A GNAT MAY DRINK
One hundred annotated games of chess from 1900 to 1999

Jonathan Hinton
To Barbara

Preface to the 2012 edition

It has been more than twelve years since I finished and published A Gnat May Drink, and it is gratifying that Chess & Bridge approached me to arrange for the book to be re-issued. At the time the original edition was published I was very pleasantly surprised by the positive recognition that it received. There were favourable reviews in Chess and the British Chess Magazine as well as a number of other places, and the book was nominated for the British Chess Federation’s Book of the Year award for 2000. Above all, however, I cherished the enthusiasm with which A Gnat May Drink was received by my family and friends, and by team-mates at Ashtead Chess Club where many signed copies were distributed.

One of the questions that I have frequently been asked about the book (along with “It took you how long to write?”) is to identify my favourite games. No easy task – I believe each one of them has some feature of interest otherwise it would not have been included. However, in choosing ten games that have particular appeal to me I came up with those from 1900, 1903, 1919, 1923, 1936, 1949, 1954, 1976, 1982 and 1986. And 1967 too, although this is primarily because it enabled me to use the line “Calapso collapses”, which rather sadly still makes me chuckle.

Since the book was published much has changed in the chess world, most notably the inexorable increase in the potency of chess engines. In the five years between 1995 and 1999 that I spent writing the book, computer chess programs were strong enough to provide a useful blunder-check, as well as generating some ingenious ideas in complex tactical positions (and of course there are many of these in the one hundred games). Nowadays, the likes of Rybka and Fritz are so strong that I have no doubt that a full computer analysis of the games would uncover some further intriguing possibilities and potentially material errors in my analysis. However, although I have made a significant number of corrections to the text, I have not attempted to re-examine the analysis of the games in the book in immense detail, merely making modifications where I have discovered obvious analytical
Chess publishing has changed, too, and happily for the better. The titles from Gambit and Quality Chess, and several masterpieces from McFarland, are but three examples of the considerable improvements across most of the chess publishing community. Thus I am delighted that this book is the first title published by Chess and Bridge's new publishing venture, LCCP.

The last decade has also been exciting for Barbara and me personally – so this time round I extend my dedication to include Marcus and Sam, our two lovely and lively little boys.

Jonathan Hinton
Surrey
September 2012

One art they say is of no use;
The mellow evenings spent at chess,
The thrill, the triumph, and the truce
To every care, are valueless.
And yet, if all whose hopes were set
On harming man played chess instead,
We should have cities standing yet
Which now are dust upon the dead.

Lord Dunsany, 1943

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There are chess aficionados in the world for whom chess represents a beautiful and noble pastime, full of history, nostalgia and tradition. The type of chess book that is cherished by them is not generally the opening encyclopaedia, nor the computer-generated database of endgames, but for
many it is the annotated collection of games. Unfortunately, there has been something of a trend in the second half of the twentieth century away from such volumes and towards technical publications that tend to cover modern opening theory or the raw data output of games without any explanation.

This is one of the reasons why, five years ago, I started work on this book. It is intended to be an enjoyable and traditional chess book; a collection of annotated games. As the twentieth century ends, I have taken a detailed look through my chess library and selected one game from each of the one hundred years. I present each game, complete with my annotations, in chronological order, hopefully creating a picture of chess during the last ten decades.

Since the primary objective of this book is to entertain, I have selected games that, for one reason or another, will hopefully enthral the reader. Although there are a number of very well-known contests included in this collection, I am convinced that no reader will have seen all the games before, since I have deliberately chosen a number of obscure but fascinating games.

My selection criteria were simple. Any game which offered an interesting, unusual or entertaining spectacle was eligible for inclusion. Thus the reader will find several examples of absorbing struggles with unusual material imbalances, such as queen versus minor pieces, or pawns against pieces. Similarly, I have included several battles with amazing attacks and king-hunts and there are also some less well-known tactical masterpieces, wild and woolly draws, and games with the most bizarre or original concepts behind them. There are also a number of exciting miniatures and games with unconventional openings and wonderful finishes.

Despite extensive examination of published material, the annotations must be regarded as my own, for each and every game has been thoroughly reappraised. However, I recognise my obvious limitations as an analyst, and so I beg forgiveness for any blunders that I expect lurk within the pages of this book.

To minimise the analytical errors I have, where appropriate, looked at the writings of the original annotators and have often examined three or four different writers’ viewpoints on the same game. To my surprise, I discovered
that many rather obvious mistakes had been made by many of the annotators and thus the interested reader should expect to see a number of original lines of play that will not have been described before. In several cases, I have let the analysis run on for a considerable number of moves in order to explore some of the intriguing possibilities lying within a position. Of course, there is certain to be inaccuracy and error as a result, but I believe that the treasures unearthed by doing so make up for any loss of precision in the analysis.

To aid the reader’s appreciation of some of the analytical complexities (i.e. so that he may make some sense of my ramblings), I have used two sizes of diagram. The larger size is for illustrating actual positions from the games, whilst the smaller is for highlighting key points that arise in the notes.

That then is some of the rationale behind the book; above all, I hope that it will provide a small contribution to the nostalgia that is the traditional chess book.

Thanks go to my father Maurice for his advice and support – on this book but also on matters generally throughout the years – and to Elizabeth Hunt for the cover artwork. But most of all, thanks to Barbara for her patience and encouragement and for everything else.

Jonathan Hinton
Surrey
September 1999

Chess is a sea in which a gnat may drink and an elephant may bathe.

*Indian saying*

**The Games**
1900

Halprin, A – Pillsbury, H
Munich
Ruy López (C67)

It has been alleged in certain sources (for example, *Great Moments in Chess* by Fred Reinfeld) that Halprin received some help in preparing for this game from Pillsbury’s rivals for first prize in the tournament, Schlechter and Maróczy. Whether or not this is true (and it would hardly be regarded as irregular nowadays) one thing is clear – this game does credit to both sides and is a wonderful example of attack and defence to start our collection.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

White plays the Ruy López opening, which dates back to the fifteenth century. No other opening illustrates so clearly the diversity and depth of chess; despite five hundred years of analysis, this opening has consistently been one of the most popular at all levels. There are numerous systems for both sides – some quiet and positional, some violent and full of tactics – but there is still no definitive view as to the overall assessment of the opening.

3 ... Nf6

The Berlin Defence, offering simple development in accordance with the theories of the time, is perfectly playable if somewhat passive. The modern move is 3 ... a6 and is known as Morphy’s Defence, despite the fact that Löwenthal was the first to give it serious study.

4.0-0

This temporary sacrifice of the e-pawn is the most active method of playing against this variation.

4 ... Nxe4 5.d4
The point of White’s previous move is shown here. With the advance of the d-pawn White attempts to open the central files in order to exploit his better development. It would be too risky for Black to try 5 ... exd4 because of the reply 6.Re1.

5 ... Nd6

Perhaps 5 ... Be7 is more solid but this knight retreat is also sound.

6.dxe5!?  

An interesting alternative to the usual move, 6.Bxc6. The line that Halprin chooses involves a temporary piece sacrifice.

6 ... Nxb5 7.a4!

This is the point. Black’s knight has no good retreat.

7 ... d6
Black avoids the mistake 7 ... Nxe5?, which gives him a very poor game after 8.Nxe5 Nd6 9.Re1! Be7 10.Bg5!. However, a better alternative is 7 ... Nbd4! 8.Nxd4 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 d5! when chances are equal.

8.e6!

This is much more enterprising than 8.axb5, when 8 ... Nxe5 9.Re1 Be7 leads to an even position.

8 ... fxe6

Although this move weakens the h5–f7 diagonal, it is better than 8 ... Bxe6?! since 9.axb4 Nxe5 10.Nd4! followed by an advance of the f-pawn is strong for White.

9.axb5 Ne7

In this position White is a pawn down but has a number of different ways of pursuing the attack. He might try 10.Bg5, pinning the knight, or 10.Ng5, eyeing the pawn on e6. In either case a difficult game ensues, with Black usually having to give back the pawn (generally the one on e6) to free his game. Instead, White prefers to play another developing move before commencing active operations.

10.Nc3 Ng6

The f5 square was also a possible destination for the knight, but after 11.Nd4 White gains the upper hand. For example, if 11 ... Nxd4 then 12.Qxd4 threatens a7 and if 12 ... Qf6 White plays 13.Qc4! with pressure along the a and c-files.

(see next diagram)

11.Ng5!

There are many attacking fronts open to White. The a-file is under his control and ideas of advancing the b-pawn are always in the air. Moreover, the black pawns on h7 and e6 are liable to come under attack.
11 ... Be7 12.Qh5

Intensifying the pressure, which Black attempts to alleviate by exchanging minor pieces.

12 ... Bxg5 13.Bxg5 Qd7

It looks as though Black has a moment’s breathing space, but Halprin (or is it the pre-game preparation by Schlechter and Maróczy?) is on top form and comes up with a series of well-placed blows. Pillsbury has to defend superbly to avoid a crushing defeat.

14.b6!!

Exploiting the fact that the a-pawn is pinned, White starts the onslaught.

14 ... cxb6

Forced.
15.Nd5!!

The idea behind White’s play is revealed with this wonderful centralizing knight move. The threat of 15.Nxb6 forces Black to capture the knight, because 15 ... Qc6 loses to 16.Ne7! Qxc2 (to defend g6) 17.Rac1!. Now, however, the e-file is wide open.

15 ... exd5 16.Rfe1+ Kf8

A very difficult decision. Instead, 16 ... Kf7 was also possible because after 17.Re7+ Qxe7 18.Bxe7 Kxe7 Black actually has a small material advantage.
Clearly, the exposed position of his king makes the situation precarious; after 19.Re1+ Kd7 20.Qxd5 Rf8! 21.Rd1 Rf6 22.Qg8! White has the initiative and should also pick up an additional pawn or two on the king’s wing. Nevertheless, this was certainly an interesting alternative to the text move.

17.Ra3!

An elegant method of bringing the queen’s rook into play, threatening 18.Rf3+ Kg8 19.Re7!, when 19 ... Nxe7 loses to 20.Qf7 mate, and 19 ... Qc6 fails against the lovely 20.Rf8+! Kxf8 21.Qf3+ with mate on f7 to follow.

17 ... Ne5!?

Pillsbury is defending well and this move seems to hold everything. There was also the intriguing tempo-saving possibility of 17 ... Kg8!? when White’s best chance is to continue with 18.Rf3. Then 18 ... Ne5 transposes into the game, but Black could also play 18 ... Qb5 19.Re7 (apparently crushing) 19 ... Be6!, giving back the piece in order to deflect the rook from the seventh rank and to defend the back rank.
In this fascinating position 20.Rxg7+? fails after 20 ... Kxg7 21.Qh6+ Kg8 22.Bf6 Qd7! and other violent attempts such as 20.Bh6? simply lose the rook to 20 ... Nxe7, so White must play 20.Rxe6. But then Black can capture on b2 with his queen, threatening mate and, if he can weather the storm, he should emerge with a decisive material advantage. The best attacking response to 20 ... Qxb2 is probably the paradoxical retreat 21.Bd2, which covers the mate threat and at the same time threatens 22.Qxd5 with a devastating discovered check following. Black must defend the pawn with his queen, and this appears to give White sufficient time to force at least a draw. For example, if 21 ... Qa2 White can play 22.Ra3!.
Here 22 ... Qxa3 23.Qxd5 Kf8 24.Qf5+ Kg8 25.Qd5 is a draw, and on 22 ... Qb1+ White should play 23.Re1! Qb5 24.Rb3 Qc6 (or 24 ... Qd7 25.Qxd5+ with the advantage) 25.Rc3 with a draw, rather than 23.Be1!? Qb5 24.Rb3 Nf4! 25.Rxb5 Nhx5, which is less clear. There are other possibilities, but in all cases White seems able to force a draw.
18.Rxe5!!

It is to Halprin’s credit that he finds the courage to continue in this sacrificial manner, eliminating the knight and thus allowing the rook to check on f3. Other moves give Black time to consolidate, but it is still far from clear how White’s attack will continue.

18 ... dxe5 19.Rf3+ Kg8

Pillsbury must have thought that his careful defence was paying off, since White is a rook and two pawns down with no obvious winning method.

20.Bh6!!

Despite the material deficit, White finds another brilliant sacrifice and this one Pillsbury decides not to accept. If 20 ... gxh6 then 21.Rg3+ Kf8 22.Qxe5! is very strong, since 22 ... Rg8? loses to 23.Qf6+ Qf7 24.Qd8+ Qe8 25.Rf3+ Kg7 26.Qf6 mate. So Black must leave the rook en prise, and after 22 ... Qc6 23.Qg7+ Ke8 24.Re3+ wins. The only alternative would be to interpose the queen by 21 ... Qg4 but White maintains the advantage with 22.Rxg4+ Bxg
23.Qxg4+, when the exposed position of the black king will be his undoing.

**20 ... Qe7!?**

Pillsbury selects this way of declining the sacrifice, but there were others.

(i) 20 ... g6? loses instantly to 21.Rf8 mate.

(ii) 20 ... Qe6? fails to the clever double attack 21.Qg5!, forcing 21 ... Qd7 22.Bxg7! Qxg7 23.Qd8+ Qf8 24.Qxf8 mate.

(iii) 20 ... e4!? is much more challenging and after 21.Rg3 Black cannot avoid giving up his queen on g7, since 21 ... g6? loses to 22.Rxg6+! hxg6 (or 22 ... Kf7 23.Rb6+ Ke7 24.Bg5+ Kf8 25.Rf6+ Kg8 26.Bh6 and mates) 23.Qxg6+ Qg7 24.Qxg7 mate. So after 20 ... e4 21.Rg3 Black might try 21 ... Kf8 (he has no useful moves at his disposal) 22.Bxg7+ Qxg7 (22 ... Ke7 loses the rook and leaves Black with an inferior position) 23.Rxg7 Kxg7 24.Qe5+ Kg8 25.Qe8+, with a draw by perpetual check. Therefore it appears that 20 ... e4 is good enough for a draw.

Nonetheless, Pillsbury’s 20 ... Qe7 contains a devious trap. If Halprin plays the obvious 21.Rg3? (planning 21 ... g6? 22.Rxg6+!) Black simply plays 21 ... Be6! and after 22.Rxg7+ Qxg7 23.Bxg7 Kxg7 White cannot draw.
21.Bxg7!

Brilliant play. He avoids the trap and destroys the protection around the black king.

21 ... Kxg7!!

Clearly 21 ... Qxg7 fails to 22.Qe8+ Qf8 23.Qxf8 mate, but Black did have a couple of plausible alternatives.

(i) If 21 ... Bd7? then 22.Bh6!! threatens mate and wins, as 22 ... Qe6 loses to 23.Qg5+ Qg6 24.Qe7!! (see diagram below) with mate following on f8, f7 or g7.
(ii) After 21 ... Bg4?! 22.Qxg4 h5 (forced, since 22 ... Qxg7? 23.Qe6+ wins) 23.Qg6! Qxg7 24.Qe6+ Kh7 25.Rf7 White’s queen is at least as strong as Black’s two rooks.

22.Rg3+

White has finally exhausted his attack and goes for perpetual check.

22 ... Kf8!

The obvious move, allowing the draw. There was one fascinating alternative in 22 ... Bg4?!, which attempts to deflect the rook to g4. On g4

the rook cannot check along the f-file because of the black e-pawn, so White must play 23.Rxg4+ Kf8 24.Qh6+ Ke8 25.Rg7!
In this position, the black queen is lost (for example, 25 ... Qc5? 26.Qe6+ mates) and after, say, 25 ... Qf7 26.Rxf7 Kxf7 27.Qd6! White’s queen is again very active. This fact, coupled with the exposed position of Black’s king, gives White the advantage. Pillsbury’s decision to allow the draw thus appears justified.

23.Rf3+ Kg7 24.Rg3+ Kf8 25.Rf3+

½–½

1901

Tietz, V – Welsch
Carlsbad
Sicilian Defence (B45)

Not a perfect game but the finishing position is beautiful.

In this variation of the Sicilian Defence Black has many alternative formations at his disposal, including the Taimanov (characterized by ... a6 and ... Nge7) and the Paulsen (with the queen on c7 and the knight on f6), as well as transposition into the more flexible lines.

5 ... Bc5 6.Be3 Qb6

7.Ndb5

In this position 7.Ncb5 leads to complications that turn out to be in White’s favour. If Black attempts to exploit the pressure along the a7–g1 diagonal by 7 ... a6 8.Nxc6 Bxe3!? , White has the useful zwischenzug 9.Nd6+! and after 9 ... Kf8 10.fxe3 Qxe3+ 11.Be2 bxc6 12.Nxc8 Rxc8 13.Qxd7 he retains an advantage. If Black tries to vary with 11 ... dxc6, White has the lovely move 12.Nf5!!.
This threatens mate on d8 and simultaneously attacks the black queen, forcing 12 ... Qg5 13.h4! Qf6 14.e5! winning.

7 ... Bxe3 8.Nd6+?! 

White decides to insert this check, although there are drawbacks; for instance the pawn on b2 is now en prise. Instead 8.fxe3! was preferable, since the delay in occupying d6 enables the queen to use the square. If Black grabs the e-pawn, he lands himself in a tight corner after 8 ... Qxe3+ 9.Be2! Kd8 (to prevent 10.Nc7+) 10.Qd6! when mate on f8 is threatened. True, Black can defend, but White has all the fun with the open f and d-files for his rooks and the black king stuck on d8.
8 ... Ke7

Many would prefer to get the king away from the centre with 8 ... Kf8 but this is more adventurous and pressurizes the knight.

9.fxe3?!

An automatic recapture, although White misses the amazing possibility of 9.Nf5+!, exploiting the vulnerable position of the black king. If 9 ... exf5? then 10.Nd5+ wins the queen. Better is 9 ... Kd8 10.fxe3?! (safer is 10.Nxe3) 10 ... Qxb2 11.Nb5 Qb4+?! (here or on the last move 11 ... exf5! should win) 12.c3 Qxe4.
In this position White is two pawns down and must try to assert himself with 13.Qd6!, again threatening the mate on f8. Whether he has more than a draw (for example after 13 ... Nf6 14.Qc7+ Ke7 15.Qd6+ Kd8) is, however, debatable.

9 ... Qxe3+

A penetrating capture that is particularly powerful since 10.Qe2? loses the knight after 10 ... Qxe2+ 11.Bxe2 Kxd6. Black could also consider 9 ... Qxb2?! although after 10.Ndb5! White threatens to trap the queen with 11.Rb1 and therefore forces 10 ... Qb4. In this position White surely has enough for the pawn, and he might continue 11.Qd2 with Rb1, Be2/d3 and 0-0 to follow with a fine attacking game.

10.Be2 Nf6?

11.Rf1?

White tries to continue his attack but misses the chance to prevent 11 ... Qd4 with 11.Ndb5. If then 11 ... Nxe4 White can force a draw by 12.Qd6+ Kd8 13.Qc7+. So to try for a win Black might try 11 ... Qc5, but White has some initiative after 12.Qd2.

11 ... Qc5!?

Although not necessarily a mistake, Black would surely be better advised to play 11 ... Qd4!, forcing the queens off. After 12.Qxd4 Nxd4 13.0-0-0 White has some pressure but it represents insufficient compensation for the pawn.

12.Nc4

The knight retreats and defends the e3 square, so that 12 ... Qd4 can be answered by 13.Bd3.

Now Black’s pieces are somewhat awkwardly placed and he therefore attempts to force matters.
12 ... b5!?

The idea to chase away the knight from c4 is a good one, and Black presumably thought that his opponent would have to play either 13.Nd2 (whereupon 13 ... b4 or 13 ... a6 both leave Black with a fine game) or 13.Na3!? b4 14.Na4 Qg5 15.Nc4, leading to a complex struggle where Black again has a clear edge. Tietz, a very creative player, finds an exciting continuation that gives him excellent practical chances.

13.Nxb5!

This knight sacrifice deflects the queen from the protection of d6, though the real point of the move only becomes apparent several moves later.

13 ... Qxb5 14.Qd6+ Ke8

Black decides that the better square for the king is e8 rather than d8, so that it defends f7. The difference will be seen as the game unfolds.

15.Qg3!

This is the clever point of White’s attack. The queen threatens g7 and at the same time vacates the d6 square for the knight to enter with check.

15 ... Qb4+

At first sight this check followed by 16 ... Qf8 seems to be the only effective way to defend g7.

(see next diagram)

16.c3 Qf8?

Consistent, but Black misses the possibility of 16 ... Nxe4!!. This fantastic move gives Black a definite advantage.

(i) After 17.Qxg7 Qf8! everything is defended.

(ii) On 17.cxb4 Black replies 17 ... Nxe4 18.hxg3 Nxb4! and if 19.Nd6+ then
19 ... Ke7! 20.Nxf7? Rf8! wins easily.

17.Nd6+

With the knight on d6 and the rook on the open f-file, White can now generate significant tactical opportunities. But returning to the question raised after Black’s fourteenth move: what difference would 14 ... Kd8 have made? For a start, after 14 ... Kd8 15.Qg3! Qb4+ 16.c3 Qf8 (16 ... Nxe4?! 17.Qh4+!) 17.Nd6 would not be check. Black could then halt the advance of White’s e-pawn with 17 ... e5 but White would maintain the initiative after 18.0-0-0.
In this position White is a knight down but threatens 19.Bc4, and it is surprisingly difficult for Black to free himself.


Other moves such as 18 ... Rb8 allow 19.Bc4, although Black can attempt to extricate himself with 19 ... Kc7! 20.Nxf7 Qc5! when 21.Qxg7 (or 21.Nxh8 Qxc4, which seems fine for Black) 21 ... Rg8! 22.Qxf6 Rg6! followed by 23 ... Qxc4 gives him a slight edge.

The only conclusion, therefore, about the relative merits of 14 ... Kd8 and 14 ... Ke8 is that both moves lead to a tactical maelstrom.

17 ... Ke7 18.e5! Nd5
Otherwise White regains the knight with a clear advantage.

19.0-0-0?

Admirable romantic chess, but unfortunately flawed. White completes his development before proceeding with the attack, but it is a poor choice because Black can now defend with 19 ... f6!, after which he is simply a piece up. White should have continued with the logical 19.Rxf7+, and after 19 ... Qxf7 20.Nxf7 Kxf7 the queen and pawn versus rook and two knights material imbalance should favour Black, although the win would be far from easy.

19 ... Nd8?

But Black misses his chance and is left with a horrible position.

20.c4

As mentioned above, Victor Tietz was a very gifted and aggressive player, so it surprising that he misses the most brutal finish. Here 20.Rxd5! wins easily, since 20 ... exd5 fails to 21.Nf5+ Ke8 22.Nxg7+ Ke7 23.Qh4+ f6 24.Qb4+
and mates. Not that the outcome is affected, since Tietz’s choice is also good enough to win.

20 ... Nb4 21.Bh5

Creating an irresistible battery against f7, which Black now tries to block.

21 ... f6 22.Qf2?!  

Again Tietz fails to find the most direct win, which was 22.Nxc8+ Rxc8 23.exf6+ gxf6 24.Qd6 mate. On this occasion we may be inclined to forgive him, for the actual finish in the game is particularly attractive.

22 ... Na6?

Better resistance would be offered by 22 ... Ndc6, though after 23.exf6+ Qxf6 24.Qd2! White’s threats along the d and f-files should prevail. For instance, if 24 ... Qh6 then 25.Nxc8+ wins the bishop, since 25 ... Raxc8 loses to 26.Rf7+.

23.Qxa7!!

Finally White lands a knock-out punch.

23 ... Rxa7 24.Nxc8 mate.

After many errors during the game the final position is before us, and it indisputably deserves a diagram.
1902

Lasker, Emanuel – Voright
Philadelphia
Sicilian Defence (B70)

Won by the then World Champion in a simultaneous exhibition. The game is full of complications and errors but Lasker and his opponent produce a fine display.

This might have been a slightly unusual opening in 1902 but today, of course, this variation of the Sicilian Defence is one of the standard ways of beginning a game of chess.

6.Be2 g6

Transposing into the famous Dragon Variation.

7.f4!?

A provocative move order, since Black now has interesting ideas like 7 ... Qb6!, exploiting the weak b6–g1 diagonal.

7 ... Bd7

Black continues instead with routine development.

8.Be3 Bg7

Black still has the possibility of 8 ... Qb6, but after 9.Qd2 Qxb2 10.0-0 White
would have excellent compensation for the pawn.

9.Nb3 a5!?

A double-edged move, which attempts to force a weakening of the queen’s side. The drawback is that the b5 and b6 squares are rather exposed.

10.a4 Rc8

Black defers castling in order to continue with his queen’s side mobilization.

11.g4?

A typical advance in the Sicilian, usually leading to extremely unclear complications. In this position it is tactically unsound.

11 ... h5?

The correct and thematic method of replying to White’s aggressive advance is 11 ... Nb4!, threatening both 12 ... Nxe4 13.Nxe4 14.Nxc2+ and 12 ...
13.fxe5 dxe5 14.Bxe5 (otherwise Black plays 14 ... Nxe4) 14 ... Nxe4! and
now 15.Bxg7? Qh4+ mates, so White is forced to play 15.Nxe4 Bxe5. If then
16.c3 (or 16.Nec5 Qh4+) 16 ... Bc6! is very strong, because 17.Qxd8+ Rxd8
18.cxb4 Bxe4 gives Black an easy win, whilst 17.Bb5 is answered by 17 ... 
Bxb5 18.axb5 Nd3+ with a clear advantage. Therefore, in reply to 11 ...
Nb4!, White must play passively, for example by 12.Rc1. Even here Black
can grab the initiative with 12 ... Rxc3!? (12 ... Nxe4!? followed by 13 ...
Bxb2 is also interesting) 13.bxc3 Na2! 14.Ra1 Nxc3 with a complicated
position.

12.g5 Ng4?!

Black should really have retreated the knight to h7, but this bold move, which
effectively will leave the piece stranded on g4, gives him some exciting
attacking possibilities.

13.Bg1

The idea is to continue with 14.h3, trapping the knight, but with his king in
the centre and Black’s pressure against the queen’s side, this plan is not
without dangers.

13 ... Nb4! 14.h3 Bxc3+

Here 14 ... Rxc3 gives him insufficient compensation after 15.bxc3 Bxc3+

15.bxc3 Rxc3

But now the pawn at c2 is hanging.
16.hxg4 Nxc2+ 17.Kf1?!

Not the most accurate, since the paradoxical and fascinating alternative 17.Kd2! hits the rook with the king. The main point is that after 17 ... Nxa1, 18.Qxa1 skewers the rooks. If instead 17 ... Rxb3 18.Qxc2 Rb4, or 17 ... Rc6 18.Rc1 Nb4, White is a bishop for two pawns ahead and should prevail.

17 ... Be6

Black cannot capture the rook on a1, since 18.Qxa1 Qc8 19.Rh3! again exploits the long black diagonal and wins. With the text move he attacks the knight and keeps alive his outside chances of victory.

18.Bb5+?

There is an expression from the United States which runs “patzer sees a check, patzer gives a check”, and although it is rather harsh to label the great Lasker as a patzer, here some criticism is justified. The move merely weakens the defences of g4 with little noticeable benefit, and therefore 18.Qd2! was the right move, immediately attacking the rook. Before examining this line, it
is worth looking at other ways in which White might save his knight.

Firstly, if 18.Nd4 (18.Nd2 is similar) Black can play 18 ... Nxa1! since after 19.Qxa1 Qc8 the threat of 20 ... Rc1+ gives him good survival chances. One particularly critical line is 20.Nxe6!? Rc1+ 21.Kg2 Rxa1 22.Bb5+! Qc6 23.Bxc6+ bxc6 24.Bd4 Rxe1 25.Kxe1 Rg8 and Black is better.

Secondly, after 18.Rb1 Bxb3! 19.Rxb3 Rxb3 20.Qxc2 Rb4 the position is unclear but Black is certainly not out of it.

That leaves 18.Qd2!, when 18 ... Nxa1? 19.Qxc3 forks the knight and rook, whilst 18 ... Rxb3 19.Qxc2 leaves White with a piece advantage. Therefore Black might try 18 ... Qc8 and here White has two promising lines.

(i) After 19.Rc1 Bxb3 20.Bd4, Black cannot play 20 ... Nxd4? because 21.Rxc3 Ne6 22.Rxb3 wins easily, so he must try 20 ... Ne3+!?. Now 21.Bxe3? is a mistake as Black has 21 ... Rxc1+ 22.Qxc1 Qxc1+ 23.Bxc1 Bxa4 24.Bb2 (24.gxh5 is the same) 24 ... Rh7 25.gxh5 Bc6 26.Bf3 (or 26.h6 Bxe4) 26 ... gxh5 and his preponderance of pawns gives him good chances in the ending. Thus after 20 ... Ne3+ White must find 21.Kf2!, which unites the rooks and forces the win.
After 21 ... Nxb3 22.Rxc1 Nxc1+ 23.Kg1 and the double attack on c8 and h8 decides) 22.Bxg4, Black loses if he plays 22 ... Qxg4 23.Rxc3, and even after the spectacular 22 ... Rc2!? he cannot survive the line 23.Rxc2 Qxc2 24.Qxc2 Bxc2 25.Bxh8, etc.

(ii) The other good line for White is 19.Bd4 because after 19 ... Rxb3, 20.Rc1! will force the win of either the knight or the rook on h8. If instead 19 ... Nxa1 then 20.Qxc3 wins, so Black’s only chance is 19 ... Nxd4, but then 20.Nxd4 (better than 20.Qxd4 Rg8 21.Nxa5 Rc1+ 22.Kf2 Rxa1 23.Rxa1 Bxg4 when Black, although lost, has some counterplay) leaves White material ahead with a reasonably sound position.

18 ... Kf8
Now White has the “usual suspects”, namely 19.Qd2 and 19.Nd4, but also 19.Nc5!?, exploiting the pinned d-pawn. At first glance this looks good, but Black has 19 ... Bxg4! 20.Qxg4! dxc5! (only not 20 ... hxg4? 21.Rxh8+) 21.Rd1 Nd4 with good compensation. If 19.Qd2 then White’s wandering bishop on b5 means that Black can infiltrate on g4 in several variations. Black plays 19 ... Qc8 and now:

(i) 20.Rc1 does not work now because 20 ... Bc4+! 21.Bxc4 (21.Kf2 Bxb3! and the king blocks the bishop so that Bd4 is unavailable, or 21.Kg2 Qxg4+ and mates) 21 ... Qxc4+ 22.Kf2 Qxb3, etc.

(ii) 20.Bd4 is better, when Black continues 20 ... Rf3+! 21.Kg2 Rxb3! 22.Bxh8 and now the fabulous move 22 ... Bd5!!.
White cannot capture the bishop because 23 ... Qxg4+ wins, so he must try to defend. If 23.Be2 then 23 ... Bxe4+ gives Black a strong attack, whilst 23.Bd3 is met by 23 ... Qxg4+ 24.Kf2 (best) and now 24 ... Bc4!! lands White in some trouble. For example, 25.Bxc4 is met by 25 ... Rf3+ 26.Ke2 Rh3+ 27.Kf1 Qf3+ 28.Kg1 Rh1 mate, and 25.Qxc2 Rxd3! wins the queen. Best is 25.Bc3! Bxd3 26.Qxd3 (or 26.Rag1 Qc8! 27.Qxd3 Rxc3 with advantage) 26 ... Qxf4+ 27.Ke2 Nxa1 with a likely draw. For example, on 28.Qd4!? Qg4+ White can get into real trouble if he attempts to avoid the draw: 29.Kd3 Qf3+ 30.Kc4 Rxc3+!! 31.Qxc3 b5+!! 32.axb5 Qxe4+ 33.Qd5+! 34.Kc5 Nb3+ winning. Fortunately for White, in the diagrammed position the strange 23.Rh4! defends the g-pawn and gives him some winning chances after 23 ... Bxe4+ 24.Kh2 Nxa1 25.Bxa1 Rb1 (or 25 ... Qc5 26.Bb2! to prevent 26 ... Ra3) 26.Qc3 Qxc3 27.Bxc3 Rh1+ 28.Kg3 Rg1+ 29.Kf2 Rxe4 30.Rxe4 hxg4 31.Bxa5.

19.Nd4!

The one benefit of White’s eighteenth move is shown after 19 ... Nxa1 20.Qxa1 Qc8 and now 21.Ne2! defends c1 and attacks the rook.
19 ... Bxg4

If 19 ... Qc8 then 20.Rc1 Bxg4 21.Qd2 will transpose into the game. Now 20.Qxg4 Nxa1 gives an unclear situation, so White prefers to place the queen on d2.

20.Qd2 Qc8?!

This move should not come as a surprise, given its prevalence in the lines above, but Black had a viable alternative in 20 ... Rh3!. If then 21.Rxh3 Bxh3+ 22.Kf2 Nxa1 White can pick up the knight with 23.Qc3, but Black again has sufficient extra pawns to make the assessment very uncertain. White might try 21.Nxc2 when 21 ... Rxh1 follows, again giving a very murky position with White having slightly the better chances because of his two bishops.

21.Rc1 Bh3+

Black’s chances now lie with a queen assault via g4.

22.Kf2 Qg4!

A clever idea, the first point of which is that 23.Qxc3? is met by 23 ... Qg2 mate.
23.Rxh3!

Lasker sees the danger and correctly decides to eliminate the bishop. On 23.Nxc2 Qh4+! 24.Ke2 Bg4+ 25.Kf1 Rf3+ 26.Ke2 Rg3+ 27.Kf2 Qxh1!, the rook on g3 cannot be captured, giving Black a won game. The other capture is slightly better, but after 23.Rxc2 Rxc2, followed by 24 ... Qg2+, wins the rook on h1 and leaves White struggling.

23 ... Qxh3

23 ... Rxb3! is an interesting alternative, since 24.Qxc2 is answered by 24 ... Qxf4+ 25.Ke1 Rh1! and White’s pawns are likely to fall. However, 24.Rxc2! is more resilient. After 24 ... Rg3 25.Be2! Rg2+ 26.Ke3 Qh3+! (not 26 ... Qg3+? 27.Nf3! Rxg1 28.Qd4! winning) 27.Nf3 Rxg1 28.Qc3! leaves Black with a lost game, so he must play 24 ... Qg3+! 25.Kf1 Rh1 26.Qg2! with a messy position where White has much the better chances because the black rook is in danger of being trapped in the corner.

24.Rxc2 Rg3?
Black is lost after this, so he had to try 24 ... Qg3+!. White must defend the bishop so has to play 25.Kf1, and then 25 ... Rxc2! 26.Nxc2 (or 26.Qxc2 Qxf4+) 26 ... Qf3+ followed by 27 ... Qxe4 leaves the unusual material balance of rook and seven pawns versus three minor pieces and four pawns. Perhaps White would be favourite in the ending, but Black’s h-pawn may have a say in matters.

25.Bf1!

An excellent defensive move, gaining time with the attack on the queen.

25 ... Qh4

If Black was pinning his hopes on the threatened discovered check, White’s next must have disappointed him.

26.Nf3!

Another retreat, but again very strong.
26 ... Qg4 27.Qc3!

Defending the knight, hitting the rook on h8 and also intending 28.Qc8+, forcing the exchange of queens.

27 ... Kg8 28.Bh2

The immediate 28.Qc8+ was also good enough.

28 ... h4 29.Qc8+

Black resigns.

After 29 ... Qxc8+ 30.Rxc8+ Kg7 31.Rxh8 wins.

1903

Marshall, F – Pillsbury, H
Vienna
King’s Gambit (C38)

In 1903 the Vienna Chess Club organized an international tournament where all the games had to begin with the King’s Gambit Accepted. Such a tournament naturally suited the most combative players such as Chigorin, who won the event, and Marshall, who was the runner-up. In the following very famous game the complexities created by the latter and his fellow American Pillsbury are absolutely fascinating.

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5

Considered best at the time. Nowadays most players of the black pieces would prefer to return the pawn with 3 ... d5, when his defensive task is far less troublesome.

4.Bc4!?

Inviting the wild sacrificial lines such as the famous Muzio Gambit, 4 ... g4
5.0-0!? gxf3, when White gains a ferocious attack at the expense of a piece. Current thinking is that Black, if he knows all the complex theory, can escape with a draw, but few players would be prepared to risk it.

(see next diagram)

4 ... Bg7

Pillsbury prefers a safer approach and develops a piece.

5.h4

In the nineteenth century, when the King’s Gambit was the most heavily studied opening, even the most insignificant variations had impressive-sounding names. The move 5.h4 was known as Philidor’s Gambit, whereas the alternative 5.0-0 was the Hanstein Gambit. In the latter variation, White’s main idea is to break open Black’s pawn chain with the move g3. Marshall’s choice is more natural.

5 ... h6!
Much better than 5 ... g4?, when 6.Ng5! forces 6 ... Nh6 and White has a great position. For example, the game might continue 7.d4 Nc6 8.c3 d6 9.Bxf4 and Black has no play whatsoever.

6.d4 d6

Again Pillsbury correctly avoids pushing his g-pawn, since the position after 6 ... g4?! 7.Bxf4! gxf3 8.Qxf3 looks even better than those obtained from the Muzio Gambit.

7.Qd3?!

![Chess board image]

Probably not the best, because Black can now respond with 7 ... Nc6!. Then White seems to have a strong forcing line, but Black has everything under control: 8.hxg5 hxg5 9.Rxh8 Bxh8 10.e5!? (threatening 11.Qh7) 10 ... Bg7! 11.Qh7!? (here 11.Nc3 is somewhat better) 11 ... Kf8!.
In this position White could try 12.Nc3 but 12 ... Nh6! threatens to embarrass the queen with 13 ... Bf5, and after 14.Bd3 Nb4! Black has a fine game. The alternative is 12.Qh5 but again 12 ... Nh6! 13.Nxg5 (or 13.exd6 Nxd4! 14.Nxd4 Bg4 followed by 15 ... Qxd6 and Black has a great position) 13 ... Bg4 14.Qh4 Nxd4 favours Black.


7 ... g4?

Pillsbury misses his chance and Marshall is given the opportunity to build a formidable initiative.

8.Ng1 Qf6

Otherwise White simply recaptures on f4 with a tremendous position.

9.c3 h5
Black’s chances lie in developing a king’s side pawn roller.

10.Na3 Ne7 11.Ne2

Increasing the pressure against f4.

11 ... Ng6 12.g3!

Very alert play by Marshall. He sees that the natural 12 ... f3 fails to 13.Bg5! f2+ (forced) 14.Kf1 Qf3 15.Qxf3 gxf3 16.Nf4 and White will mop up the pawns.

12 ... fxg3 13.Rf1!!

The great thing about Frank Marshall was his willingness to enter into the wildest complications, and this is a good illustration. Pillsbury cannot have been expecting such a bold move, which leaves the h-pawn undefended. After the next move – his thirteenth – he obtains three connected passed pawns. In compensation, White wins the knight on g6 but Black seems to have excellent chances of advancing his pawns. Mere mortals would of
course be content with the situation after 13.Qxg3 Be6 when on balance things favour White.

13 ... Qxh4

This carries the threat of 14 ... g2+.


The last few moves have been pretty much forced, and Marshall must have seen this far and judged things in his favour. However, Pillsbury has some tactical tricks up his sleeve.

16 ... Rf8 17.Be3 Bh6!

A beautiful deflection of the bishop from the defence of f2 that carries an added sting.

Here the natural defence is 18.Ng1 but this would lose to 18 ... Rf3!! 19.Nxf3 (or 19.Nc2 Bxe3! 20.Nxe3 Qxf2+) 19 ... gxf3 20.0-0-0 (else 20 ... g1Q+ wins) 20 ... Qxf2! because the bishop is unfortunately pinned.

Other defensive tries also seem to fail. If 18.Bf5, for example, then 18 ... Bxf5 19.exf5 and now Black can choose between three winning moves, 19 ... Qh1+, 19 ... g1Q+ and 19 ... Re8. Marshall, however, has another option, leading to further excitement.

18.Bxh6! g1Q+!

The start of a forcing sequence which leads to a massive material superiority for Black.
19. \textit{Nxg1 Qxf2+ \ 20.Kd1 Qxg1+ \ 21.Kc2 Rf2+}

Saving the rook before capturing on a1.

\textbf{22.Bd2}

Marshall did not fancy 22.Kb3 as after 22 ... Qxa1 23.Bg5+ Kd7, White is faced with the threat of 24 ... Qxb2+. This seems to give Black sufficient resources to beat off the attack and to capitalize on his material advantage.
For example, after 24.Nc4 (actually threatening mate in seven by 25.Ne5+! dxe5 26.dxe5+ Kc6 27.Qc4+ Kb6 28.Be3+ c5 29.Qxc5+ Ka6 30.Qa3+ Kb5 31.Qa4 mate!) Black has 24 ... Nc6! (24 ... c6 25.Qg3! is less clear although Black should hold), which menaces 25 ... Na5+ and ensures him a significant advantage.

22 ... Qxa1

After the mêlée Black has won two rooks for a bishop, but White has some chances to exploit the exposed position of his adversary’s king and the fact that the black queen is out of play.

23.Qe3

Intending to invade via g5. Black could now try to save his rook with 23 ... Qf1!? , when after 24.Qg5+ Black has two options.

(i) Returning the piece with 24 ... Rf6 25.e5 (or 25.Bf5 Nd7!) 25 ... Bf5+! 26.Bxf5 Qxf5+ 27.Kb3 dxe5 28.dxe5 Qe6+ 29.c4 Nd7 with a clear advantage.
The enterprising 24 ... Kd7!? 25.e5!? (other moves are less forcing and allow Black to consolidate with moves like ... c6) 25 ... R xd2+! and Black’s queen re-enters the game with a winning position.

Instead, Pillsbury elects to return the rook immediately.

23 ... R xd2+!? 24.Qxd2 Bd7?!

A better choice is 24 ... c6, which immediately provides the king with an escape route. It is likely that Pillsbury was attracted by the possibility of checking on a4.

25.Qg5+ Kc8 26.Bf5!

Marshall continues to complicate matters and he has good chances of achieving perpetual check. For example, if now 26 ... Bxf5 then 27.Qg8+ Kd7 28.Qf7+ is a draw.

26 ... b6!?
This is the obvious move and it should be good enough for victory. Pillsbury was in terrible time-trouble, so probably did not consider other options at this juncture, but 26 ... c6!? was feasible and also gives Black chances to win. If 27.Qg8+ then 27 ... Kc7 28.Bxd7 Nxd7! 29.Qxa8 regains the rook but Black’s king’s side pawns will decide the game. Thus White must try to confuse the issue, but neither 27.e5 dxe5 nor 27.d5 Qf1 gives Black much problem, so the best attempt is 27.Nc4!. Since 27 ... Kc7? and 27 ... Na6? both fail to 28.Qe7!, Black’s best reply is probably 27 ... Qxa2! 28.Nxd6+ Kc7, when if 29.Qf4? then 29 ... Qa4+ followed by 30 ... Kb6 is fine for Black. Instead 29.Qe7! threatens perpetual check by 30.Ne8+ Kc8 (not 30 ... Kb6? 31.Qc5+ and mate next move) 31.Nd6+. After 29.Qe7 this fascinating position arises.

There are now several possibilities.

(i) The attempt to put the king in front of the pawns leads to a draw after 29 ... Kb6? 30.Qd8+! Ka6 31.Bxd7 Qa4+ 32.Kc1! Nxd7 33.Qxa8, because Black must take perpetual (not 33 ... Qb3? 34.Nc8! and White wins).

(ii) 29 ... b6? is a mistake because 30.Ne8+ forces a draw (30 ... Kb7? allows

(iii) 29 ... Qg8 is the best move, but after 30.Qe5! Black is still under great pressure: for example, if 30 ... b6!? then 31.Nf7+ Kb7 32.Qe7 should be good enough for a draw, but better is 30 ... Qf8! and then 31.Nb5+! (much better than 31.Ne8+ Kd8! 32.Nc7 Qe7!) 31 ... Kb6! (or 31 ... Kd8 32.Qc7+! Ke7 33.Qd6+ Kf7 34.Qg6+ and draws) 32.Qc7+!? Kxb5 33.Qxb7+ Ka5 34.b4+ (if 34.Bxd7 then 34 ... Qf2+ 35.Kb3 Nxd7 36.Qxa8 Qf7+ should be okay for Black) 34 ... Ka4 35.Qxa8 a6! 36.Bxd7 Qf2+ gives Black winning chances after 37.Kd3 Qf1+ followed by 38 ... Nxd7.

Clearly with a few seconds on the clock Pillsbury’s natural move is understandable.

27.Qg8+

Marshall must have been getting a little desperate, but one of his great strengths was his ability to squeeze complications out of seemingly meagre resources. Nevertheless, with accurate play Black should win.

27 ... Kb7 28.Bxd7

If 28.Qd5+ then 28 ... Bc6 keeps everything under control. Therefore White must exchange more material and hope to exploit the weakened white squares.

28 ... Nxd7 29.Qd5+
29 ... c6?

This gives White some chances, although it should still win. As Marshall pointed out after the game, there was a clever way of snuffing out all of his attacking chances by giving up the knight. After 29 ... Kb8!! 30.Qg8+ Nf8!! 31.Qxf8+ Kb7, Black wins quite easily. Such a defence is not at all obvious, particularly with little time remaining on one’s clock.

30.Qxd6 Rd8?

The obvious move but it gives White chances to turn the tables. There were two main alternatives, both of which lead to further hair-raising complications.

(i) 30 ... Rf8! threatens mate in six beginning with 31 ... Rf2+, and if White tries 31.Qxd7+ Ka6 32.Nc4 to defend the pawn on b2, then this gives Black time to capture the a-pawn and after 32 ... Qxa2 33.Qxc6 Rf2+ forces 34.Nd2 and Black has a winning position. Instead of 32.Nc4, White might play 32.Kb3 but Black wins by forcing the exchange of queens with 32 ... Qd1+ 33.Kb4 c5+! 34.Kc4 Qf1+! followed by 35 ... Qf7+. 
(ii) 30 ... Rc8! aims to consolidate after 31.Qxd7+ Rc7.

White seems to have insufficient resources at his disposal to save the game. For example, one fantastic variation is 32.Qe6 g3! 33.Nc4 g2! 34.Nd6+ Ka6 35.Qb3!, which looks very strong, since it menaces 36.Qa3 mate and if 35 ... b5 then 36.Qa3+ Kb6 37.Qc5+ is a draw. However, Black has a beautiful response in 35 ... Qd1+!! 36.Kxd1 g1Q+ 37.Ke2 Qh2+ followed by 38 ... Qxd6 winning easily. So White might consider 35.Qc4+, but again Black hangs on with 35 ... b5!. If now 36.Nxb5!? (exploiting the pin on the c-pawn) then Black can win with 36 ... Qf1 37.Nxc7+ Kb7 or even 36 ... Qb1+! 37.Kxb1 g1Q+ 38.Kc2 Qh2+! 39.Kd3 cxb5! because the queen defends the rook.

31.d5!!

This is Marshall’s wonderful method of drumming up enough play to save the game.
31 ... Rf8?

Pillsbury goes for a counter-attack along the f-file, but he has lost a crucial tempo over the variations given above; this difference allows Marshall to win the game. Throughout the twentieth century annotators have suggested that Pillsbury could win with the spectacular move 31 ... Nc5!, giving up the rook in order to divert the white queen from her task. The first point of the move is that 32.dxc6+? loses to 32 ... Kc8, whilst 32.Qxc6+ Kb8 33.Nb5 was not thought to give White enough because of 33 ... Rc8. The main variation quoted is therefore 32.Qxd8 Qf1 33.dxc6+ Kxc6 and now:

(i) 34.Qd5+ Kc7 35.Qe5+ Kb7 and since White has no perpetual, he loses to Black’s king’s side pawns.

(ii) 34.Nb1 g3! 35.Qd5+ (or 35.Nd2 g2 36.Qc8+ Kb5 wins) 35 ... Kc7 36.Qe5+ Kb7 37.Qxg3 Qe2+! 38.Nd2 Qxd2+! 39.Kxd2 Nxe4+ and wins.

However, there are several flaws in this old analysis. Firstly, in the main variation after 32.Qxd8 Qf1 33.dxc6+ Kxc6 White has other options in 34.Qc8+! or 34.Qa8+!, which are much stronger than either 34.Nb1? or
34.Qd5+?. For example, after 34.Qa8+ Black cannot play 34 ... Nb7? because 35.Qe8+! Kc5 36.b4+ followed by 37Nb5+ wins immediately. Moreover, the move 34 ... Kd6 leads to a draw after 38.Qd8+ Kc6 (not 38 ... Ke6? because of 39.Qe8+! winning, and if instead 38 ... Ke5 then 39.Qe8+ Ne6 37.Qxh5+ is fine) 39.Qa8+. The only alternative is 34 ... Kc7!? 35.Qxa7+ Nb7 but then 36.Qa4! threatening 37.Nb5+ is quite awkward to meet and gives White excellent chances of escaping with the draw. Looking for alternatives for Black after 32.Qxd8 reveals the possibility of 32 ... Qxa2?!, which seems to leave him with an edge after 33.Qe7+?! Ka6 34.dxc6 Qb3+ followed by 35 ... Qe6. However 33.dxc6+! Kxc6 34.Qa8+! is even stronger than the line above since after 34 ... Kc7 35.Qxa7+ Black cannot play 35 ... Nb7? as 36.Nb5+ wins.

This is all quite interesting and suggests that White has greater resources than has previously been assumed, but the real fun starts when the original line beginning with 32.Qxc6+ Kb8 33Nb5 Rc8 is scrutinized. Far from being lost, White has excellent chances to save the game with 34.Qd6+!, leading to the following variations.

(i) 34 ... Ka8 35.Nc7+! should be a draw (but not 35.Qe7? because of 35 ... Qxa2!), since 35 ... Kb7? loses instantly to 36.Qc6+ Kb8 37.d6!! and 35 ... Rxc7?! 36.Qxc7 is hardly palatable.

(ii) 34 ... Kb7 35.Qe7+! Ka6 and now:
(a) 36.c4!? (threatening 37.Qxa7 mate) 36 ... Ka5 (36 ... Nb7 is also possible but after 37.Qb4! Na5 38.Nd6! Rxc4+! 39.Nxc4 chances are roughly equal) 37.Qxa7+ Na6 (not 37 ... Kb4? 38.Qa3+! Kxc4 39.Nd6+ Kd4 40.Qc3 mate) 38.Nd6! Rb8 (and here 38 ... Qxa2? fails to 39Nb7+ Kb4 40.Qxb6+ Kxc4 41.Nd6 mate) 39.a3!! threatening to push the b-pawn and forcing the remarkable draw by repetition after 39 ... Qa2 (pinning the b-pawn) 40.Kc3! Qa1! (pinning along the diagonal) 41.Kc2, etc.

(b) 36.Qxa7+ Kxb5 37.b3! giving this fascinating position.
Here, White intends a mate in three by 38.c4+ Kb4 39.a3+! Qxa3 40.Qxb6 mate, and most attempts to thwart this plan fail. For example 37 ... Rb8? loses to 38.Qa3!, whilst 37 ... Na6? falls to 38.a4+ Kc5 39.Qe7 mate. The alarming 37 ... Nxb3 leads to perpetual after 38.Qd7+, so Black might try the amazing 37 ... Nxe4! 38.Qd7+ Kc5, which looks suicidal but 39.b4+? Kc4 40.Qxe8+ Nc5 41.bxc5 Qxc3+ 42.Kd1 Qa1+ 43.Kd2 Qxa2+ is actually in his favour. Instead, the other try is 39.Qxe8+! Kxd5 40.Qf5+! Kd6 41.Qf4+!! (not 41.Qxe4? because of 41 ... Qxa2+ 42.Kc1 Qxb3 and wins) 41 ... Kd7 42.Qf5+ when Black cannot escape the checks without allowing the knight to be captured with check, so a draw is the likely result.

The summary of all this is that, although 31 ... Nc5! is a fine move, it should probably only lead to a draw with best play.

32.dxc6+!

Well played. This is the decisive move and it is now White who wins, whereas 32.Qxd7+? Ka6 33.Nc4 Rf2+ is unclear and likely to lead to a perpetual.
32 ... Ka8

Forced, in view of 32 ... Ka6? 33.Qd3+ and mate next move.

33.cxd7!

Nicely calculated: Black’s checks end and he faces defeat. 33.Qxd7? is less clear after 33 ... Rf2+ 34.Kb3 Qxb2+ 35.Ka4 b5+

36.Nxb5 Qxa2+ and Black has some chances to save the game.

33 ... Rf2+ 34.Kb3 Qxb2+

34 ... Rxb2+ does not alter the outcome.

35.Ka4

And if now 35 ... b5+ then 36.Ka5! Qxc3+ 37.Ka6! wins.

Black resigns.
One runs out of superlatives – this game clearly demonstrates Marshall’s greatest skill, that of placing problem after problem in the path of his opponent. In this case, not even a player of Pillsbury’s genius could cope with such a barrage of complications.

1904

Napier, W – Chepmell, C  
Hastings  
Queen’s Gambit Accepted (D21)


This is certainly a playable variation of the Queen’s Gambit Accepted but it does rather neglect development. Black has to tread carefully to avoid being overrun by White’s quickly immobilized forces.

8.0-0 b5 9.Bb3


9 ... Bb7 10.Re1 Be7 11.Ne5!

An aggressive square for the knight, which now eyes f7. Black should therefore castle, although after 12.Qe2 the threat of 13.Nxf7 is hard to meet.
11 ... Nbd7?!

This gives Napier, a tremendously attacking player, the chance of a promising sacrifice, which he immediately accepts.


The threat of the discovered check now forces the king to retreat.

13 ... Kf8 14.Bf4

There were a number of ways to continue with the attack; Napier selects the simplest.
An interesting moment. Mr Chepmell decides that his best defensive strategy is to eliminate the white knight, which otherwise would eventually join the attack. The main alternative is 14 ... Nb6!, providing two additional defenders for the important d5 square. After 15.d5! Nbxd5 16.Nxd5 Nxd5 17.Qh5! is strong.

(i) 17 ... Nxf4? 18.Rf6+! gxf6 19.Qf7 mate.

(ii) 17 ... Qe8 18.Qf3 and now after 18 ... Nxf4 19.Qxf4+ Qf7 20.Qxf7+ Kxf7 21.Rb6+ White has the advantage, whilst if 18 ... Qf7!? then 19.Rxe7! Qxf4 20.Qxf4+ Nxf4 21.Rxb7 and White should win.

(iii) 17 ... Qd7!? 18.Qf5+ Ke8 (or 18 ... Kg8 19.Qe4 with the awkward threat of 20.Rxe7!) 19.Rae1 and White has a powerful position.

15.Qe2

Increasing the tension along the e-file.

15 ... Rxc3?!

Consistent, but now White has approximate material equality and retains his initiative. Again a better try might have been 15 ... Nb6, when White has to prove that his dominant position is worth the piece. He could try the slow build-up by 16.Bg5, 16.Be5 or 16.Rae1, or he might try to blast open the king’s side with 16.g4!? In any case, Black has a difficult but not necessarily impossible defensive task ahead.

16.bxc3

(see next diagram)

16 ... Nd5

If 16 ... Nb6 then 17.Rxf6+!! gxf6 18.Bh6+ wins, and if in this line 17 ... Bxf6 then 18.Qe6!

17. **Bd6**

17. Bxd5, followed by 18. Rxa6, is also good, but Napier goes at the king.

17 ... **N7f6**

If 17 ... Bxd6 then 18. Rxd6 N5f6 19. Rae1 gives White a clear advantage.

18. **Bxd5**

Equally effective would have been 18. Bxe7+ Nxe7 19. Qe5!, threatening 20. Rxf6+.

18 ... **Nxd5**

After this the win is elementary, but if 18 ... Bxd6 then simply 19. Bxb7 leaves White with a winning advantage.

19. **Bxe7+ Nxe7 20. Re1**
Inevitably the pressure along the e-file has proved Black’s undoing, and the knight is lost.

20 ... Qd5

Black’s first and last real threat.

21.f3 h6 22.Rxe7 Black resigns.

1905

Marshall, F – Chigorin, M
Ostend
Dutch Defence (A83)

Another example of Frank Marshall’s genius.

1.d4 f5

The double-edged Dutch Defence, giving Black dynamic chances at the expense of a positionally questionable pawn structure.

2.e4!?

Of course a dashing attacker such as Marshall will have this, the Staunton Gambit, in his repertoire.

2 ... fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5

The alternative is 4.f3, when Black does best to decline the pawn, since 4 ... exf3 5.Nxf3 can give White the lead in development that he is after.

4 ... c6!?

Black would like to play 4 ... d5, but then 5.Bxf6 followed by 6.Qh5+ wins the d-pawn. So this ancient remedy prepares the advance, though White’s advantage in development is growing.
5. Bxf6

There is nothing wrong with this move, but much more in the spirit of the opening is 5.f3!, opening the centre with an exciting battle ahead.

5 ... exf6 6.Nxe4 Qb6

Another interesting move, attempting to exploit White’s potential weakness on the dark squares. A more prudent course would be simply 6 ... d5.

7.Rb1 d5?!

Black should have seriously considered 7 ... Qa5+!? since 8.Nc3 (otherwise the a-pawn goes) 8 ... Bb4! gives him a reasonable game.

8.Ng3 Be6

8 ... Qa5+ was again possible, but after 9.c3 Qxa2 10.Bd3 White would have
a massive initiative.

9.Bd3 Nd7 10.Qe2!

Highlighting the awkwardness of Black’s set-up: he is exposed along the e-file and is forced to put his king in an unpleasant location.

10 ... Kf7 11.Nf3 Re8 12.0-0 Bd6

Chigorin tries to find decent squares for his pieces.

13.c3

Defending the pawn on d4 so allowing the knight on f3 to advance.

13 ... Nf8 14.Nh4 Bf5

When playing this discovered attack, Chigorin presumably had seen Marshall’s reply but did not look deeply enough into the position.
15.Nhxf5!!

This is brilliant not because the queen is sacrificed, but because the tactical sequence had to be worked out with great ingenuity and accuracy – two recurring facets of Marshall’s games.

15 ... Rxe2

Marshall also had to calculate a reply to 15 ... Bxg3. In that event 16.Qg4!, with a double attack on the bishop and on g7, wins quickly.

16.Nxd6+ Ke6

Going after the knight. If Black can win the piece he would have queen for rook and bishop. Marshall, however, has seen how he can rescue the piece by tactically exploiting some unfortunate placing of the black pieces. The alternative is 16 ... Kg8 17.Nxe2 g6 (trying to win the knight with 18 ... c5). But Marshall had worked out that after 18.c4! c5 19.dxc5 (19.Nb5 also wins) 19 ... Qxc5 20Nb5! Black’s attempt to grab the piece with 21 ... dxc4 fails after 21.Rbc1!, because if 21 ... Qxb5 then 22.Bxc4+ wins.

17.Nc8!

This surprising zwischenzug must have been what Chigorin had overlooked. The point is that if the queen captures the knight then the king and queen are liable to be skewered.

17 ... Qc7 18.Bxe2

A curious position.
Clearly 18 ... Qxc8? loses instantly but a tenacious try is 18 ... g6!?, threatening 19 ... Qxc8 20.Bg4+ f5. In this case 19.Rfe1! is very strong. For example, if 19 ... Kf7 then 20.Bg4 followed by 21.Re7+ wins. But Black could try 19 ... f5 20.Bf3+ Kf6, when after 21.Ne7 (21.Re8!? is another fascinating possibility) 21 ... Qa5!? (not 21 ... Ne6? because 22.Bxd5! wins) Black threatens 22 ... Ne6 trapping the knight, which appears to give him some chances. On closer inspection, however, White can force matters with 22.c4!
After 22 ... dxc4 23.d5! he should come out on top. Instead of these lines, Chigorin decides to retreat his king but Marshall also has an answer for that.

18 ... Kf7 19.Nf5!!

Another tactical blow; the knight cannot be touched because of the fork 20.Nd6+. With the knight safe White has a clear advantage, given the poor coordination of his opponent’s pieces.

19 ... Ne6

He naturally wishes to complete his development, but White’s advantages are numerous. He will soon penetrate along the e-file and his bishop will dominate the white squares.

20.Nfd6+!

Other moves such as 20.Ncd8+ would also win but Marshall smells blood and throws the other knight into the fray.
20 ... Kg6

Looks suicidal but retreating to f8 or g8 would also be hopeless. For example, after 20 ... Kf8 21.Rbe1, followed by 22.Bg4 or 22.Bd3, the rook will reach e8.

21.Bd3+ Kh5

Again it looks a little strange to advance the king, but 21 ... Kh6 meets a similar response. Black’s main problem is to try to prevent White’s rook reaching e7.

22.Rbe1!

More tactics from Marshall, based on the idea that 22 ... Rxc8 fails to the intricate line 23.Nxc8! Nf4 (or 23 ... Qxc8? 24.Bf5!) 24.Bf5 g6! 25.Re7! and the knight is saved.

22 ... Nf4 23.Re7 Qa5 24.Bb1
A safe retreat although as Marshall pointed out after the game, 24.Bc2 is slightly more accurate since the bishop then has access to the d1–h5 diagonal, whilst Black never has time to take on a2.

24 ... g6

In a few moves Chigorin tries a final, desperate combination, which is neatly refuted by Marshall. The same idea could be tried here, but it also fails. After 24 ... Rxc8 25.Nxc8 Qd8 (the point of Black’s sacrifice), White has the choice of the complex 26.Bf5!? Kg5 27.Bd7, which leaves him slightly disorientated, or the far more elegant 26.Rxg7! Qxc8 27.Rxh7+ Kg5 28.h4+ Kg4 29.f3+ Kg3 30.Rg7+! Kxh4 31.g3+! and wins.

25.g3

Black’s knight is running out of useful squares.

25 ... Nh3+ 26.Kg2 Ng5 27.Bd3!

Now the check on e2 is going to win unless Black does something drastic: for
example, 27 ... Qxa2 28.Be2+ Kh6 29.h4 Ne4 30.Nf7+ Kg7 31.Nxh8+, etc.

27 ... Rxc8

So Chigorin goes for his combination knowing, surely, that it cannot succeed.

28.Nxc8 Qd8 29.h4!

The knight cannot move because of mate on h7.

29 ... Qxc8 30.hxg5 Black resigns.

Mate can only be prevented by giving up the queen.

1906

Duras, O – Wolf, H
Nuremberg
Ruy López (C65)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6

Another example of the Berlin Defence as in our game from 1900. The normal continuation here is 4.0-0. Duras, however, prefers a quiet but solid set-up.

4.d3 Ne7?!
Known as the Mortimer Variation, this bizarre retreat contains a well-known trap; if now 5.Nxe5? then 5 ... c6! 6.Bc4? Qa5+ wins a piece. After the better 6.Nc4!, Black must avoid 6 ... cxb5? 7.Nd6 mate and should play 7 ... d6 or 7 ... Ng6 when 8 ... b5 will follow with a clear advantage. Nevertheless, apart from this pitfall, the Mortimer Variation is inferior to more natural continuations such as 4 ... d6 or 4 ... Bc5.

5.Bc4

After this simple move White has the advantage.

5 ... c6

The real idea behind Black’s opening can now be seen. By using the indirect defence of the pawn on e5 (6.Nxe5? Qa5+ again), he hopes to have sufficient time to play ... d5, freeing his game.

6.Bb3

Again Duras plays the most solid move, rather than trying early Ng5 ideas,
which do not seem convincing: 6.Nc3 Ng6 7.Ng5 d5 8.exd5 h6! with an unclear game.

6 ... Ng6 7.Nc3 Bb4

Wolf decides not to play the intended 7 ... d5. The position after 8.exd5 cxd5 9.d4 would give him an inferior but not hopeless position.

8.0-0 0-0

Still Wolf defers 8 ... d5, giving Duras the opportunity to stake a claim to the centre.

9.d4!? d6!?

Now that his king is safely castled, Black might have considered exchanging his bishop for the knight and grabbing the e-pawn. After 9 ... Bxc3 10.bxc3 Nxe4 we reach this interesting situation.

White now could try 11.Nxe5 but after 11 ... Nxe5 (not 11 ... Nxc3? 12.Nxf7!
Rxf7 13.Bxf7+ Kxf7 14.Qf3+ 12.dxe5 Nxc3 13.Qf3! Nb5 Black keeps his pawn, albeit with a difficult position. White’s alternative is 11.Qd3 (11.Qe1 is less accurate) 11 ... d5 12.Nxe5 or 12.dxe5 when he has the better of the game.

10.Qd3 Bxc3

A suspicious move order, since after White recaptures with the b-pawn, his centre is better protected. Black could have played 10 ... exd4 11.Nxd4 and only then 11 ... Bxc3 12.bxc3 d5!, when his position is somewhat superior to that obtained in the game.

11.bxc3 d5

Striking out in the centre. It turns out, though, that White emerges from the exchanges with a superior position.

12.Nxe5 Nxe5

If he plays 12 ... dxe4 then White will have complete control of the a2–g8 and a3–f8 diagonals.

13.dxe5 Nxe4

With the opening phase more or less over, one can see that White’s two bishops provide excellent compensation for his slightly disrupted pawn centre. Black should now focus on attempting to round up the e-pawn, which is the Achilles heel of the white position.

14.Be3!

It would have been tempting to play the superficially attractive 14.Ba3, but after 14 ... Re8 White’s weaknesses start to become exposed. For example, if 15.f3 then 15 ... Qb6+ is strong. Duras correctly elects to centralize the bishop, thereby removing any danger along the a7–g1 diagonal. Now White has several powerful ideas at his disposal, such as the 15.c4 thrust, detonating the centre and 15.f3, embarrassing the knight.

14 ... Qe7
A developing move with more than one purpose. Firstly, the knight can retreat to either g5 or c5 and secondly, Black now eyes the pawn on e5. The main drawback, which White tries to exploit, is that the d-pawn loses a defender. For this reason, the immediate 14 ... Bf5 would have been a reasonable alternative, as 15.f3 fails to the neat 15 ... Ng3!.

15.c4!?

Again Duras strikes at the centre in classic style, ignoring the attack on the e-pawn. The outcome, however, is not entirely clear-cut.

15 ... Bf5

This is evidently where Wolf suffers an hallucination, although it is his subsequent move that is the real blunder. Instead of 15 ... Bf5, at least two other possibilities should have been seriously considered. Firstly, on 15 ... Qxe5 16.cxd5 cxd5 17.Qxd5 (17.Rae1 also gives White good play) White can obtain the advantage of the two bishops after 17 ... Qxd5 18.Bxd5, but Black should survive. Secondly, if 15 ... dxc4!? then White’s best is 16.Qxe4 cxb3 17.axb3, but again Black should be okay.

16.cxd5!

Setting a vicious trap, into which Wolf obligingly falls.
16 ... Ng3?

Here it is. Whilst this knight tactic worked in the note to Black’s fourteenth move, in this position it fails to a lovely idea from Duras. Wolf should have played 16 ... Qxe5!, when White has to play very accurately to demonstrate an advantage.

(i) If 17.Qc4 Black can defend with 17 ... Rfd8 18.dxc6 Be6! 19.Qe2 bxc6.

(ii) Alternatively, White could try the forcing 17.f4 but this merely weakens his own position and after 17 ... Qd6 Black faces few problems.

(iii) The position of Black’s queen on the e-file looks awkward, and if 17.Rae1 cxd5 then 18.Qxd5! leads to an advantage. But in this variation White must also consider whether 17 ... Ng3!? works.
18.Bc5! is best, for if 18 ... Bxd3 then 19.Rxe5 leaves several of Black’s pieces en prise and after 19 ... Ne2+ 20.Kh1 Ng3+ 21.fxg3 Bxf1 22.Bxf8 White’s d-pawn gives him an excellent game. Black should probably play 18 ... Nxf1! since 19.Rxe5 (19.Qxf1!? Qc7! is also interesting) 19 ... Bxd3 20.Bxf8 Kxf8 21.cxd3 Nd2 disrupts White’s structure and leaves Black with good equalizing chances.

(iv) Therefore, 17.Rfe1!, moving the other rook, looks stronger because the 17 ... Ng3 tactic is disarmed. Again White gets a good position after 17 ... cxd5 18.Qxd5, so Black must examine other options. However 18 ... Rfd8? allows 19.Bd4! when the complications favour White, meaning that Black must play the cumbersome 17 ... Nc3?! or the more sensible 17 ... Rfe8, though White has the upper hand in either case.

(v) The risky attempt for a decisive victory is the complicated 17.dxc6?! when Black should dive in with 17 ... Ng3!, which seems to refute White’s play.
If now 18.cxb7? then 18 ... Bxd3 wins, but 18.Qc4?! leads to some fantastic variations after the brilliant 18 ... Nxf1!!. If 19.cxb7!? (after 19.Rxf1 bxc6 leaves Black the exchange up) then 19 ... Qxa1!! (apparently falling into a trap) 20.Qxf7+!! Kh8! (avoiding 20 ... Rxf7? 21.bxa8Q+) 21.Bd4! (else 21 ... Nxe3 is mate) 21 ... Qxd4 22.bxa8Q Rxa8 and wins. White can also try 18.Qd5 Qxd5 19.Bxd5 Nxf1! (best, since 19 ... bxc6 loses to 20.fxg3! when the bishop on f5 is hanging) 20.cxb7 (other moves lose) 20 ... Rad8 21.c4 Nxe3 22.fxe3 and White’s passed pawns will not be quite sufficient to negate his material deficit.

17.Bg5!!
Wolf missed this nice bishop move. If now 17 ... Bxd3 then 18.Bxe7 Rfe8 (or 18 ... Bxf1 19.Bxf8 Ba6 20.Ba3 with a clear advantage) 19.cxd3 Ne2+! (best, since 19 ... Nxf1? 20.Bb4! traps the knight) 20.Kh1 Rxe7 21.d6! wins (because 21 ... Rxe5 fails to 22.Rae1! Kf8 23.Bd1! Rae8 24.d7! Ng3+ 25.hxg3 Rxe1 26.dxe8Q+). He tries another move, but this also loses.

17 ... Qxg5 18.Qxg3

White is simply a pawn up with a won game.

18 ... Qxg3 19.fxg3!

Gaining time with the attack on the bishop. Duras now pushes his d-pawn home for victory.

19 ... Be4

Attempting to block the a2–g8 diagonal.

20.d6 Rae8
His last try is to capture the e-pawn.

21.d7! Re7

Unfortunately for Wolf 21 ... Rxe5 cannot be played since 22.Rxf7! wins. The only alternative is 21 ... Rd8 but then 22.e6! wins quickly after 22 ... fxe6 23.Bxe6+ Kh8 24.Rxf8+ Rxf8 25.Bf7!! Rd8 (else 26.Be8 follows) 26.Re1! Rxd7 27.Rxe4! and if 27 ... Rxf7 then 28.Re8+ and mates.

22.Rxf7!

The simplest way to finish the game. Black should resign but he plays on through inertia.


1907
Duras, O – Spielmann, R  
Vienna  
Centre Counter Defence (B01)

As demonstrated in the previous game, Duras was a very strong player with a fine tactical awareness. Here he manages to defeat Spielmann in an exciting skirmish.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5

The Centre Counter or Scandinavian Defence lurks just below the surface of respectability in the world of opening theory, though the modern 2 ... Nf6 variations have been very popular in recent years.


Economical development from Duras. The modern preference is 6.h3, because if Black preserves the two bishops with 6 ... Bh5 then White tends to gain the initiative with aggressive moves such as g4 and Ne5.
6 ... Nc6

Spielmann’s principal objective is also to develop his pieces and get his king into safety. The drawback of 6 ... Nc6 is that his queen is now somewhat cut off, which is why Black often prefers ... c6 at some stage in this opening.

7.Be3!

White figures that his opponent will castle on the queen’s side and therefore positions his bishops facing west. The move also overprotects the d-pawn, which would come under pressure should Black play a later ... e5.

7 ... 0-0-0

The pressure against the pawn on d4 is growing and now 8 ... e5 is an uncomfortable threat.

8.Nd2!

This move re-routes the knight towards the black king and queen and relies on a nice piece of tactics. If Black tries to win the pawn with 8 ... Bxe2 9.Qxe2 Nxd4? then 10.Bxd4! Rxd4 11.Nb3! wins the exchange (note that if 11 ... Qxc3+!? 12.bxc3 Re4 then 13.Nd4 Rxe2+ 14.Nxe2 leaves White the exchange for a pawn ahead).

8 ... Bxe2 9.Qxe2 Qf5

The queen is well-placed on f5, supporting the ... e5 advance, which is key to Black’s strategy.

10.Nb3 e6

The alternative is 10 ... e5 but Spielmann decides to prepare this advance thoroughly before opening the position.

11.a3

A cautious but useful move, preventing either the knight or the bishop landing on b4.
11 ... Bd6 12.0-0-0

Castling on the other wing was also possible, but it would make Black’s attack easier to play.

12 ... Nd5 13.Na4

This is the first sign that it is White who is attacking. The c5 square is begging to be occupied by a knight, and if Black tries to prevent this by 13 ... b6 then White continues 14.Qa6+ Kb8 15.Nac5! bxc5 16.Qxc6 with a fine attack.

13 ... e5!?  

He continues with his counter-attack in the centre, but the game now becomes very open and he has to be careful otherwise White’s initiative will prove too strong. Two safer alternatives were 13 ... Nb6 and 13 ... Nxe3, both of which attempt to eliminate one of White’s well-placed minor pieces.

14.dxe5 Bxe5

Consistent but highly dangerous. Much more prudent would have been 14 ... Nxe3, removing the bishop.

15.Nac5!

Suddenly the b7 square looks very exposed and White threatens 16.Nxb7! Kxb7 17.Qb5+ Nb6 18.Nc5+ with a clear advantage.
15 ... Nb6?!

Although the knight retreat looks reasonably safe, Black misses the last chance to eliminate the bishop. Admittedly, after 15 ... Nxe3 16.fxe3! White retains a strong initiative with play down the f and d-files, and he also maintains dangerous threats against the white squares around the black king. Nevertheless, it offered better chances to save the game than the text move.

16.a4!

Despite weakening the b4 square, this move provokes a serious concession from Black. Since he cannot allow the pawn to drive away his knight, he must further compromise his white-square defences.

16 ... a5 17.g4!

Lovely timing from Duras, diverting the queen from the c8–h3 diagonal. The sacrifice 17.Nxb7 would have been premature, for then Black has the defensive resource 17 ... Kxb7 18.Nc5+ Kb8 19.Qa6 Qc8! and White’s attack dissipates.
17 ... Qf6

Black’s only chance lies in the equally exposed position of his adversary’s king. The threat of 18 ... Bxb2+ 19.Kb1 Ba3! stops White momentarily, and forces him to weaken his own king’s position.

18.c3 Rhe8?

Superficially very attractive. Black has apparently sorted out his own defences whilst building a menacing attack. The rooks dominate the central files, but nonetheless it would have been better to attempt to reduce the white forces by 18 ... Rxd1+ 19.Rxd1 Rd8!. Until 18 ... Rhe8? Black’s play could be described as provocative but not necessarily deficient. But now he is in trouble.

19.Nxb7!!

An obvious sacrifice but it does require good calculation because Black has some counter-tactics at his disposal.
19 ... Rxd1+ 20.Rxd1

Not 20.Kxd1 because of 20 ... Kxb7! 21.Nc5+ Kb8 22.Qa6 Qd8+! and 23 ... Qc8.

20 ... Bxc3

Spielmann was obviously relying on this measure, since after 21.bxc3 Qxc3+ wins the knight on b3 and the game. Duras, however, is not to be phased and has several methods of ensuring victory.

21.N7c5!?

It is often said that retreating moves are the hardest to foresee, and this is a good example. The move defends the knight on b3 and the pawn on a4 and threatens 22.Qa6+ followed by mate. However, there were also other, simpler, ways of winning, such as 21.Qa6! Bxb2+ 22.Kb1 Nb4 23.Nd6+ Kd8 24.Ne4+, or 21.Nd6+ followed by 22.Qa6+.

21 ... Nb4!

The best attempt, for if now 22.bxc3 then 22 ... Qxc3+ 23.Kb1 Nc4! and ... Na3 mate is threatened.

22.g5!

Not 22.Nxa5 because of 22 ... Bd4. Now, however, White threatens to capture on a5 (after 23.Nxa5 Bd4 fails to 24.Qg4+).

22 ... Qe5 23.Nxa5

A further point of 22.g5 is shown after 23 ... Qxc5? 24.Qg4+ and 25.Bxc5.

23 ... h5?!

Obviously with the idea of preventing a check on g4 by the white queen, but the plan is nicely refuted by Duras. With hindsight, Spielmann should possibly have tried to create further complications by 23 ... N6d5, hoping for 24.bxc3? Qxc3+ 25.Kb1 Rxe3!, when 26.fxe3 Qxc5 is good for Black.
Nevertheless, Duras would almost certainly have found a route to victory, one rather nerve-racking method being 24.Qg4+ Re6 (forced) 25.Nxe6, when White escapes after 25 ... Bxb2+ 25.Kd2!.

24.bxc3!

A lovely move, which leads to a delightful finish after Black recaptures on c3 with his queen.

24 ... Qxc3+

This seems to give Black some drawing chances, but Duras has everything under control.

25.Kb1 Qxc5

After 26.Bxc5 Rxe2 27.Bxb4 Nxa4, the active position of Black’s rook and knight might give him outside chances of saving the game. But such deliberations prove unnecessary after White’s next move.
26.Rd8+!!

If 26 ... Kxd8 then 27.Nb7+ picks off the queen, whilst 26 ... Rxd8 is answered simply by 27.Bxc5.

Black resigns.

1908

Janowski, D – Marshall, F
Surense
Albin Counter-Gambit (D08)

Another fantastic slugging match between two fearless masters.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5!?

The wild Albin Counter-Gambit, a favourite of Marshall’s. It was thought unsound, even in those swashbuckling days.

3.dxe5 d4

The idea behind the opening is that after the text move White will find it difficult to defend the e-pawn and complete his development, thus enabling Black to build a dangerous initiative. Methods have been found to counter Black’s plan, but White must tread very carefully otherwise he risks being rolled over before his pieces have got off the back rank.

4.e4!?

Modern theory offers 4.Nf3! Nc6 5.g3! and White, if he is circumspect, has the better game. Janowski’s choice is much more fun.

4 ... Nc6

An interesting alternative is 4 ... f6!?, aiming for rapid development.
5.Nf3 Bg4 6.Qb3

A natural move, unpinning the knight and attacking b7.

6 ... Bb4+!

Another piece enters the game. Perhaps White should simply play 7.Bd2 now, but he tries something more ambitious.

7.Nfd2!?

The idea is that after 8.a3 the bishop will have to retreat with loss of time, or exchange itself for the knight giving White the two bishops. Janowski was renowned for his penchant for the two bishops, which explains his choice.

7 ... Qh4!?  

An original square for the queen in this opening.

8.a3 Bxd2+ 9.Nxd2
Janowski has achieved his objective, but will he have time to consolidate?

9 ... 0-0-0 10.g3?!

White plays more pawn moves, still neglecting his development.

10 ... Qh5 11.f4!?

Defending the e-pawn, which Marshall immediately undermines.

11 ... g5!

Instant action is required, otherwise White will be able to set the rest of his king’s side pawns in motion with 12.h3. An alternative was the enterprising 11 ... f6!?, because if White tries to embarrass the bishop with 12.h3!? fxe5 13.f5 then Black can pose some awkward problems with 13 ... d3!? 14.Bxd3 Nd4!, with a wild position.

12.Qd3

Using the queen as a blockader; Nimzowitsch would have shuddered at the thought.

12 ... gxf4 13.gxf4 Ne7
For his pawn, Black has tremendous compensation. White’s king is very exposed and Black intends to penetrate down the g-file. The following manoeuvres by Janowski are bizarre in the extreme, but at least he eventually manages to castle.

14.Rg1!? Rhg8 15.Rg2!?

Janowski’s weird idea is to put the rook on f2, the knight on f3 the bishop on d2 so that the king can castle into safety on c1. An alternative was 15.Rxg4!? Rxg4 16.Bh3, which also attempts to untie the knots in his position.

15 ... Be6 16.Rf2 Rg1

Marshall wastes no time in throwing his rook into the guts of the white defences, but it allows Janowski to execute his intricate plan.

17.Nf3! Rh1

An amazing situation. With the opening barely over, Black has managed to get his king’s rook to h1.
18.Bd2!?

Consistent and sensibly clearing the back rank to allow castling. The alternative was the bold 18.f5!?, when Black can retreat passively by 18 ... Bd7 or can go for the throat with the unclear sacrifice 18 ... Nxf5!? 19.exf5 Bxf5. Then, although he has only one pawn for his knight, he has several attacking ideas, such as ... f6 to open the e-file, ... d3 or ... Na5, and White will have to defend carefully to survive.

18 ... f6!?  

Marshall decides to smash open the position.

19.exf6  

Janowski is not easily scared and takes the pawn. An alternative was 19.0-0-0 fxe5 20.f5, but then 20 ... Nxf5! 21.exf5 Bxf5 gives Black a strong initiative.

19 ... Nf5!?
Given the comments in the notes to the last few moves this knight sacrifice should not come as a surprise. If the sacrifice is not accepted, the piece will land on e3, attacking c4, d1 and f1.

20.0-0-0?! 

Janowski decides that he should castle, thus permitting 20 ... Ne3. There were two alternatives that both merited serious consideration.

(i) 20.exf5!? Bxf5 21.Qe2! (looks suicidal) 21 ... Re8 22.Ne5! Nxe5 23.fxe5 (23.Qxh5? Nd3+ wins) and now the move that appears crushing, 23 ... Bg4, is met by 24.f7! Bxe2 25.fxe8Q+ Qxe8 26.Kxe2 (if 26.Rxe2 then 26 ... d3! 27.Re3 Qf7! is awkward to meet) with an unbalanced position possibly favouring White, although Black does have some immediate initiative after 26 ... Qxe5+.

(ii) 20.Ng5! Bd7 (20 ... Re8 would be met with the same response) 21.e5 and Black is struggling to prevent the powerful 22.e6.

20 ... Ne3!

The double attack on d1 and c4 urges White to capture the knight, although 21.b3!? Nxd1 22.Kxd1 was not completely out of the question, bearing in mind that White has three passed pawns for the exchange.


He is three pawns ahead, but his king becomes somewhat exposed after the following exchange.

22 ... Rxd1+ 23.Kxd1 Bxc4
Black’s crazy rook pins the white bishop. The knight is also pinned and because 24.Ke1? fails to 24 ... Qh3!, White’s next is forced but is still very strong.

24.Qe1!

The queen’s retreat has lined up a nasty tactic, namely 25.Bh3+ followed by 26.Qxh1.

24 ... Qc5!

Although White is still a little tied up, Marshall correctly sacrifices his rook in order to have a chance at a perpetual check.

25.Bh3+! Kb8 26.Qxh1

A rook and two pawns down, but has Marshall seen the path to a draw?

26 ... Bb3+!
The answer should be yes, since the white king must stay in defence of the rook.

27.Ke2 Qc2+?

Very careless. A draw is available by 27 ... Bc4+! 28.Kd1 Bb3+ 29.Ke2 (29.Ke1?? Qc1+ 30.Ke2 Bc4 mate) 29 ... Bc4+ etc.

28.Ke3?

The right move is 28.Nd2!, when the king reaches g2 and the checks dry up.

28 ... Qc5+ 29.Ke2?

In fact even here the surprising 29.Nd4!? could have been tried since after the capture on d4 White survives with a material advantage. But now both players repeat the errors and the game does indeed end in a draw.


1909

Schlechter, C – Salwe, G
St. Petersburg
Ruy López (C90)

Carl Schlechter has a reputation for being a dull and drawish player, but in reality he had a clear and incisive style as illustrated in this game where he defeats his opponent in sparkling – and indeed unsound – fashion.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7

The popular Closed Variation of the Ruy López.

In this variation of the Ruy López, which was the most common at the time, Black has not yet castled whilst White has still to decide whether to advance his d-pawn one square or two. After 10.d4 Qc7 (defending e5) 11.h3 0-0 the game would have transposed into the standard position in the Chigorin Variation. Schlechter prefers a quieter but equally playable system, based on 10.d3.

10.d3 Nc6 11.Nbd2

Normal development for the Ruy López. The knight heads for e3 or g3 via f1.

11 ... 0-0 12.Nf1

There are numerous alternatives available to Black in this well-known position. Black can play the immediate but loosening 12 ... d5!? or he can follow one of several systems of development. One set-up routes the knight on f6 to b6, whilst another places the bishop on f8 and the c6 knight on g6. The white-squared bishop can be positioned on e6 or b7. It’s all a matter of personal choice, and Salwe plays it along very traditional lines.
12 ... Qc7

The purpose is to protect the pawn on e5, thus preparing the ... d5 advance.

13.Bg5!?

The first slightly unusual move of the game – 13.Ne3 is more common – but not without a certain logic. Clearly, Black’s ultimate objective in this variation is to play ... d5 and thus free his game. The bishop sortie prevents this for the moment (13 ... d5? 14.Bxf6 and 15.exd5).

13 ... Ne8

A clumsy retreat; 13 ... Rd8 or 13 ... Be6 were better alternatives. Black must try to get his ... d5 thrust in.

14.Ne3 Bxg5 15.Nxg5 Ne7

Black decides to “double” his knights, again in order to support the advance of the d-pawn, but his fiddly manoeuvres are dangerous in the face of White’s well-developed position. Schlechter decides it is time for action.

16.a4!

A typical advance in the Ruy López, which generally favours the side best placed to exploit the open file. If now 16 ... b4 then 17.d4! blasts open the centre to White’s advantage.
16 ... Rb8 17.axb5 axb5 18.Qd2

Still Schlechter refuses to be rushed, and calmly completes the mobilization of his forces.

18 ... h6

Driving away the knight that prevents 18 ... Be6. Whether the bishop is better on e6 or b7 is a moot point anyway.

19.Nf3 Be6

Will Black finally get to play ... d5?

20.d4!?

No, Schlechter plays “P–Q4” first. If Black were now to exchange on d4, the resulting position would favour White, as he could readily occupy the open c-file with an easy game.
20 ... Nf6

At least Black’s rooks are now connected.

21.Ra6!? 

Another bold move. To prevent White doubling rooks with 22.Rea1, Black contests the open file.

21 ... Ra8

22.dxe5?

A noble conception, which in the game leads to a fabulous attack by Schlechter. Despite winning one of the two brilliancy prizes on offer at St. Petersburg, the combination is unfortunately unsound. But it will take accurate play to prove it.

22 ... Rxa6?
Accepting the sacrifice plays into White’s hands and though not decisive, it gives him a strong attack. Black had two better options. The safe move is 22 ... dxe5, when 23.Qd6 (or 24.Rea1) leaves White with a slight plus. The risky move which seems to refute the combination completely is 22 ... Nxe4!! If 23.Bxe4 then 23 ... Rxa6 leaves White with insufficient compensation for the exchange, whilst after 23.Qd3 Black has the choice of 23 ... Rxa6 24.Qxe4 Ng6 or 23 ... d5 and again White’s attack peters out.

23.exf6

If now 23 ... Ng6 then 24.fxg7 Kxg7 (24 ... Re8 is slightly better but after 25.Nf5! White has all the chances) 25.Nf5+! Bxf5 (else 26.Qxh6 follows) 26.exf5 is crushing, for example 26 ... Ne5 27.f6+! Kxf6 28.Nxe5 dxe5 29.Qxh6+.

However, 23 ... Nc8! is the best defence, since after 24.fxg7 Kxg7 25.Nf5+ Bxf5 26.exf5 the knight is not attacked, so Black has time for a useful defensive move like 26 ... f6. For that reason, instead of taking on g7, White might try 24.Nd5 or 24.Nf5 with an unclear position.

23 ... gxf6?

The disruption of the king’s pawn shelter gives White excellent practical chances.

24.Nd5!

This obvious but beautiful move attacks the queen and knight, as well as the pawns on f6 and h6, and therefore forces Black to take the piece.

24 ... Bxd5

Not 24 ... Nxd5 because after 25.exd5 the bishop must move and the pawn on h6 falls.

25.exd5 Kg7?
Salwe is loathe to let White play 26.Qxh6 but after 25 ... Ng6 26.Qxh6 Rfa8, can White do any better than 27.Bxg6 fxg6 28.Qxg6+ Qg7 29.Re8+ Rxe8 30.Qxe8+ Kh7 with two pawns for the exchange and an unclear position? The dynamic attempt is 27.Nh4?!, exploiting the fact that 27 ... Nxb4 loses to 28.Qh7+.
However, Black has the clever tactic 27 ... Ra1! 28.Bb1 Qe7!, forcing White to retreat with 29.Qc1, because 29.Rf1 fails to 29 ... Rxb1! 30.Rxb1 Qe4!.

26.Nh4!

This threatens 27.Rxe7 Qxe7 28.Nf5+, which Salwe is able to avoid.

26 ... Re8

If now 27.Rxe7? then 27 ... Ra1+! 28.Bd1 Rxe7 29.Nf5+ Kg8 30.Nxe7+ Qxe7 is good for Black.

27.h3

Schlechter decides to put paid to Black’s back-rank threats once and for all and his choice leads to speedy victory. In fact, 27.Qd3! was an even quicker way to win, as 27 ... f5 loses to 28.Nxf5+ Nxf5 29.Rxe8, and 27 ... Rh8 fails after 28.Rxe7.

27 ... Qd8
The idea behind this curious retreat is to provide a flight square for the king, so that after 28.Rxe7? Rxe7 29.Nf5+ Kf8 30.Qxh6+ Ke8 31.Ng7+ Kd7 32.Bf5+ Kc7! Black wins. Good defensive calculation by Salwe, but Schlechter can simply position his army in the most appropriate way before commencing any precipitous action.

28.Re3!

28 ... Ng6

Black has vague ideas of playing 29 ... Ra1+ and a later ... Ree1 to generate some counterplay. A possible alternative was 28 ... Ng8!? (which has the benefit of defending the pawn on h6), but White wins beautifully with 29.Nf5+ Kf8 30.Rg3! Ra1+ 31.Kh2 Ree1 32.Rxg8+!! Kxg8 33.Qxh6 Qf8 34.Ne7+!! Qxe7 35.Qh7+ and 36.Qh8 mate.

29.Nf5+ Kf8 30.Re6!!

A simple but elegant combination, the main objective of which is to uncover a deadly attack on h6.
30 ... Rxe6

Of course 30 ... fxe6? allows mate in two.

31.dxe6!

The most accurate follow-up, because Black has no time for defensive moves such as 31 ... Qe8 or 31 ... fxe6 since 32.Qh6+ wins.

31 ... d5

Other moves are equally hopeless.

32.Qxh6+

Now the queen comes crashing in for the kill.

32 ... Ke8 33.exf7+ Kxf7 34.Qh7+ Ke6 35.Qxg6 Ra2

The exposed situation of his king means that Black is totally lost. Schlechter chooses a pretty winning tactic.

36.b4!

Once the pawn on c5 is displaced, the knight lands on d4 with telling effect. The move relies on the fact that 36 ... Rxc2? loses to 37.Ng7+ and 38.Qxc2.

36 ... cxb4 37.Nd4+ Kd7

Or 37 ... Ke5 38.Qg3 mate, and if 37 ... Kd6 again 38.Qg3+ followed by 39.Bf5+ wins.

38.Bf5+

And 38 ... Kd6 39.Qg3+ Ke7 40.Ne6+ is curtains.

Black resigns.
1910

Dus-Chotimirsky, F – Marshall, F
Hamburg
Albin Counter-Gambit (D08)

Marshall is given a taste of his own medicine – caught in a brilliant trap laid by his opponent.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5!?

Another Albin Counter-Gambit by Marshall, as he played in our 1908 game against Janowski.

3.dxe5 d4 4.Nf3

Dus-Chotimirsky selects a sensible response to Marshall’s provocative opening.

4 ... Nc6 5.Nbd2 Bg4 6.h3

The best move in this position is 6.g3, aiming for speedy development.

6 ... Bh5?!

Better is 6 ... Bxf3 7.Nxf3 Bb4+ 8.Bd2 and now not 8 ... Bc5 9.a3! a5 10.g3 when White has the edge, but 8 ... Qe7! with good compensation for the pawn.

7.a3 a5

Wisely preventing 8.b4, thus preparing to develop the bishop on c5.

8.Qa4!

A useful move, which not only pins the knight, but effectively prevents 8 ... Bc5 because of the reply 9.Nb3 with the advantage.
8 ... Qd7 9.Qb5!? 

At first sight a very curious move, since the capture on b7 leads to a draw after 10.Qxb7 Rb8 11.Qa6 Rb6, etc. The real intention is to play 10.e6!, hitting the bishop on h5. Marshall spots this trap, the first of several from his devious opponent.

9 ... Bg6 10.g3 Nge7 11.Nb3

Homing in on the pawn on d4. If the pawn falls, Black’s opening strategy can be said to have failed dismally. Recognizing this, Marshall complicates matters in his inimitable style.

11 ... a4!?
The scheme contrived by Marshall is shown after 12.Nbxd4 Ra5 13.Qxb7 Nxd4 14.Qb8+ Nc8 15.Nxd4 Be4 16.Nf3 Ra8! 17.Qb5 Bc6 or 16.f3 Ra8 17.Qb5 c6 and in either case Black gains a significant momentum by chasing White’s queen around the board. However, there is a flaw in this plan, since after 15 ... Be4? White can play 16.f3! Ra8 17.Qb5 c6 18.e6!!, which turns the tables.
Then 18 ... cxb5? 19.exd7+ Kxd7 20.fxe4 simply leaves White a piece to the good, and 18 ... fxe6 allows 19.Qe5! when the bishop and the pawn on e6 are en prise. Therefore, Black’s only hope lies in 18 ... Qxd4! which admittedly looks very strong. Nevertheless, White has a wonderful rejoinder in 19.Qb7!, forking f7 and the rook. Since attempts like 19 ... fxe6 fail (for example 20.Qxa8 Bc5 21.Qxc8+ Kf7 22.Qc7+! Kg6 23.e3!) Black must play 19 ... Qa7 but then 20.exf7+ Kd8 21.Bg5+ Be7 22.Rd1+ Bd5 23.Qxc6 is crushing.

Instead of 15 ... Be4? Black might try other alternatives, but none seems entirely satisfactory. For instance, if 15 ... Rxe5 then 16.Bf4! Rc5 17.Bg2! and White has an excellent game.

12.Nc5

Dus-Chotimirsky prefers to avoid the variations above. One can hardly blame him, for the move chosen looks very strong.

12 ... Qc8 13.Bd2!

A sensible approach. Clearly 13.Nxb7? would give away White’s advantage
after 13 ... Rb8 but 13.Qxb7 was plausible. After 13 ... Qxb7 14.Nxb7 Nc8! threatens to trap the knight with 15 ... Rb8 or 15 ... Ra7. White can try some tactics along the h1–a8 diagonal by 15.Bg2! but after 15 ... Rb8 the move 16.Nd2 (or 16.Nh4) fails to 16 ... Nca7!, whilst ideas like 16.0-0 (hoping for 16 ... Rxb7 17.Nxd4!) do not work because Black can interpose 16 ... Be4! before capturing the knight.

After Dus-Chotimirsky’s move, Black’s game looks wretched, and it takes Marshall’s tactical genius to conjure up any play whatsoever.

13 ... b6!? 14.Nxd4!

The final consequences of this move do not become clear for about eight moves. The superficial point is to give up the knight on c5 in order to win the black piece on c6. Further complexities emerge after this happens.

14 ... bxc5 15.Nxc6

Now White has a dominant position. In addition to being two pawns ahead, he threatens a nasty discovered check in 15.Na7+.

15 ... Be4

By attacking both knight and rook, Marshall hopes to defend against 16.Na7+ by 16 ... Qd7!, giving him with some chances of saving the game. After 17.Qxd7+ Kxd7 18.f3! Rxa7 19.fxe4 White’s extra pawns are rather weak. Marshall has also planned a response to the other knight move which Dus-Chotimirsky selects.
16. Nxe7+! Kxe7!

Not 16 ... Qd7? as 17. Qxd7+ followed by 18. f3 wins a piece. In this fascinating position, White can probably win with the prosaic 17. Rg1, when Black has no compensation for his two-pawn deficit.

However, Marshall’s whole plan has been to reach this exact position, because he thinks he is laying an irresistible trap. Dus-Chotimirsky has seen further, and willingly falls into the snare.

17. f3!


17 ... Ke6!!

A wonderful move. By thrusting the king into the centre, sacrificing the bishop, Marshall intends to trap the white queen.
18.fxe4!!

Dus-Chotimirsky plays along and by doing so creates a strong tripled, isolated pawn centre (such a formation was once labelled an “Irish Pawn Centre” by the incorrigible Tony Miles).

18 ... c6!

The queen has only one square available to her.

19.Qb6 Ra6

The culmination of his ingenious play. The queen is trapped.

20.h4!!

With this little pawn push Black’s grand scheme crumbles, and he is left hopelessly lost because of the impending check on the h3–c8 diagonal. In addition to the continuation chosen by Marshall, Dus-Chotimirsky also has to consider the clever attempt to escape by 20 ... f5. White has two clear paths to
victory, either by 21.Bh3 g6 22.exf5+ gxf5 23.e4 or by the more spectacular 21.exf6 Kxf6 22.Qd8+! Qxd8 23.Bg5+.

20 ... Rxb6

Black could have resigned here.


With the nasty threat of 26.e3+ Ke5 27.Bc3 mate.

25 ... Rb3

Black has to give up this rook as well.

Although the game takes many twists and turns and the result is always in doubt, it is a wonderful example of Duras’ exciting style.


This rather tame move can lead to a quiet version of the closed Ruy López after 5 ... d6 6.c3. But when Duras plays 5.d3 it is as a prelude to his own variation characterized by an early c4. Such a pawn push is very committal, but does have the advantage of preventing Black’s normal freeing plan of ... b5.

5 ... d6 6.c4!? g6

An alternative development would be 6 ... Bg4!, leading to equality.

7.d4!?

A good example of creative reasoning by Duras. Despite having already played 5.d3, he judges that the time is right to open the position with a further move of this pawn.

(see next diagram)

7 ... exd4

Otherwise 8.d5 ensues.

A plausible move, seemingly very solid. Rubinstein, when faced with this position against Duras in 1909, had preferred 9 ... Bxc6 with full equality. The text move concedes the initiative to White and leads to a complicated game.

10. 0-0

White delays Nc3 in order to execute his plan. Of course, if now 10 ... Nxe4? then 11. Re1 wins.

10 ... Bg7 11. c5!
This surprising move is Duras’ idea. If 11 ... dxc5, Black will be in possession of tripled, isolated pawns. These (which are another example of an Irish Pawn Centre as seen in our last game) are horribly weak and some or all of them would eventually fall. Moreover, White also has the tactical shot 12.e5!, which leads to complications in his favour. For example, if 12 ... Ng4 then 13.e6!! wins material because 13 ... fxe6 allows 14.Qxg4 and 13 ... Bxe6 loses to 14.Bxc6+. Therefore, Black must play 12 ... Nd5 but after 13.f4, White has all the play.

11 ... 0-0!

Cohn finds an excellent defence that threatens 12 ... Nxe4. If White tries 12.cxd6 then 12 ... Nxe4! 13.dxc7 Qxc7 is fine for Black.

12.Nc3 Qe7 13.cxd6

An interesting choice, relieving some of the tension. Alternatives such as 13.Qc2 or 13.Re1 are more double-edged.

13 ... cxd6 14.f3?!
Again, a surprisingly cautious choice from such an aggressive player as Duras. The most critical continuation is surely 14.Re1!, preventing Black’s thematic ... d5 break.

14 ... d5!

If now 15.exd5 cxd5 16.Bxd7 (not 16.Nxd5? because 16 ... Nxd5 wins a piece since the bishop hangs) then 16 ... Qxd7 gives Black an easy game.

15.Re1

Duras must have been relying on this move when he played his fourteenth. If 15 ... dxe4 then 16.Nxe4 gives him a clearly better position.

15 ... d4!

A clever retort, which seizes the initiative. White cannot capture on d4 because of 16 ... Ng4! when 17.Qd1? allows 17 ... Qc5+ and 17.Qc4 fails to 17 ... Be6! 18.Qe2 Qc5+ 19.Kh1 Bc4! 20.Qc2 Bd3! with a winning attack (if 21.Qd2 or 21.Qxd3 then 21 ... Nf2+ wins the queen). Moreover, if 17.Qd2
then not 17 ... Bh6 because of 18.Qd4 Qh4 19.Bxh6!, but instead 17 ... Qc5+!
18.Kf1 (if 18.Kh1 Nf2+ 19.Kg1 Nxe4+ 20.Qe3 Bd4 wins) 18 ... Nhx2+
19.Ke2 Rad8! with a dominant position.

16.Ne2 c5

Cohn has made good progress, but White’s position is solid with few weaknesses. Unless Black can continue with his active counterplay, the weak c-pawn might become a problem for him.

17.Nf4 Be6?

A poor choice. Much stronger was 17 ... Bb5!, keeping the pressure on White’s bishop and also controlling the key white squares c4 and d3.

18.b3

Probably best, holding up Black’s pawns.

18 ... Rfd8 19.Nd3

Using the knight as the blockader of the passed pawn and also applying pressure to the c-pawn.

19 ... Bd7

Cohn reckons that swapping light-squared bishops is his best course of action. One alternative was to try 19 ... Nd7, which might appear better as after 20.Bxd7 Bxd7 Black would have control over the white squares. However, White would continue with 21.Ba3, with even more intense pressure against the c-pawn than in the game. Another option was 19 ... c4 20.bxc4 Bxc4, exchanging the backward c-pawn for the isolated d-pawn.


Creating an extremely annoying pin, after which the initiative gradually transfers back to White.
21 ... Rac8 22.Rc1 Bf8 23.Qd2!

With the idea of entering the game at a5. White’s plan is to double rooks on the c-file, which will reduce Black to complete passivity. Thus Cohn decides to create a diversion on the king’s wing.

23 ... Qh4!

Obviously with the intention to follow up with 24 ... Bd6. After 24.Qa5 Bd6 25.g3? Bxg3! 26.hxg3 Qxg3+ 27.Kf1 Qxf3+ 28.Nf2 Ne5! Black gets an overwhelming attack. So instead White must play 25.e5!. Then 25 ... Bc7 26.Qxa6 Ra8 27.Qe6! Nxe5! (better than 27 ... Rxa3 28.g3! Qg5 29.f4! Qe7 30.Qxc7 when White maintains the edge, and if 28 ... Qh3 then 29.Qxc7 Rda8 30.Nf4 is again good for White) 28.Nxe5 Bxe5 29.Rxe5 Rxa3. In this position Black’s hope lies with his passed d-pawn, but the situation is far from clear. Understandably, perhaps, Duras prefers a less violent line.

24.g3 Qh5 25.Kg2 c4!

Out of the blue. The pawn, which for so long seemed completely immobile,
suddenly uncovers an attack on the bishop on a3. The situation is fascinating.

White obviously cannot capture on c4 because 26 ... Bxa3 wins a piece, but there are a number of options.

(i) 26.Bxf8 c3! 27.Qh6! (best) Nxf8 28.Qxh5 gxh5 and Black’s advanced pawns give him the advantage.

(ii) 26.g4!? with the idea that if, say, 26 ... Qh4? then 27.Bxf8! c3 28.Qh6!! wins a piece – unlike the variation above, the black queen is unprotected. However, 26 ... Qh4 is not forced, and after 26 ... c3! 27.Qe2 Qg5 White remains under pressure.

(iii) 26.Nf4, as played in the game.

26.Nf4 Qe5

The knight not only attacked the queen but also uncovered a threat to the d-pawn, thus preventing 26 ... c3? because of 27.Qxd4.
27. Bxf8 c3!

The same theme, giving Black two passed pawns.

28. Qd3 Nxf8 29. Nd5!? 

White decides against 29. Qxa6, which might however have been playable. After 29 ... Ra8 30. Qe2 White can establish his knight on d3 and try to hold out. Instead, the text move threatens 30. f4!, embarrassing the black queen, which is tied to the defence of the d-pawn.

29 ... Rxd5!

Evidently the best chance, eliminating the powerful knight and preserving his pawn roller.

30. exd5 Qxd5 31. Red1!

With a threefold threat against the d-pawn, the a-pawn and the c-pawn (since now 32. Rxc3! Rxc3 33. Qxc3 is possible).

31 ... Ne6!
Fine play, preventing the intended 32.Rxc3, which now loses to 32 ... Rxc3 33.Qxc3 dxc3! 34.Rxd5 c2! and the pawn queens.

32.Qxa6 Ra8 33.Qe2

One can imagine Duras breathing a huge sigh of relief after this move, as everything seems defended. Surely Black’s attack has now withered away to nothing?

33 ... d3!

Cohn is making it very difficult for Duras to consolidate. This seemingly desperate move, giving up the d-pawn in order to be able to penetrate to the seventh rank, contains more intricacies than meet the eye. In the game, White plays the obvious 34.Rxd3, being unwilling to allow 34.Qxd3 Rxa2+.

However, it might be playable since after 34 ... Rxa2+ 35.Kh1, if Black tries 35 ... Qh5 36.h4 Nd4? then 37.Ra1! wins in all variations: for example, 37 ... c2 38.Rxa2 cxd1Q+ 39.Qxd1 or 37 ... Rxa1 38.Rxa1 Qc5 39.Rc1. Therefore, Black must try the subtle 36 ... Qc5! with good drawing chances, for instance after 37.Rc2 Rxc2 38.Qxc2 Nd4!
pawn.

34. Rxd3

It looks as though Black’s game is falling apart, but he has a powerful move which maintains the pressure.

34 ... Qg5!

Not only hitting the rook at c1, but also menacing 35 ... Nf4+. White has only one move at his disposal, and consequently he must cede the seventh rank to his opponent after all.

35. Qe3 Rxa2+ 36. Kg1 Qh5

Threatening mate in four beginning with 37 ... Qxh2+. White has his usual response ready.

37. h4 Qf5!

If left unmolested, the queen will infiltrate the position at h3. The natural response is 38.g4 but Duras feared a drawn ending after 38 ... Qf4 39. Qxf4 (not 39. Rd8+ Kg7 40. Qxc3+? because after 40 ... Kh6 White can resign) 39 ... Nxf4 40. Rdxc3 Ne2+. True, White will have the extra pawn, but Black’s active rook might give him drawing chances. So Duras allows the queen in, relying on his own active counter-attack.

(see next diagram)

38. Rdxc3!? Qh3 39. Rc8+ Kg7?

A horrible-looking move, exposing the king to a ferocious attack. The natural 39 ... Nf8 gives Black excellent chances to hold the game after 40.R8c2 Qxg3+ 41.Kf1 Qh3+.

40. Qe5+

Protecting the g-pawn, so that if 40 ... Kh6 41.R8c2 gives White winning prospects.
40 ... f6

Has Duras overreached himself? The next move shows that the answer is no.

41.R1c7+!!

A beautiful response, requiring precise calculation. If now 41 ... Nxc7 then 42.Rxc7+ Kh6 (or 42 ... Kg8 43.Qe8 mate) 43.Qf4+ g5 44.Qxf6+ Kh5 45.Qxg5 mate.

Black has another move, and because he still threatens mate on the move, White must find a forcing combination.

41 ... Kh6! 42.Qe3+ g5 43.hxg5+!
If now 43 ... Kg6 then 44.Rg8+ Ng7 45.Rgxg7+ Kh5 46.Qe8 mate. Best is the paradoxical but brilliant 43 ... fxg5!!, the first point being that 44.Qxe6+? Qxe6 45.Rc6 fails because 45 ... Ra1+! forces a unique perpetual check. White must play 44.Rc2 but after 44 ... Qxg3+ 45.Kc1 Qh3+ he has only one line that provides any winning chances at all.
For example 46.Ke2 Nf4+ 47.Kd2 Qg2+ leads to a draw, so White has to try the perilous variation 46.Ke1! Qh1+ 47.Kd2 Qg2+ 48.Kd3! (48.Qe2 draws after 48 ... Qxe2+ 49.Kxe2 Nd4+ 50.Kd3 Rxc2 51.Rxc2 Nxc2 52.Kxc2 Kg6 53.b4 Kf5 54.b5 Ke5 55.b6 Kd6 56.Kd3 h5 57.f4! gxf4 58.Ke4, etc) 48 ... Nf4+ 49.Qxf4! when 49 ... gxf4? loses to 50.Rxg2 Rxg2 51.Ke4! Rb2 52.Rb8! Kg5 53.Rb5+! Kg6 54.Kxf4. Thus 49 ... Qf1+! is best, when 50.Ke4 gxf4 51.Rxa2 Qb1+ 52.Rac2 leads to a position where White’s two rooks should be a good match for the queen, although a draw would appear the most likely result after 52 ... Qxb3 53.Kxf4.

Given all these horrendous complications, the pressures of the tournament time limit, and the apparent strength of 43 ... Nxg5, it is hardly surprising that Cohn selects the capture with the knight. It is, however, fatally flawed.

43 ... Nxg5? 44.Rxh7+!!

A stunning finale, leading to a subtle winning manoeuvre.

44 ... Kxh7 45.Qe7+ Kg6 46.Rg8+ Kf5
Otherwise 47.Rh8+ wins the queen.

47.Rxg5+!!

Brilliant. If 47 ... fxg5 then 48.Qd7+ picks off the queen.

47 ... Kxg5 48.Qg7+!

Whether Black chooses 48 ... Kh5 49.Qh7+ or 48 ... Kf5 49.Qd7+, he loses his queen and the game.

Black resigns.

1912

Yates, F – Schlechter, C
Postyen
Queen’s Pawn (D00)

1.d4 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.Bd3

A very popular choice with club players, this opening can lead into the Colle System (where White plays c3 and Nf3) or the Stonewall Attack (when an early f4 is the intention). In modern master play such ideas are too predictable and one-dimensional to achieve anything other than equality, but in club chess – and indeed in pre-war master play – the simple development chosen by White can generate a strong attack if Black loses concentration.

3 ... Nc6

Schlechter intends to follow this with either 4 ... Nb4 or 4 ... e5. White cannot readily prevent both ideas.

4.f4

Preferring to stop the 4 ... e5 advance.
4 ... Nb4 5.Nf3 Nxd3+

The strategic idea behind this exchange is that White is now left with a bad bishop, with most of his pawns on black squares. Moreover, Black has the two bishops. The drawback of the concept is that White can gain a significant pawn domination in the centre.

6.cxd3

6.Qxd3 is also possible, but the text move is a more dynamic choice.

6 ... g6 7.Nc3 Bg7 8.0-0 0-0

Sensible development by both sides. Yates must now decide how to formulate his plan for the middlegame. He is reluctant to play e4 since after a pawn exchange his centre would be a little fragile. Accordingly, he aims to mobilize his queen’s side forces.

9.Ne2 b6
Supporting the ensuing ... c5 advance and also offering the a6–f1 diagonal for his bishop.

10.Bd2 c5?! 

As in many queen’s pawn openings, this move represents Black’s thematic strike at White’s solid centre. In this position, however, it is somewhat premature.

11.Rc1! 

Immediately attacking the c-pawn. Schlechter counters with a threat to the pawn on d3, but Yates has already gained the initiative.

11 ... Ba6 12.Ne5! 

Defending the pawn thus resurrecting the threat to the pawn on c5.

12 ... Nd7 

If instead 12 ... Rc8 then 13.Qa4! as in the game is very strong.

13.Qa4! 

Yates is playing excellent chess, and here he forks two of Black’s minor pieces.

13 ... Nxe5 14.Qxa6 Nd7 15.Rc2 

A precautionary move that defends the pawn on b2 and also prepares for a powerful doubling of rooks.

15 ... e6 

It is hard to suggest a decent alternative. Schlechter elects to play a few solid moves in readiness for vigorous action by White. The only other plan was to play 15 ... cxd4 but after 16.exd4 (16.Nxd4 is also possible) White will penetrate along the c-file.
16.Rfc1 Re8 17.b4!
Well played. This finally forces open the c-file.

17 ... cxd4

18.Qb7!?
Yates has achieved such a overwhelming position, that he can be excused for preferring this bold advance over a more conservative recapture. In fact, after 18.Nxd4 or 18.exd4 the threat of 19.Qb7 is very difficult to meet.

18 ... dxe3
Otherwise Black gets no compensation for his wretched position.

Schlechter’s genius enables him to find this tactical shot, which frees his game. The only alternative was the passive 19 ... Re7, hoping for 20.Rc8?
Rxc8 21.Rxc8, when Black has the amazing resource 21 ... Nf8!! and if 22.Qb8 then 22 ... Qd7! followed by 23 ... Qb7, remaining a pawn ahead. However, White would play 20.Rc7! instead, with strong pressure.

20.Rc7

Schlechter’s idea is demonstrated after 20.Bxd4 Bxd4+ 21.Nxd4 Nc5! 22.bxc5 Qxd4+, when Black has solved most of his problems.

20 ... dxe3 21.Rxd7

Yates must have been shocked by his opponent’s combination, but was undoubtedly still feeling pretty confident with his position. Any minute now, he will triple major pieces along the seventh rank.

21 ... Qf6 22.Rcc7

Lining up against f7.

22 ... Rf8
Now 23.Rxf7 looks tempting, as 23 ... Rxf7 allows 24.Qxa8+. But on closer inspection, Black has 24 ... Bf8! (stronger than 24 ... Rf8 25.Qe4! Qa1+ 26.Rc1 when White can pick off the e-pawn and just about hold) and the threat of 25 ... Qa1+ forces White to retreat. After 25.Rc1 Qb2! 26.Qf3 Qd2 is very strong. Therefore, Yates decides to close the long diagonal with his next move, but this enables Schlechter to turn the tables with some accurate play.

23.d4


23 ... Rad8!

Well played by Schlechter. The rook is no longer en prise from the queen, so 24.Rxf7 is not possible, and if 24.Qxa7 then the rook executes the nice switchback manoeuvre 24 ... Ra8 followed by 25 ... Rxa2 with an easy win.

24.Qe4
Takes the pressure off, but this move attacks the pawn on e3 and White obtains control of the b1–h7 diagonal. If not, Black would play his queen to f5 with nasty back-rank threats.

24 ... Rxd7 25.Rxd7 Qh4!

An imaginative move by Schlechter. The black queen performs a little dance, first to h4 with the intention of ... Qe1 mate or ... Qf2+, and then to g4, attacking the knight and preparing a pretty combination.

26.g3 Qg4!

Aiming at the knight, but how is Black to proceed after White plays the obvious 27.Qxe3?

27.Qxe3 e5!

This is the point of Black’s queen sortie. The discovered attack on the rook enables him to break apart his opponent’s pawns.

28.Rxa7 exd4

With the nice point that 29.Nxd4? fails to 29 ... Qd1+, winning the piece.

29.Qe4 Qc8!

Another good move: the queen operates along the rank (supporting the rook when it moves to e8) and down the file (if the knight moves then ... Qc1+ is possible). Schlechter indirectly defends d4 because 30.Nxd4? loses to 30 ... Qe8! followed by 31 ... Bxd4+.

30.Qd3

Of course, the queen is the worst piece to use as the blockader of a passed pawn, but Yates has little alternative.

30 ... Qe6

Planning to follow up with 31 ... Re8. Once more 31.Nxd4? is impossible
because 31 ... Qd5 pins and wins the knight.

31.b5 Re8 32.Kf2 Qh3!

More dexterity from the queen in the hands of Schlechter. Here the piece will switch back without loss of tempo to the f5 square.

33.Kg1 Qf5!

33 ... Qh5! (attacking h2 and e2) was also possible. After 34.Qc4, hitting f7, Black can play 34 ... g5! when 35.Nxd4? again loses, this time to 35 ... Bxd4+! 36.Qxd4 Re1+ 37.Kg2 Re2+ with mate unless White gives up his queen. After 34 ... g5! White is struggling to prevent 35 ... Rxe2. Perhaps the only try is 35.Kf1 but after 35 ... gxf4 36.gxf4 his king is horribly exposed.

34.Qc4

If instead 34.Qxf5 then Black wins after 34 ... gxf5 35.Kf1 (or 35.Kf2 d3 36.Ng1 Bd4+ 37.Kf1 Bxg1 38.Kxg1 d2) 35 ... d3 36.Ng1 d2 followed by 37 ... Re1+. 
34 ... d3
Pushing the pawn and also freeing the d4 square for the bishop.

35.Nd4
Yates continues to create complications, but they should ultimately not succeed.

35 ... d2?
This move should win, but it is certainly not the easiest route to victory. Far simpler is 35 ... Bxd4+! 36.Qxd4 and now there is a choice between the routine 36 ... Qxb5 when the queen, rook and pawn win easily, and the forcing 36 ... Re1+ 37.Kg2 Re2+ 38.Kg1 (or 38.Kf3 Qh5+) 38 ... Qc8! and wins.

36.Nxf5 d1Q+
Schlechter gets a new queen with a seemingly irresistible attack against the opposing king, but Yates has himself some pressure in return, primarily on f7.

37.Kf2
Not 37.Kg2 because 37 ... Re2+ forces the king to h3 when 38 ... Qf1+ wins.

37 ... Qe1+ 38.Kf3
Again the only move to stay alive.

38 ... Qh1+
This checking manoeuvre enables Black to pick off the h-pawn, since White daren’t play his king to g4.

39.Kf2 Qxh2+ 40.Kf3
The crunch position. Black should win this, but Schlechter, in severe time-trouble, falters again.

40 ... Qh5+?

The pretty win is 40 ... Qh1+ 41.Kf2 Qe1+ 42.Kf3 and now the profound 42 ... Kh8!! leaves White in real trouble. The point of the king move is that White can no longer capture on f7 with check, and thus the knight is genuinely en prise. If it moves, then the rook check on e3 is immediately fatal. For example, if 43.Nxg7 then 43 ... Re3+ 44.Kg2 Rxg3+ 45.Kh2 Qg1 mate. Since 43.Qxf7 loses to 43 ... Qe2 mate, White loses the knight and the game.

41.g4 Qh1+

If instead 41 ... Qh3+? then 42.Ng3! forces 42 ... Rf8 and White is fine.

42.Kg3 Qg1+ 43.Kf3 Qd1+

Of course Schlechter always has a draw by perpetual check in hand.
44. Kg3 Qe1+ 45. Kf3 Re6

Blocking the queen’s path to f7, but weakening the back rank.

46. Qc8+! Re8

If Black had played 46 ... Bf8? then 47. Nh6+ Kg7 48. Rxh7+ Kxh6 49. Qxf8 is mate.

47. Qc4

Reinstating the threat to f7.

47 ... Kh8

Although difficult to see, Schlechter finds the correct idea. Unfortunately it is far less convincing in this position than in the variation given after his fortieth move.

48. Qxf7!

Now 48 ... Qe2+ is not mate because the g-pawn has advanced.

48 ... Qc3+

Black gets nowhere after 48 ... Qe2+ or 48 ... Qf1+.

49. Kf2
Not 49.Kg2? because of 49 ... Re2+ and mate next move. Schlechter now agrees to a draw,

but he had the chance to win White’s queen with a series of checks, starting with 49 ... Bd4+! forcing 50.Nxd4 and now 50 ... Qxd4+ 51.Kg3 Qg1+ (not 51 ... Re3+? because after 52.Kh4 Qd8+ 53.g5 White wins) 52.Kh4 Qe1+!
In this position White must play 53.Kg5 but then 53 ... h6+!! 54.Kxg6 (not 54.Kxh6 since 54 ... Qh4+ followed by 55 ... Qxg4+ wins) 54 ... Re6+! wins the queen, as 55.Kf5 Qe4 is mate as is 55.Kh5 Qh1. Thus 55.Qxe6 is forced. But things are not so clear because after 55 ... Qxe6+ 56.Kh5 it is not easy to demonstrate a winning plan for Black. Still, he could hardly lose from this position, and one is forced to say that Schlechter’s agreement to a draw was premature.

½–½

1913

Mahood – Gibson
Cheltenham
Vienna Gambit (C29)

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.f4 d5
The correct response to White’s Vienna Gambit.

4.fxe5 Nxe4 5.Nf3

Other options here are 5.d3 and 5.Qf3 but Mahood plays the main line.

5 ... Be7

After this move, White usually plays 6.d4 (probably best), 6.d3 or 6.Qe2, but in this game a more passive continuation is chosen.

6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Be6

Black opts for simple development, whereas he might have considered the advance 7 ... f5, supporting the knight.

8.Qe1!?

A nice idea, which prepares the deployment of the queen on the attractive g3 post.

(see next diagram)

8 ... c5 9.d3

Finally White dislodges the knight.

9 ... Nxc3 10.bxc3 d4!?

Designed to prevent White’s d4 advance, but it allows Mahood to continue with his plan.
11.Qg3

With the unpleasant threat of 12.Bh6, winning the exchange.

11 ... Kh8 12.Ng5!

An interesting move, tempting Black to kick the knight back with 12 ... h6. After 13.Ne4, however, the h6 pawn would become a target for an eventual bishop sacrifice, so Gibson prefers to complete his development.

12 ... Nc6 13.c4!?

Blocking the centre and taking away the useful d5 square from Black’s army. The drawback is that the pawn on e5 is now a permanent weakness.

13 ... Qd7

A more active idea would be 13 ... Bxg5 14.Bxg5 Qc7 with pressure against the e-pawn. Black plays the whole game rather passively.
14. **Bd2?!**

Many players would prefer to over-protect e5 with 14.Bf4. Technically, Black has a strategically won game, but White has many tactical bombs to detonate before the ending is reached.

**14 ... Rae8**

More sensible development. White now decides the time has come for action.

**15.Qh4**

With this move mate is threatened on h7, but his e-pawn is without protection. Safest for Black is now 15 ... Bxg5! when 16.Qxg5 is necessary to avoid losing the pawn.

**15 ... h6**

Looks strong, given that White’s knight is pinned, but the complications are about to begin.

**16.Rf6!?**
Into the lion’s mouth. Mahood deserves much credit for this daring move, but it is not entirely sound. If now 16 ... gxf6? then 17.Qxh6+ leads to mate next move. And if 16 ... Bxf6 then 17.exf6 forces 17 ... Bf5, and then 18.Ne4! wins after either 18 ... Bxe4 19.fxg7+ Kxg7 (or 19 ... Kg8 20.gxf8Q+, etc) 20.Bxh6+ and mates, or 18 ... Rg8 19.Bg4!! when 20.Bxh6 cannot readily be prevented: for example, 19 ... Bxg4 20.Bxh6! Bh5 21.Bxg7+! Rxg7 22.fxg7+ Kxg7 23.Nf6 and wins. Thus the rook cannot be taken, so Black has to decide the best way to decline the sacrifice.

16 ... Bf5!

This bishop move is the natural and best defensive continuation, since the h7 square is protected. Black therefore avoids various pitfalls, such as 16 ... Nxe5? 17.Rxh6+! and mates. Another interesting move was the paradoxical 16 ... Kg8!? which removes the king from the h-file and this unpins the pawn on h6.
This simple change in the position now makes it somewhat difficult for White to find sufficient time to drive home his attack, as the following variations demonstrate.

(i) 17.Ne4!? is an interesting try, but Black has the strong response 17 ... Nxe5!. If 18.Bxh6 then 18 ... Ng6! leaves Black with a solid position and White’s various sacrificial attempts all fail. If instead 18.Raf1 then 18 ... Ng6 is again strong, as 19.Qg3 gxh6 20.Nxf6+ (20.Rxf6 Bf5! or 20.Bxh6 f5! also fail) 20 ... Bxf6 21.Rxf6 Kg7! is winning for Black.

(ii) 17.Raf1 looks good but after 17 ... hxg5 18.Bxg5 Nxe5 White has insufficient for the piece.

(iii) The follow-on sacrifice by 17.Rxh6!? nearly works, but after 17 ... gxf6 18.Qxh6 (18.Qg3!? hxg5 19.Bxg5 Nxe5! and 20.Bxe7+ Ng6! or 20.Qxe5 f6! and Black holds) 18 ... Bf5 Black has time to defend. For example, if 19.g4 Bg6 20.e6 then 20 ... Bxg5! 21.exd7 Bxh6 22.dxe8Q Rxe8 23.Bxh6 Rxe2 is excellent. Or if 19.Rf1, 19.Bh5 or 19.Bg4 then 19 ... Nxe5 and White cannot break through.
(iv) If White defends e5 with 17.Bf4 then Black’s simplest response seems to be 17 ... hxg5 18.Qxg5 (or 18.Bxg5 Nxe5) 18 ... Qd8!, threatening to capture on f6, which would previously fail because of the mating net around g7.

(v) Finally, White’s best chance – although leading to little more than equality – is 17.Nxe6! with the idea that 17 ... fxe6 18.Rxf8+ Rxf8 19.Qg3 gives him equal chances. Better might be 17 ... Qxe6! 18.Rxe6 Bxh4 19.Rxe8 Rxe8 20.Bf3 Rxe5 when White’s pawn deficit is balanced by his potential play down the b-file and his two bishops. In this last variation, if White tries 18.Bxh6!? then Black wins after 18 ... Qxe5! 19.Bxg7 Qe3+ 20.Kh1 Kxg7.

It can be concluded that 16 ... Kg8 should be good enough for at least a draw, whereas the move actually played by Black dares White to try for more.

17.Rf1!

Bringing another piece into the attack, threatening the bishop on f5. If now 17 ... gxf6 then 18.Qxh6+ Kg8 19.Bg4! fxg5 20.Bxf5! wins elegantly.

17 ... Bxf6!

Well played. The other plausible defence was 17 ... Bg6? but White has a lovely riposte in 18.e6!!.
Since 18 ... fxe6 loses a piece to 19.Rxg6, Black must move his queen, but this fails to a stunning follow-up sacrifice. After, say, 18 ... Qc7, White plays 19.Nxf7+!!. Then 19 ... Kg8 loses to 20.Nxh6+ gxh6 21.Rxg6+ Kh8 22.Qxh6 mate, and 19 ... Rxf7 is insufficient after 20.exf7 Bxf6 21.fxe8Q+ Bxe8 22.Qe4 with a won game. If instead 19 ... Kh7 then 20.Bxh6! crashes through. Black has only one remaining attempt, namely 19 ... Bxf7, but then White has at his disposal the brilliant combination 20.Rxh6+!! gxh6 21.Qxh6+ Kg8 22.Rxf7! Rxf7 23.exf7+ Kxf7 24.Bh5+! Kg8 25.Qg6+ Kh8 26.Qxe8+ Kh7 27.Bg6+ Kg7 28.Qf7+ Kh8 29.Qh7 mate! Incidentally, other queen moves by Black on move eighteen lose quicker because White plays 25.Bg6! instead of 25.Qg6+.

18.exf6 Rxe2

White’s recapture has left his bishop en prise, and Black rightly decides to grab it while he can.

19.fxg7+ Kxg7

Is White’s attack running out of steam?
20.Ne4!

This retreat forms the crux of White’s attacking strategy. The bishop is defended, f6 is attacked and the diagonal to h6 is opened up. It looks impressive – can Gibson find the strongest defence?

20 ... Bxe4?

After pursuing the correct defence so well, it is a great pity that Gibson fails to find the best continuation here. In the cold light of day it is obvious that White’s better attacking minor piece is the bishop, not the knight, and so 20 ... Rxd2! is the right move. After 21.Qf6+ Kh7 22.Rxf5 (or 22.Nxd2 Bg6) 22 ... Rd1+ 23.Kf2 Qe7! White can resign.

21.Bxh6+

Now the bishop springs to life and Black is chronically weak on the dark squares.

21 ... Kg8
Not 21 ... Kg6? 22.Qf6+ and mate next move, and if 21 ... Kh7 then 22.Bxf8+ Kg8 23.dxe4! and White keeps the bishop and the attack, because 23 ... Kxf8 is met by 24.Qh8+! Ke7 25.Qh5! hitting the rook and the f7 square.

22.dxe4

Having thrown everything at Black and having seen him pressurized into a blunder, Mahood misses the quickest win in his haste to destroy the threat to his g2 square. Simpler was the thematic 22.Qg5+ Bg6 23.Qf6, which forces 23 ... Rxg2+ 24.Kxg2 Qg4+ 25.Kh1 and Black is lost, the attempt at perpetual by 25 ... Be4+ failing after 26.dxe4 Qxe4+ 27.Rf3 Qe1+ 28.Kg2 Qe2+ 29.Kh3 Qe5 30.Rg3+ Kh7 31.Qxe5 Nxe5 32.Bxf8. Nevertheless, White is still in control and the text move also wins.

22 ... Ne5

Other defences are also futile, for example 22 ... Qe6 23.Rf6! wins. This at least provides one last way for White to go wrong.

23.Qg5+!

Better than 23.Qf6?, which allows 23 ... Qg4! and Black is back in the game.

23 ... Ng6 24.Qf6

Black now has only one desperate defence to the mate on g7, but it cannot succeed.

24 ... Rxg2+ 25.Kxg2 Qg4+ 26.Kf2

White presents Black with no alternative but to liquidate into a lost ending.

26 ... Qh4+ 27.Qxh4 Nxh4 28.Bxf8 Kxf8 29.Kg3 Black resigns.

1914

Réti, R – Nyholm, G
Baden-Baden
King’s Gambit (C36)

1.e4 e5 2.f4

In his early days Réti frequently essayed the King’s Gambit.

2 ... exf4 3.Nf3 Nf6

This line is somewhat unusual but not without merit.

4.Nc3 d5 5.exd5

The game has transposed into a modern variation usually reached by 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 d5 4.exd5 Nf6 5.Nc3.

5 ... Nxd5

An interesting choice, rather than the more normal 5 ... Bd6.
6.Nxd5 Qxd5 7.d4 Bd6

A better development of the bishop would have been 7 ... Be7!, with the idea of a later ... g5 and possibly queen’s side castling.

8.c4 Qe6+ 9.Kf2!

This is the point of White’s play: the king steps aside and his other pieces are ready for rapid deployment.

9 ... c5

Nyholm was clearly concerned about White playing 10.c5.

10.Bd3!

Preventing castling, which would now be met by 11.Bxh7+!.

10 ... Qh6

Else 11.Re1 wins the queen.

11.Re1+ Kf8 12.Qe2

Threatening mate on e8.

12 ... Bd7 13.b4!!

Not the only way to exploit his strong position, but certainly the most spectacular. 14.c5 will follow either capture by the black c-pawn.

13 ... b6 14.Be4!

Very strong, for if now 14 ... Bc6 then 15.b5! Bxe4 16.Qxe4 wins.

14 ... Nc6!

A brave attempt, which relies on a clever piece of tactics.
15.b5 Nxd4 16.Nxd4 Re8!

This is Black’s idea, pinning the bishop. Has Réti miscalculated?

17.Nf3 f5

This looks rather alarming, but Réti has prepared an exciting riposte.

18.Bd5!!

White sacrifices his queen and in return for a slight material disadvantage obtains a powerful attack.

18 ... Rxe2+ 19.Rxe2 Be7

The best defence, preparing to contest the long diagonal. The wild 19 ... g5 is met by 20.Bb2 Rg8 21.Bxg8 Kxg8 22.Kg1! (defending h2) and White has a fine game.

White’s bishops dominate the board.

21 ... g5


22. Rae1

Increasing the pressure and intending 23.Bd6+.

22 ... Bxe5

If 22 ... Kg7 then 23.Bxf6+ Kxf6 24.Re6+ Bxe6 25.Rxe6+ and White comes out on top.

23. Nxe5 Qh4+?

Black had two interesting alternatives.

(i) 23 ... Be8 24.Ng4! Qh4+ 25.g3! Qh5 (best) and White emerges with an edge after 26.Rxe8+.

(ii) 23 ... Be6! is the best defence, when after 24.Nc6 Bxd5 25.cxd5 chances are equal.

24. Kg1

It soon becomes clear that Black’s check on the previous move only served to put his queen out of play whilst improving the position of White’s king.

24 ... Be8 25.Nf3 Qh5 26.Nxg5!

He could also have won with 26.Rxe8+ Qxe8 27.Rxe8+ Kxe8 28.Nxg5 but Réti wants to finish his opponent off in the middlegame.

26 ... Kg7!

The best try, given that 26 ... Qxg5 loses to 27.Rxe8+ Kg7 28.Rxh8! Kxh8 30.Re8+ Kg7 31.Rg8+!, winning the queen.
27.\text{Re7+ Kh6}

If 27 \ldots \text{Kf6} then 28.\text{Nf3!} with the threat of mate on e6 is crushing, whilst if 27 \ldots \text{Kg6} then 28.\text{Nf7! Rf8 29.R1e6+ Kg7 30.Nd6+ Kh8 31.Bf3} wins the bishop on e8.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=8cm]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

28.\text{Bf7!!}

A brilliant move that wins in every variation.

(i) 28 \ldots \text{Qxg5 29.R1e6+ Kg7 30.Bh5+! Kf8 31.Rxe8+ Kg7 32.R8e7+ Kg8 (32 \ldots Kf8? 33.Rf7+ and mate next move) 33.Bf3!! followed by 34.Bd5 and wins.}

(ii) 28 \ldots \text{Qg4 29.h4!! Qxh4 (if 29 \ldots Bxf7 30.Nxf7+ wins) 30.Nf3 and 31.R1e6+ is decisive.}

(iii) 28 \ldots \text{Qh4 29.Nf3! and 30.R1e6+ wins.}

(iv) 28 \ldots \text{Bxf7 29.Nxf7+ Kg7 30.Nxh8+ Kxh8 31.Rd7! and White will}
double rooks on the seventh rank with an easy victory.

28 ... Kxg5

Nyholm bails out but his position is hopeless and Réti has no trouble in mopping up.

29.Bxh5 Bxh5 30.Rxa7 f3 31.Ree7!

So that if ever Black tries to get his rook to the seventh rank via d8, White simply plays Rad7.

31 ... fxg2 32.Kxg2 h6 33.Kg3 f4+ 34.Kf2 Rd8 35.Rad7!

Snuffing out all counter-chances.

35 ... Ra8 36.Re5+ Kh4 37.Rd2 Ra4 38.Re6!

Accurately calculating the following sequence.

38 ... Rxc4 39.Rxh6 Rb4 40.Rxb6!

Avoiding the last pitfall, which was 40.Rd5? Rb2+ 41.Ke1 Rb1+ and Black draws, because if the king comes to the d-file then ... Rd1+ would win the rook.

40 ... c4 41.a3 Rb3 42.Rc6 Rf3+ 43.Kg2 Rxa3 44.Rxc4 Black resigns.

Nyholm needs to see no further.

1915

Znosko-Borovksy & Koyalovich – Alekhine & Tereshchenko
St. Petersburg
Falkbeer Counter-Gambit (C31)

A highly entertaining exhibition game from the young Alekhine.
1.e4 e5 2.f4 d5

Alekhine and his ally use the aggressive Falkbeer Counter-Gambit in response to the King’s Gambit.

3.exd5 c6!?

Nimzowitsch’s interesting continuation, which has the psychological advantage of forcing a well-prepared King’s Gambiteer to defend passive positions.

4.Nc3

Without a doubt the best move, developing a piece and keeping the e4 square under control.

4 ... exd5 5.Bb5+

5.fxe5 is simpler but White’s desire to organize his king’s side development is understandable.

5 ... Nc6

If 5 ... Bd7 then White continues with 6.Qe2.

6.fxe5

White is now a pawn ahead but Black’s d-pawn is potentially a problem for White.
6 ... d4 7.Ne4 Qd5!

A strong central location for the queen.

8.Qe2

Looks natural but Black quickly builds up a dangerous initiative. Safer would have been 8.Bxc6+ followed by 9.d3, preventing the further advance of the black d-pawn.

8 ... Bf5!

Avoiding the trap 8 ... Qxe5? 9.Nf3!, with advantage.

9.Ng5?

The reluctance to exchange the bishop on b5 is the cause of White’s problems. It was high time to bail out with 9.Bxc6+ Qxc6 10.d3, although Black’s control of the c-file gives him massive compensation for his pawn.
9 ... d3!

The pawn advances, exploiting the awkward placement of the white pieces. Now 10.cxd3? loses the bishop, and 10.Bxd3 Bxd3 11.cxd3 (or 11.Qxd3 Qxg2) 11 ... Nd4! gives Black a winning attack.

10.c4

An interesting idea, based on the line 10 ... dxe2? 11.cxd5 a6 12.dxc6 axb5 13.cxb7. Unfortunately, Black is not obliged to capture on e2, and White is left with an unenviable position. The other option was 10.Bxc6+ but 10 ... bxc6 11.cxd3 Bxd3 is clearly very good for Black.

10 ... Qd7 11.Qe3 Nh6!

Despite being a pawn down, Black has a far superior position and this knight is threatening to harass the queen further by advancing to g4. For this reason White might now have contemplated 12.h3, although he could ill-afford another non-developing move.
12.Nf3 Ng4 13.Qf4

White has a wretched position, with poor development, a wandering queen, an uncastled king and with that pawn on d3 like a bone his throat.

13 ... f6!

A surprising but strong little move. If White tries 14.exf6? then 14 ... gxf6 15.Nh3 and now both 15 ... Qe6+ and 15 ... Bd6 force White to give up a piece by 16.Ne5. White’s other attempt, 14.Ne4 is also unconvincing so long as Black avoids the blunder 14 ... g5?, which loses to 15.Qxg4! followed by 16.Nxf6+. Instead, 14 ... fxe5 15.Bxc6 exf4! 16.Bxd7+ Kxd7 followed by 17 ... Re8+ gives Black a convincing advantage.

14.Nh3 Bc5!

Seizing the important black diagonal, and better than 14 ... fxe5 15.Bxc6 exf4 (if 15 ... bxc6 then White can play 16.Nxe5!) 16.Bxd7+ Kxd7 17.Nxf4 with good survival chances.

15.b4!

Rightly White decides to stir things up a bit. If 15 ... Bxb4 then 16.0-0 relieves some of the pressure.

15 ... g5!

An excellent advance, allowing Black to obtain control of the d4 square.

16.Qg3 Bd4 17.Rb1

Sadly for White, if 17.Nxd4? then 17 ... Qxd4 18.Rb1 Qe4+ wins.

17 ... Ngxe5

Restoring material equality and with a clearly advantageous position.

18.Nxd4
White takes the opportunity to remove Black’s commanding bishop.

18 ... Qxd4

White now must ensure that he has an answer to the impending check by the black queen on e4.


Certainly not 20.Qe3 because 20 ... Qxe3+ 21.dxe3 d2+! wins the exchange, but 20.Kf1!? was possible. After 20 ... Qe2+ 21.Kg1 Black cannot continue with 21 ... Qxd2? because of 22.Bxe5 turning the tables (22 ... fxe5 23.Qxe5+ and 24.Qxf5+).

20 ... 0-0-0

An additional benefit of castling is that the knight on c6 is no longer pinned and can enter the battle. Nevertheless, Black must remain circumspect, since capturing on b4 willy-nilly has dangers in view of the reply Bxe5.

21.Re1 Bg4+


22.Kc1 Be2

Necessary, otherwise 23.Bxc6 was hard to meet.

23.Nf2

Finally the knight is able to contribute to the game, and gradually White’s situation is starting to look slightly less clumsy.
23 ... Qf5 24.Bc3

White still spurns the chance to exchange a pair of minor pieces. The bishop on b5 is not participating in the action, so many would prefer 24.Bxc6 Nxc6 with ideas of pushing the b-pawn.

24 ... Nd4

The knight hits the bishop on b5 and also might enter the heart of White’s defence at c2. Moreover, Black menaces 25 ... a6 26.Ba4 Nxc4.

25.Qe3!

Well played. White has managed to find some counterplay and the black queen’s side defences are looking somewhat exposed.

25 ... Nc2!

Much more positive than 25 ... Nxb5 26.cxb5, when the pawn on a7 is under attack from the white queen.
26.Qc5+

This was the moment when White might have plunged into some wild complications with 26.Qxa7, but Znosko-Borovsky and Koyalovich could not see sufficient concrete counterplay, which is a shame because some of the lines are fascinating. After 26.Qxa7 Nxe1 White must act quickly before Black can organize the defence, so there are two tries that are critical.

(i) Firstly, 27.Bd4!? threatens 28.Bb6 with mate to follow, and Black has to be extremely careful otherwise he can succumb to a whirlwind attack. For example, if he covers the b6 square by 27 ... Nd7, White unleashes 28.Bc6!!, with a powerful attack. After 28 ... bxc6 29.b5! Black is in great trouble because 30.b6 is hard to stop; in fact, he must either give up his queen with 29 ... cxb5 30.Rxb5 Qxb5 with a lost game, or try to derail White’s attack with 29 ... Nb6!? 30.Bxb6 Qf4, but then 31.Ne4!! Qb8 32.Qa6+! Qb7 (or 32 ... Kd7 33.bxc6+ wins) 33.Qa5! cxb5 34.Nc5! wins the queen and the game. All this is very alarming but Black can calmly side-step these variations by removing the bishop with 27 ... Rxd4!. Then after 28.Qxd4 Rd8 White’s attack is rebuffed and Black is very well-placed.

(ii) White’s other try is 27.Ba6!? bxa6 28.b5!, again with some dangerous ideas. If 28 ... Rd7? then 29.Qa8+ Kc7 30.b6+ Kd6 31.Qxh8 and White’s b-pawn decides. However, Black’s best is 28 ... Qd7! 29.Qa8+ (if 29.Qxa6+ then 29 ... Qb7) 29 ... Kc7 and now White has a number of options.
(a) 30.Ba5+ (30.Qa7+ is similar) 30 ... Kd6 31.Ne4+ (or 31.Bb4+ Ke6 32.Qxa6+ Kf7 33.Ne4 Qe6 and White has nothing) 31 ... Ke7 32.Bxd8+ Rxd8 33.Qxa6 Qe6 and White’s three passed pawns give him some chances.

(b) 30.Qxa6 Ra8 31.Ba5+ (31.Qxf6 leads nowhere) 31 ... Kb8 32.Qb6+ Qb7 33.Qd6+ Kc8! (not 33 ... Ka7? because 34.Bc7! forces mate) 34.Qc5+ (34.Qe6+ Qd7 35.Qxf6 Re8 is fine for Black) 34 ... Kd7 35.Qd4+ Ke8 and Black comes out on top.

(c) 30.Bxe5+ fxe5 31.Qa7+ Kd6 32.Ne4+ Ke7 33.Qc5+ Kf7 and now the obvious 34.Qf2+? (hoping to penetrate via f6) is met by the brilliant 34 ... Nf3!! 35.gxf3 Rc8 (or 35 ... Qd4) with a won game. Better for White is 34.bxa6! Rb8 35.Rb7 Rxb7 36.axb7 Rb8 37.Qxe5 and despite the material imbalance, Black is going to have to work hard to avoid perpetual check. For instance, if 37 ... Rxb7 then 38.Nd6+ Kg8 39.Qxg5+ Qg7 40.Qd8+ Qf8 41.Qxf8+ Kxf8 42.Nxb7 gives White chances to draw because of his extra pawns.

These lines show that perhaps the text move selected by White was not the best.
Although Znosko-Borovsky and his ally did not go for the messy complications on the previous move, they continue to find ideas that pose difficult challenges for their opponents.

27 ... Qf3!

Avoiding the trap 27 ... Qf4? 28.Rxe2 dxe2 29.Kxc2 and White is back in the game.

28.Rg1

Finally the attacked rook moves, and on g1 the g-pawn is usefully defended.

28 ... Qf4

Otherwise 29.Bxe5+ follows.

29.Ba6!

White throws caution to the wind and tempts Black with this bishop sacrifice.
29 ... Rd7?!

If Black wants to decline the sacrifice, as he probably should, then 29 ... Nd7! is correct. After 30.Qb5 Nb6 the attack on the knight on f2 gives Black a very good game. Far more exciting (and risky) would have been 29 ... bxa6?! 30.b5! Bf3! when the following position is reached.
Now 31.Nh3! Qxh2 32.bxa6+ Ka8 33.Nxg5! gives White some chances, although the wonderful 33 ... Bh1! (only not 33 ... Nd7? 34.Nxf3!) keeps Black in the ascendancy.

30.Nh3

White now adopts the plan of chasing the black queen whenever possible.

30 ... Qxh2 31.Kb2

If 31.Bxe5+ then Black simply replies 31 ... Qxe5.

31 ... Rc7!

This is far better than the immediate 31 ... bxa6, though Black is okay after 32.Rh1 Qg3 33.Rbg1 Nxc4+ 34.Qxc4 Qd6.

32.Qd5 bxa6!

Now Black’s position is clearly sound enough to enable this capture to be
played.

33. Rh1 Qg3 34. Rbg1 Qf3

White can recover a pawn or two but Black’s queen infiltrates and the win is assured.

35. Bxe5 fxe5

Of course not 35 ... Qxd5? 36. Bxc7+ Kxc7 37. cxd5.

36. Qxe5 Qf8!

Defending h8 but equally importantly aiming at the pawn on b4.

37. Nxg5

If 37. a3 then 37 ... Qg7 forces the exchange of queens.

37 ... Qxb4+ 38. Ke1 Na3! 39. Qxh8+ Kb7

Mate cannot now be avoided.

White resigns.

1916

Capablanca, J – NN
New York
Queen’s Gambit (D37)

A bright contest won by Capablanca in a simultaneous display. The interesting variations that lie in the notes are a good example of the hidden resources that are to be found in many games.

We have reached an entirely normal position in the Queen’s Gambit Declined. Capablanca’s opponent now places his king’s bishop on the d6 square, which is somewhat unusual in this opening.

4 ... Bd6

Other moves such as 4 ... Be7, 4 ... c5 or 4 ... c6 are safer, since the bishop is somewhat exposed on d6 and does nothing to relieve the pressure created by White’s next.

5.Bg5 c6 6.e3

Capablanca prefers this controlled development to the more expansive 6.e4, which is also playable.

6 ... 0-0 7.Rc1 dxc4 8.Bxc4 Nbd7

Black is preparing his ... e5 break, the best chance for equality.

(see next diagram)

9.Bd3 Be7?

The time was right for 9 ... e5!, which should lead to a fairly level game after 10.dxe5 Nxe5.
Perhaps Black was afraid of 10.Ne4, attacking f6 and d6 but this would have been a mistake. 10 ... Qa5+! would force 11.Kf1 as 11.Nc3? (or Ned2?) loses a piece to 11 ... e4!, whilst 11.Nfd2 loses at least one pawn after 11 ... Nxe4 12.Bxe4 exd4 and the bishop on g5 hangs. Finally, 11.Qd2 fails to 11 ... Bb4.

10.0-0 b6

Black understandably wishes to develop his remaining pieces, but it might have been advantageous to kick the bishop back with 10 ... h6 11.Bh4 and then try to exchange some pieces with 11 ... Nd5.

11.Qc2 Bb7 12.Ne5

Both this and the previous move pressurize c6 and attack the king’s side defences. The immediate threat is 13.Nxd7 Qxd7 14.Bxf6 and 15.Bxh7+.

12 ... g6

12 ... h6 is rather better since the weaknesses that are created are less significant than those that arise after 12 ... g6.
13. Bh6 Re8

White has a wonderful attacking position and most masters would now continue with 14.f4, to support the knight and to prepare for the further advance of the king’s side pawns. However, Capablanca prefers to delay committing himself.

14. Rfd1 Nxe5

Black sees his chance to liquidate some pieces, though the weak squares around his king and the pawn on c6 mean that his position will still be difficult.

15. dxe5 Nd5 16. Nxd5 exd5

If 16 ... cxd5 then 17. Bb5 wins the exchange.

17. e6!

This pawn advance is an excellent choice, particularly in a simultaneous
display where the opponent may be less able to cope with a direct attack. The obvious point is that 17 ... fxe6 is met with 18.Bxg6 and White triumphs.

17 ... f5

Black naturally attempts to block the b1–h7 diagonal.

18.Bxf5?!

Capablanca decides to try to crash through, though in a serious tournament game he might have been more circumspect with 18.e4!, which is very strong since the d-pawn is pinned.

18 ... gxf5 19.Qxf5

White has obtained great compensation for his bishop sacrifice, and Black’s defence is never going to be easy. However, with 100 per cent. accurate play the sacrifice should be proved unsound.

19 ... Bf6 20.e4

The bishop on f6 performs a key role in defending the dark squares. Capablanca correctly assesses the needs of his position – open lines are needed for his rooks to enter the game.

20 ... Qc7 21.exd5

21.e5 Bg7 leads nowhere.
21 ... cxd5?

The obvious recapture although had Black seen the complications that follow, he might have looked for an alternative. In fact, 21 ... Rac8! would have been a very strong move. White does still have some attacking chances, but his two central pawns would come under increasing pressure. For example, if 22.d6? then 22 ... Qxe6 wins, whilst 22.dxc6 Bxc6 gives Black a solid position with few concerns. White could try 22.Rd3!? cxd5 23.Rg3+ Kh8 but then he has nothing better than 24.Re1 in order to defend the e-pawn, and his chances of victory are small.

22.Rc7!!

Although this move does not necessarily lead to a win, it is a brilliant attempt to generate mating threats. Capablanca gives up the rook so that he can remove Black’s most important defensive piece, the dark-squared bishop. At the very least, White can bail out with a draw when he wishes.

22 ... Qxc7 23.Qxf6 Qe7?
Again Black plays the most natural move, but it is a mistake that loses the game. Instead, the correct move is 23 ... Rac8!, which prevents the rook from coming to d3 because of 24 ... Qc1+ with mate to follow. White should take a draw by perpetual check with 24.Qg5+ Kh8 25.Qe5+, etc, since attempts to win are too risky. For example, after 24.Qg5+ Kh8, 25.Re1 looks promising, as 25 ... Re7? fails to 26.Qf6+ Kg8 27.Bf4! Rf8 (else 28.Be5 wins immediately) 28.Qg5+ Rg7 29.e7! Rxg5 (or 29 ... Re8 30.Qxg7+) 30.exf8Q+ Kxf8 31.Bxg7. Black can do better with 25 ... Qe7!, when White can try 26.Qe5+ Kg8 27.f4 leading to this position.

Black has at least two sensible choices here.

(i) 27 ... Rf8?! is unconvincing since White plays 28.Bxf8 (28.Re3 is also interesting, for example 28 ... Rf6 29.Rg3+ Rg6 30.f5! Qc5+! 31.Be3 Qb4! 32.Bh6! Qc5+ and draws) 28 ... Rxf8 29.Re3! h6 30.Rg3+! Kh7 31.Rc3! Rc8 and now either 32.Qf5+ with a draw, or 32.f5!? Rxc3 33.bxc3 when White’s central pawns keep the position unclear.

(ii) 27 ... d4! is a clever move, opening the long diagonal and also clearing his fourth rank. After 28.f5 Rc5 29.Qxd4 Rd5! (not 29 ... Rc7 30.f6!) 30.Qg4+
Kh8 31.Bg5 Black has two choices.

(a) 31 ... Qg7?! 32.f6! Qxg5 33.f7!!.

Now if Black captures the queen with 33 ... Qxg4? then 34.fxe8Q+ Qg8 (34 ... Kg7 loses to 35.Qf7+ and 36.e7) 35.Qxg8+ Kxg8 36.e7 and White emerges a pawn ahead. The alternative is 33 ... Qe7 (if 33 ... Bc6 then 34.Qf3! with good chances) but even then White could try the spectacular 34.Qb4!!, which not only deflects the queen but threatens the deadly 35.Qc3+. Thus Black must play 35 ... Kg7 but after 36.Qc3+ Kg6 the king will be dreadfully exposed and White has all the play.

(b) 31 ... Qc5+! 32.Be3 (else 32 ... Rxf5) 32 ... Qd6 33.Bg5 (33.f6? Rg8!) 33 ... Qc5+ with a draw by repetition.

Thus White seems to have no more than a draw after 23 ... Rac8 24.Qg5+, and other moves such as 24.h4, giving the king an escape square, are no better since the black rook on c8 can enter the game (24.h4 Qe7! 25.Qe5, and now 25 ... Rc4 or 25 ... Rc6 forces White to check on g3 and e5 and take perpetual).
24.Qe5!

Now White is threatening the rook lift to d3 with deadly effect.

24 ... Rf8 25.Rd3

25 ... Qf6?

There is a much tougher defence in 25 ... Rf6!

although this would also lose against best play. After 26.Qg5+! Kh8 27.Rg3 if Black takes on e6 with 27 ... Rxe6 then 28.Bg7+ Kg8 29.Bf6+ Kf7 30.Qg7+ Ke8 31.Qxe7+! Rxe7 32.Bxe7 Kxe7 33.Rg7+ and 34.Rxb7 leaves White a pawn ahead. Instead, Black might try the heart-stopping alternative 27 ... Rf7!! with the tactical justification that 28.exf7 is impossible due to 28 ... Qe1 mate. However, it is insufficient after 28.Qe5+ Rf6 29.Bg5! Raf8 30.Bxf6+ Rxf6 (30 ... Qxf6 31.e7!! and mates) 31.Qg5! Qf8 32.e7! and wins.

26.Rg3+ Kh8 27.Bg7+
Black resigns.

It’s mate next move.

1917

Mayer & Steiner & Réti – Szavay & Lasker, Emanuel
Hungary
Ruy López (C86)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 d6

This move order grants his opponent more flexibility than with 5 ... Be7. White could now exchange bishop for knight with 6.Bxc6+ bxc6 and then advance in the centre by 7.d4, or he might play 6.d4 immediately. In this game the consulting partners playing White decide to transpose into the Worrall Attack.

Both sides continue with classic Ruy López strategies. An interesting idea for Black would now be 9 ... Bg4 pinning the knight, but Lasker and his ally decide instead to follow the ancient Spanish recipe of queen’s side pawn expansion.

9 ... c5 10.d4 Qc7 11.d5

This blocks the centre in preparation for activity on either wing.

11 ... 0-0 12.h3

Not just to prevent 12 ... Bg4, but also to prepare a later g4.

12 ... Kh8!?

An interesting plan. Black wishes to prepare the advance of the f-pawn, and decides to do so by retreating the knight to g8 where it protects the h6 square. The alternative is 12 ... Ne8 when the game might continue 13.g4 g6 14.Kh2 f5 15.gxf5 gxf5 16.Rg1+ Kh8 17.Bh6! Rf7 18.exf5 Bxf5 19.Bxf5 Rxf5 20.Qe4 Rf6! (otherwise White can play 21.Qg4 with a strong attack) with a
double-edged position.

13.Nh2

White intends to push his own f-pawn.

13 ... Ng8 14.f4!

Réti and his allies are the first to get in their strike against the centre. If now 14 ... exf4 15.Bxf4 Nc4 16.b3 Ne5, White can simply exchange on e5 and then attempt to exploit the open f-file and the protected passed pawn on d5.

14 ... f6!

Bolstering the e5 square so that 15 ... exf4 followed by 16 ... Nc4 and 17 ... Ne5 is now a powerful positional threat. This is the reason why White now elects to block the centre.

15.f5 g6
Szavay and Lasker realize that defensive measures must be taken in order to be ready for the impending advance of the white king’s side pawns. The arrangement that they choose is a sensible one, with the second rank controlled by the major pieces and the minor pieces taking a support role. The text move is better than 14 ... g5?!; which presents White with a target on g5 that would be challenged by the white h-pawn.

16.g4 Rf7 17.Nd2

Neither side has yet completed queen’s side development.

17 ... Rg7

Black patiently refrains from exchanging pawns on f5 and concentrates on organizing his forces.

18.Kh1 Bd7 19.Ndf3

From here the knight supports the g5 advance, which would begin the assault on the black king.

19 ... Nc4!

A clever defensive manoeuvre typical of Lasker, who was a renowned genius of resolute defence. The first point is that after 20.g5? Black swaps pawns and then captures on b2.

20.b3 Nb6

And this shows the second point of Black’s idea. If now 21.g5 Black wins a pawn with 21 ... gxf5 22.exf5 Nxd5.

21.Be3

White intends to increase the pressure against the g6 pawn so that Black is forced to retreat his bishop to e8. This is important since ideally the bishop is needed on the c8–h3 diagonal to attack the pawn on f5 and thus forestall White’s g5 advance. White also has in his sights the Qd2/Bh6 manoeuvre; if then Black plays ... Nxhr6 White continues with Qxhr6 and the queen, in the
heart of the black position, attacks g6 and is ready to support the pawn breakthrough.

21 ... Rf8 22.Nh4

Intensifying the pressure. Here and for the next few moves Lasker and his partner must have been tempted to block the g-file with 22 ... g5. After 23.N4f3 h6 24.h4 Bd8 25.hxg5 hxg5 White clearly has a space advantage and possibilities along the h-file (and access to the useful h5 outpost), but Black should have reasonable defensive chances. Instead, they decide to maintain the tension.

22 ... Rff7 23.Rg1 Bd8 24.Qd2 Be8!?

Again Black prefers not to block the pawns with 24 ... g5 and allows White to get in his long-awaited advance.

25.g5 Nd7

Black correctly avoids 25 ... gxf5? 26.Nxf5 Rg6 27.Bd1! with 28.Bh5 to
follow. A playable alternative to the text is 25 ... fxg5 26.fxg6 hxg6 27.Bxg5 with a similar situation to that in the game.

26.fxg6

Another approach is to double rooks on the g-file before exchanging pawns. In that event Black himself would swap off by ... fxg5.

26 ... hxg6 27.gxf6 Rxf6

The exchanges have eased Black’s restricted game and though his g-pawn is rather exposed he does at least have a target at h3.

28.Rg2 Nf8

An extreme example of Lasker’s defensive skill. He is quite prepared to retreat his minor pieces into seemingly passive situations, in order to defend all entry points.

29.Rag1 Rff7!?  

Lasker permits White to win the g-pawn, since after 30.Nxg6+ Nxg6 31.Rxg6 Rxg6 32.Rxg6 Black can occupy the h-file by 32 ... Rh7! and mount uncomfortable pressure against the pawn on h3.

30.N2f3

Thus White declines the pawn.

30 ... Qd7

A useful square for the queen, although Black does not yet threaten the pawn on h3 because of the reply Rh2!.
31.Bd1 Rh7!

A strong move, attacking the knight on h4 and also blocking the h-file, thus establishing a genuine threat of 32 ... Qxh3+. Now the natural defence is 32.Bg5, although it is true that after the exchange of bishops White’s dark squares are rather weak. Play might continue 32 ... Bxg5 33.Qxg5 (if 33.Nxg5 then 33 ... Rhx4 34.Nxf7+ Qxf7 leaves Black two pieces for a rook ahead) 33 ... Rf4 (or 33 ... Qxh3+ 34.Rh2 Qd7 35.Nxg6+ Nxg6 36.Qxg6 Rxh2+ 37.Nxh2 with equality) 34.Rg4!. Now 34 ... Rxg4! 35.hxg4! (not 35.Rxg4? since 35 ... Rh5! 36.Qe3 Nf6 37.Rg3 Qh7! gives Black a clear advantage) 35 ... Rh6! is awkward for White.
The threat is 35 ... Nh7! and 36 ... g5! so White has to retreat his queen. Therefore best is 36.Qd2! Nh7 37.g5! (only not 37.Rg2? since 37 ... g5! 38.Nxg5 Rhx4+ wins) and White holds on.

**32.Rxg6!**

Rather than enter the lines above, White decides he might be better served by grabbing the pawn. The move relies on the fact that 32 ... Nxa6? is impossible (because of 33.Nxg6+ Kg7 34.Nxe5+, winning the queen).

**32 ... Qxh3+**

Forced.

The only other way to save the knight on g8 is 32 ... Nf6, but this fails to the simple 33.Qg2! Rg7 (else 34.Rg5+) 34.Rxg7 Rxg7 35.Qxg7+ Qxg7 36.Rxg7 Kxg7 37.Nf5+! followed by 38.Nxd6 with a winning advantage.

**33.Qh2 Qxh2+**

Forced.
34. Nxe2 Rxh4!

If instead 34 ... Ne7 then 35. Rxd6 Nxd5 (or 35 ... Bc7 36. Rh6) 36. Ng6+! Nxe6 37. Rxd5 and 38. Bxc5 with a clear advantage, but 34 ... Nf6!? is a tougher defence.

(i) For example, 35. Bf2 Rxh4 36. Bxh4 Nxe6 37. Rxe6 allows 37 ... Nxe4!!, with the idea that 38. Bxd8 is met by the clever discovered attack 38 ... Rd7! 39. Bf6+ Kh7 40. Rg2 Nxf6 and Black has regained the piece and is a clear pawn up.

(ii) A better idea is 35. Bh6! so that 35 ... Nxe6? loses to 36. Nxe6+ Kg8 37. Ne7+ Kh8 38. Rg8+ Nxe8 39. Ng6 mate. White threatens the slow but poisonous 36. Rg5! followed by 37. Ng4, 38. Nxf6 and 39. Rg8 mate. This is surprisingly difficult to meet and as a result Black will soon have to concede the exchange with ... Rxh6, leaving him with an uncomfortable game.

35. Rxe6+ Kh7 36. Rg4

Réti and co. elect to simplify, on the grounds that the ensuing endgame favours White. In reality the advantage is very slight and a player of Lasker’s strength should have little difficulty in forcing the draw.

36 ... Bd7
Black correctly allows the rooks to be exchanged, thereby avoiding a number of pitfalls that are caused by the exposed position of his king. For example, after 36 ... Rh3 37.Kg2! the rook should retire, since 37 ... Rxe3? gets into trouble after 38.Rh1! with the threat of 39.Nf1+.

37.Rxh4+ Bxh4 38.Bg4!

White maintains his edge by forcing the exchange of his bad bishop for Black’s correspondingly good one. The trade cannot be avoided since on 38 ... Be8 White replies 39.Bh5!.

38 ... Bxg4 39.Rxg4?!

It would have been more accurate to recapture with the knight as this would make the occupation of its best square f5 easier to achieve.

39 ... Be1!

This forces the c-pawn to advance thus creating a pawn formation with weaknesses on c4 and e4. This factor is the principal reason why Black
should be able to hold the game.

40.\textit{c4 bxc4 41.bxc4 Nd7!}

Another accurate move. From d7 the knight can jump to b6 hitting the c-pawn or to f6 attacking e4.

42.\textit{Rg2 Nb6}

Forcing the rook to a passive location.

43.\textit{Rc2 Bg3}

After the last few moves Black has improved his chances to the extent that it is now White who must play accurately to ensure the draw.

44.\textit{Ng4!}

White realizes that he needs to manoeuvre his knight to the outpost on f5 via h6.

44 ... \textit{Kg6?}
Even in innocuous positions there are frequently hidden tactical ideas lurking to snare the unwary. This is a perfect example, since by carelessly placing the king on the g-file Black lays himself open to a potentially fatal continuation. White should now play 45.Rg2! and the bishop cannot move because of 46.Nxe5+. If 45 ... Rf1+ then simply 46.Bg1 wins, so Black must try 45 ... Rf3 but then 46.Bxc5! Nxc4 (46 ... dxc5 47.Nxe5+) 47.Nh2! and 48.Bf2 gives White a clear material advantage, which he should be able to convert into a win.

45.Nh6?

White notices that Black has erred but fails to find the right move to exploit the lapse. Though the text move causes Black some discomfort, it is much weaker than 45.Rg2.

45 ... Rf3?!

A safer response would be 45 ... Rf6! because if then 46.Rg2? (46.Nf5 is correct and maintains
equality) Black emerges on top with 46 ... Rf1+! 47.Rg1 (47.Bg1? Kxh6) 47 ... Rxg1+ 48.Kxg1 Bf4!.

Now 49.Nf5 is met by 49 ... Bxe3+! 50.Nxe3 Kg5 and 51 ... Kf4 picking off the e-pawn, whilst on 49.Bxf4 exf4 wins the c-pawn.

46.Nf5

Of course if 46.Rg2 then 46 ... Rxe3 47.Nf5 Rxe4 wins.

46 ... Rxf5!?

Lasker and his comrade recognize that the immediate sacrifice of rook for knight is best, since if 46 ... Kf6? then 47.Kg2! forces Black to relinquish the exchange in more unfavourable circumstances.

47.exf5+ Kxf5

Black has few problems in getting the draw because the white rook is tied down to the defence of the weak pawn on c4.
48. Kg2 Bf4 49. Kf3

If he exchanges bishops the black king will infiltrate and win the c-pawn.

49 ... e4+ 50. Ke2 Be5 51. Rc1 Bb2 52. Rc2 Bd4

White dare not capture the bishop since the pair of passed pawns created after 53 ... cxd4 would be too powerful.

53. Bd2 Ke5 54. Be1 Kf4 ½–½

White can make no real progress without risk and so agrees to the draw.

1918

Brown, W – Gibbs
London
Max Lange Attack (C55)

Although it might be classified as an opening trap, this brief encounter is a very pretty miniature.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d4

In this game Gibbs allows the Max Lange Attack, a theoretical minefield. The opening has been extensively analysed since the middle of the nineteenth century, and there are numerous pitfalls for both sides to avoid.

4 ... exd4 5. 0-0 Bc5
With this move, Black accepts the invitation to enter into the Max Lange. Today, most players would prefer to play the other main variation running 5 ... Nxe4 6.Re1 d5 7.Bxd5 Qxd5 8.Nc3!, which usually leads to an equal game.

6.e5 d5 7.exf6 dxc4

The normal position in the Max Lange has been reached but as mentioned above, the whole variation is full of gruesome dangers for the unwary.

8.Re1+ Kf8?!

Just about playable if followed up correctly, but normal and far safer is 8 ... Be6 9.Ng5 Qd5! (not 9 ... Qxf6? since 10.Nxe6 fxe6 11.Qh5+ wins) and a complicated game ensues.

9.Bg5!

With the unpleasant threat of 10.fxg7+ and 11.Bxd8. If now 9 ... g6 then 10.Bh6+ followed by 11.Bg7 is very strong.
9 ... gxf6

Black is now two pawns ahead but his king will be driven to an exposed position. The alternative, 9 ... Qd7, looks unnatural and is met by the elegant continuation 10.Bh6! gxh6 11.Qd2! and wins.

10.Bh6+ Kg8 11.Nc3!

A fairly typical idea in these romantic king’s pawn openings (see for example the note to move five in this game), but attractive nevertheless. The knight is immune because of 12.Qxd8+ Nxd8 13.Re8+ Bf8 14.Rxf8 mate.

11 ... Bg4?!

Looks threatening but leads to problems. One of two better attempts is 11 ... Bf5, which guards the e4 square. White’s best is then still 12.Ne4! since after 12 ... Bxe4, 13.Rxe4 leaves Black with difficulties in preventing penetration along the g-file (for example 13 ... Ne7 14.Nxd4 is strong). Instead, 12 ... Bf8 can be played – to trade off the bishop – but 13.Qd2 favours White, who has excellent compensation for the pawns. The other possibility at move eleven is
the immediate 11 ... Bf8, forcing 12.Bxf8 Kxf8 and now 13.Ne4 again gives White a fine game.

12.Ne4

Obvious but very powerful.

12 ... Bb6?!

Again, the retreat 12 ... Bf8 should have been considered, although White has an even easier game than in the similar variations discussed above.

13.Qe2!?

Not the most obvious square for the queen – in the variations in this game she is usually happier on d2 – but this move sets a lovely trap, into which Black blindly falls.
Plausible but fatal.

14.Nxe5!!

A brilliant queen sacrifice, which logically exploits the dark-squared weaknesses around the king.

14 ... Bxe2

Alternatives do not alter the outcome. If 14 ... Bf5 then 15.Qg4+!! Bxg4 16.Nxg4 leads to the same mate.

15.Nd7!!

If 15..Qxd7 then 16.Nxf6 is mate, and otherwise 16.Ndxf6+ Qxf6 17.Nxf6 mate follows.

Black resigns.
1919

Przepiórka, D – Dominik, P
Warsaw
Queen’s Gambit (D63)

Such is the great depth of chess, this magnificent battle is virtually unknown.

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 0-0 6.Nc3 Nbd7 7.Rc1

A common move in the Orthodox Queen’s Gambit Declined. White tries to avoid moving his bishop on f1, since if Black plays ... dxc4 (as he often does) then the bishop would waste another tempo when recapturing.

7 ... a6

An interesting and logical alternative to the traditional move 7 ... c6, preparing ... dxc4 and ... b5.

8.cxd5

White elects to exchange pawns, although there were a number of equally viable options. In addition to simple development such as 8.Bd3 or 8.Qc2, White has tried 8.a3 or even 8.a4!? in this position, and the constraining 8.c5 is also a frequent choice.

8 ... exd5 9.Bd3 c6

Now 10.Qc2 would transpose into a common line in this opening, but White prefers to castle.

10.0-0

Now nine out of ten players would simply slide the rook to e8, but Dominik makes an interesting attempt at simplification.
10 ... Ne4!? 11.Bf4

Of course not 11.Nxe4?, when 11 ... dxe4 wins a piece. However 11.Bxe4 is also possible, as after 11 ... Bxg5 12.Nxg5 Qxg5 13.Bf3 chances are balanced.

11 ... f5

Creating a type of Stonewall structure and preparing an aggressive king’s side attack.

12.Ne5

White advances his knight and has the intention of driving away the black knight with 13.f3.

12 ... g5!? 13.Nxd7

After 13.Bxe4 fxe4 14.Nxd7 similar positions arise to those in the game.
13 ... Qxd7!

A clever recapture enabling the white bishop to be challenged by ... Bd6, which would not be possible after 13 ... Bxd7 14.Be5.

14.Be5 Bd6!

Striking before White can consolidate with 15.f3.

15.f4!?

Uncompromising play from both sides. White might have considered the simpler 15.Bxd6 Qxd6 when Black’s advanced pawns might become a weakness as the endgame approaches.

15 ... g4 16.h3?

Superficial in the extreme. The short-term attack against the g4 pawn is ineffectual but the serious weakening of the dark squares is enduring and causes White difficulties as the game progresses.

16 ... gxh3 17.Bxe4
He could not recapture by 17.gxh3? since 17 ... Bxe5! 18.fxe5? Qg7+ wins for Black, whilst on 18.Bxe4 fxe4! wins the pawn on h3.

17 ... fxe4

Opening the c8–h3 diagonal.

18.Bxd6

White continues to exchange pieces to relieve the pressure.

18 ... Qxd6 19.g4?

Very optimistic but very poor. White intends to round up the h3 pawn to regain material equality, but this move is extremely weakening. A better idea would have been 19.Qh5 Qg6 20.Qxg6+ hxg6 21.Kh2 hxg2 22.Rg1 and White can fight for a draw.

19 ... Qg6!
Obvious and strong, presenting White with all sorts of problems on the f, g, and h-files.

20.\text{g}5

Otherwise 20 \ldots \text{Bxg4} follows with devastating effect.

20 \ldots \text{h}6!

Black continues with the seemingly unstoppable build-up on the g-file.

21.\text{Kh2} \text{hxg5} 22.\text{Rg1}!

This counter-pin looks easily refuted, but as so often there is a drop of poison in the position.

22 \ldots \text{g}4

Surely this must be completely winning?
23.Na4?

Missing the spectacular 23.Nxd5!!, when 23 ... cxd5? is met by 24.Rxc8! Raxc8 25.Rxg4 Qxg4 26.Qxg4+ and White wins. However, Black can do better with 23 ... Rf7! 24.Nb6 (apparently very strong) 24 ... Rg7!!.

If now 25.Nxa8? then 25 ... g3+ leads to mate, so he must play 25.Rg3!, leading to a fascinating position. After 25 ... Rb8 26.Nxc8 Rxc8 White could try to win the g-pawn with 27.Qe2 but Black has a superb defence in 27 ... Qh5! 28.Rc1 Kh8!! 29.Rxg4? Rcg8!! 30.R1g3! Rxc4!! 31.Rxh3! Qxh3+! 32.Kxh3.
Now after the wonderful 32 ... R4g7!! White must surrender his queen to avoid mate. Therefore, on the twenty-ninth move in this line the g-pawn is inviolate and the position is somewhat in Black’s favour, though a draw looks to be a likely outcome.

23 ... Bf5!

Now White’s tactical ideas do not work, and Black is left with a clear advantage of two pawns. His only problem is how to break through, as White might be able to create a blockade with Rg3.

24.Nb6 Rae8 25.Rc5 Re7 26.a4?!

To be safe White should have preferred Rg3 either now or on the previous move, since it physically prevents the g-pawn from advancing.

26 ... g3+!?

If Black does not do this then White simply plays 27.Rg3 and he will be unable to break through without a major sacrifice (for example ... Rxf4 at
some stage might be necessary). The move played is incredibly risky, since White immediately wins the queen for rook.

27.\textit{Rxg3} Qxg3+ 28.\textit{Kxg3} Rg7+

Black’s combination is based on the subsequent penetration to g2 with his rook, but will it be enough for the queen?

29.\textit{Kh2}

White allows his king to be locked in the corner. The other choice is 29.\textit{Kf2}!?, which probably leads to a draw with best play. After 29 ... Rg2+ 30.Kf1 Bg4! White must prevent the impending 31 ... h2 and so 31.Qe1! is best, and now 31 ... Bf3! 32.Qh4 h2! leads to the key position.
Here Black threatens 33 ... Rg1+ 34.Kf2 h1Q and the attempt for mate or perpetual with 33.Nxd5? fails to 33 ... Rg1+ 34.Kf2 h1Q! 35.Ne7+ Kf7 36.Rf5+ Ke8 37.Rxf8+ Kxf8 38.Qf6+ Ke8 and White cannot prevent mate. White’s superb saving resource is 33.Rc1!! when a draw by perpetual check results after 33 ... Rg1+ 34.Kf2 Rxc1 35.Qg5+.

29 ... Rg2+ 30.Kh1 Bg4!

Gaining an important tempo and heading for the beautiful f3 square.

31.Qg1!

Przepiórka deserves credit for recognising that this unnatural move is necessary, otherwise 31 ... Bf3 is crushing. For example, if 31.Qe1? then 31 ... Bf3 32.Qh4 h2! and Black wins. The text move pins the rook against the king and thus prevents lateral discovered checks. If now 31 ... Rxc1+ then 32.Kxg1 leaves the position unclear, so Dominik plays for more.

31 ... Bf3!?
32.Rc2!? 

A major alternative here is 32.Nd7! with the nasty threat of 33.Ne5 hitting the bishop. After 32 ... Rxg1+ 33.Kxg1 Rf7 34.Ne5 Rh7 35.Kh2, White is a pawn down but has a good knight versus a bad bishop. Black could be more ambitious and try 32 ... Rf7!?, with the idea of 33.Ne5 Rfg7! 34.Nxf3 exf3, leading to this fascinating position, which is, however, probably drawn.
Here, after 35.Qf1 f2 36.Rc1 a5, Black can prepare to exchange into a king and pawn ending by advancing his king to d6 and playing his pawn to b6. Then ... Rg1+ leads to the pawn ending: however, as long as White keeps his b-pawn on b2, Black would be unable to win that ending. The pawn must not move to b3 because Black would then play ... c5, forcing the favourable exchange dxc5 bxc5. With the pawn on b3 White cannot avoid this exchange since ... c4! would be decisive. So the diagrammed position is most likely a bizarre draw, which would somehow have been an appropriate end for this strange game.

32 ... Kf7

Making way for the other rook.

33.Rxg2

This exchange reduces Black’s options, but gives him a strong pawn on g2.

33 ... hxg2+ 34.Kh2 Rh8+ 35.Kg3
The king takes a delicate route to f2.

35 ... Rh1 36.Kf2

From this moment Black always has the option of playing ... Rxg1 and transposing into a bishop versus knight ending. White’s king would be bound to defend the g1 square, leaving Black’s king free to try to break through against the knight. For the time being, however, Black decides to hold ... Rxg1 in reserve.

36 ... a5!

Preventing 37.a5 which would defend the knight and make a blockade more achievable.

37.Ne8!?

37.Nd7 is far safer since the strong squares on c5 and e5 are then available. But White is trying to use his knight to pick off a few pawns.

37 ... Ke6 38.f5+!?  

White takes violent action, since he is worried that his knight will be trapped after 38.Nb6 Kd6. Now if 38 ... Kxf5 then 39.Nd6+ Ke6 40.Nxb7 is good for White.

38 ... Kf6! 39.Nd6 b6 40.Nc8  

Threatening the b-pawn from behind.

40 ... c5  

If he can create another passed pawn he must surely win. Still he refrains from capturing the queen, and this fact ultimately decides the game.

41.Nxb6 cxd4
42.Nxd5+

A bad mistake, based on a huge oversight, which leads to a lost game. Better is 42.exd4!, which gives White some outside chances of salvaging a draw. For example, if 42 ... e3+ (other moves such as 42 ... Kxf5? allow White to consolidate with 43.Nxd5 followed by 44.Ne3) then 43.Kxf3 Rfxg1 44.Nxd5+ Kxf5 45.Nxe3+ Ke6 46.Nxg2 gives some drawing chances: for example, 46 ... Rxg2 fails to win after 47.Kxg2 Kd5 48.Kf3! (not 48.b4? axb4 49.a5 Kc6! and Black wins) 48 ... Kxd4 49.Ke2 Ke4 50.Kd2, etc. Therefore, Black must try to pick off some of the white pawns with 46 ... Ra1 but the win still remains to be proved.

42 ... Ke5!

Now if the knight moves, simply 43 ... dxe3+ wins the queen.

43.f6 dxe3+ 44.Nxe3

Forced, since 44.Kxe3? loses to 44 ... Rfxg1 45.f7 Rd1! 46.fQ g1Q mate.
44 ... Kxf6

Now White is nearly in zugzwang, because his king must stay on f2 and his knight is reduced to shuffling off and on the e3 square. Black’s winning plan is thus simply to advance his king to mop up his opponent’s pawns. The only evasive action that White can take is 45.Nxg2, but after 45 ... Rxg1 46.Kxg1 Bd1 Black should win. This variation does at least present Black with the task of playing an accurate ending, whereas after the next move White is immediately lost.

45.b4? axb4 46.Nd5+

Now we witness White’s blunder unfold in front of our eyes.

46 ... Ke6 47.Nxb4 e3+

Ouch. This move, which vindicates Black’s earlier decision not to capture the queen, must have come as a rather unpleasant surprise to White. An abrupt end to an enthralling game.

White resigns.

1920

Spielmann, R – Möller, J
Gothenborg
King’s Gambit (C33)

Another game that will be unfamiliar to many, but again the ideas and tactics are well worth examination.

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Qf3!?
This obscure variation of the King’s Gambit was invented by Breyer and has a poor reputation, but it is not without its points. In fact both Spielmann, in tournament games, and Capablanca, in simultaneous exhibitions, liked to play 3.Qf3.

3 ... Nc6

Another good response is 3 ... d5!, when White’s queen is not ideally placed on f3.

4.c3

White’s strategy is based on building a c3–d4–e5 pawn centre.

4 ... Nf6 5.d4 d5!

As always in the King’s Gambit, Black aims to free his game by playing a well-timed ... d5.

6.e5 Ne4 7.Bb5?
A careless move, all the more so because a few rounds earlier in the same tournament Spielmann had played the correct 7.Bxf4 against Tarrasch. Admittedly, in that game Black found the correct antidote to White’s opening with 7 ... f6! but that was a far better line than the “improvement” chosen by Spielmann here.

7 ... Qh4+!

Now White will have difficulties in recovering the pawn on f4, leaving him a pawn down with scant compensation.

8.Kf1 g5

Bolstering the pawn on f4 and, more importantly, intending 9 ... Bg4 when the threat of mate on f2 means White loses his queen.

9.Nd2

It turns out that 9 ... Bg4 is very hard to stop, so Spielmann is forced to find a creative solution to his predicament.

9 ... Bg4

Of course Möller played this in a flash but with hindsight the less forcing 9 ... Bf5 should have been seriously considered; White’s position would then be horribly tied up and he would remain a pawn down.
10. Nxe4!

Forced, and leads to exciting play. Two years later, in a similar position, Capablanca played the same queen sacrifice against Chase, an opponent in a simultaneous exhibition in New York. After a well-played attack Capa, who must have familiar with this game of Spielmann’s, emerged victorious in just twenty-five moves.

10 ... Bxf3 11. Nxf3

White has just two minor pieces for the queen but he is able to use his whole army in a coordinated onslaught against the black position.

11 ... Qh6 12. Nf6+

12. Nexg5 was also possible but Spielmann prefers first to prevent Black from castling before breaking open the king’s side pawns.

12 ... Kd8 13. h4!
Black’s pawn structure starts to crack under the pressure and his queen is short of squares, a fact which Spielmann expertly exploits during the course of the game.

13 ... Be7!?

Black decides to try to complete his development, rather than provoke White’s attack with 13 ... g4!? 14.Ng5 (threatening 15.Nxf7+) 14 ... Qg6 15.Nxd5 (if 15.Bxf4?! then 15 ... h6! gives Black good counter-chances) and both sides have possibilities.

14.Nxg5 Qg6 15.Nxd5!

Correctly avoiding the exchange of this knight, and picking off a useful centre pawn.

15 ... Bxg5

At least Black can still remove one of White’s galloping horses from the board.
16.hxg5 Qc2?

Looks aggressive, and threatens 17 ... Qd1+, but markedly inferior to 16 ... Qxg5! 17.Bxf4 Qf5, when the exposed position of White’s king gives Black hopes of drumming up a drawing or even winning attack. White might then try 18.Rh6!? but the active 18 ... Rg8 keeps Black alive.

17.Be2!

Not just a preventative move but also an attacking one. If now 17 ... Kd7, to connect his rooks, then 18.Bg4+ pushes the king back.

17 ... Ne7!

Black starts along the correct plan, intending 18 ... c6 and 19 ... Kc7 with relative safety for the king.

18.Nxf4

White’s material deficit is shrinking and he now has two bishops and two pawns for the queen, plus of course a powerful and active hold on the position.

18 ... c5?!

A dual-purpose thrust, creating a bolt-hole for the king on c7 and also attempting to disturb White’s pawn centre, but more circumspect would have been 18 ... c6, though here too White’s advantage is clear.

19.Rh3!

Spielmann finds a cunning reply. Black’s last chance now is 19 ... Qf5 although after 20.g4! Qd7 21.d5! White’s attack remains very strong.

19 ... cxd4?
No doubt expecting the simple recapture but succumbing to a piece of Spielmann wizardry.

20. **Rd3!!**

A simple but devastating move, pinning the pawn and containing the vicious threat of 21. **Bd1!!** trapping the queen. Black is now lost, as 21 ... Qa4 fails to 22. **Rxd4+**.

20 ... **Kc7**

Slightly better though ultimately hopeless is 20 ... **Rc8**.

21. **Bd1**

Black’s poor queen finally meets her grisly demise.

21 ... **Qxd3+ 22.Nxd3 dxc3 23.bxc3**

With two bishops and a pawn for a rook, White has a winning material
advantage.

23 ... Rad8 24.Be2 Nf5 25.Bf4

On the open board Black is helpless against the bishops.

25 ... Kb8 26.Rb1 b6 27.e6+ Kc8 28.Ne5

29.Ba6+ will be crushing.

Black resigns.

1921

Grau, R – Guerra Boneo, A
Buenos Aires
Vienna Opening (C26)

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3

The Vienna Opening, as also seen in our game from 1913.

2 ... Nf6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3

More accurate than 4.f4?!, which allows 4 ... Bxg1! 5.Rxg1 d5! with the initiative.

4 ... d6 5.f4
The sharpest move, although 5.Be3 and 5.Bg5 are also possible. The game now takes on the character of a King’s Gambit Declined.

5 ... Nc6

The tempting 5 ... Ng4?! is shown to be unsound after 6.f5! Nf2 (or 6 ... Qh4+ 7.g3 Qh5 8.h3 Bxg1 9.Qxg4 with a better game) 7.Qh5! with a strong attack.

6.f5

A better move is 6.Nf3, which keeps the central tension.

6 ... Na5?!

One can understand Black’s desire to exchange the powerful bishop, but the move is inferior to 6 ... Nd4! with 7 ... c6 to follow, when Black’s game is preferable.

7.Bg5
An aggressive player might prefer 7.Qf3!, with the idea of a subsequent g4 and h4, giving a strong attack.

7 ... Nxc4 8.dxc4 c6

Necessary to prevent the knight coming to the d5 square.

9.Qd3 a6

Black begins his queen’s side expansion, avoiding 9 ... 0-0, which would only give White a target for his operations on the king’s wing.

10.Nf3 b5 11.0-0-0?!

Provocative in the extreme and probably foolhardy, since the king is hardly in a safe haven on the queen’s side.

11 ... Qb6 12.h3

White’s predicament is clearly illustrated by this move, which is intended to support the g4 advance. In reality, g4 hardly threatens anything anyway, so Black continues to prepare his forces for action along the a and b-files.

12 ... Rb8 13.cxb5 axb5 14.Bxf6

Exchanging the bishop for the knight has little effect, but it is hard to suggest a sensible alternative plan.

14 ... gxf6 15.Nd2

He decides to remove the bishop in order to generate some pressure against the pawn on d6, but Black retains a clear advantage with a simple king advance.
15 ... Ke7! 16Nb3 Ra8!

It becomes clear that the pawn on a2 is weak.

17Nxc5

Perhaps it would have been better to play 17.Kb1 intending 18.Nc1, but in any event Black would have a strong attack.

17 ... Qxc5 18.Rd2

Loses the a-pawn but if he tries to regroup with 18.Kb1 then 18 ... b4 19.Ne2 Ba6! 20.Qd2 Bxe2 21.Qxe2 Ra5! (21 ... Qa5?! 22.Qc4!) follows and Black will double rooks on the a-file with telling effect. White’s idea is to try to win back the pawn by tripling his major pieces on the d-file.

18 ... b4 19.Nb1 Rxa2 20.Rhd1 Rd8 21.g4

Finally White gets in his g4 advance and his attack starts to become a reality.
Having established such a strong position, Black now conceives a risky plan of manoeuvring his queen to a2. It is dangerous because it permits White to generate serious threats against his king.

23.g5 Qa5?

Black proceeds with his intention, but he should not simply ignore White’s mounting demonstrations on the king’s side. Instead, 23 ... fxg5 24.hxg5 hxg5 should have been played, when White would have trouble in proving his attack has any real substance.

24.gxf6+ Kxf6 25.Qe3!

Now Black is in trouble.

25 ... Qa2?

In blindly carrying out his plan, Black overlooks a forced mate. Instead, 25 ...
Ke7! would have given him good drawing chances as after 26.Qxh6 Qa2! White is forced to take perpetual check.

26.Qxh6+?

White misses it as well. The correct continuation is 26.Rxd6+ Rxd6 27.Qxh6+! (only not 27.Rxd6+? which loses after 27 ... Ke7!) 27 ... Ke7 28.Qxd6+ Ke8 29.Qd8 mate.

26 ... Ke7 27.Qg5+ Ke8?

Very carelessly played. After 27 ... f6 the threat of mate on b1 forces White to take perpetual check. Black believes that the text move also leads to a draw but he gets a nasty shock.

28.Qg8+ Ke7

29.f6+!

If now 29 ... Kxf6 then 30.Rxd6+ leads to mate, whilst 29 ... Kd7 is clearly
hopeless after 30.Rxd6+ Kc7 31.Qxd8+. Black is thus forced into 29 ... Ke6 but he resigns as soon as he plays the move, not waiting for 30.Qe8+!! Rxe8 (30 ... Kxf6 only delays the mate by a few moves) 31.Rxd6 mate.

29 ... Ke6

Black resigns.

1922

Hartlaub, C – Shories, G
Hamburg
Boden-Kieseritzky Gambit (C55)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6

The venerable Petroff Defence is still one of Black’s best neutralizing openings. In this game White plays an interesting if somewhat speculative gambit variation.

3.Bc4!?

This and the next move constitute an ancient continuation known as the Boden-Kieseritzky Gambit, offering the pawn on e4 in return for rapid development.

3 ... Nxe4 4.Nc3!? Nxc3
Black accepts the gambit in preference to the safe alternative 4 ... Nf6 5.Nxe5 d5.

5.dxc3 f6!

This unnatural move is perfectly correct, as is the alternative 5 ... c6 6.Nxe5 d5. However the obvious 5 ... d6? would be a mistake for White plays 6.Ng5! (better than 6.Nxe5 Qe7!) and if 6 ... Be6 then 7.Bxe6 fxe6 8.Qf3! wins.

6.0-0

Here 6.Nxe5? loses to 6 ... Qe7.

6 ... Nc6!?

More normal is 6 ... d6 but the text is also playable.

7.Nh4

This is the standard method of commencing the attack on the white squares
around the king.

7 ... g6

To prevent 8.Qh5+.

8.f4

White tries to maintain the pressure.

8 ... Qe7!?

Intending 9 ... Qc5+ picking off the bishop, hence White’s next.

9.b4 d6 10.f5

White continues his plan to force open lines around the king.

10 ... Qg7

Defending g6 in this way is again normal practice in this opening.

11.a4!?

A curiously slow move to play when gambitting a pawn.

11 ... g5?!

Black is afraid to allow White time to improve the position of his pieces prior to a breakthrough, but this is surely a strategic blunder. He essentially concedes all the white squares to his opponent.

12.Qh5+ Kd8 13.Nf3

In compensation for his pawn deficit, White has a lovely position and has merely to complete his development before assessing where to direct his attack.

13 ... h6
If 13 ... Bxf5 then 14.Nxg5 is very strong.

**14.b5 Ne7**

14 ... Na5 also came into consideration, although after 15.Ba2 White keeps his edge.

**15.Nxe5!!**

A beautiful move, ripping open Black’s defences. If now 15 ... fxe5 then 16.f6 Qh7 17.fxe7+ Bxe7 18.Rf7! leads to the following position.

15 ... dxe5 16.Rd1+ Nd5

Or 16 ... Bd7 17.Be6 Nd5 18.Rxd5 Bd6 leading to similar positions to the game continuation.

17.Rxd5+ Bd6 18.Ba3 Ke7

An interesting alternative is 18 ... Bxf5!!, with the idea that 19.Bxd6?! cxd6 20.Rxd6+ Kc7 actually relieves the pressure on the black position: for

19.Rc5!?

An interesting move threatening 20.Rxc7+. Clearly White wins after 19 ... Bxc5+? 20.Bxc5+ Kd8 21.Rd1+ Bd7 22.Be6, but 19 ... Kd8 is a harder nut to crack. White does best to increase the pressure with 20.Rd1, since 20 ... Bxf5 21.Qf3! is very strong. Shories decides instead to advance the threatened pawn.

19 ... c6 20.Rd1

20.bxc6 is also possible, although 20 ... b6 gives Black some chances after the exchange of dark-squared bishops.

20 ... Rd8
Black is completely tied up and it is difficult to suggest a decent alternative.

21.Rxd6!

An aggressive finale, although inserting 21.bxc6 bxc6 before capturing on d6 is just as effective.

21 ... Rxd6

Or 21 ... Kxd6 22.Rxc6+ Kd7 23.Be6 mate.

22.Rxc6!

Brutal and spectacular, although the prosaic 22.bxc6 also wins.

22 ... bxc6 23.Qd1!

This pretty switchback by the queen wins. After, say, 23 ... Bd7 24.Qxd6+ Ke8 25.bxc6 Bxf5 26.c7! Rc8 27.Be6! Black’s position is hopeless.

Black resigns.
Réti, R – Becker, A
Vienna
English Opening (A38)

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.g3

Réti is famous for pioneering the eponymous Réti Opening, commencing 1.Nf3 d5 2.c4. This game transposes into the Symmetrical English.

3 ... g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.d3 0-0

Although the position looks very dull, Réti conceives the idea of castling on the queen’s side, which is highly unusual in this type of opening.

7.Be3 d6
8.h3!?  
Many would prefer 8.Qc1 with the intention of 9.Bh6, exchanging dark-squared bishops. Réti, however, wishes to play Qd2 so that he may castle and therefore pushes the h-pawn to prevent ... Ng4.

8 ... Bd7 9.Qd2 Rb8

Correctly preparing for operations on the b-file.

10.Bh6 Ne8?

It is unnecessary to play this move, since after the superior 10 ... a6 11.Bxg7 Black can safely capture with his king.

11.h4!

Taking advantage of the missing knight on f6, Réti launches his h-pawn up the board.

11 ... Bg4

To prevent the pawn from advancing further.

12.h5!

Réti plays it anyway.

12 ... gxh5


13.Nh4!

With the plan of developing the white-squared bishop outside the pawn chain.
13 ... Qd7 14.Be4!

With 15.f3 and a huge attack to follow.

14 ... Nd4!

Becker retaliates, threatening 15 ... Nc2+ 16.Qxc2 Bxh6 with a comfortable game.

15.0-0-0

If 15.f3 then 15 ... f5! 16.Bd5+ e6 keeps Black in the game.

15 ... b5!

Active counterplay from Becker, who notices that if the white knight on c3 moves then the pawn on e2 hangs.

16.f3 b4!

Producing an extremely complex position.
White now has a number of choices.

(i) 17.fxg4? is disastrous after 17 ... bxc3 18.bxc3 (or 18.Qg5 Nxe2+ 19.Kb1 Rxb2+ 20.Ka1 Rxa2+! 21.Kxa2 Qa4+ 22.Kb1 c2 mate) 18 ... Qa4! when mate can only be prevented by ruinous loss of material.

(ii) 17.Bxg7? loses in a similar fashion after 17 ... bxc3! 18.Qh6 (if 18.bxc3 Qa4 wins) 18 ... Nxe2+, etc.

(iii) 17.Nd5! is an excellent move and after 17 ... Nxe2+ 18.Qxe2! (not 18.Kb1 Nc3+ nor 18.Kc2 Qa4+) 18 ... Bxh6+ 19.Kb1 Black must do something about his attacked bishop.
Moves such as 19 ... f5 succumb to the pretty tactic 20.Nxe7+! Qxe7 21.Bd5+!, so Black has really only two choices. Firstly, he can try 19 ... Be6 but 20.Nf5!! Bxf5 21.Bxf5 is very good for White because 21 ... Qxf5 loses to 22.Nxe7+; and if 21 ... e6 then 22.Rxh5 exf5 23.Rxh6 gives White an excellent position with a ready-made attack along the h-file. After 20.Nf5!! the only other move to prevent 21.Nxe7+ is 20 ... Bg5 but then 21.Rxh5 is absolutely crushing. So instead of 19 ... Be6 Black must find a decent alternative, and the only possibility is 19 ... e6 20.fxg4 exd5.
Now White has three lines.

(a) 21.Nf5! presents Black with a dilemma. If 21 ... Bg7 then 22.Ne7+! Kh8 23.Nxd5 leaves White with a good position, and 21 ... Bg5 22.Rxh5 dxe4 23.Rxg5+ Kh8 24.dxe4 is no better. Thus he must try 21 ... dxe4 22.Nxh6+ Kh8 23.Qxe4 (23.Rxh5 Qe6 is less clear) 23 ... hxg4 24.Nf5! f6 (or 24 ... Nf6 25.Qf4 with the advantage) 25.Rh4! with a strong attack.

(b) That is quite good for White, but he might try for more with the dramatic 21.Bxh7+!? Kxh7 22.g5!, when it is all too easy for Black to fall victim to a whirlwind attack. For instance, 22 ... Bxg5 loses to 23.Qxh5+ Kg8! (if 23 ... Bh6 then 24.Nf5 Qe6 25.Qg5! and mate follows) 24.Nf5!! (better than 24.Qxg5+? Ng7!) 24 ... f6 25.Qg6+ Ng7 26.Rh7! Rf7 27.Rdh1 and mates, and 22 ... Bg7 turns out to be unsatisfactory after 23.Qxh5+ Kg8 and now not 24.g6? Nf6! but 24.Rdf1!!. The threat of 25.Nf5 is then difficult to meet, Black’s best being 25 ... f5! but then 26.Nxf5 Rxf5 26.Qh7+ Kf8 27.Rxf5+ gives White a significant edge. So does 21.Bxh7+ work? Not entirely, because Black can do better after 21 ... Kxh7 22.g5 with 22 ... Qg4!, which forces the exchange of queens. The position after 23.Qxg4 hxg4 24.Ng2 is no more than level.
(c) Another attempt by White is 21.g5!? because if 21 ... Bg7? then
22.Bxh7+! transposes to the best line in (b) above. Moreover, if Black plays
21 ... Bxg5? then 22.Bxh7+! again transposes into a winning line for White.
So Black has to defend with 21 ... dxe4 and then 22.Qxh5 is best, as 22.gxh6?
Qg4! is fine for Black. Now Black should avoid the natural 22 ... Bg7 since
23.Rdf1! Be5 (other moves fail to 24.Nf5, including 23 ... Qe6 24.Nf5 h6
would be a mistake after 24 ... Bxf6 25.gxf6 Kh8 and holds) 24 ... f6 25.g6!
Rb7 (White threatened 26.Qxh7+ Qxh7 27.Rxh7 and 28.Nh6 mate)
26.gxh7+! Kh8 (or 26 ... Qxh7 27.Qg4+, etc) 27.Qh6! followed by 28.Nh4!
wins. Thus Black has only two choices after 21.g5 dxe4 22.Qxh5. Firstly 22
... Qe6 is possible, leading to an unclear position after 23.Rdf1 f5 (23 ... Bg7?
24.Nf5! h6 25.Nxh6+!! wins as above, whilst White is better after 23 ... Bxg5
24.Qxg5+ Kh8 25.Ng2) 24.g6 hxg6 25.Nxg6 (25.Qxh6 Kf7! and Black is
okay) 25 ... Bg7 26.Nxf8 Kxf8 27.Rxf5+ Nf6. And secondly after 22 ... Ng7!
23.Qxh6 Nf5 24.Nxf5 Qxf5 Black has at least equality.

All these variations are highly complex and demonstrate that 17.Nd5 is
certainly a playable move. Réti, on the other hand, decides that it is more
important to block the b-file.

17.Nb5!? Nxe2+!?

Consistent, although 17 ... Nxb5!? was also possible. If then 18.fxg4 Nc3!
19.bxc3? bxc3! and Black wins. In this line 19.Bxg7 Nxe4 (not 19 ... Nxe7
because the removal of the dark-squared bishop means that 20.bxc3! is then
can play the immediate 18.Bxg7 Nxe7 19.fxg4, which keeps the initiative.

18.Kc2!

Best, because with the knight on b5 rather than d5 the complications after
18.Qxe2 Bxh6+ 19.Kb1 Be6! favour Black. Furthermore, if 18.Kb1 then 18
... Nc3+ 19.bxc3 (if 19.Kc2 Nxe4 20.dxe4 Be6!) 19 ... bxc3 20.Qc1 (or
20.Qc2 Bxh6 21.fxg4 a6 and wins) 20 ... Rxb5+! 21.cxb5 Qxb5+ 22.Ka1
Bxh6 and Black wins.

18 ... Nxc3
Black could also retreat the bishop because after 18 ... Be6 19.Bxg7 Nhxg7 20.Qxe2 either 20 ... f5 or 20 ... a6 regains material. However, White will then be able to complicate matters with an appropriately timed g4, smashing open the king’s side, so Becker’s choice is understandable.

19.fxg4!


19 ... Nxe4?!

19 ... Nhx1!? looks somewhat better, since after 20.Rxh1 d5 (not 20 ... Qxg4 or 20 ... hxg4 because of 21.Nf5!) 21.Bxd5 Rxb5 seems to win material. 22.Nf5! is then again best, threatening 23.cxb5 Qxd5? 24.Nxe7+. Black is then in trouble after 22 ... e6 23.Bc6! but 22 ... Rb6! holds: for example 23.Qg5 Rg6! 24.Nxe7+ Kh8 25.Nxg6+ fxg6! or 23.Rxh5 e6 24.Nxg7 Nhxg7 25.Bxg7 exd5 26.Bxf8 Kxf8 and Black is fine. The move Becker actually played has the advantage of removing the light-squared bishop from the board but Réti still has the initiative.
20.dxe4 Qe6!

A powerful move, simultaneously hitting the bishop and the pawns at c4, e4 and g4. Black also takes care not to make the careless blunder 20 ... a6? since 21.Nf5! axb5 (21 ... Bxh6 22.Qxh6) 22.Bxg7 N.xg7 22.Qg5 wins. Can Réti now find a safe way to convert his attack into a win?

21.Nf5!


21 ... Qxc4+ 22.Kb1 Qxe4+ 23.Ka1

White manages to get his king safely tucked away in the corner, but meanwhile Black is merrily picking off most of his pawns whilst his knight on b5 is still trapped.

23 ... hxg4

Capturing the pawn with the queen would concede the g-file with disastrous results after 24.Nxg7 N.xg7 25.Rdg1. And the plausible 23 ... Rxb5 is refuted, not by 24.Qg5? because Black wins after 24 ... Qxg4!, but by 24.Bxg7! N.xg7 25.Qg5 Qe5 (here 25 ... Qxg4 is met by 26.Nh6+) 26.Rde1! Qf6 27.Nxe7+. The text move leads to a curious situation – White has a knight and two pawns against Black’s eight pawns, five of which are passed. Despite this, the position is very much in White’s favour since the immediate tactical factors outweigh material considerations.
24.Bxg7?

Surprisingly, now that 24.Qg5! has become possible, White delays the move and misses the win. There is no defence after the queen move, as the following analysis shows.

(i) 24 ... Qe5 25.Bxg7 Nxg7 26.Rxh7!! (very pretty, although other moves also win) 26 ... Kxh7 27.Rh1+ Kg8 28.Qxg7+! Qxg7 29.Nxe7 mate.

(ii) 24 ... e6 25.Nbxd6 Qe5 26.Bxg7 Nxe7 27.Qh6 mates.

(iii) 24 ... f6 25.Qh5! and now:

(a) 25 ... Rxb5 26.Bxg7 Nxe7 27.Qxh7+ Kf7 28.Qxg7+ Ke8 29.Rhe1 wins.

(b) 25 ... e6 26.Ne7+ Kh8 27.Bxg7+ Kxg7 (or 27 ... Nxg7 28.Ng6+ Kg8 29.Qxh7+ Kf7 30.Nxd6 mate) 28.Qh6+ Kf7 29.Qxh7+! Qxh7 30.Rxh7+ Ng7 31.Nxd6+ Kxe7 32.Rxg7+ Kd8 33.Nb5+ and mate next move.

(c) 25 ... Rf7 26.Bxg7! Rxg7 (26 ... Nxe7? allows mate in two) 27.Rde1! Qd3
(27 ... Qb7 leads to defeat in the same manner) 28.Nbxd6! Nxd6 29.Nxg7 Kxg7 30.Rxe7+ Kf8 31.Rxh7 and wins.

24 ... Nxa5

If instead 24 ... Qxf5? then White wins with 25.Bxf8 Kxf8 26.Qh6+ Ng7 (or 26 ... Kg8 27.Rh5!) 27.Nxd6!.

25.Nxg7?

Here White might have been tempted by 25.Rxh7 hoping for 25 ... Kxh7? 26.Qh6+ Kg8 27.Qxg7 mate, but after 25 ... Qxf5 26.Rdh1 f6 27.Qh6 Qg5! (not 27 ... Nh5 because White actually wins after 28.Rxe7) a black victory is clear.

In fact, rather than 25.Rxh7 the calm retreat 25.Ng3! may be the best move:

(i) If 25 ... Qg6 then 26.Rh6! wins the queen, though after 26 ... Rxb5 27.Rxg6 hxg6 28.Qe2 Black has chances to hold. As we shall see below, Black’s attempts to save the queen are tempting but dangerous.

(ii) If 25 ... Qe5 then 26.Qh6! forces 26 ... f6 but then 27.Rde1! Qxg3 (or 27 ... Qg5 28.Qxh7+ Kf7 29.Ne4 followed by 30.Rh6 and wins) 28.Rxe7 Rf7 (forced) 29.Qxh7+ Kf8 and now the beautiful move 30.Re4! threatening mate on h8. In order to avoid material loss, Black’s reply 30 ... Rfb7 is mandatory, but 31.Qg6 forces 31 ... Kg8 32.Rxg4! Qxg4 (else 33.Qh7+ will win the knight on g7) 33.Qxg4 Rxb5. Now White has at his disposal a truly magnificent manoeuvre in 34.Qc4+! Kf8 35.Rh8+!! Ke7 36.Qg4!!.
After this breathtaking move Black cannot move his knight since 37.Rh7+ wins, and 36 ... Kf7 37.Rh7! Rg8 38.Qc4+ picks off the rook, so he must take on h8 but there follows 37.Qxg7+ and 38.Qxh8 and White should win.

(iii) If he tries 25 ... Qf3 then 26.Qh6 f6 27.Qxh7+ Kxf7 28.Nh5 Rg8 29.Nxd6+!! exd6 30.Rhf1! wins.

(iv) 25 ... Qe6!? leads to some fascinating lines after 26.Nc7!. Now if the queen moves to c4 then 27.Qh2! (preventing 27 ... Qc2) 27 ... f6 28.Qxh7+! Kf7 29.Nf5 wins. If the queen moves to f6 then 27.Rdf1 Qe5 (27 ... Qd4 is met in the same way) 28.Qh6 f6 29.Nf5!! is conclusive. Finally, if the queen moves to d7 (c8 is similar) then White has to find the brilliant continuation 27.Qh6 f6 28.Qxh7+ Kf7 29.Nh5! Rg8 (29 ... Qxc7 30.Qxg7+! Ke8 31.Rhe1 and 32.Nxf6+ wins) 30.Nxg7! Rxg7 31.Qh5+ Kf8 (or 31 ... Rg6 32.Qd5+ and if 32 ... e6 then 33.Nxe6! wins, or if 32 ... Kg7 33.Ne6+ Kg8 34.Rh8+!! Kxh8 35.Qh5+ mates) 32.Qd5! and the threat of Rh8+ is crushing. In the line above Black might try to be clever with 30 ... Rh8!? instead of 30 ... Rxg7 but then White really has a chance to show off with 31.Nge6+!!.
31 ... Rxe7 32.Rxe7+ Kg6 (not 32 ... Kg8 since 33.Rg7+ leads to mate next move) 33.Rg7+ Kf5 34.Rd5+ Ke4 35.Nxc5+ wins the queen and the game. So, after 25 ... Qe6!? 26.Nc7!, Black has to play 26 ... Qe5. White continues 27.Qh6 f6 28.Rd5!! Qxg3 29.Ne6! Kf7 30.Nxg7 and the threat of 31.Nf5 wins.

(v) Finally, if 25 ... Qc4 then 26.Qh2! is the right move because the black queen is kept from c2. After 26 ... f6 27.Qxh7+ Kf7 White again emerges on top after 28.Nf5 Rg8 29.Nbd6+!.

25 ... Kxg7

It appears that the check by the white queen on h6 is going to pose severe problems for Black, but this is an illusion.

26.Qh6+ Kg8?

A horrible blunder, since it is intuitively obvious that the king is better placed on h8, allowing the rook to move to g8. Indeed, after 26 ... Kh8! White is left in some difficulty. 27.Rdg1 is met by 27 ... Rf8, so the best attempt is
27.Nxd6!. Then 27 ... exd6 is an error; White plays 28.Qf6+ Kg8 29.Rh5! Rfd8 (others are worse) 30.Rg5+ Kf8 31.Rf1! Qc4 32.Re1! and Black is lost. But Black can do far better with 27 ... Qg6!, intending the exchange of queens. If White accedes then he is left with a knight against five pawns, a difficult situation. The alternative is to retreat the queen, but then Black can capture the knight and White is left with a very difficult game. For example after 28.Qf4 exd6 29.Rxd6 Qg7 30.Rdh6 f5! White is in severe trouble. Thus 26 ... Kh8! should lead to a black win.

**27.Rdg1**

After this Black loses very quickly, but the threat of 28.Rxg4+ Qxg4 29.Qxh7 mate cannot be met satisfactorily. If 27 ... Rfc8 White secures victory by 28.Rh4! Kh8 (if 28 ... f5 then 29.Qxh7+ Kf8 30.Qg6! Qe5 31.Rgh1 wins) 29.Nxd6!. Another try is 27 ... Rfd8 because the d-pawn is covered, and if 28.Rh4 then 28 ... Kh8 29.Rxg4 Rg8 is interesting. However, White does have a win after 30.Rg7!, since Black is in virtual zugzwang. White will simply manoeuvre his knight to a decisive square. For example, 30 ... Qf5

28.Rxg4

Becker now sees that mate on either g7 or h7 is coming, so he gives up his queen.

28 ... Qxh1+ 29.Qxh1 Rg8 30.Rxg8+

Black’s pawns are clearly insufficient against the queen and knight. He resigns – and Réti presumably breathed a huge sigh of relief.

Black resigns.

1924

Janowski, D – Lasker, Edward
New York
Queen’s Pawn (D00)

This is an extremely well-known encounter, particularly the finale with the three white pawns sitting on the seventh rank. But the whole game is fascinating and worthy of close inspection.

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3

White will set up a “Colle triangle” with pawns on c3, d4 and e3. In the Colle Opening proper the dark-squared bishop stays on c1 until after White has liberated his position with e4. Janowski’s system has the drawback of leaving the pawn on b2 undefended, a fact which does not go unnoticed by his opponent.

3 ... e6

Very common in such positions, although there is a strong case for delaying this move. Immediate queen’s side action with 3 ... c5 and 4 ... Qb6 is more
active.

4.Bd3 c5 5.c3 Qb6

Lasker attacks b2 and forces White to consider how best to defend the pawn. The move chosen by Janowski seems most natural, but 6.Qc1! is probably stronger, since the pawn on e3 is given additional protection.

(see next diagram)

6.Qc2 Nbd7?!

Such a developing move cannot be called a mistake.

However, an alternative scheme of development on the queen’s side with 6 ... Nc6 would cause White more problems. For example, after 7.Nf3 Bd7 8.Nbd2 Rc8!, Black would be threatening the awkward 9 ... cxd4! 10.exd4 Nb4! with the initiative.

The dilemma of whether to exchange bishops is often encountered in these types of queen’s pawn openings. Generally, White should refrain from swapping unless there is a very good reason to do so. This is because Black would be ill-advised to play 8 ... Bxf4 9 exf4, since this concedes the open e-file to White whilst simultaneously rendering his thematic ... e5 break impossible. Therefore, 8.Nf3 would be a better alternative.

8 ... Qxd6 9.f4!?

Janowski plays in his typically energetic fashion. This strategically desirable move, controlling the e5 square, weakens the dark squares around his king and leads to a double-edged position.

9 ... Ng4!?

A very tempting move, since it forces White to play some rather cumbersome defensive manoeuvres. Calmly developing with 9 ... b6 would be a less provocative option.

10.Nf1

Forced, because 10.Ke2? loses to 10 ... c4. Despite the clumsy appearance of such moves, White’s position is essentially sound.

10 ... cxd4

Taking advantage of the fact that 11.exd4 allows 11 ... Qxf4.

11.cxd4 Qb4+!

With the idea that 12.Qc3 is likely. Then, after the exchange of queens, Black would have a clear advantage because of the weakness of his opponent’s pawn on c3.

12.Ke2!

This courageous move means that White can maintain a dynamic equilibrium, and Black’s advanced pieces will inevitably be forced to retreat.
12 ... Nb6 13.a3 Qe7 14.Nf3

Carefully developing the knight – to prevent Qh4! – before playing h3.

14 ... Bd7 15.h3 Rc8?

An obvious intermediate move, but very careless. There was no need to do this and 15 ... Nf6! was much better, with good chances along the c-file after a later … Rc8.

16.Qxc8+!!

This must have knocked Lasker off his seat. Janowski correctly gives up his queen for mere rook and knight, which would normally be insufficient. The key feature of the situation in this game is the h-file, which will be dominated by White’s rooks. This prevents Black from completing his development – castling is ruled out – so White is able to gain a strong initiative.

16 ... Nxc8 17.hxg4 Nd6!
Despite his oversight, Lasker quickly adjusts to the new demands of the position. He understands that he must seek counterplay on the queen’s side and intends to play 18 ... Nc4. If White takes the knight, Black will have a three versus two pawn majority and will be back in the game.

18.Rc1?

A natural move, seizing the c-file and apparently preventing 18 ... Nc4. The move is a mistake, however, because Black can play the move anyway, immediately closing the c-file. Accordingly, 18.N1d2! was much better.


20 ... b5!

Black has cleverly achieved his goal and White needs to act quickly or he is in danger of being overrun on the queen’s wing.

21.Rh5!

An elegant move, simultaneously preparing for the doubling of rooks on the h-file and taking control of the fifth rank. If Black now tries to castle, 22.Rch1 h6 23.g5! is very strong.

21 ... f6 22.g5 Kd8?

Lasker decides to abandon the pawn on h7, by setting out on a long journey with his king. In doing so, he misses the opportunity to remove one of the dangerous knights by 22 ... Bc6!. For example 23.Rch1 Bxf3+! 24.Nxf3?! (24.gxf3 would be safer) 24 ... b4! 25.Rxh7 Rxh7 26.Rxh7 c3! and White is struggling.

23.Rch1 Be8

Perhaps Lasker had planned 23 ... g6, defending the h7 pawn with his queen. Unfortunately, this fails to 24.gxf6 and not only does the pawn fall, but White has the e5 square available for his knights.
24. Rxh7 Rxh7 25. Rxh7 fxg5

A curious looking move, which concedes the e5 and g5 squares, but in order to prevent 26.gxf6 Qxf6 27.Ne5 Black would have had to play the ungainly 25 ... Qf8 26.gxf6 gxf6, conceding the seventh rank.

26. Nxg5

With two knights on the board, Black has to be very circumspect. White now threatens 27.Rxg7! Qxg7 28.Nxe6+, thus Black has to take evasive action.

26 ... Kc8 27. Rh8 Kb7 28. Nde4!

Black’s position is full of holes that the knights can exploit. He has now to take measures against the threat of 29.Nxe6! Qxe6 30.Nc5+.

28 ... Kb6 29. Nc5

As a result of his manoeuvres, Janowski now threatens to capture the pawn on e6. The obvious defensive resources 29 ... Bf7 and 29 ... Bd7 fail against
30.Rb8+! and 31.Rb7! winning the bishop. An interesting try is 29 ... e5?!, but after 30.Nge6 exd4 31.exd4 Black is still in a difficult predicament. Lasker decides instead to activate his sad bishop.

29 ... Bc6 30.Ngxe6 Bd5

If 30 ... Bxg2, 31.Rh7 is crushing.

31.Ng5 Ka5!?

An imaginative idea; Black tries to generate some sort of counterplay with his pawns, rather than grabbing the g-pawn. After 31 ... Bxg2, 32.e4! keeps the bishop shut in the corner.

32.e4 Bc6 33.Ke3!

The king supports all three pawns at once.

33 ... Be8

The bishop returns to e8, trying to keep the rook out of the action.

34.Nf3 b4 35.Ne5

Attacking the vulnerable c-pawn. Here Lasker had originally planned to create a passed pawn by 35 ... c3, but saw that after 36.bxc3 bxa3 White has 37.Rxe8! Qxe8 38.Nc4+! Kb5 39.Nd6+ Ka5 40.Nxe8 a2 41.Nb3 Ka4 42.Na1 Ka3 43.Kd3! and 44.Nc2, winning.
35 ... Bb5 36.a4?

This move should still be good enough for a win, but makes the task that much more difficult. The proper course is 36.Rb8!, threatening 37.axb4+! Kxb4 38.Nc6 mate. Black is defenceless, because 36 ... bxa3 loses to 37.Nxc4+! Kb4 (not 37 ... Bxc4? 38.b4 mate) 38.Nxa3. The only other try is 36 ... b3 but this fails to 37.a4! and Black must give up his queen to avoid mate.

36 ... Bxa4 37.Nxc4+ Kb5 38.Ne5

With the nasty threat of 39.b3, winning the bishop.

38 ... Ka5 39.Rb8!


39 ... Bb5 40.g3

Played to prevent the queen infiltrating via h4.
40 ... g5 41.Nf3

A solid retreat. The more aggressive alternative was 41.f5, but Janowski was clearly concerned that this would open the c1–h6 diagonal for the queen.

41 ... gxf4+ 42.gxf4 Qh7

Trying to penetrate with his queen. This allows White to play 43.Rb7!, which picks up the a-pawn and wins easily. Black could not, however, have played 42 ... a6? since 43.Nb3+! Ka4 44.Nfd2! threatens 45.Nc5+ and Black has to give up his queen or be mated.

43.f5?

Janowski loses patience and decides to push his pawns, rather than stopping to capture the a-pawn. One can sympathize with him, because it is certainly not at all obvious that Black’s only chance to save this game lies in that very pawn.

43 ... Qh1 44Nb3+ Ka4 45.Nbd2

White has ensured that his pieces are well coordinated and prepares to set his impressive pawn mass in motion.

45 ... Qh6+ 46.Kf2 Bd3 47.Rg8 Qf4?!

It must have been tempting to attack the e-pawn, but White has an easy defence. It would have been wiser immediately to play 47 ... a5.

48.Rh8! b3

The e-pawn cannot be taken because of 49.Rh4.

49.Rh4 Qc7 50.f6!

This advance should prove decisive.

50 ... Bc4 51.Rh5?
Janowski again misses the most clear-cut route to victory. It is not difficult to see that 51.Nxc4 Qxc4 52.Rf4! forces the passive 52 ... Qf7 (when White wins as he pleases), since 52 ... Qc2+ 53.Kg3 Qxb2 54.f7 Qa3 55.f8Q Qxf8 56.Rxf8 b2 57.Rb8 is conclusive.

51 ... Be6 52.Re5!

This time Janowski finds the very best plan, namely sacrificing his rook for the bishop.

52 ... Qf7 53.Rxe6!! Qxe6 54.e5!

Lasker’s only chance is the a-pawn that White spurned on move forty-three.

54 ... Kb4 55.Ke3 a5 56.Kf4

The king and knights begin to shepherd the pawns home.

56 ... a4 57.Ng5 Qd7 58.f7!
Finally, a pawn reaches the seventh rank. Black cannot now play 58 ... Qxd4+ because of 59.Nde4 Qd8 60.Ne6! Qh4+ 61.Kf5 and White’s king reaches safety, allowing the f-pawn to triumph.

58 ... Qc7! 59.d5 a3!

The only chance.

60.bxa3+ Kc3!

Declining to recapture in order to keep the king active.

61.d6 Qf8 62.Ne4+!? 

There were two good alternatives.


(ii) 62.Ne4+!? Kc2 63.e6 b2 64.e7 Qh6 65.f8Q Qh4+ 66.Kf5 b1Q 67.e8Q with an overwhelming material advantage – though with four queens on the board care would be required.

62 ... Kd3 63.e6 Qh6+ 64.Kf5 b2 65.d7!

If instead 65.e7 then White cannot escape the checks after 65 ... Qh7+ 66.Ke6 Qh3+ 67.Kd5 Qf5+! 68.Kc6 Qc8+!.

65 ... Qf8 66.a4!

At first sight a curious move, particularly when the natural 66.Kf6 looks crushing. But appearances can be deceptive, and Black has 66 ... b1Q! 67.Nxb1 Kxe4, when White cannot play 68.e7? because of 68 ... Qh6 mate. Perhaps White could still win with 68.Nc3+ but there is always the danger of perpetual check. The text move threatens simply to advance the pawn to a7, when White wins by Kf6 and e7.

66 ... Qa8 67.e7
An amazing position. Black can only hope that White allows perpetual check, but this seems unlikely. This game was played in the twenty-first round of the famous International Tournament in New York, and the situation on the board was giving the other participants in the event cause for much amusement. The sight of three connected passed pawns on the seventh rank resulted in giggles and titters from the normally respectable grandmasters.

67 ... Qd5+ 68.Kf6 Qd4+ 69.Ke6?

After many ups and downs, White makes the final error and the game is drawn. The winning line was 69.Kg6! b1Q! 70.d8Q! Qg1+ 71.Ng5, and Black is lost.

69 ... b1Q! 70.Nxb1

The difference between the game and the line above is clear: if White had tried 70.d8Q then 70 ... Qa2+! 71.Kf5 Qxf7+ is a draw.

70 ... Qxe4+ 71.Kf6 Qh4+
And he does indeed have perpetual check. If White tries to slip out by 72.Kg7 then Black plays 73 ... Qxe7 74.d8Q+ Qxd8 75.f8Q Qd7+ and picks off the a-pawn with a drawn ending. A really remarkable game.

½–½

1925

Grünfeld, E – Tarrasch, S
Baden-Baden
Queen’s Gambit (D10)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 Bf5

In this variation Black develops his bishop outside the thematic c6–d5–e6 pawn chain. This is the same idea that Janowski used as White in our previous game.

4.cxd5 cxd5

Tarrasch has also played 4 ... Bxb1!? 5.Rxb1 Qxd5 here, but it is hard to see the benefit of giving up the bishop for the undeveloped knight.

5.Qb3 Qd7

Not the most comfortable position for the queen. 5 ... Qc7 and 5 ... Qc8 are two alternative squares.

6.Nc3 e6 7.Nf3 f6

Tarrasch considers it important to prevent the knight from landing on the e5 square where it would control many key white squares. The weakness along the a4–e8 diagonal that has been caused by the situation of the queen and king starts to have an impact.

8.Be2
Interestingly, Grünfeld refrains from the active Bb5, preferring to rely on the latent potential of his pieces.

8 ... Bg6 9.Bd2 Nc6 10.Na4!

Since 10 ... b6 would be horribly weakening, there is little Black can do to prevent the knight landing on c5. Black is thus forced to give up one of his bishops for the knight if he wishes to eradicate its influence.

10 ... Bd6 11.Rc1 Nge7 12.Nc5! Bxc5

Forced – this highlights again the unfortunate placing of the queen.

13.Rxc5 0-0 14.0-0

White has obtained a commanding position on the queen’s side. To create counterplay Black will need to attack through the centre or on the king’s wing.

14 ... Rac8 15.Rfc1 Kh8
Removing the king from the a2–g8 diagonal in readiness for an advance of his e-pawn.

16.h3

Patient play from Grünfeld, who takes time to create a luft for his king before making headway with Qa3 and b4.

16 ... e5!?

As mentioned above, if Black is to generate any sort of play in this game he needs to strike back at White before winning threats arise on the queen’s side. The disadvantage of this advance is that the pawn on d5 will become seriously weak as the game progresses.

17.Bb5 e4

Black blocks the centre and obtains a territorial advantage, which is very much in keeping with Tarrasch’s style.

18.Nh2 Bf7

Defending the d-pawn.

19.Qa3!
At last White slides his queen to a3. The move is a multi-purpose one, attacking the pawn on a7, freeing the b-pawn and also eyeing the rook on f8.

19 ... Qe6

If 19 ... Qd6 then Grünfeld had prepared 20.Rxc6 Qxa3 21.Rxc8!!, sacrificing the queen for a powerful position. After 21 ... Qxb2 22.Rxf8+ the mobility of White’s pieces will prevail. However, in this line Black can capture the rook with 20 ... Rxc6!, which equalizes after 21.Qxd6 Rxd6 22.Bb4 Rc8!. In fact, 20.Rxc6 is inferior to 20.Bxc6!, which is extremely powerful. If 20 ... Nxc6 then 21.Bb4! creates havoc along the diagonal and White wins after 21 ... Nxb4 22.Rxc8! or 21 ... Qb8 22.Rxc6! bxc6 23.Bxf8 Rxf8 24.Rxc6. Similarly, if 20 ... Rxc6 then 21.Bb4! is again very good for White, since neither 21 ... Ra6 22.Rc7! nor 21 ... Rxc5 22.Rxc5! Qd7 23.Qxa7 helps.


With the bishop removed from the scene of action, White’s b-pawn is now clear to advance.
21 ... Kg8

Tarrasch is clearly annoyed that in several variations the rook on f8 hangs to
the queen, so he elects to defend it.

22.b4 Nb8?!

A very passive retreat and probably unnecessary.

23.b5 axb5 24.Bxb5 Rxc2 25.Rxc2 Nec6

This is Black’s defensive scheme. It would have been an error to try to
simplify further with 25 ... Rc8 because of 26.Qxe7!!: if 26 ... Qxe7 then
27.Rxc8+ will leave White a bishop ahead, whilst 26 ... Rxc2 27.Qd8+ Be8
28.Bxe8 wins.

26.Nf1!

Since Black is tied up White begins some patient manoeuvres to improve his
position.

26 ... Rc8 27.Ng3 Nd7

Tarrasch tries to unravel the knots.

28.Be2

Now the bishop also has the h3–c8 diagonal to occupy, hence Black’s next.

28 ... g6 29.Qb2!

Intending to double major pieces on the b-file.

29 ... Rb8

Contrary to initial appearances, 29 ... Rc7!? is also possible. If then 30.Ba5
b6! is interesting; White should not play 31.Bxb6?! because of 31 ... Rb7, so
the bishop must retreat.
30.a4 Kg7 31.Qb1 Qd6

In order to move the queen to c7, defending b7.

32.Rb2 Qc7 33.Nf1!

A clever move, preparing 34.f3 followed by Be1 and Bg3. Gradually, White’s patient positioning is bearing fruit.

33 ... f5 34.Be1 Nf6!

Tarrasch sees the threat and reacts well. He plans to whip up a quick counter-attack after 35.f3 g5!? 36.Bg3 f4.

35.f4!

Once more Grünfeld – determined to prevent Tarrasch from confusing matters in a tactical battle – plays with maximum solidity.

35 ... Ne8
Evidently preparing to route the knight to d6, where its influence is somewhat increased. Having sewn up the situation on the queen’s flank, Grünfeld now decides to put pressure on the king’s side.

36.g4!

Despite their being clustered on or near the back rank, White’s pieces are perfectly placed to jump into action on either side of the board. Over the next few moves Black is rather helpless as his opponent inexorably improves his position.

36 ... Nd6 37.Ng3 Be6 38.gxf5!

Clearly the right decision – the open g-file will benefit the strategically better side.

38 ... gxf5?!

With this move Tarrasch maintains the locked pawn structure in the centre, but the open lines created eventually lead to his downfall. White is far better placed to exploit the g-file and therefore 38 ... Bxf5! would have been the correct recapture. Grünfeld would still have the advantage, but in order to create effective avenues of attack he would have to weaken his own position by advancing the h-pawn.

39.Bf1

Clearing the path for the rook to reach g2 and at the same time keeping an eye on the c4 square.

39 ... Rg8 40.Kh2 Kh8

Black has managed to tuck his king away in the corner, but his principal problem is the weakness of the dark squares that White’s bishop will be able to exploit.

41.Qc2

The purpose of this sly queen move is to pin the knight on c6, preventing 41
Na5 which Black wants to play in order to occupy c4.

41 ... Qd7

Unpinning the knight and defending the bishop.

42.Qc5

Tempting the black rook to oppose the queen.

42 ... Rc8

Obvious, but the removal of the rook from the g-file should be of concern.

43.Qa3

In this position, if Black decides to play 43 ... Nc4 then 44.Bxc4! dxc4 45.d5! Bxd5 46.Bc3+ followed by 47.Rg2 is decisive.

43 ... Bf7 44.Qb3

Yet more patient manoeuvring by Grünfeld, who gives his opponent every opportunity to go wrong.

44 ... Nd8?!

This somewhat awkward retreat prepares 45 ... Nc4 but it prevents the rook from reaching g8. It would have been better to mark time with, say, 44 ... Be6 when it would be for Grünfeld to try to break through and capitalize on his advantage.

45.Rg2!

Rather than continuing the watch over c4 with 45.Rc2, this move lays a beautiful trap, into which Tarrasch falls.
45 ... Nc4?

Obvious but careless, since White now has a forced win. Better is 45 ... Nc6. After 46.Qd1 White can generate some threats on the king’s side, but these are far from decisive and after 46 ... Rg8! White still has to prove that his advantage will lead to anything concrete.

46.Bxc4! Rxc4

46 ... dxc4 also loses after 47.Qa3! Nc6 (or 47 ... Ne6 48.Nxf5 and wins) 48.d5! and the check on c3 will be deadly.

47.Qa3!

Threatening 48.Qf8+ Bg8 49.Nxf5 and wins.

47 ... Ne6 48.Nxf5

And now 49.Bh4 is very hard to meet.
48 ... Rxa4 49.Bh4!!

White plays it anyway, since if 49 ... Rxa3 then 50.Bf6+ Ng7 51.Bxg7+ Kg8 52.Nh6 mate.

49 ... h6 50.Qf8+!

If 50 ... Nxf8 then 51.Bf6+ Kh7 52.Rg7+ Kh8 53.Rxf7+ Kg8 54.Nxh6 is checkmate.

Black resigns.

1926

Yates, F – Janowski, D
Ghent
Sicilian Defence (B45)


For the modern preference 6.Ndb5 refer to our game from 1979, whilst Alekhine employed 6.Be2 in our 1933 game.

6 ... bxc6

Correctly capturing towards the centre.

7.Bd3

More common nowadays is the direct advance 7.e5, which can lead to a highly complex game. In this game Yates concentrates on sensible and flexible development.

7 ... d5

The normal counter by Black in the Sicilian, although in this position 7 ... e5 has also been played.
8.0-0 Be7 9.Qe2 0-0

White is faced with the question of how to develop his dark-squared bishop. The most common method in this variation is 10.b3 and 11.Bb2, despite this tending to weaken the queen’s side pawn structure.

10.Bf4

(see next diagram)

10 ... Bb7 11.Rad1 Re8 12.Rfe1 Qa5 13.e5

Yates finally decides to push his e-pawn, which forces the retreat of the knight and gives him chances for a quick attack against the king.

13 ... Nd7 14.Qg4

The classic bishop sacrifice 14.Bxh7+ is easily refuted by 14 ... Kxh7 15.Qh5+ Kg8 16.Re3 g6 17.Qh6 Bf8.
14 ... Nf8

An extremely good defensive square for the knight.

15.Re3

Yates brings more pieces into the attack, but Black really should have sufficient resources to defend.

15 ... g6

Not strictly necessary yet, but this move does have the advantage of threatening a nasty fork by 16 ... d4, hence White’s next move.

16.Rh3 c5

The slight weakness that this creates on b5 is more than compensated by the awkward central pawn advances that are now threatened.

17.Bg5!

Yates recognizes that the exchange of bishops will seriously weaken his opponent’s defences of the dark squares.

17 ... c4

Janowski has had enough of the bishop on its dangerous attacking diagonal so drives it away. The drawback is the inherent immobility in his own pawn centre that this advance creates.

18.Bxe7!

White swaps bishops before Black can bring his queen back with ... Qd8 to aid the defence of the dark squares.

18 ... Rxe7

If Black had captured the other bishop then 19.Bf6! would have been very strong, with Qf4 and Qh6 being practically unstoppable.
19.Bf1 Rc7 20.Qf4

A useful square for the queen, since she can now enter the opposition territory at f6, f7 or h6.

20 ... Rb8

Black intends to drum up queen’s side pressure by using the b-file to his advantage. Meanwhile, Yates continues to mount his attack on the opposite wing.

21.Rg3

So that the h-pawn may advance.

21 ... Ba6

Now the b-pawn is en prise, and 22.Rb1 looks forced.

22.h4!?

Yates comes up with a slightly wild sacrifice, which in the heat of battle is rather hard to meet. Janowski reasons that he is in no danger and can pick off the queen’s side pawns.
22 ... Rxb2 23.h5!

White’s attack is based on the weak dark squares around the king together with the lack of protection on the back rank. Black should be able to defend, but after his next move things start to get a little more difficult.

23 ... Rxc2?!

Too greedy. The calm 23 ... Rcb7 – or 23 ... Rb8 – leaves White with only minor compensation for his pawn sacrifice, although Black would clearly still have to tread very carefully.

24.Qf6!

It is surprising how swiftly White’s attack gains momentum. The immediate threat is 25.h6 followed by mate on g7 so Black has little choice in his reply.

24 ... Nd7

Better than 24 ... h6 when the loose position of the rook on c2 is shown after

(see next diagram)

25.Qd8+ Kg7?

An unfortunate choice since the queen’s control of the back rank enables White to generate a winning attack. Much better is 25 ... Nf8!, when White can draw with 26.Qf6Nd7, etc. He could try for more but it is easy to go wrong.

For example, some interesting positions arise after the attempt 26.hxg6, but they still lead to a draw since if 26 ... fxg6 then 27.Rf3 Qc5 28.Na4! Qe7 29.Rxf8+ Qxf8 30.Qxc7 Qxf2+ with perpetual check. Similarly if 26 ... hgx6 then White cannot do better than 27.Rh3 Qc5 28.Qf6 Nh7 29.Qd8+ Nf8 (29 ... Qf8? 30.Qxc7) 30.Qf6 with a draw.

White’s most interesting try is 26.h6!? with the intention of 27.Qf6. After 26 ... f5! 27.exf6? Qb6! Black will prevail so White should try the spectacular 27.Rxd5! exd5 28.Nxd5, threatening mate in two beginning with 29.Nf6+. If
28 ... Qc5 then 29.Nxc7 Qxf2+ 30.Kh2 gives White excellent chances (30 ... Qxf1? 31.Ne6 wins).

However, Black can do better by ignoring the rook and playing 27 ... Qb6!, which leads after 28.Rd6 Qxf2+ 29.Kh2 to a rather random position with chances for both sides.

Black has a material advantage and has managed to penetrate with his queen, but in return White’s pieces are rapidly converging on the black king. A draw might well be the most likely outcome as this typical variation shows: 29 ... Rf7 30.Nd5!! (not 30.Rxa6 because after 30 ... Qxf1 Black menaces 31 ... Rc1) 30 ... Qxf1 (if 30 ... exd5 then 31.e6!) 31.Nf6+ Kh8 32.Rd7! and Black must take perpetual by 32 ... Rxa6+! 33.Rxa6 Qf4+, etc. If Black tries to interpose the creative 30 ... f4!? then 31.Rxg6+! hxg6 32.Nf6+ Kh8 33.Rd7 leads to a similar result (Black actually loses if, after 33 ... Qh4+ 34.Kg1 Rxg6 35.exf6, he plays for more with 35 ... Qxh6? because of 36.Rf7! Kg8 37.Qe7!).

26.hxg6! fxg6
If 26 ... hxg6 then 27.Rh3! wins.

27.Ne4!!

A lovely coup, exploiting the pin on the d-file. If now 27 ... dxe5 then 28.Rxd7+ Rxd7 29.Qxa5 wins.

27 ... Nf8

Alternatively, 27 ... Nxe5 is met by 28.Qf6+ and 29.Qxe5 with an easy win, and if 27 ... Qb6 (with ideas on f2) then 28.Qe7+ Kh8 (or 28 ... Kg8 29.Rh3! h5 30.Rg3!) 29.Rf3! wins.

28.Rf3

With the threat of 29.Qxf8 mate. Since the black rook on c7 is pinned and the knight prevents 29 ... Qc5, Black is lost.

28 ... Nd7 29.Ng5
The quickest win – mate in two is unavoidable.

29 ... Rxf2 30.Nxe6+ Black resigns.

1927

Buerger, V – Yates, F
Scarborough
King’s Indian Defence (E62)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.g3 0-0 5.Bg2 d6 6.0-0 Nc6 7.Nc3

This is a fairly standard position in the King’s Indian Defence. Now Black often continues with 7 ... e5.

7 ... Nd7

This preparatory manoeuvre is also quite playable.

8.Be3!?
A very interesting move, holding back the advance of the e-pawn and instead developing the bishop on a useful square. In some variations White can play Nd5 and obtain active piece play in the centre. The idea has been seen in similar variations (for example see our game from 1990) and although it is virtually unknown in this precise position, no less a strategist than Petrosian once played it.

8 ... h6

Black defends the g5 square and prepares to play ... Kh7, thus preventing the typical Qd2, Bh6 ideas.

9.Rc1

Shifting the rook from the long diagonal. Most players would instinctively insert 9.Qd2 Kh7 before deciding how to continue.

9 ... e5 10.Nd5!?
An interesting sortie, the idea being to follow with 11.b4, beginning a quick queen’s side onslaught.

10 ... Kh7?!

Pedestrian and rather passive. The idea is to defend the pawn on g6 so that after ... e4 White’s Nh4 can be met with ... f5. A more active plan would be the immediate 10 ... f5.

11.b4! exd4

Black opts for this central exchange rather than the complicated alternatives.

Firstly, if 11 ... f5 then 12.b5 Ne7 13.dxe5 dxe5? loses to 14.Bg5!!, so Black must recapture with 13 ... Nxe5, giving an interesting position with equal chances.

Secondly, Black might try 11 ... e4!? with complex play. For example if White tries to get the upper hand with 12.Nh4 f5 13.Nf4 g5 14.Ne6 Qf6 15.d5, then not 15 ... gxh4 16.Nxf8+ and 17.dxc6 winning the exchange, but 15 ... Nxb4!? 16.Bd4 Ne5 17.Nxf8+?! Bxf8! 18.a3 Na6 19.f4 gxh4! 20.fxe5 dxe5 leaving Black with tremendous compensation for the exchange. However, in this last line White can improve with 17.Nxc7!, when after 17 ... gxh4 18.Nxa8 hxg3 Black’s attack looks less convincing.

12.Nxd4 Nde5?

Yates is seeking an aggressive placement for his pieces but he overlooks that this move loses a pawn. Therefore he should have played 12 ... Nxd4 (12 ... a6 is also possible) 13.Bxd4 Ne5.

13.Nb5!

The pawn on c7 cannot be defended.
13 ... Be6 14.Nbxc7 Rc8 15.Nxe6!?  

Buerger takes the opportunity to obtain the two bishops, although after 15.Nb5! both the a-pawn and the d-pawn are further targets and if 15 ... Bxd5 then 16.cxd5 Nxb4 17.Rxc8 Qxc8 and Black’s pawns will soon be picked off.

15 ... fxe6  

White is clearly winning but the open bishops’ files and his active minor pieces give Black certain chances to create complications.

16.Nf4  

White perceives the pawn on e6 to be an easy target.

16 ... Qe7 17.Bh3  

Increasing the pressure on e6.

17 ... Rf6!?
This gives up the exchange to a nice tactic, but it is conceivable that Yates saw it and played it anyway, since at least he gets some counter-chances in this line, which is more than can be said after 17 ... Nd8 18.c5! d5? 19.Nxd5! and wins.

18.Nd5!

Forking queen and rook.

18 ... exd5 19.Bxc8

The point of the combination. Now, however, Yates can create some threats, although they should be insufficient to save the game against best play.

19 ... d4!

A clever advance, tempting White into 20.Bxd4? Nxd4 21.Qxd4 Rf8!, which wins the bishop due to the threat of 22 ... Nf3+.

20.Bd2
This bishop defends the pawn on b4, but it would have been easier to play 20.b5! dxe3 21.bxc6, when the reduction in the number of pieces makes the win more straightforward.

20 ... d3!?

Yates has nothing to lose and therefore plunges into the most unclear line.

21.f4

If 21.exd3 then 21 ... Nxd3, with ideas involving ... Nd4 or ... Nce5, gives Black excellent chances.

21 ... Nd4!

Continuing with the bold approach and putting pressure on e2. The other option was 21 ... Nxc4 22.exd3 Ne3 but after 23.Bxe3 Qxe3+ 24.Rf2 White prevails (24 ... Ne5 is met by the calm 25.Rc3).

22.fxe5?

Whether or not this is objectively correct, the unfathomable consequences that result are reason alone for preferring 22.e3! (22.exd3 Nxd3 again gives Black decent play), when after 22 ... Ne2+ 23.Kg2 Black’s attack fizzles out if he captures the rook on c1. He might try 23 ... Nc6 but this allows White sufficient time to consolidate with 24.Bg4.

22 ... dxe2

22 ... Rxf1+ 23.Qxf1 leads to nothing.

23.exf6 exd1Q

If now 24.Rxd1 then 24 ... Bxf6 leads to an unbalanced position, where White’s two rooks will prove stronger than the queen only if they can provide some protection for the king. Buerger, however, continues with his grand vision.
24.fxe7

This is the point of Buerger’s combination, as the pawn on e7 looks very menacing.

24 ... Qe2

The natural move, preventing the pawn from promoting. Consideration should also have been given to other moves, as the following fascinating variations show.

Firstly, although interesting, 24 ... Qxd2? can quickly be demonstrated to be an error after 25.e8Q Ne2+ 26.Kh1 Nxc1 27.Be6!, when 27 ... h5 28.Bg8+ leaves White with a clear advantage.

Secondly, there is the wonderful possibility of 24 ... Nf3+!? after which White must be very careful. White cannot play his king to h1 (since 25 ... Qe2 wins) but might play 25.Kf2. Then 25 ... Bd4+ 26.Be3 Qd2+ 27.Kxf3 Qxe3+ 28.Kg2 Qe2+ 29.Kh3 Qh5+ is drawn (it being too risky for Black to take the e-pawn). He could also play 25.Kg2 when after 25 ... Qxd2+ we
reach this position.

Now White has two decent looking attempts to win.


(ii) The correct move is 26.Kxf3!, which gives him good winning chances. After 26 ... Qd3+ 27.Kg2! (only not 27.Kf4? Qe2! and White is in a mating net) 27 ... Qe2+ 28.Rf2! Qe4+ 29.Kh3 Qxe7 30.Rcf1! White has a clear advantage.
25.Rce1

Now the pawn must surely give White victory.

25 ... Nf3+!

Nothing else can save Black, and this clever idea picks up the rook on e1 by force.

26.Rxf3

This and White’s next two moves are forced.

26 ... Bd4+ 27.Be3

Not 27.Kh1? Qxf3 mate.

27 ... Qxe1+ 28.Kg2

Again White is mated if he makes a slip with 28.Rf1? Qxe3+ 29.Kg2 Qe2+ 30.Kh3 Qxf1+, etc.

28 ... Qe2+ 29.Bf2!

The right way to go for the win. If 29.Rf2? then 29 ... Qxe3 30.Rf7+ Bg7 31.Bd7! Qe2+ forces a draw; or 29.Kh3? Qxf3 30.e8Q Qh5+ again with perpetual check.

29 ... Bxf2

29 ... Qxe7 30.Bxd4 leaves White with a clear advantage.
30.\textbf{Rf7+! Kg8}

If 30 \ldots Kh8 then White has at his disposal the fabulous move 31.Bg4!! and whether Black takes the bishop or not, White queens his pawn and wins since there is no perpetual check.

31.\textbf{Rf8+?}

This permits Black to escape with a draw. Although 31.Bg4 fails in this position to 31 \ldots Kxf7, there is a win by 31.Be6!!, when 31 \ldots Qxe6 loses to 32.Rf8+ and 33.e8Q, whilst a discovered check by the bishop (say 31 \ldots Bc5+) fails to 32.Rf2+!! Qxe6 33.Rf8+ and 34.e8Q.

31 \ldots Kg7 32.e8Q

White has finally promoted his pawn but, by the skin of his teeth, Black still has the draw.

32 \ldots Be3+ 33.Kh3
Of course not 33.Rf2? since 33 ... Qxf2+ 34.Kh3 Qf1+ leads to mate.

33 ... Qh5+ 34.Kg2 Qe2+ ½–½

1928

Rejfír, J – Treybal, K
Prague
Queen’s Gambit (D53)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 a6?!

A somewhat dubious move, because although the idea of supporting an advance of the b-pawn to b5 after exchanging pawns on c4 is a good one, in this position White can avoid this continuation by exchanging central pawns himself.

An interesting development for the knight, which is heading for g3 where it will control some important white squares, such as f5 and h5.

8 ... b6

Preparing the advance of the c-pawn.

9.Ng3 g6

Black evidently wishes to prevent the knight reaching the f5 square, but this advance severely weakens the dark squares. A better plan would have been to kick away the bishop with 9 ... h6, since 10.Bh4? would lose a piece after 10 ... g5. White would then have the choice of exchanging this bishop for the knight on f6 or retreating with 10.Bf4. In either case, the pressure on Black’s position is somewhat alleviated.

10.Bh6

An annoying move to meet, since castling is prevented.

10 ... Bb7 11.h4!

Enterprising play, intending an advance to h5 thus capitalizing on the development of his knight.

11 ... c5 12.h5 c4?

As usual in Queen’s Gambit positions, the decision to advance the c-pawn in this fashion is a strategically critical one. After this move, there is little pressure on White’s centre, and Black’s only chance of active operations lies with an advance of the queen’s side pawns. But this is a slow plan of action, and White has time to continue with his offensive on the other wing.


A cunning retreat, which threatens 15.hxg6 fxg6 16.Bxg6, exploiting the pin of the h-pawn against the rook.

14 ... Rg8
Black dare not castle headlong into a ready-made attack, so this move is necessary to save the pawn.

15.hxg6 hxg6 16.e4!

Should this pawn be exchanged, the open lines created should greatly favour White.

16 ... Nb6

An interesting idea is the alternative 16 ... b4!?, when an unbalanced position arises after 17.Nxd5 Nxd5 18.exd5.

17.e5 Nfd7 18.Qg4!

From this square the queen exerts great influence on the light squares, and the possibility of a later advance of the e-pawn becomes a consideration.

18 ... Nf8
One can well understand Black’s eagerness to control e6 and g6.

19.Nf5!

Utilising the pin on the g-pawn to improve the position of this knight.

19 ... Bc8

Another backwards move by Black, this time to pin the knight. White’s next, however, shows that little good is achieved by the retreat.

20.Qg3 Ne6

With this move, Black intends 21 ... Nxf4 22.Qxf4 gxf5 winning a piece.

21.Be3 Kd7?!

A courageous dual-purpose move. Primarily it allows the queen to protect the rook, thus menacing 22 ... gxf5, but secondly it signals the plan of shifting the king to the queen’s side, where it may be slightly safer than in the centre of the board. The main drawback is that the d-pawn is temporarily starved of the support of the queen, a fact which White fails to exploit.

22.Nh6 Rf8
23.f4?

Although not in itself a bad idea, by making this advance White misses a simple but surprisingly strong idea in 23.Qf3!, which forks d5 and f7. No matter what Black does, he loses an important pawn and his game starts to fall apart.

23 ... Kc6 24.Ke2

The purpose of this move is to unite his rooks, and to continue with b3 or a4, breaking up the pawn chain.

24 ... b4 25.Na4

A good post for the knight, which prompts Black to play the following strange king move.

25 ... Kb5!? 26.Nxb6

A simple way to retain the advantage. If 26.b3 then 26 ... Nxa4 27.bxa4+ Kb6
is less clear.

26 ... Qxb6 27.Rad1

White again adopts the strategy of keeping to the simple lines, rather than sacrificing a pawn with 27.a4+. Then Black would be best advised to decline the offer with 27 ... Kc6, because if he accepts by 27 ... bxa3 28.bxa3 Nxd4+ 29.Bxd4 Qxd4 30.Rab1+ Kc6, White generates a strong attack by 31.Nxf7!.

27 ... Ng7

To forestall the advance of the f-pawn.

28.Qf3 Be6

The pawn on d5 was en prise.

29.g4

Now Black is unable to stop 30.f5 unless he occupies the square himself.

29 ... f5 30.gxf5 Nxf5

The move that Black would like to play, 30 ... gxf5, loses after 31.Rdg1! Ne8 32.Nxf5! Bxf5 33.Qxd5+.

31.Nxf5 gxf5

Again, the bishop is needed to protect the d5 pawn.

32.Rh6

Seizing the sixth rank and increasing the discomfort for his opponent.
32 ... Rae8

If 32 ... Rh8, to challenge the rook, then 33.Rdh1 maintains the pressure and threatens 34.Bxf5.

33.Rdh1!

White achieves his plan by first preventing 33 ... Rfh8, which would have been the correct answer to 33.Rg1.

33 ... Qc6

The idea behind this move is to unpin the bishop by playing the queen to d7, but the piece is unfortunately placed on the c6 square. Black would have liked to have prevented White’s next with 33 ... Rg8 but unfortunately for him 34.Bxf5 is the crushing reply. The only other alternative is 33 ... Bd8 although after 34.R1h5 Qb7 Black has a wretched position.

34.Rg6!
Black is really tied up, and in particular the rook on f8 cannot move because of 35.Bxf5 winning easily.

34 ... Bd8

At least the bishop retreat means that the bishop on e6 is now defended.

35.Rhh6 Qd7

Unpinning the bishop, with future possibilities of unravelling his position. White, having outplayed his opponent completely, now devises a lovely winning manoeuvre.

36.Qh1!!

The most elegant feature of this move is that superficially it merely seems to bolster the rooks on the king’s wing, whereas the true intention only becomes apparent after the subsequent move.

36 ... Bb6 37.Qd1!!
The point of the previous move. White now menaces 38.Ba4+, which is extremely awkward to meet.

37 ... Ka5

Forced.

38.a3! b3

Otherwise 39.axb4+ Kxb4 40.Bd2+ wins.

39.Bxb3!

An obvious sacrifice, but pretty nonetheless. If now 39 ... cxb3 then simply 40.Qxb3 forces 40 ... Qb5+ 41.Qxb5+ axb5 42.Rxe6 and Black is lost.

39 ... Qb5 40.Bd2+!

A beautiful move. The discovered check that Black now has at his disposal is harmless.

40 ... c3+ 41.Ke1! Bxd4

Of course, White mates after 41 ... cxd2+ 42.Qxd2+ Qb4 43.Qxb4.

42.bxc3

With both bishops and his king in dire danger, Black calls it a day.

Black resigns.

1929

Koltanowski, G – Dunkelblum, P
Antwerp
Max Lange Attack (C55)
Koltanowski played this game as part of a blindfold simultaneous exhibition.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d4

White offers a Max Lange Attack, as seen in our game from 1918.

5 ... exd4

Black decides to try his luck with the complications against the blindfold player.

6.e5 d5 7.exf6 dxc4 8.Re1+ Be6!

In the game in 1918 Black played the dubious 8 ... Kf8.

9.Ng5 Qd5

Black knows his theory and avoids the trap which has accounted for numerous victims: 9 ... Qxf6? 10.Nxe6 fxe6 11.Qh5+! wins the bishop.
10.Nc3 Qf5 11.Nce4

This position is well-known to opening theory and now the best continuation is certainly 11 ... 0-0-0, leading to a complex game.

11 ... Bb4?!

After this experiment, Black is forever struggling.

12.c3! dxc3 13.bxc3 Ba5 14.g4!

Looks dramatic, but for an accomplished Max Lange aficionado this move is very natural and is seen in many variations. The pawn cannot be captured since after 14 ... Qxg4+ 15.Qxg4 Bxg4 16.fxg7 Rg8 17.Nf6+ wins.

14 ... Qg6 15.Nxe6!

White keeps the attack going by exchanging Black’s best defensive piece.

15 ... fxe6 16.f7+!

A pretty pawn sacrifice, which causes maximum disruption to Black’s game.

16 ... Kxf7

Somewhat better is 16 ... Qxf7 when 17.Ng5 Qd7 18.Rxe6+ Kd8 enables the black king to flee to the queen’s side, although White’s superior position is certainly worth a pawn, and after 19.Qf3! he retains good winning chances.

17.Ng5+ Kg8

Compared with the previous note, it is clear that the king is far less comfortable on this side of the board.

18.Rxe6 Qd3

Seemingly very good, since the pawn on c3 looks doomed, which would put Black two pawns ahead.
19.Qe1!

An important tactic, avoiding the exchange of queens and intending 20.Re8+ Rxe8 21.Qxe8 mate.

19 ... Rf8?

A far better defence is 19 ... Qd7!, when White has an edge after 20.Qe4 but there is no immediate win.

20.Re8!?

Koltanowski has worked out a fantastic sacrificial line, which he believes will secure victory. However, a simpler and easy win could be found in 20.Rxc6!, because 20 ... bxc6 loses to 21.Qe6+ Rf7 22.Qxf7 mate.

20 ... Qd7

The threat was 21.Qe6 mate. The alternative 21 ... Qd6 would fail to 22.Ba3!.

21.Rxf8+ Kxf8 22.Ba3+ Ne7

If 22 ... Kg8 then 23.Qe2 is simple and strong.
23.Rd1!!

A beautiful conception, allowing the queen to capture the pawn with check and thus sacrificing the knight. However the combination, of which Koltanowski has been justifiably very proud, is not as straightforward as he presumed.

23 ... Qxg4+ 24.Kf1!!

This king move is vital for Koltanowski’s combination to work. The more natural 24.Kh1 would have been a mistake, as will become apparent next move.

24 ... Qxg5 25.Rd5!!

If the king had been on h1, then this move would lose immediately to 25 ... Qxd5 check. With the king on f1, 25 ... Qxd5 26.Qxe7+ leads to mate next move.

25 ... Qh4
The queen must remain in defence of the knight.

26.Rh5!?

Very pretty and consistent with the idea behind the combination, but actually not the simplest winning method. The easy win is apparent once one looks for an alternative to the deflection concept of the text move: 26.Bxe7+! (26.Qe6! is also crushing) 26 ... Qxe7 27.Rf5+! Qf6 (not 27 ... Ke8? since 28.Re5 Qxe5+ 29.Qxe5+ wins the bishop) 28.Qe5! followed by 29.Rxf6+ gxf6 30.Qxf6+ Kg8 and the rook is trapped.

26 ... Qf6?!

There seems no sensible alternative to this move, but there was an intriguing counter-measure in 26 ... Bxc3!?, when White must exercise great caution otherwise his win might turn into a loss.

(i) 27.Bxe7+? Qxe7 28.Rf5+ Bf6! and wins.

(ii) 27.Qxc3? Qxh5 28.Bxe7+ Kxe7 29.Qxg7+ Qf7 30.Qxh8 and White is
two pawns down.

(iii) 27.Rxh4 is interesting, as White must be careful after 27 ... Bxe1
Black has the clever try 29 ... Bb2!! hoping for 30.Bc5? b6! 31.Rxc7+ bxc5
32.Rc8+ Ke7 33.Rxh8 c3! 34.Rc8 Ba3! and the c-pawn will queen. However,
the immediate 30.Rxc7+! Bxa3 31.Rc8+ Ke7 32.Rxh8 c3 33.Rc8! prevents
the advance of the pawn and gives White outside chances of winning.

(iv) White could also try 27.Qe2!? Qf6 (forced) 28.Rf5! Ke8 (else 29.Qxe7+
wins) 29.Rxf6 Bxf6 30.Qxc4 with an edge.

(v) Even better is the refinement on the previous line by 27.Qe6! Qf6 28.Rf5
Ke8 29.Rxf6 Bxf6 30.Bxe7! Bxe7 31.Qc8+ Bd8
32.Qxb7 and White is well ahead and should win.

In summary, therefore, White does have sufficient to win but at least Black
has made life considerably more difficult than in the game.

27.Rf5!
After this, Black is totally lost. It’s now too late for 27 ... Bxc3 since 28.Qxe7+ wins immediately, and on 27 ... Qxf5 28. Qxe7+ Kg8 29. Qe8+ mates next move.

Black resigns.

1930

Boros, S – Gereben, E
Budapest
Sicilian Defence (B40)

1.Nf3 c5 2.e4

White decides to transpose into a Sicilian Defence.

2 ... e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Bb4
In this slightly unusual variation, Black pins the knight and therefore puts pressure on the pawn on e4. White’s best reply is 6.e5!, as he should not fear 6 ... Ne4? because of the strong reply 7.Qg4! Nxc3 8.Qxg7! (for example 8 ... Rf8 9.a3 Nb5+ 10.axb4 Nxd4 11.Bg5! Qb6 12.Bh6! Qxb4+ 13.c3 Nf5! 14.cxb4 Nxc7 15.Bxg7 with the advantage). Black should instead play 6 ... Nd5, when White’s 7.Qg4 can be met with 7 ... Kf8, 7 ... g5!? or even the wild 7 ... 0-0!? giving up the exchange after 8.Bh6 g6 9.Bxf8 Qxf8. Interesting play is guaranteed in these lines, and Black is not without chances.

6.Bd3 Nc6?!

Somewhat passive. 6 ... d5!? and 6 ... e5 are more likely to equalize.

7.Be3

Routine development is fine, but White misses his chance with 7.Nxc6! followed by 8.e5!, with an excellent position.

7 ... Ne5?!

A dubious plan; 7 ... d5 was again the best way to reach equality.

8.0-0!

Again Boros elects simple and efficient development.

8 ... Nxd3

The point of Black’s knight manoeuvre, but it gives White an ideal attacking formation.

9.cxd3 0-0 10.f4

Now Black must tread very carefully, otherwise White’s attack will gain momentum too quickly. It becomes clear that the absence of the black bishop on the king’s side will be to White’s advantage.

10 ... d5 11.e5!
Correctly blocking the centre and planning to throw pieces at the opposing king. It is difficult to see from where Black’s counterplay will come.

11 ... Nd7 12.Rf3! Re8

This move frees f8 for the knight or the bishop.

13.Rg3 g6

Blocking the g-file, but now the dark squares are looking rather weak. To remedy this, Black should consider playing 14 ... Bf8 when he might hold on.

14.Nf3 Qa5!?

Rather than remain passive, Black seeks counter-chances on the queen’s side. This move threatens to win a pawn, but White reckons that he can afford to ignore the threat and go after Black’s king.

15.h4! Bxc3

Black accepts the offer.

16.bxc3 Qxc3
For the pawn, White has obtained a glorious position, and Black’s defence is full of holes.

17.h5 b5!?

Desperately attempting to force open some lines on the queen’s side.

18.Nh2!?

The knight is heading for the g4 square, from where it eyes the weaknesses at f6 and h6. This is a sensible plan, but it lacks urgency and does give Black some chances to simplify matters on the other wing. Accordingly, 18.Nh4!? was a good alternative plan – the threat to sacrifice on g6 is very hard to meet. For example, should Black try 18 ... Nc5 then 19.hxg6! hxg6 20.Nxg6! fxg6 21.Rxg6+ Kf7 22.Rc1! wins immediately. However, after the defensive 18 ... Nf8! White has no instant win despite his superb position.

18 ... b4 19.Ng4 Qa3?!

Black’s idea is to play 20 ... Rb8 and then 21 ... b3, and he first decides to put
the queen on a3 to defend the pawn on a7. The whole idea is rather ponderous.

20.Qc2?!

Despite defending a2 and controlling the b1–h7 diagonal, this move gives Black the tactical possibility of 20 ... b3! since the a-pawn is pinned. After 21.Qxb3 Qxb3 22.axb3 Rb8! Black has drawing chances in the ending. Therefore, the simple 20.hxg6 was preferable.

20 ... Rb8

As mentioned above 20 ... b3 was possible but the move played is also rather useful, preparing to advance the b-pawn on the next move.

21.Rc1?!

Better is 21.Rb1! when White retains the advantage.

21 ... Ba6?!
Although it looks menacing because it attacks the d-pawn, this move allows White to penetrate with his queen, after which Black’s game is very difficult. The thematic 21 ... b3! was of course the right move, when 22.axb3 Qxb3 23.Qxb3 Rxb3 24.Bxa7 is still good for White, but Black can at least survive into the ending.

22.Qc7! Bb5

A good defensive try, the only alternative to which is 22 ... Rb7, presenting an interesting challenge for the attacker. White must find the spectacular 23.Qc8!!, leading to the following variations.


34.Be3+ Kxd3 35.Bc1+ wins the queen.

(iii) 23 ... Rf8!, which is the correct defence, when White must play very accurately – leaving his queen en prise – with 24.f5!! (24.Nf6+? Nxf6 25.exf6 Rb8!) and now:

(a) 24 ... Rxc8? 25.Rxc8+ and mate follows.

(b) 24 ... Qxd3 25.Nh6+! Kh8 26.Nxf7+! Kg8 (or 26 ... Kg7 27.Bh6+ Kxf7 28.fxe6+ Kxe6 29.Qc6+ and 30.Rxd3 wins) 27.Nh6+ Kh8 (on 27 ... Kg7, 28.f6+ Kh8 29.hxg6! hxg6 30.Rh3! wins) 28.hxg6! and here 28 ... Kg7 fails to the fabulous 29.Qxf8+!! Nxf8 30.f6+ Kh8 31.g7+ Rg7 32.fxg7 mate! (see diagram).

Therefore 28 ... hxg6 is a better defence but White has a won game after 29.Qc6!.

(c) 24 ... exf5 25.Nh6+! Kh8 (or 25 ... Kg7 26.Nxf5+ Kg8 27.Ne7+ Kg7 28.h6+ Kh8 29.Bd4! wins) 26.e6! f6 27.e7! and wins.
23.hxg6!

Opening the h-file for the rook.

23 ... hxg6

If Black recaptures with the f-pawn then 24.Nf6+ is very strong.

24.Rh3!

White is preparing for a stunning finale.

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24 ... Qa6

Black can be forgiven for not realising that his knight is in need of support, and as a result he succumbs to White’s lovely conception. Better would be 24 ... Rbd8, although after 25.Nh6+ Kg7 26.f5! White’s attack will prove too strong. For example, if 26 ... exf5 then 27.e6! fxe6 28.Nxf5+! e5 29.Bd4+ wins.
25.Qxd7!!
The queen sacrifice starts the combination.

25 ... Bxd7 26.Nf6+ Kf8
Or 26 ... Kg7 27.Rh7+ Kf8 28.Bc5+, transposing into the game.

27.Bc5+! Re7
Forced, since 27 ... Kg7 allows 28.Rh7 mate.

28.Rh8+ Kg7 29.Rh7+! Kf8 30.Nxd7+
Exploiting the pinned rook on e7.

30 ... Kg8
Pushing the king the other way does not help, since 30 ... Ke8 31.Nf6+ Kd8 32.Bxe7+! Kxe7 33.Rc7+ Kd8 34.Rd7+ Kc8 35.Rh8 is checkmate as in the game.


1931
Botvinnik, M – Myasoedow
Leningrad
Nimzo-Indian Defence (E23)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4
The famous and enduring Nimzo-Indian Defence, named after the great Aron Nimzowitsch. The strategic reasoning behind the defence is that the pinned knight no longer has influence over the key e4 square.

4.Qb3
There are many fourth moves at White’s disposal including Qc2, f3, a3, Bf4, Bg5, Nf3 and e3. Botvinnik’s selection was championed by Spielmann, and represents an interesting early displacement of the queen.

4 ... c5

A typical pawn advance in this opening, immediately challenging White’s centre. The alternative line 4 ... Nc6 is also playable and is usually followed by the advance of the d-pawn.

5. dxc5

Again, there are equally good alternatives but Botvinnik prefers to liquidate the central tension.

5 ... Nc6

There is no need to regain the pawn at once.

6. Nf3 Ne4

All this is well-known to opening theory; Black will recapture the pawn with his knight.

7. Bd2 Nxc5 8. Qc2 f5
This dynamic move is strategically sound, since it extends Black’s influence over the key e4 square.

9.a3

Since the bishop cannot retreat (because of the fork by 10.b4), this forces Black to exchange on c3 and gives White the two bishops.

9 ... Bxc3 10.Bxc3 0-0 11.b4

Simple development by 11.e3 or 11.g3 is also possible, but Botvinnik is following the game Ståhlberg – Alekhine from the previous year’s team tournament in Hamburg.

11 ... Ne4 12.Bb2

Ståhlberg continued with 12.e3 b6 13.Bd3 and Alekhine exchanged on c3 with an equal game.

12 ... b6 13.g4?
Botvinnik, who had prepared this innovation at home, clearly did not delve sufficiently deeply into the tactical possibilities available to Black. Far safer is 13.g3, which leads to an even position after 13 ... Bb7 14.g3.

13 ... Nxf2!

Well played. Other moves favour White, for example 13 ... fxg4 14.Qxe4 gxf3 15.Rg1! and the g-file is opened for White’s attack.

14.Kxf2 fxg4

Attacking the pinned knight. But Botvinnik’s idea is to use the open g-file to generate threats against the black king.

15.Rg1!

Now 15 ... gxf? loses to 16.Rxg7+ Kh8 17.Qxh7 mate. However, Myasojedow has an unpleasant response available.

15 ... Qh4+!
This check, exploiting the pinned knight, forces the white king into the centre of the board, since 16.Kg2 fails to 16 ... gxf3+ 17.exf3 Nd4! with ... Bb7 to follow, whilst 16.Rg3 is also inadequate after 16 ... gxf3 17.Kg1 (threatening 18.Rxg7+) 17 ... Nd4!, which is again very powerful.

16.Ke3 Qh6+ 17.Kf2!?

This tempts Black to try 17 ... Qxh2+!?, which would be met by 18.Rg2!. Then Black should play 18 ... Qf4! and, although White might try to rescue his pinned knight, his king’s position is very draughty. For example, if White releases the pin by 19.Kg1, Black can play 19 ... e5! 20.Nh2 g3! 21.Nf3 Qe3+, with at least a draw. Myasojedow prefers to push the king back into the centre.

17 ... Qh4+ 18.Ke3 Qh6+ 19.Kd3!?

Very risky, but if he can get his king into safety on the queen’s side he will have a clear advantage.

19 ... d5!

20.Qc1!

The right defence, attempting to exchange queens whilst preparing to retreat the king to safety on c2. Not 20.Rxg4? because 20 ... e5! hits the rook with devastating effect, nor 20.Qd2 which is refuted by 20 ... Qg6+ 21.Kc3 Qe4! (threatening 22 ... Qxc4 mate) 22.Qg5 e5! 23.cxd5 Nd4! winning. Finally, the interesting try 20.Ne5!? is defeated by 20 ... d4! (20 ... Qxh2 and 20 ... Nxe5+ are less clear) which threatens mate on e3. If then 21.Bxd4 the reply 21 ... Nxd4 22.Kxd4 Qf4+! is decisive, or if 21.Nxg4 then 21 ... Ne5+! 22.Kxd4 Nhxg4 wins (23.Rxg4? e5+!).

20 ... dxc4+ 21.Qxc4

This feels safer than 21.Kxc4?!, which is highly dangerous after 21 ... Rf4+ 22.Kb3 e5!. For example 23.Ng5 Be6+ 24.Nxe6 Qxe6+ 25.Kc2 Rc4+ 26.Bc3 Nd4+, followed by 27 ... Rac8 is fairly convincing. However, 21.Kc2!? might be possible, although Black’s three pawns for the piece and the exposed position of his adversary’s king give him fine chances.

21 ... Rd8+ 22.Kc2

22.Bd4 is defeated by 22 ... Rxd4+! 23.Nxd4 Ne5+, winning the queen.

22 ... Bb7!

Defending the knight and, more importantly, clearing the c-file for the black queen’s rook. Now the question is how White should capture the pawn on g4.
23.Qxg4


23 ... Nxb4+! 24.axb4

White allows the game to end with perpetual check. There were two alternatives should he wish instead to play for a win.

(i) He could try 24.Qxb4?! but 24 ... Rac8+ forces 25.Bc3. In this position Black can generate a vicious attack starting with 25 ... Bxf3 26.exf3 a5! hitting the queen, and White’s best is probably to give up the rook with 27.Rxg7+ Qxg7 28.Qb3, when his two bishops might give him some chances against Black’s major pieces.
(ii) The bizarre move 24.Kb3!? is actually a good attempt to win the game, since White threatens to exchange on g7 with the advantage. After 24 ... Qe3+ (24 ... Bd5+!? may be better) 25.Bc3 g6! the position is extremely double-edged, but 26.Ng5! is difficult to meet since most replies fail to 27.Qxe6+. Best is 26 ... Bd5+ but after 27.Kb2 White seems to be holding on and is of course a piece ahead.

24 ... Rac8+

Black’s major pieces now dominate the board and White must allow the draw.

25.Bc3


25 ... Rxc3+! 26.Kxc3

Other moves lose, so this is forced.

26 ... Qe3+ 27.Kb2
One ambush that White might have set was 27.Kc2 hoping for 27 ... Rc8+?, which throws away the hard work after 28.Kd1!. Of course, 27 ... Be4+ is the right move.

27 ... Rd2+! 28.Nxd2 Qxd2+

White cannot escape the checks, since if the king creeps up the board the bishop enters the fray and White would be mated (for example 29.Ka3 Qc3+ 30.Ka4? b5+ 31.Ka5 Qc7+ 32.Kxb5 Qc6+ 33.Ka5 Qa6 mate).

29.Kb1 Qd1+ 30.Kb2 ½–½

1932

Tramoyeres – Marin, M
Spain
French Defence (C15)
The aggressive and popular Winawer Variation of the French Defence. Now 4.e5 is the most common line, but White selects a gambit that was once favoured by Alekhine.

4.Nge2!? dxe4 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.Nxc3

Now Black attempts to hold on to his pawn, but this constitutes a very dangerous gamble for it allows White to get a significant lead in development.

6 ... f5?! 7.Bf4

An immediate 7.f3 is also possible.

7 ... Nf6 8.f3!

Turning the opening into a kind of Blackmar-Diemer Gambit.
8 ... exf3

Risky, but otherwise his pawn structure will be shattered.

9.Qxf3

Offering another pawn, which cannot be accepted; if 9 ... Qxd4? then 10Nb5! hits c7 and wins.

9 ... 0-0 10.0-0-0

White’s moves come naturally and his pieces easily find strong attacking posts.

10 ... Nd5

From this fine square the knight defends c7 and aims at the white minor pieces.

11.Bc4 c6 12.Rde1!

White uses his queen’s rook on the open e-file and preserves the other rook for action on the king’s side.

(see next diagram)

12 ... Nxf4?!

Exchanging pieces in an attempt to forestall the white attack, but Black faces a difficult defensive task since his e-pawn is very vulnerable.
13. Qxf4 Rf6?!

Black can ill-afford to waste time with non-developing moves such as this, but he had to do something to protect the pawn on e6. 13 ... Qf6 might have been slightly better but White would have a lovely position after 14.Rhf1.

14.g4

Because of the pin on the e-pawn, this threatens to win the pawn on f5.

14 ... fxg4

A hazardous move, since it leaves the e-pawn isolated and opens lines on the king’s side for the white rooks. A more circumspect choice would have been 14 ... Kh8, although after 15.gxf5 exf5 16.d5! White remains well on top.

15.Qxg4 Rg6!?

Black prefers to make some active manoeuvres with his rook and queen, rather than try to defend passively with 15 ... Qd6 when the completely
undeveloped queen’s side will be his major headache.

16.Qh3?!

This is a little casual and enables Black to exchange his weak pawn for the strong d-pawn. Better is 16.Qe4 and the king’s rook can then enter the game, giving White good attacking opportunities.

16 ... Qg5+?!

There was nothing wrong with 16 ... Qxd4. After 17.Bxe6+ (17.Rxe6? Bxe6 18.Bxe6+ Kh8 19.Rd1 Rg1! and Black has a clear advantage) 17 ... Bxe6 18.Rxe6 Qd7, Black is a safe pawn ahead. Instead White might continue with 17.Bd3, in order to maintain the tension, but with 17 ... Qf4+ 18.Kb1 Rh6 Black keeps the advantage.

17.Kb1 Rh6

17 ... Qh6 is also possible. After the white queen moves the position remains balanced with White having good attacking chances for his pawn.
18.Rhf1!!

A spectacular riposte, leaving the queen en prise.

18 ... Rxh3?

Black cannot resist the temptation, but this is a serious error. Had he exercised more restraint and played the sensible 19 ... Qe7, he would have chances of surviving the inevitable onslaught. White would then continue 20.Qd3 with ideas of 21.d5 to follow, but the win is far from assured.

19.Rxe6!

With the grisly threat of 20.Re8 mate. Black’s reply is forced, because 19 ... Bxe6? 20.Bxe6+ leads to mate next move, whilst 19 ... g6 is answered by 20.Rxg6+ Kh8 21.Rf8 mate.

19 ... h6 20.Rxh6+ Qd5

Black is forced to return the queen.

21.Nxd5 gxb6?

This loses to a forced mate. The better alternative was 21 ... Rxb6! when there is no mate. White wins with the mundane 22.Nc7+ (22.Ne7+? is unconvincing) 22 ... Kh7 23.Nxa8 Nd7 (not 23 ... Rxb7? because 24.Rf8! wins a piece) 24.Rf2 and with his pawn advantage White has good winning chances.

1933

Alekhine, A – Boekdrukker, N
The Netherlands
Sicilian Defence (B45)

This game was part of a simultaneous display that Alekhine gave at Bussum in Holland during a gruelling schedule, playing sixteen exhibitions in just seventeen days. His opponent, by a combination of luck and skill, managed to wrest the game from him with a stunning desperado combination.


This is the same variation of the Sicilian as we have already seen in our game from 1926.

5 ... Nc6 6.Be2
White has many options at this juncture, including 6.Be3, 6.Bf4, 6.g3, 6.Bg5, 6.a3 as well as 6.Ndb5 (as in our 1979 game) or 6.Nxc6 as Yates played in our 1926 game. Alekhine’s choice is also fine but it does permit Black to play 6 ... Bb4, which gives him a free game.

6 ... d5!?

A very rare move in this position, but it is in accordance with Sicilian Defence strategy.

7.exd5 exd5

With this recapture Black lands himself with an isolated queen’s pawn, which can become a target. Therefore, 7 ... Nxd5 might have been slightly better.

8.0-0 Be7 9.Be3

Routine development from both sides. The isolated pawn gives White a slight advantage, but Black should be able to equalize comfortably.
9 ... 0-0 10.Nb3

This and the next few moves expose the fact that Alekhine, probably because this game was played in a simultaneous display, had yet to form a sensible plan. He re-positions his knights but allows Black to complete his development unhindered.

10 ... Be6 11.Nb5 a6

Pushing the knight to where it was going anyway.

12.N5d4 Re8 13.c3

Alekhine decides not to exchange the bishop, as one might have expected him to, and instead quietly supports the knight.

13 ... Qc7 14.h3

A prophylactic move, as Nimzowitsch would have observed, to neutralize any ideas of ... Ng4 or ... Bd6.

14 ... Bd6

Now Alekhine, with his development complete, ponders the tactical possibilities with his masterfully alert mind, and comes up with an interesting but highly complex continuation.
15.Nc5?!

The basic idea is that 15 ... Bxc5 16.Nxe6! fxe6 17.Bxc5 gives White a good position. When playing this move, Alekhine failed to notice that there are a number of hidden tactical responses that turn the game in Black’s favour. One possibility is to play 15 ... Nxd4! so that 16.Nxe6? loses a piece after 16 ... Nxe6. Thus White has only two choices.

So White must bail out with 20.\textit{Kxg2} but 20 \ldots \textit{Rxa6} leaves Black a pawn up in the endgame.

(ii) Therefore 16.\textit{cxd4!} is necessary, but after 16 \ldots \textit{Bxc5} 17.\textit{dxc5 Ne4} Black is doing fine.

Boekdrukker, however, sees that he can do even better and uncorks the following spectacular move, which in a nice echo of variation (i) above, is itself a very clever desperado sacrifice.

\begin{center}
\textbf{15 \ldots Bxh3!!}
\end{center}

The point is that Black emerges a pawn ahead after 16.\textit{gxh3 Bxc5}. Now, however, the white knight on \textit{c5} can become a desperado and win back the pawn. Alekhine must have thought he had survived the tactical skirmish, but he is in for a surprise.
The right move was 16.Nxb7!, giving White chances of negotiating the tactics, which – particularly those based on the desperado theme – are frightening and exceedingly difficult to calculate. But with care White can just about survive into an inferior ending. Black has two key tries.

(i) The complicated 16 ... Bxg2?! does not quite work, because White can reply 17.Nxd6!. If 17 ... Bxf1? then 18.Nxe8! hits the queen and wins a piece, whilst 17 ... Qxd6? 18.Kxg2 also leaves White with a material advantage. Thus Black has to continue the fireworks with 17 ... Rxe3! but 18.Kxg2! (not 18.fxe3? Bxf1 19.Qxf1 Qxd6 and Black has the better chances) produces this wild situation.
Here 18 ... Nxd4 19.cxd4 (or 19.fxe3?! Nxe2! 20.Qxe2 Qxd6 with attacking chances) 19 ... Rxe2! 20.Qxe2 Qxd6 gives Black some compensation for the slight material deficit. Also, the immediate 18 ... Rxe2 19.Nxe2 Qxd6 again leaves Black behind on material but with ideas against the exposed king.

(ii) Given the lines above, Black would do better to play 16 ... Qxb7!. If White tries 17.Nxc6? then 17 ... Bxg2! 18.Na5! (18.Kxg2 Qxc6 is similar) 18 ... Qc7! 19.Kxg2 Qxa5 leaves Black a pawn up with the better game. Consequently 17.gxh3! is best, and after 17 ... Nxd4 18.Bxd4 Black should simply grab a pawn by 18 ... Qxb2, attacking the bishop on e2.
White is in great difficulties but has one interesting idea in 19.Bxf6!? Then 19 ... Qxe2 20.Qxd5! gxf6 21.Qxd6 Re6! gives Black an advantage but White does have some drawing chances. Similarly, 19 ... Rxe2 20.Qxd5 Rae8 21.Bxg7! Kxg7 22.Qxd6 Qxc3 should be sufficient for Black to win but White can certainly fight for a draw. Instead, 19 ... gxf6 can be met by 20.Qxd5 and if 20 ... Rad8 then 21.Qg2+ Kh8 22.Qf3!, and the threat of perpetual after 23.Qxf6+ means White holds.

In any event these last lines are far better than the mess that Alekhine lands himself in as a result of the text move.

16 ... Bh2+!

Of course 16 ... Bxg2 loses the queen to 17.Nxc7, but this check forces the king to h1, so that the capture on g2 next move is with check.

17.Kh1 Bxg2+! 18.Kxg2 bxa6

It is natural to believe that Boekdrukker, who was after all no more than an enthusiastic amateur, would have stopped his calculations here, thinking
himself a safe pawn ahead. However, White’s next move seems to win a piece and it is Black’s reply to that which is the real key to the whole combination. Perhaps we should charitably assume that Boekdrukker had it up his sleeve all along.

19.Nxc6

So that on 19 ... Qxc6? 20.Kxh2 wins a piece.

19 ... Rxe3!!

Splat. The knight is spurned and a rook sacrificed in order to penetrate into the heart of White’s position.

20.fxe3

Alekhine refuses to play the humble 20.Nd4, which although objectively better would leave him with a wretched position, a pawn down with no chances whatsoever.
20 ... Qg3+ 21.Kh1 Bg1!!

A powerful and aesthetically pleasing move, which wins a rook and the game. Mate on h2 is threatened and 22.Rxg1 is met by 22 ... Qh3 mate.

22.Rf2 Bxf2

Black is only a pawn up but his strong attack means that White is completely lost. Alekhine struggles on for a few moves, but to no avail.

23.Qf1

To prevent 23 ... Qh3 mate.

23 ... Re8

The rook will join the attack with telling effect.

24.Qg2 Qxe3

White should really resign, but Alekhine wants to play on.


Alekhine won’t surrender, and somehow manages to lay a final trap. If Black now moves his rook then 28.Qb8 mates.

27 ... Bg3! 28.Qe2

Of course Black could exchange queens and win rather easily, but he is enjoying himself against the champ.

28 ... Nf2+ 29.Kg2 Qh6!
Withdrawing the queen to the h-file and uncovering an attack on the white queen with his rook.

30.\textit{Qc}2 \textit{Qh}3+!

Now it’s a forced mate.

31.\textit{Kg}1 \textit{Bh}2+!

A pretty finish.

32.\textit{Kxf}2 \textit{Qg}3+ 33.\textit{Kf}1 \textit{Qg}1 mate.

A fabulous game by Black.

1934

Eliskases, E – Henneberger, W
Liebwerda
Nimzo-Indian Defence (E47)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4

The Nimzo-Indian Defence has been a popular reply to the queen’s pawn openings since Nimzowitsch championed it early in the twentieth century.

4.e3

White plays the most classical line, known as the Rubinstein Variation.

4 ... 0-0 5.Bd3 d6

More common nowadays is 5 ... d5 but the text move, intending an early 6 ... e5, was a popular idea at the time.

6.Nge2

To recapture with the knight after a subsequent ... Bxc3+. 
6 ... e5 7.0-0

If 7.d5 then 7 ... Bg4 8.f3 e4! is awkward for White.

7 ... c5!? 8.dxe5

Also possible is 8.Ne4!? Qe7 9.Nxf6+ Qxf6 10.d5 with a slight edge. Eliskases prefers to open the centre.

8 ... dxe5 9.Qc2 Bxc3

As so often happens in the Nimzo-Indian, Black concedes the two bishops.

10.Nxc3 Nc6 11.a3

Otherwise 11 ... Nb4 is annoying.

11 ... Be6 12.b3 Qc7 13.Bb2

Both sides continue with their development.

13 ... Rad8 14.Rad1 g6?!

A curious choice, since Black is without his king’s bishop and thus should be careful about weakening the dark squares.

15.Ne4!

With the idea of 16.Nxf6+ Qxf6 17.f4! with pressure against the e-pawn.

(see next diagram)

15 ... Nh5

Possibly this shows the reasoning behind the fourteenth move, in that g7 is now available for the knight.
16.\textit{Ng3 N\textit{x}g3!?}

Both 16 ... \textit{Nf6} and 16 ... \textit{Ng7} were possible alternatives, but Henneberger decides to exchange some pieces.

17.\textit{hxg3 Qg5}

A good square for the queen, and a more imaginative move than the routine 17 ... \textit{f5}.

18.\textit{Be4 Bg4 19.Rd5!?}


19 ... \textit{Qc7 20.Qc3 f6}
Attempting to sure up the long diagonal.

21.f4

Eliskases must have been confident that this eruption would lead to favourable complications, but his own position is also compromised.

21 ... exf4 22.Rxf4

Here White can interject 22.Rxd8!, as after 22 ... Rxd8 23.Qxf6! Qxf6 24.Bxf6 he has won a pawn. Black can defend, however, with 22 ... Qxd8! because 23.Rxf4 can be answered by 23 ... Kg7 (24.Rxg4? Qd1+!). Nonetheless, after 24.Bxc6 bxc6 White would have a superior position.

22 ... Ne5

Otherwise the f-pawn is in danger.

23.Rxe5

With this he wins two pieces for the rook. The cost is that Black can cause him some discomfort along the first rank.

23 ... Rd1+ 24.Kh2 fxe5!?

If Black plays 24 ... Qxe5?! then not 25.Rxg4?, because this loses to 25 ... Qxc3 26.Bxc3 f5! 27.Bd5+ Rxd5 28.cxd5 fxg4, but 25.Qxe5! fxe5 26.Bd5+ Rxd5 27.Rxf8+ Kxf8 28.cxd5 with a probable draw. Thus he prefers to keep the queens on the board.

25.Rxg4?

Instead of this, 25.Bd5+! is worth considering. Then 25 ... Rxd5 is forced and White simplifies with 26.Rxf8+ Kxf8 27.cxd5.

25 ... Rff1!

Threatening mate.
26. Bd5+

White was clearly relying on this move. Indeed, after 26 ... Kh8? the reply 27. Qxe5+ Qxe5 28. Bxe5+ leads to mate, and 26 ... Kf8 27. Rf4+! forces the exchange of rooks with a winning advantage. So surely Black has to play 26 ... Kg7, when 27. Qxe5+ Qxe5 28. Bxe5+ Kh6 29. Rh4+ and 30. Bf4+ allows the white king to escape from the mating net? Not so – Black has prepared a stunning surprise.

26 ... Qf7!!

What a move. The real point of this staggering queen sacrifice is seen next move.

27. Bxf7+?

Amazingly, the worse move on the board is to capture the queen with check. White has to try 27. Rxg6+! Kf8! (only not 27 ... hxg6? 28. Bxf7+ followed by 29. g4 and Black has no mate) and now 28. g4! creates an escape square for the king. After 28 ... Qxg6 29. Qxe5 White’s queen and two bishops can force
perpetual check. For example, 29 ... Qxg4 30.Qb8+ Ke7 31.Qc7+ Qd7 32.Qe5+ with a draw.

27 ... Kf8!!

Here is the brilliant idea – Black avoids 27 ... Kxf7 28.Rf4+, which enables White to escape from the mate with a won game. But now White realizes that he cannot prevent mate on h1.

White resigns.

1935

Bogoljubow, E – Danielsson, T
Zoppot
French Defence (C17)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4

Danielsson plays the Winawer Variation, which at the time was not the most popular way of meeting Bogoljubow’s move. Nowadays, of course, this is regarded as one of the most direct methods of meeting 3.Nc3.

4.e5 c5 5.a3

We have reached a very common position in this line of the French Defence. Here 5 ... Bxc3+ is much the most common move, but Danielsson opts for a riskier idea.

5 ... cxd4!? 6.axb4 dxc3
Modern opening theory also gives 7.Nf3! as an interesting gambit giving White an excellent attacking game. For example, 7 ... cxb2 8.Bxb2 with an easy game, or 7 ... Qc7 8.Qd4 followed by 9.Bd3, etc. The main line runs 7 ... Ne7 8.Bd3 Qc7 (or 8 ... Nbc6 9.b5, or 8 ... Nd7 9.0-0 Nc6 10.Re1 Nxb4 11.bxc3 Nxd3 12.cxd3 0-0 13.Ra4 with a clear edge) 9.Ra3! cxb2 10.Bxb2 and again White has an excellent position.

Black decides to form a pawn chain rather than pursue the usual French Defence strategy of sacrificing the g-pawn by 7 ... Ne7!? 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qxh7 Qc7!, leading to a complicated game. A better method of defending the pawn might have been 7 ... Kf8, whilst 7 ... Qb6!? 8.Qxg7 cxb2 9.Qxb2 Qxb4+ 10.Kd1 Qxb2 11.Rc1 Nc6 12.Qxh8 Kf8.

8.Nf3
Correctly continuing his development rather than taking time to recapture the sacrificed pawn.

8 ... Qc7

Nine times out of ten this will be the most useful square for the queen in the French Defence, and in this variation she controls the c-file and hits the pawn on e5.

9.Bd3 Nc6 10.0-0!

In the spirit of White’s aggressive strategy he ignores the threat to his e-pawn.

10 ... Nge7?!

If he dares to grab the pawn with 10 ... Nxe5, then 11.Nxe5 Qxe5 12.bxc3 (12.Bb5+ is also interesting) 12 ... Qxc3 13.Be3 causes Black some problems due to his lack of development and weak dark squares, but he should have chances of surviving.

11.Re1 Bd7

Preparing to make an awful but rather entertaining blunder.
12.bxc3 0-0-0?

A terrible move, which Bogoljubow punishes ruthlessly. Far better would have been 12 ... Nf5!, as after 13.b5 Na5 he attacks the c-pawn and has a number of active ideas such as ... Nc4.

13.b5! Nb8

Here Danielsson presumably realized that 13 ... Na5 is met by 14.Qb4!, forking the knights and thus winning a piece on the spot.

14.Qh4

Bogoljubow is able to exploit the poor positioning of Black’s pieces. The queen attacks e7 and with threats such as Rxa7 and Bg5 or Ng5, one can safely assume that “Black is busted”, as Fischer used to say. Incidentally, in some sources (for example, the unreliable book by Fine, *The World’s Great Chess Games*) this move is incorrectly given as 14.Qb4 and the game truncated at move twenty.
14 ... Be8

So that at least the pawns on f7 and h7 both remain defended. Note that 14 ... Qxc3 would lose to 15.Bg5!, but perhaps 14 ... Nf5 would be a better defence.

15.Bg5!

Black’s depressing reply is forced.

15 ... Rd7 16.Rxa7 Qb6

Threatens the rook but removes the queen from the defence of the knight.

17.Ra8

17.Be3 was also feasible, but the rook is well-placed on a8.

17 ... Qd8

Perhaps Danielsson had intended 17 ... Nf5 and now realized that 18.Bxf5 followed by 19.Be3 and 20.b6 is crushing.

18.Nd4
Black is helpless, so White closes in for the kill.

18 ... h6 19.Bf6 Rg8 20.b6!

The pawn cannot be taken because the knight hangs. This explains Black’s next move, but White is not to be denied.

20 ... g5 21.Qxh6 Qxb6 22.Qh7! Rf8

The only square for the rook, otherwise 23.Bxe7 wins.

23.Bxe7 Rxe7 24.Qg7! Black resigns.

An unusual and attractive method of trapping a piece. The whole game is an excellent illustration of how to drift into a hopeless position in a handful of moves.
1936

Abrahams, G – Cukierman, J
Nottingham
Benoni Defence (A50)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 b6

This early advance of the b-pawn used to be considered premature, since White could often gain territory in the centre by playing f3 and e4. Nowadays dynamic counter-attacking plans from Black have led to a reassessment and a tough struggle is usually the result.

3.Nc3 Bb7 4.f3 c5!?

The advance 4 ... d5 is more common and is a better way to challenge the centre.
5.d5 d6

In this Benoni-type position, Black’s bishop is rather hemmed in and its situation hinders the preparation of the natural break on the queen’s side by ... a6 and ... b5.

6.Bg5 Nbd7 7.e3!?

Restrained development, rather than the obvious 7.e4. The text move has the benefit of allowing Abrahams to adopt a flexible formation.

7 ... g6 8.Nge2 Bg7 9.h4

Clearly signalling his aggressive intentions. Black would like to attack White’s pawn centre, but he is unprepared for 9 ... b5 (hence his next move), and 9 ... e6 is impossible because of the weakness of the d-pawn.

9 ... a6 10.Ng3

White’s pieces begin to find excellent posts.

10 ... h5

Otherwise 11.h5 is very awkward.

11.Be2 Nh7?!

A time-consuming and therefore risky plan, given his lack of space and White’s mounting pressure.

12.f4!

The obvious 12.Bf4 is simple and allows him to keep his superior position, but Abrahams, a wonderfully original player, reckons that Black has insufficient defensive resources to survive the attack that will arise if he tries to snare his dark-squared bishop.

12 ... f6
Cukierman accepts the challenge.

13. Qc2

Already a number of attractive alternatives are open to White. For instance, 13. Bxh5!? is interesting because 13 ... gxh5 loses to 14. Qxh5+ Kf8 15. Bh6! Rg8 16. Nf5! and 13 ... fxg5 is also inadequate given the reply 14. Bxg6+ Kf8 15. hxg5 Kg8 16. Qh5!. Therefore, Black might do better with 13 ... Nxg5!. If then 14. Bxg6+?! Nf7 15. Qg4, Black plays 15 ... Kf8 16. Qe6 (or 16. Nf5 Nh6 and Black survives) 16 ... Nfe5! 17. fxe5 Nxe5 and the threat of 18 ... Bc8 hitting the queen gives him just enough time to defend himself. White should instead play 14. hxg5! gxh5 15. Rxh5! with excellent compensation.
For example, if 15 ... Kf7 then White gets a great game with 16.g6+! Kg8 (16 ... Kxg6 loses after 17.Rxh8 since 17 ... Bxh8 18.Qh5+ Kg7 19.Nf5+ wins and 17 ... Qxh8 18.Qg4+! Kf7 19.Qxd7 is very strong) 17.Rxh8+ Bxh8 (not 17 ... Kxh8? 18.Qh5+ Kg8 19.Qh7+ Kf8 20.Nf5!) 18.Qh5 Nf8 19.Nf5! Bg7 20.0-0-0 and now if 20 ... Qe8 then 21.Nxg7! Kxg7 22.f5! and 23.Rh1 wins. Instead of 15 ... Kf7, it looks as though Black’s best is 15 ... Rg8 when White has no immediate win, although after 16.Nf5! Black remains in great danger.

13 ... Nh8

Avoiding the move 13 ... Kf7?, which looks fine but fails in spectacular fashion to 14.Qxg6+!! Kxg6 15.Bxh5 mate.

14.Bd3 Kf7

14 ... f5 would leave Black with a miserable position – after 15.e4! he would not last long.

15.0-0
Castling has the benefit of bringing the rook onto the key f-file.

15 ... Qe8!?

Again Black declines the bishop, though after White’s next move he captures it under rather unfavourable circumstances. Perhaps, therefore, this was the right time to grab the booty. After 15 ... fxg5 16.fxg5+, Black just seems to survive with 16 ... Kg8. White’s best is 17.Bxg6! Nxe6 18.Qxg6 Rh7! (avoiding 18 ... Ne5? 19.Qe6+ Kh7 20.Rf7!! winning) 19.Qe6+ Kh8 20.g6 Rh6 21.Nf5 Ne5 22.Nxh6 (not 22.Nxg7? Rxg6!) 22 ... Bxh6 and although White has strong pressure in return for his slight material deficit, Black has good chances of holding on (in fact the threat of 23 ... Bc8! trapping the queen helps his cause considerably).

16.f5!?

Threatening 17.fxg6+, winning the pawn with a fine position. Black could now defend by 16 ... Ne5!, when after 17.fxg6+ Nfxg6 his excellently placed knights give him decent play.

16 ... fxg5?!

Extremely risky, for the pawn on g6 is a thorn in his side and grants White an enduring initiative.

17.fxg6+ Kg8 18.Rf7!
A very aggressive post for the rook. In playing this, Abrahams will have anticipated Black’s next move, which is practically forced since 19.Nf5 had to be prevented.

18 ... Ne5

Seemingly very strong; the knight hits the bishop, rook and pawn.

19.Raf1!

This must have come as a shock to Cukierman, who was surely expecting 19.Rxg7+ Kxg7 20.Nf5+ Kg8 21.g7 Rh7 22.gxf8Q+. Then after 22 ... Qxf8 White can try the tactical shot 23.Nxd6!?, when 23 ... exd6? 24.Bxh7+ is very strong, so 23 ... Nxd3! is forced. Then 24.Qxd3? exd6 is fine for Black, and the superior 24.Nxb7 is met by 24 ... Ne5 and Black emerges with a defensible position. Instead of 23.Nxd6!?, White might do better to try 23.hxg5! since he has good compensation after 23 ... Nxd3 24.Qxd3, with the threat of 25.Nh6+ likely to regain the exchange.

19 ... Bc8
Cukierman obviously avoids 19 ... Nxf7? 20.gxf7+ winning, and decides to guard the crucial f5 square. An interesting alternative is 19 ... gxh4!?, since Black has a good game if White plays 20.Nf5 Nxf7 21.Nxg7 (or 21.Nxe7+ Qxe7 22.gxf7+ Qxf7 23.Rxf7 Kxf7 and Black has more than enough material in return for his queen) 21 ... Kxg7 22.Rxf7+ Kg8. Moreover, even if White finds the forcing line 20.Rxg7+! Kxg7 21.Nf5+, then 21 ... Kg8 leads to an unbalanced position with White probably having a slight edge. If, for example, 22.g7 then 22 ... Nxd3! (not 22 ... Rh7? 23.gxf8Q+ Qxf8 24.Nxd6!) 23.Qxd3 Ng6 24.gxh8Q+ Kxh8 followed by 25 ... Ne5 holds.

20.Bf5!?

A daring continuation, maintaining the almost incalculable complications. In such positions both players will be relying as much on intuition as on exhaustive calculation. Interestingly, Abrahams might have looked at the prosaic alternative 20.hxg5!, which gains an important king’s side pawn, and after 20 ... Nxd3 21.Qxd3 h4 22.Nf5 Bxf5 23.Qxf5 White has a very powerful position and actually threatens mate in five commencing with 24.Rxf8+! and 25.Qe6+. Somewhat better for Black is 20 ... h4 21.Nf5 Bxf5! 22.Bxf5 although even this seems to give White a more favourable version of the line actually played in the game, thanks to the extra g-pawn.
20 ... gxh4

The other candidate move was 20 ... Nxf7, whereupon White would continue 21.gxf7+ Qxf7 22.Bxc8! and now Black has three options.

(i) 22 ... Qxf1+ is shown to be weak after 23.Kxf1 Rxc8 24.Qf5 followed by 25.Qxg5.

(ii) 22 ... Bf6 fails to 23.hxg5 Rxc8 24.gxf6, with 25.Nge4 to come.

(iii) 22 ... Qe8! is best, and now White has the choice of two ideas. Firstly, 23.Rxf8+!? Kxf8 24.Be6!? is a clever attempt to capitalize on the constricted position of the black king, and White does generate some awkward threats. Black should be able to defend, however, with 24 ... gxh4 25.Qf5+ Bf6 26.Nge4 Rh6 (26 ... Kg7 is also possible) 27.Nxf6 exf6! (not 27 ... Rxf6? as 28.Qh7+ forces mate) 28.Qf4! (best) 28 ... Rg6! when White remains too far behind on material. Secondly, the simple 23.Bb7! Rb8 24.Bc6 and 25.hxg5 allows White to keep the initiative in return for a small material deficit.

21.Bxc8 hxg3
Capturing the bishop with the rook is also possible (but not with the queen since 22.Nf5 forks e7 and g7 and wins), although the resulting positions are very messy. For example, after 21 ... Rxc8 22.Nf5 Bf6! (if 22 ... Nxf7? then 23.Nxe7+! Qxe7 24.gxf7+ Qxf7 25.Rxf7 Kxf7 26.Qf5+! wins) 23.Nxd6! exd6 24.R1xf6 Rh6 Black seems to survive despite White’s various aggressive ideas like 25.Ne4.

22.Be6

This forces Black to exchange the knight for bishop, giving a fascinating position where White’s access to d5 should compensate for the piece.

22 ... Nxe6 23.dxe6 Rh6

Attempting to round up the g-pawn. Alternatively, Black could play the greedy 23 ... Nxc4?! and after 24.Nd5! Nxe3 White has two lines.

(i) Firstly, the brutal 25.Rxg7+!? gives White a strong attack after 25 ... Kxg7 26.Nxe3 (better than 26.Qc3+? Kxg6 27.Qxe3 Rf8! and White has nothing) 26 ... Rf8 (else 27.Rf7+ wins) 27.Rf7+ Rxf7 28.gxf7 (28.exf7 is also possible) 28 ... Qh8 29.Qc3+ Kh7 30.Qd3+ Kg7 31.Nf5+ Kf6 (31 ... Kf8 32.Qxg3 and 33.Qg5 wins) 32.Nh4!. One variation runs 32 ... Qh6 (forced) 33.Qf3+ Ke5 (again forced since 33 ... Kg5? 34.Qe3+ wins the queen and 33 ... Kxe6? is met by 34.Qf5 mate) 34.Qf5+ Kd4 35.Nf3+ and the black king is horribly exposed, whilst the queen and rook must keep an eye on f8 to prevent the pawn queening.

(ii) Secondly, the less adventurous but probably better 25.Nxe3! Bd4 26.R1f3! threatening 27.g7 and 27.Rxg3 gives White an overwhelming game.

24.Nd5

Natural and good, since the knight can move to e7 or f4.

24 ... Ra7!

Sensibly defending the pawn on e7, rather than risking 24 ... Nxf6? 25.Qf5! Ra7 (not 25 ... Bxb2 26.Qg5! Bg7 27.Nxe7+, etc) 26.Qg5! Qa4 (the only
chance is to try to exploit the back rank) 27.Rxg7+! Kxg7 28.Rf7+ Kg8
29.Qxh6 Qd1+ 30.Rf1 when White wins: for example, 30 ... Qg4 31.Nf4!
Nxf4 32.Rxf4 Qd1+ 33.Rf1 and White mates, or 30 ... Qd3 31.Nc3! followed
by 32.e4! winning. With his next move, White defends the attacked pawn
and, though a whole bishop down, the pressure on the black position is
growing.

25.Nf4 Kh8

This move signals the intention of capturing the rook with the knight in the
near future. In response White calmly improves the attacking position of his
queen, reckoning that his superior mobilization and advanced pawns will be
adequate compensation should he go a whole rook behind.

26.Qf5! Qc8!?

Black decides to pin the e-pawn so that it cannot recapture after he takes the
rook. If instead Black decides to capture the rook at once, then White wins
immediately with 27.exf7! Qf8 28.Ne6! Qb8 29.f8Q+ and mates.
Alternatively, if Black tries to prevent the h-pawn from falling by 26 ... h4,
then 27.Nh5 Nxf7 28.gxf7 Qf8 29.Nxg7 Kxg7 30.Rf4 Rg6 31.Rxh4 leads to the identical position as in the game.

27.Nxh5 Nxf7


28.gxf7

Now White is a rook down.

28 ... Qf8

Necessary, because 28 ... Qxe6? allows 29.f8Q+ and mates, whilst 28 ... Rxe6? loses to 29.Nxg7 and Black is defenceless.

29.Nxg7 Kxg7 30.Rf4

If left unmolested the rook will head for g8.

30 ... Rg6

If 30 ... Kh8 White could tread a tightrope with 31.Rg4 since after 31 ... Rh1+ 32.Kxh1 Qh6+ 33.Kg1 Qxe3+ 34.Kf1 Qc1+ 35.Ke2 Qxb2+ 36.Kd1! Qa1+ 37.Kd2! Qb2+ 38.Qc2 there is no perpetual check. Simpler is 31.Rf3!, when 31 ... Ra8 is forced. Then White should play 32.Rxg3!, which will be followed by 33.Rg8+ Qxg8 34.fxg8Q+ Rgx8 and the passed pawn gives him good winning chances.

31.Rh4!

With the threat of 32.Qh5 winning instantly.

31 ... Ra8

The only move.

32.Qh5!
With the powerful threat of 33.Qh7+ Kf6 34.Rf4+ Kxe6 35.Qh3+ Ke5 36.Qf5 mate.

Black cannot now take on e6 since 33.Rg4+ wins, so his reply is forced.

32 ... Kf6 33.e4!!

A quiet but very strong move, threatening 34.Qf3+! (much better than 34.Qf5+ Kg7 35.Qh3 Rg5! with some survival chances) 34 ... Kg7 35.Qc3+! Rf6 36.Qxg3+! Rg6 37.Qc3+! Rf6 38.Qh3! and White has a clear advantage: then 38 ... Qh8 is forced, but White plays the wonderful forcing sequence beginning 39.Qg3+! Rg6 40.Qc3+ Rf6 41.Rxh8 Rxh8! (not 41 ... Kxh8? since 42.Qxf6+!! exf6 43.e7! wins beautifully) 42.e5! Rxe6 43.exd6+ Rf6 (43 ... Kxf7 44.Qxh8) 44.d7! Kxf7 (44 ... Rd8 45.Qg3+! Kxf7 46.Qc7) 45.Qe5!! Rf8 46.Qd5+ e6 47.d8N+!, with a clear win.

33 ... Kg7

Black loses quickly after this, but if 33 ... Qc8, hitting the pawn on e6, then 34.Qf3+ Kg7 35.Qc3+ leads to the line in the note above.
34.Qh7+ Kf6 35.Rf4+ Kxe6

35 ... Ke5 36.Rf5+ Kxe6 37.Qxg6+ is hopeless for Black.

36.Qh3+

Now 36 ... Ke5 37.Qf5+ Kd4 38.Qd5+ Ke3 39.Rf3+ Ke2 40.Qd3+ Ke1 41.Rf1 is checkmate.

Black resigns.

1937

Sämisc, F – Bogoljubow, E
Bremen
Queen’s Gambit Accepted (D27)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 a6 5.a4 e6 6.e3 c5 7.Bxc4 Nc6 8.0-0 Be7
Reaching a very common position in the Queen’s Gambit Accepted. There are now numerous alternatives at White’s disposal, including 9.dxc5, 9.d5, 9.Qd3 and 9.Ne5. Sämisch elects to play another good line.

9.b3 0-0 10.Bb2 cxd4

Bogoljubow decides to saddle White with the infamous isolated queen’s pawn. Whether this turns out to be a strategic weakness or an attacking asset for White depends on how well both opponents play in the next fifteen moves or so.

11.exd4 Na5!?

More common in this position is 11 ... Nb4, controlling d5 and often with the idea of a subsequent ... Bd7 and ... Bc6. There is, however, a certain amount of logic in Bogoljubow’s plan to challenge the active bishop on c4.

12.Ne5

Rather than retreating the bishop Sämisch places the knight aggressively on the e5 square.

12 ... Nd7

This immediate challenge to the knight contains an element of risk since the king’s side loses protection.

13.Qc2!?

This allows Black to isolate the c-pawn, but White clearly wants to defend b3 against a later ... Qb6.

13 ... Nxe5

After this and the subsequent exchange, Black has the two bishops and is able to disrupt his opponent’s pawn structure, at the cost of a disadvantage in development.

14.dxe5 Nxc4 15.bxc4 Bd7
Hastening to complete the mobilization of his pieces.

16.Rfd1

Grabbing the open file and pinning the bishop.

16 ... Qc7 17.Ne4!

An obvious but strong dual-purpose move, which allows the c-pawn to be defended and also prepares to seize the d6 square.

17 ... Bc6 18.Nd6! Bxd6!?

Black immediately exchanges the advanced knight, although this leaves him rather weak on the dark squares. Bogoljubow was famous for being hugely self-confident, and a more patient player might have been prepared to try something like 18 ... Rad8. But then after 19.c5 White would be clearly well-placed to exploit his superior position.

19.exd6 Qd7 20.a5!
The idea behind this move is to prevent 20 ... b6, thus maintaining the dark-square control.

20 ... f6!? Bogoljubow begins a highly dangerous counter-attack, based on the advance of the pawns in front of his king. Such a plan should logically be doomed to failure, but the game heads into murky complications where anything can happen.

21.Ra3 Bringing the queen’s rook into play via the third rank.

21 ... e5 22.Rh3?! A tempting move, threatening 23.Qxh7+, but not the most prudent. Surprisingly, the rook becomes rather exposed to attack from the advancing pawns, and thus it would have been better to forestall Black’s ambitious plan with 22.h4!.

22 ... g5!? This looks horribly loose, but it is in accordance with Bogoljubow’s plan to create an unbalanced situation.

23.Qe2 With vague ideas of invading with the queen via h5, but this is the first sign of some rather indecisive dithering.

23 ... Rf7 Suring up his second rank.

24.c5 Rd8 25.Rg3 Again White is unable to formulate a concrete plan of action and his procrastination gives Black the opportunity to support the advance of his
pawns.

25 ... Rg7 26.Re1 Qe6 27.Qd2

The purpose of this move is to prepare the provocative advance 28.f4, with the idea 28 ... gxf4 29.Rxg7+ Kxg7 30.Qxf4 (exploiting the pinned e-pawn) with an advantage. Black therefore proceeds immediately with his pawn advance.

27 ... h5 28.f4!?

White continues with his plan, seemingly walking into Black’s counter-punch.

28 ... h4!?

Although 28 ... gxf4 29.Rxg7+ Kxg7 30.Qxf4 Qd5! is objectively better, the text move poses White an awkward problem: once the rook moves, Black has 29 ... gxf4 and the threat to g2 secures a won game.
29.fxe5!!

The grovelling alternative 29.f5 leaves Black a pawn ahead after 29 ... Qxf5, so this spectacular coup is the best chance.

29 ... hxg3 30.exf6!

The attack is stymied after 30.hxg3? f5.

30 ... gxh2+ 31.Kh1

The expected way to get out of check, because the black pawn on h2 acts as a shield for the king. The alternative 31.Kxh2?! was also a possibility, although following 31 ... Rh7+ 32.Kg1 Qg4 (to defend the pawn on g5) White has less recompense for the rook than he obtains in the game. Now after the text move Black’s queen and rook are both en prise so he has to take drastic action.

31 ... Bxg2+!!

The only move, both pretty and very strong, since if 32.Qxg2? White is mated by 32 ... Qxe1+ 33.Kxh2 Rh7+ 34.Qh3 Qf2+ 35.Kh1 Rxh3 mate.

32.Kxg2 Qg4+

This is the point of the previous sacrifice; the queen escapes the threat of capture with check, thus enabling the rook to be saved.

33.Kh1 Rh7?

But far better was the simplifying 33 ... Qf3+ 34.Qg2 (forced) 34 ... Qxg2+ 35.Kxg2 Rh7, with an endgame advantage. After Bogoljubow’s move White has chances to generate some action of his own.

34.Qd3

To defend the important white squares on f3, e4 and d5. Black therefore reroutes his queen to try to give a check on c6.

34 ... Qd7 35.f7+!!
A fantastic move, far from obvious but very strong. The idea is to deflect the queen from the long diagonal before penetrating with the rook. If now 35 ... Rxf7 then 36.Qg6+ Rg7 (or 36 ... Kf8 37.Qh6+ Rg7 38.Qh8+! Rg8 39.Qf6+ Qf7 40.Qxd8+ Qe8 41.Qxe8 mate) 37.Bxg7 Qxg7 38.Re8+! Rxe8 39.Qxe8+ Qf8 40.d7! wins, so Black’s reply is forced.

35 ... Qxf7 36.Re7?

This natural rook thrust is a mistake and it is a great shame that Sämisch fails to find the best way of continuing the combination. The correct move is 36.Re5!! hitting the g-pawn. Black loses in every variation.

(i) If 36 ... Rg7 or 36 ... Rh5 then 37.Re7 wins.

(ii) If 36 ... g4 37.Rg5+ Kf8 38.Rf5 wins the queen.

(iii) 36 ... Qh5 fails to 37.Qd5+, followed by 38.Rxg5.

(iv) Black’s cleverest try is 36 ... Re8, since 37.Rxg5+ Kf8 38.Rf5? loses to 38 ... Re1+. However, White wins with 37.d7! Qxd7 38.Qxd7 Rxd7
39.Rxe8+ and the extra bishop will prove decisive.

36 ... Qh5!

The only move, but one that offers excellent drawing chances.

37.Qd5+

There were two alternatives, neither of which seems to lead to any concrete advantage for White.

(i) If 37.Bf6, Black holds with 37 ... Rxe7 (37 ... Rd7 38.Re5! is good for White) 38.Bxe7 Rd7. One variation runs 39.Qd5+ Kg7 40.Qe5+ Kh7 41.Qf5+ Kg8 42.Qxd7 Qf3+ 43.Kxh2 Qf2+ 44.Kh3 Qf3+ with a draw.

(ii) White might try to swap rooks with 37.Rxh7, but after 37 ... Qxh7 38.Qxh7+ (or 38.Qd5+ Kf8 39.Qxg5 Rd7 and White has no more than a drawish ending) 38 ... Kxh7 39.Bf6 Rd7 40.Bxg5 Kg6 White cannot win.

37 ... Kf8 38.Qf5+

If 38.Bf6 then 38 ... Qg6! activates the queen and gives Black a likely draw. For example, 39.Qxb7 Qxf6 40.Rxh7 Re8! 41.Re7! Rxe7 42.dxe7+ Qxe7 will lead to a draw, whilst 39.Rxh7 Qb1+ 40.Kxh2 Qxh7+ 41.Kg2 Rd7 is again balanced.

38 ... Rf7 39.Bf6

Avoiding 39.Rxf7+ Qxf7, which leads nowhere, in order to threaten 40.Rxf7+! Kxf7 41.Be7+! winning instantly. The drawback is that the black queen can now harass the king.

39 ... Qd1+ 40.Kxh2 Qd2+

If 40 ... Qh5+? then Black is in difficulties after 41.Kg2 since the checks dry up.

41.Kh3
He advances the king to try to avoid perpetual, but Black finds a clever retort.

41 ... Qc3+!
Forcing the exchange of queens.

42. Bxc3 Rxf5 43. Rxb7!? 
White decides to sacrifice his bishop in order to grab the b-pawn, giving him two advanced passed pawns. The alternatives do not seem to offer any more than a draw. For instance, 43. Be5 Rf7 (only not 43 ... Re8? 44. Bg7+! winning) 44. Rc7 Rxc7 45. dxc7 Rc8 with a probable draw.

43 ... Rf3+ 44. Kg4 Rxc3 45. Rc7
Defending the c-pawn. 45. Rh7 (threatening 46. Rh8+) is an interesting idea, whereby the black rook is lured to e8 rather than maintaining pressure on the white d-pawn from d8. Unfortunately the drawback is that the black rooks can generate mating threats against the white king. After 45 ... Rc4+! 46. Kf3 (46. Kh5 Rh4+, or 46. Kf5 Rxc5+) 46 ... Re8 White will be overrun. For
example, 47.Rc7 g4+ 48.Kg3 Re3+ 49.Kh4 (49.Kf2 Rb3!) 49 ... g3+ and wins.

45 ... Ra3

From d8 the black rook prevents the c-pawn from advancing. Black decides that he has time to pick off the pawn on a5, but now White’s king enters the fray.

46.Kxg5

If 46.d7? then simply 46 ... Rxa5! wins, because 47.c6 Rc5 48.Re8 Ke7 leaves White completely tied up and Black merely advances his a-pawn to victory.

46 ... Rxa5

This looks extremely risky since the rook cannot now check the king from behind, but Black has a useful way of bailing out with a draw by 47 ... Rxc5 48.Rxc5 Rxd6.

47.Kf6 Ra1?

Black really has little chance of winning, and this move risks losing if he is not careful. Therefore, far simpler would be 47 ... Rxc5 with an immediate draw.

48.Rf7+ Kg8

It appears perilous to allow the king to penetrate to e7, but Bogoljubow must have been concerned that after 48 ... Ke8 White would play the tricky 49.Rh7!, threatening 50.d7+! Rxd7 51.Rh8 mate. Actually, after 49 ... Rf1+ 50.Ke6 Re1+ 51.Kd5 a5 Black is safe since 52.c6? fails to 52 ... Rd1+ and 52.Kc6 leads to no more than a repetition by 52 ... Rc8+ 53.Kd5.
49.\textit{Rg7+}

If White tries 49.\textit{Ke7} then one line for Black is 49 \ldots \textit{Rc8} 50.\textit{Rf5} (or 50.d7 \textit{Re1+} 51.\textit{Kf6 Rc6+}, etc) 50 \ldots \textit{Re1+} 51.\textit{Kd7 Ree8} with a safe draw.

49 \ldots \textit{Kh8}

The alternative 49 \ldots \textit{Kf8} leads to perpetual check. Bogoljubow places the king in the corner and now White has to be careful to avoid several poisonous traps. For example, if 50.\textit{Ke7}? then 50 \ldots \textit{Rxd6}! 51.\textit{Kxd6 Kxg7} wins, and after 50.\textit{Ra7 Re8!} 51.d7? Black strikes with 51 \ldots \textit{Rf1+} 52.\textit{Kg6 Rg8+} 53.\textit{Kh6 Rh1} mate. White can avoid these pitfalls and draw with 50.\textit{Re7! Rc1} 51.d7 \textit{Rxd7!} (51 \ldots \textit{Rf1+?} 52.\textit{Ke6!} wins) 52.\textit{Rxd7 Rxc5}. For this reason the players decide to share the point, which seems to be a fair result at the end of such an up-and-down game.

$1/2 - 1/2$
1938

Parr, F – Wheatcroft, G
London
Grüinfeld Defence (D71)

The combination at the end of this game is famous; the rest of the game far less so.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 d5

The aggressive Grüinfeld Defence.

5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Nc3 Nxc3 7.bxc3 c5 8.e3 0-0

The main alternative is 8 ... Nc6, delaying castling in order to increase the pressure on d4.

9.Ne2 Nc6

The most natural move in this position, although others such as 9 ... Qa5 and 9 ... Nd7 are also possible.

10.0-0 cxd4 11.cxd4
11 ... e5?

Black attempts to attack the pawn centre, but

this enables White to develop a strong initiative. The alternatives are 11 ... Be6 and 11 ... Bf5, as in the game Bernstein – Alekhine (Carlsbad 1923), which continued 12.Ba3 Qd7 13.Qb3 Rab8 and an interesting struggle ensued.

12.d5! Ne7 13.Ba3!

An obvious move but nonetheless very powerful. The bishop is developed on a lovely diagonal, the knight pinned and the d6 square is under control.

13 ... Re8 14.Nc3

14.Qb3! may be more flexible, but White has a clear advantage in any event.

14 ... Qa5
Seeking counterplay and preventing the annoying 15.Nb5.

15.Qb3 e4

Seems very strong, since the long black diagonal is opened for the bishop. However, Black is far behind in development and such an attempt is highly dangerous.

(see next diagram)

16.Nxe4!!

This sacrifice hardly needs concrete calculation because it gives White a wonderful attacking position.

16 ... Nxd5

Black decides to remove the dangerous d-pawn, rather than to accept the sacrifice by 16 ... Bxa1 17.Rxa1 Nxd5 18.Qxd5!, when White dominates.
17.Rac1 Be6

This puts the bishop on the same diagonal as the white queen, creating interesting tactical possibilities.

18.Rc5 Qb6

If 18 ... Qd8 then 19.Rd1! wins.

19.Rb5! Qa6

An undesirable reply, taking the queen away from the area of real operations, the king’s side. However, the obvious alternative 19 ... Nxe3, which tries to exploit the position of his bishop and the white queen, fails to 20.Rxb6! Bxb3 21.Rxb3 Nxf1 (or 21 ... Nxd2 22.Nd6! and the black knight is trapped) 22.Kxf1 with a winning ending.

20.Nc5!

Continuing to harangue the black queen. If now 20 ... Qc6 then 21.Nxe6! fxe6 22.Rxd5! wins easily.

20 ... Nxe3


21.Nxe6! Nxf1

Other moves lose material.

22.Ng5!

This elegant retreat increases the pressure and avoids the pitfall of 22.Nc7?, when 22 ... Nd2! gives Black excellent chances to save himself. For example, if 23.Nxa6? then 23 ... Re1+! 24.Bf1 Rxf1+ 25.Kg2 Nxb3 with a better game. Instead, 23.Bxb7! is best, but after 23 ... Nxb3 24.Bxa6 Nd4! Black emerges with approximate equality.
22 ... Nd2 23.Qxf7+ Kh8

White has an apparently overwhelming position, but Black is not without some defensive resources.

24.Bd5!

With the brutal threat of 25.Qg8+ Rxg8 26.Nf7 mate. The text move is an excellent attacking choice, but there was an even more convincing win in 24.Bb2!, preventing the black bishop from moving because of mate on h7. Then, since 24 ... Rg8 loses quickly to 25.Rxb7! (f1 is still defended by the bishop on g2), Black has to try 24 ... Re1+ 25.Bf1 Rxf1+ 26.Kg2 Qc6+ but after 27.Kh3! QC8+ 28.Ne6! he is forced to give up his queen with 28 ... Qxe6+ (or 28 ... Bxb2 29.Rxb2 Qc3 30.Rxb7 and forces mate), and after 29.Qxe6 Bxb2 30.Rxb2 White has an easy win.

24 ... h6!

25.Bb2!

This move creates tremendous pressure along the a1–h8 diagonal.

25 ... Rg8 26.Qd7!

A subtle move, defending rook and bishop, but also preparing to move to h3, preventing 26 ... hxg5.

26 ... Qa4

Black spots the possibility of 27 ... Qd1+ 28.Kg2 Qf1 mate, and it takes some brilliance from White to pursue the attack. Other than the text move, the only alternative is 26 ... Raf8!??, but White can continue 27.Nf7+! Kh7 28.Nxh6! Qa4! (a good attempt) 29.Bb3! which wins, but only just. For example, if Black tries 29 ... Nf3+ 30.Kg2 Qe4, White calmly plays 31.Bd5! and after 31 ... Ne5+ 32.Bxe4 Nxd7 33.Nxg8 Bxb2 34.Rxb2 White will soon be two pawns up. Another try is 29 ... Rd8, but simply 30.Qxg7+! Rxg7 31.Bxa4 wins.

27.Bb3!

A powerful retreat. The bishop move serves a number of purposes: it attacks the queen, prevents 27 ... Qd1+ and frees the fifth rank for the rook.
27 ... Nxb3

If instead 27 ... Qa6 then White concludes brilliantly with 28.Qh3! h5 29.Nf7+ Kh7 30.Rxh5+! (30.Qxh5+ also mates) 30 ... gxh5 31.Bc2+ and mate in three. Black can try 28 ... Nf3+, but after 29.Nxf3 g5 (to prevent 30.Qxh6 mate) 30.Be6! wins immediately.

28.Nf7+ Kh7 29.Rh5!!

A very pretty move, leaving queen, rook and bishop en prise. None can be captured. The variations are simple but elegant: 29 ... gxh5 30.Qf5 mate; 29 ... Qxd7 30.Ng5+! Kh8 31.Rxh6 mate; 29 ... Bxb2 30.Ng5+ Kh8 31.Qh7 mate.

29 ... Qa5 30.Rxh6+

It’s mate next move by 31.Ng5.

Black resigns.
1939

Rojahn, E – Czerniak, M
Buenos Aires
Nimzowitsch Defence (B00)

1.e4 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.g4!?

The first indication that this is going to be no ordinary encounter. This pawn push is very provocative.

4 ... Bg6

Black should consider interjecting 4 ... Be4! 5.f3 Bg6, since if he then develops his dark-squared bishop on e7 unpleasant threats would be generated along the h4–e1 diagonal.

5.Nh3

With the intention of developing the knight on f4, exchanging the bishop.

5 ... e6 6.Nf4!?

A slightly rash advance. It was safer to prelude this move with 6.Be3, which serves the dual purpose of defending d4 and preparing to retreat to f2, blocking the weak diagonal.

6 ... Be4!?

Now the hasty reply 7.f3? would be a mistake, since Black has 7 ... Qh4+ at his disposal, when White is totally lost after 8.Ke2 Bxc2!.

7.Rg1 Nh6

It was possible to create complications with 7 ... Qh4!?, attacking h2, but after 8.h3 the queen might find herself out of play. Another enterprising plan was 7 ... Nb4 8.Na3 (to defend c2) 8 ... c5!? with an interesting but
unbalanced position. The text move is more conservative, but allows White to consolidate.

8.\textit{Be3 Be7 9.Nd2 Bh4!?}

After a couple of sane developing moves Black plays this outlandish bishop move, instead of the safe 9 \ldots Bg6 with an even game. His idea becomes clear in a few moves: he wishes to tempt his opponent into a tactical mêlée, relying on his lead in development to keep the edge.

10.\textit{Nxe4 dxe4 11.Bg2}

An obvious move, apparently winning the pawn on e4. With hindsight, 11.c3 followed by 12.Qc2 would have been a better approach.

11 \ldots Qe7!

Suddenly Black’s counterplay springs to life. The queen is now intending to enter the game with check on b4, and subsequent queen’s side castling will bring his rook into play.
12.Bxe4!?

White snatches the bait, again passing up the opportunity to play the prophylactic 12.c3.

12 ... Nxe5!?

Again the complex option is selected, the idea being 13.dxe5 Qb4+ 14.Qd2 Qxe4 15.0-0-0 0-0 with an unclear position. The alternative was 12 ... Qb4+ 13.c3 Qxb2 but possibly Black did not like the look of his position after 14.Bd2, when 15.Nd3 is difficult to meet. Nevertheless, since White’s king would be stuck in the centre, Black would have his chances.

13.g5!?

Rojahn continues in the tactical spirit, with the clever idea of deflecting the queen from e7, so that after dxe5 there is no check on b4. The position after 13 ... Bxg5 14.Rxg5 Qxg5 15.dxe5 is still a little wild, but White seems to be able to consolidate his material advantage. For example, if 15 ... Rd8 16.Nd3 Qg1+ 17.Ke2 Qxh2 White simply plays 18.Qg1 and Black’s attack fizzles.
out. Alternatively, if 15 ... Qxe5 White has 16.Bxb7, when 16 ... Rd8 is answered by 17.Bc6+ Ke7 18.Nd3 with 19.Bc5+ to follow. All this is fine, but it would have been far simpler to play 13.c3!, when Black has nothing better than 13 ... 0-0-0, giving White a clear advantage after 14.Qb3.

13 ... Nc4!

A further surprise. Czerniak is trying to exploit the pinned pawn on f2 by hitting the dark-squared bishop.

14.gxh6

White rightly accepts the gift, but the crisis is looming.

14 ... Nxe3 15.hxg7?!

An obvious yet slightly careless move, which gives Black the chance to seize the initiative after his next move. Instead, White has two better continuations, although matters are far from simple.

Firstly, 15.Qd3 attacks the knight whilst keeping the pressure on the g7 pawn. Black could try 15 ... Qb4+!? 16.Ke2 g5! to maintain the tension; White’s most interesting is then probably 17.Nh5!? with intentions on the g7 square, and leaving Black’s knight en prise. Black then has several options.

(i) 17 ... Nd5 18.Bxd5 exd5 19.Nf6+! with a slight advantage to White, for example after 19 ... Kd8 20.Qf5.

(ii) 17 ... Nc4?! 18.a3! Qb5 19.Ng7+ and White has a clear edge.

(iii) 17 ... Nf5?! 18.Bxf5 exf5 19.Qxf5! and again the complications favour White.

(iv) 17 ... f5!? 18.Ng7+! Ke7 19.fxe3! fxe4 20.Qxe4 and White prevails.

Therefore, instead of checking on b4, Black should try 15 ... g5!? 16.Nh5 Nd5, but after 17.Bxd5 exd5+ 18.Qe2 White has a superior endgame.

White’s second alternative is 15.Qe2! and after 15 ... g5 16.Nh5 Black again
has a choice of unpalatable options.


(iii) 16 ... f5!? 17.Ng7+ Kf8 (if 17 ... Kd7 then 18.Qb5+! is strong) 18.Bd3! and once again White remains on top.

15 ... Bxf2+!!

Black’s best chance, with the obvious point that 16.Kxf2 loses to 16 ... Nxd1+.

16.Ke2 Rg8 17.Qd3

Black looks to have escaped the worst, since after 17 ... Bxg1 18.Rxg1 Nd5 everything is covered. But Rojahn decides to continue with the
complications.

17 ... Bxg1 18.Qb5+!

With the idea that since 18 ... c6 is impossible, Black must play 18 ... Kd8, and then 19.Rxg1 Nf5 20.Qxb7 follows. However, this whole game is characterized by unexpected stratagems, and once again Czerniak plays a delightful tactical finesse.

18 ... c6!!

White had assumed that this was impossible, since the bishop would simply take the pawn, but Black had seen further.

19.Bxc6+ Kd8

Now we can see Czerniak’s clever idea. If White plays the natural 20.Rxg1? then 20 ... Nf5! attacks the d4 pawn and forces White to play either 21.Qa5+, when after 21 ... Qc7 Black stands well, or 21.Qxb7 when 21 ... Qxb7 22.Bxb7 Rb8 23.Be4 Rxg7! 24.Rxg7 Nxe7 gives Black an advantageous endgame.

20.Bxb7!

The best chance.
20 ... Nxc2?

Black’s move attacks the rook on a1 and also threatens 21 ... Nxd4+ winning the queen. It appears that attempts at perpetual check fail, since after 21.Qa5+ Qc7 22.Qg5+ Ke8 23.Qb5+ Black has 23 ... Qd7! 24.Bc6 Nxd4+ winning.

But incredibly, this natural move allows White to uncork a miraculous drawing combination. Therefore, with the benefit of hindsight, the winning move was 20 ... Nf5!!, when after 21.Qa5+ Qc7 22.Qxc7+ Kxc7 23.Bxa8 Bxh2 Black emerges a piece up.

21.Qa5+ Qc7 22.Nxe6+!!

This is the resource which enables White to retain excellent chances for a draw. The point of the sacrifice is to open the h5–e8 diagonal, therefore maintaining the perpetual net. It is now clear why 20 ... Nf5 was the right square for the knight, since on f5 it would prevent the white queen reaching the g5 and h5 squares.

22 ... fxe6 23.Qg5+ Qe7 24.Qa5+ Kd7 25.Qb5+
Black has several possible manoeuvres to try to avoid the perpetual check.

(i) Firstly, he can attempt to escape via c7 to the queen’s side. This looks completely suicidal, since after 25 ... Kc7 White has the powerful 26.Rc1!, pinning and winning the knight whilst maintaining a ferocious attack. Black, however, does have resources although ultimately they are insufficient to win and even risk losing. For example, if he tries 26 ... Bxd4? then he loses after 27.Rxc2+ Kb8 (or 27 ... Kd8 29.Bxa8) 28.Be4+! followed by 29.Qc6. A better try is 26 ... a6!? but after 27.Rxc2+ Kb8 28.Bxa6+ Ka7 29.Qa5! Qd8! 30.Rc7+ Qxc7 31.Qxc7+ Kxa6 32.Qc6+ White has at least perpetual check.

(ii) Secondly, he might try to rearrange his king and queen in such a way that his queen gets to d7, enabling his king to reach g7 via e7 and f7. Again, this plan involves extreme risk, since the white rook enters the game by capturing the bishop on g1. Thus 25 ... Kd8?! 26.Qa5+ Ke8 27.Qh5+ Qf7 28.Qb5+ Qd7 29.Qh5+ Ke7 30.Qg5+ Kf7 31.Qh5+ (also, 31.Rf1+ might be even better after 31 ... Ke8 32.Qh5+! Kd8 33.Rf8+ Kc7 34.Bxa8! and so on) 31 ... Kxg7!? 32.Rxg1+ Kh8 33.Qe5+ Rg7 34.Bxa8 and White has at least a draw: for example, on 34 ... Nxd4+ 35.Ke1 Qc7!? 36.Qxg7+ (not 36.Qxd4? since 36 ... Qc1+ wins) 36 ... Qxg7 37.Rxg7 leads to an ending where White is
(iii) Thirdly, he can combine the two plans in a clever attempt to keep the white rook out of play. The idea is to lure the white rook to c2, so that when the black king heads for the king’s side the rook is blocked by its own king and cannot therefore join the attack: 25 ... Kc7 26.Rc1 as above, but now 26 ... Rab8!? 27.Rxc2+ Kd8!? 28.Qa5+ Ke8 giving this very interesting position.

Here Black threatens to carry out his plan of running the king to h8, but White can try 29.Rc7!?. Black should then ignore the threat to his queen and play 29 ... Rxb7!, so that after 30.Rxe7+? Rxe7 he has a clear material advantage; White should refuse the offer and play 30.Rc8+! Kf7! (better than 30 ... Kd7? 31.Rxg8! when Black is in real trouble after, for example, 31 ... Rxb2+ 32.Kd1 Bf2 and there seems to be no win) 33.Qh5+ Kg7! 34.Qg4+ with a draw by perpetual check. The situation is full of danger, and should Black try to avoid the draw by 31 ... Kf6, then he might
stumble into pitfalls like this: 32.Qh6+ Kf5 33.Qxh7+ Kg5 (or 33 ... Kg4 34.Rxg8 Rxb2+ 35.Kd1! with chances to queen the g-pawn) 34.h4+ Kf4 35.Rxg8 and White should win.

These variations clearly illustrate the wild nature of the position and show that attempts by Black to avoid the draw are more likely to lead to an unpleasant result for him. Wisely, therefore, he allows his opponent to take the perpetual check.

25 ... Kd8 26.Qa5+ Qc7 27.Qg5+ Ke8 28.Qh5+ Ke7 29.Qg5+ Kd7 30.Qb5+ Kd8 31.Qg5+ Qe7 32.Qa5+ Kd7 33.Qb5+ ½–½

1940

Bogoljubow, E – Rellstab, L
Cracow
Polish Defence (A46)

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d4 b5

The unusual Polish Defence, which has been played by several very strong players such as Alekhine and Spassky.

3.Bg5!?

Bogoljubow was often keen to play Bg5 in queen’s pawn openings. Indeed, he was one of the early exponents of the now famous Trompowsky Attack (1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5).
3 ... Bb7

3 ... Ne4!? is an interesting alternative.

4.e3

White is content to continue with routine development.

4 ... a6 5.Nbd2 e6 6.a4

At some stage White usually decides to challenge the b-pawn in this manner, thereby weakening Black’s hold on the c4 square.

6 ... b4 7.Bd3 c5!?

Striking at the centre, despite lagging behind in development.

8.0-0 Be7 9.dxc5
A typical piece of nice timing – White waits until the dark-squared bishop has moved before forcing it to shift again to recapture on c5. For this reason, Black might have been better playing ... Nc6 on the previous move.

9 ... Bxc5 10.e4!

Bogoljubow seizes his chance to advance his e-pawn, threatening 11.e5 and posing an awkward problem for his opponent.

10 ... Be7?

10 ... Qc7 and 10 ... Qb6 look unappealing because Black will have the problem of finding a safe haven for his king, but 10 ... d6! is a far better choice, as the weakness of the d6 square is liquidated after 11.e5 dxe5 12.Nxe5 when White’s advantage is only slight.

11.e5! Nd5 12.Bxe7 Nxe7

The recapture with the queen does not alter the status of the positional weakness on d6.
13.Nc4!

And after a mere twelve moves Black’s position is simply horrible, with 14.Nd6+ being the principal threat.

13 ... Nc8

It’s hard to suggest a decent alternative to this passive retreat.

14.Re1!

Clever play from Bogoljubow, who anticipates Black’s routine response.

14 ... d5

Obvious but flawed – a better option was 14 ... 0-0 but White still has a clear plus.

15.exd6 Nxd6 16.Bg6!!

A spectacular and very effective coup, uncovering an attack against the knight on d6.
16 ... hxg6

If 16 ... Nxc4? then 17.Rxe6+ Kf8 leads to mate or the win of the queen, whilst the only other option 16 ... Ke7 loses after the simple 17.Qxd6+ Qxd6 18.Nxd6 Kxd6 (or 18 ... hxg6 19.Nxb7) 19.Bxf7 Bd5 20.Rad1.

17.Nxd6+ Ke7 18.Nxb7

White is now a knight ahead, but Black attempts to trap the piece.

18 ... Qc7 19.Qd5!

This manoeuvre saves the knight, although he could also have played 19.Qd4, since 19 ... Qxb7 loses to 20.Rxe6+! Kxe6 (or 20 ... fxe6 21.Qxg7+) 21.Re1+ Kf5 22.g4 mate.

19 ... Rh5

A futile last-ditch try.
20.Qe4 Nc6 21.g4 Rh6
21 ... Rd5? 22.Qxd5!.
22.Nc5 Black resigns.

1941

Mikenas, V – Lebedev, S
Grusien
Queen’s Gambit (D66)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3

Mikenas is not afraid of the Nimzo-Indian Defence that would now arise after 3 ... Bb4, but Lebedev prefers to transpose into a Queen’s Gambit Declined.

3 ... d5 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3

White delays Nf3 which, in some variations, permits him to castle on the queen’s side and can lead to a more double-edged game than the traditional lines.

5 ... h6 6.Bh4

6.Bxf6 Bxf6 is also possible, when White can adopt a pleasing set-up by exchanging on d5 and playing Bd3, Ne2 and 0-0.

6 ... 0-0 7.Rc1

As is common in the Queen’s Gambit, White defers 7.Bd3 so that he might save a tempo in the event that Black decides to exchange on c4.

7 ... c6

In this position Tartakower’s 7 ... b6 is also seen, but Lebedev sticks to traditional QGD development.

Reaching a pretty standard position in this opening. The pure Orthodox Queen’s Gambit Declined is identical except for one small but important difference, namely that 5 ... h6 6.Bh4 would not have been played. The consequence of this is demonstrated later in the game.

9 ... dxc4

The best method for Black to free his game, although 9 ... Ne8 has also been tried.

10.Bxc4 Nd5?!

In an analogous position, without ... h6 and Bh4, this freeing move is regarded as natural and best. However, in this precise position, 10 ... b5! is a better attempt for counterplay and immediately causes White a certain amount of disruption to his otherwise harmonious development.

11.Bg3!
This is the difference. In the variation without ... h6 and Bh4, this retreat would not be possible. Most aggressive masters would prefer the text move to 11.Bxe7?! Qxe7 12.0-0 Nxc3 13.bxc3, which would leave Black with an even game.

11 ... Nxc3 12.bxc3 c5

The thematic break in this opening, but the advantage lies with White because of his better development.

13.0-0 a6

Lebedev prepares for active pawn play on the queen’s side, but he might have preferred piece play. For example, 13 ... Qa5 is an interesting alternative, pressurising the pawn on a2, but even here White keeps the initiative after 14.Ne5!, menacing 15.Qg4 or 15.Qf3, with an ideal attacking position. For the alternative 13 ... b6 see our 1978 game.


A fine post for the knight.

15 ... Bd6?!

With the idea of relieving pressure by exchanging minor pieces. However, White’s next move demonstrates the drawback of this manoeuvre.

16.Bh4! Be7

Black decides to eat humble pie and returns the bishop to e7. The alternative was hardly very appealing, since after 16 ... g5 17.Bg3 White has a clear advantage and will follow up with f4, causing Black severe weaknesses on the king’s side.
17.Bb1!

A typical attacking motif in the Queen’s Gambit, planning 18.Qd3, 19.Bxf6 and 20.Qh7 mate. It is hard to meet if, as here, Black is still to generate active counterplay.

17 ... Qe8!?

Lebedev must have hated to play this constricting move, but he apparently saw no other option. The idea is to prepare ... g6 without allowing a sacrifice on that square. He rejected the alternative 17 ... Bd7, not because of 18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Qd3 g6 20.Nxg6?! fxg6 21.Qxg6+ (since 21 ... Bg7 seems to hold), but because of 18.Qc2!, which practically forces 18 ... Re8 and after 19.Bxf6 Bxf6 20.Qh7+ White has a strong attack.

18.dxc5!

Cleverly exploiting Black’s predicament. If now 18 ... Bxc5? then 19.Bxf6 gxf6 20.Qg4+ Kh8 21.Qh5! Kg7 22.Ng4! wins the bishop.
18 ... g5

Black lashes out, but other moves only allow White to build an overwhelming attack. For example, if 18 ... Qb5 then 19.Qc2 is simple and strong.

19.Bg3!

He would spoil everything if he tried the spectacular 19.Qd3? since the king-hunt fizzles out to a draw after 19 ... gxh4 20.Ng4 Kg7 21.Nxf6 Kxf6 22.Qd4+ e5!.

19 ... Bxc5

Tempting, but it does weaken the dark squares around the king.

20.f4!?

Now White decides that it is time to smash through his opponent’s defences. Admittedly, this does look very powerful, but it turns out that a less dramatic continuation of the attack (for example with 20.h4 or 20.Qc2) might have been a safer way to win.

20 ... Bxe3+ 21.Kh1 Bxc1

Sacrificing a pawn and the exchange is all part of White’s plan.

22.fxg5!?

After this White is a whole rook down. Nevertheless, he appears to have all the elements of a mating attack in place.

22 ... Bxg5 23.Rxf6!!
A brilliant sacrifice that is the point of White’s combination. At the end of the game White must have been delighted to accept the plaudits, since, as we shall see, he scored a memorable and seemingly smooth victory. The main point of the move is that 23 ... Bxf6? blocks the f-pawn, and therefore loses immediately to 24.Qd3 with mate on h7 to follow. (Years later, Bobby Fischer used the identical idea to defeat Benko in a lovely miniature from the 1963/64 US Championships.) Other than taking the rook, the only defence seems to be the move chosen by Lebedev, 23 ... Kg7, but in fact that loses rapidly, whereas an interesting defence missed by both players (and annotators) is to be found in the counter-punch 23 ... Qb5!!. This move puts pressure on the bishop at b1 and the knight at e5, and in certain variations gives Black back-rank mating ideas.
There are a number of fascinating possibilities in this position.

(i) At first sight, the simple riposte 24.Qc2? seems to win, since mate is threatened on h7. However, after 24 ... Qxb1+! 25.Qxb1 Bxf6 26.Ng4 Bg7 Black has two rooks and a pawn for the queen and is doing fine. This theme, giving up the queen to stem the attack, is the primary reason that this defence is a difficult one to crack.

(ii) Similarly, the wild 24.Rxh6 – with the idea that after 24 ... Bxh6 25.Qg4+ might give White enough play for the material – can be simply refuted by 25 ... Bg7 and White’s back rank is fatally weak.

(iii) Another brutal attempt is 24.Rxf7!?, when after 24 ... Rxf7 25.Nxf7 Kxf7 White is a rook down but Black’s king looks somewhat exposed. It is not altogether clear, though, how White can exploit this, particularly given the threat to his own back rank. For example, if 26.Qf3+ then 26 ... Kg7 seems to hold, albeit precariously; or if 26.h4 then 26 ... Bf6 again just about keeps the position intact, whilst 26.Qh5+ Ke7 leads nowhere.

(iv) White could try the quiet retreat 24.Rf3!? when in return for a pawn and
the exchange he has significantly weakened the black position, and can consider moves such as 25.h4 or 25.Qc2. Nonetheless, it is very unclear because Black himself has some resourceful ideas and after, for instance, 24 ... Rd8 25.Qc2 f5! he might be able to launch an attack with a later ... Rd2.

(v) That leaves the move 24.Ng4! which leads to further complications. Here 24 ... Qxb1? fails to 25.Qxb1 Bxf6 26.Nxf6+ Kg7 27.Qh7+! Kxf6 28.Bh4+ Ke5 29.Qg7+ and 30.Qxf8. So Black has to play 24 ... Bxf6 25.Nxf6+ Kg7 (25 ... Kh8 might also be possible) and in this interesting situation White again has a number of alternatives.

He might attempt to deflect the queen by 26.c4!? Qg5 and now 27.Qe1?! again allows Black to give up the queen with 27 ... Kxf6! (simpler than trying to circumnavigate the complications that follow other moves) 28.Bh4 Kg7 29.Bxg5 hxg5 with advantage. Thus a better try is 27.Nh7! and after 27 ... Qe3, not 28.Qg4+? Kh8, but 28.Bh4! gives White good chances, although a draw seems the most likely outcome. One variation runs 28 ... f5 (avoiding 28 ... Re8? when 29.Bf6+ Kg8 30.Qg4+ mates) 29.Nxf8 Kxf8 30.Qd8+ Kf7 31.Qf6+ Kg8 and as soon as White makes his king safe, Black either forces perpetual by 32.h3 Qc1+ 33.Kh2 Qf4+ 34.Kg1 (or 34.Bg3? Qg5!) 34 ... Qc1+
35.Kf2 Qd2+ 36.Kf3 Qd1+ 37.Kg3 Qd6+ etc, or plays for more and retreats his queen.

Thus, instead of 26.c4 White should play 26.Bh4!, which keeps the queen away from the g5 square. Here Black can try to defend the white squares with 26 ... e5!? but White can generate a massive attack by 27.Nh5+ Kg8 28.Bd3! Qb2 29.Qe1!. For example, if 29 ... f6 then 30.Qg3+ Kf7 31.Qg7+ Ke6 (worse is 31 ... Ke8 32.Nf6+!! Rxf6 33.Bg6+!! Rgx6 34.Qe7 mate!) 32.Bc4+! Kd6 33.Qxf8+ wins.

Other defensive tries are possible, and perhaps Black could find a route to equality, but in any event these lines are certainly less clear-cut and present White with more problems than in the game.

23 ... Kg7? 24.Qd3!

A strong battery is created along the chronically weak white squares.

24 ... h5

If 24 ... Kxf6 then 25.Ng4+! Ke7 26.Qd6 is mate. So Black defends the g4 square.
25.h4

Good enough to win, although a more fitting climax would have been the lovely sacrifice 25.Nxf7!! when 25 ... Bxf6 26.Qg6 is mate and 25 ... Rxf7 also leads to 26.Qg6+ Kf8 27.Bd6+ Qe7 28.Qxf7 mate. Moreover, 25 ... Rg8 loses after 26.Qg6+ Kf8 27.Bd6+ Qe7 28.Nxg5 mate and 25 ... Qxf7 fails to the powerful 26.Be5!. The best defence is 25 ... Kxf6 but this is found wanting after 26.Be5+!! Ke7 (or 26 ... Kxf7 27.Qh7 mate) 27.Bd6+ Kd7 28.Bxf8+ Kc6 29.Qd6+ Kb5 30.Qc5+ Ka4 31.Qb4 mate.

25 ... Kxf6

Had Black played 25 ... Bc1 then White would had to have found the same 26.Nxf7 sacrifice as above, which wins in similar fashion. Now, however, White finishes with a beautiful flurry of sacrifices to produce a picturesque mating position.

26.Ng4+!! hxg4

If 26 ... Ke7 then 27.Qd6 mate.
27.\textit{Be}5+!!  Kxe5 28.\textit{Qd}4 mate.

Lovely.

1942

Pilnik, H – Najdorf, M
Mar del Plata
Caro-Kann Defence (B15)


In this variation of the Caro-Kann Defence, Black has to decide between the simple 5 ... exf6 as played here, and the more strategically complex recapture towards the centre 5 ... gxf6, which was favoured by Larsen and Bronstein.

6.c3
Here 6.Bc4 is an active alternative.

**6 ... Bd6 7.Bd3 0-0**

Normal at this juncture is 8.Qc2.

**8.Qh5!?**

A provocative move, which takes advantage of the absence of a black knight on f6 to force a weakness in the pawn structure.

**8 ... g6 9.Qh4 c5!**

Correctly countering an attack on the flank with one in the centre. This typical Caro-Kann plan should give Black a level game, particularly since White’s king remains in the centre of the board.

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10.Ne2 Nc6 11.Bh6 f5?!
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Najdorf offers to simplify after 12.Qxd8 Rxd8, but the advance of the pawn
leaves him chronically weak on the black squares. 11 ... Re8 was natural and much better, leading to a position with chances for both sides.

12.Bg5 Qb6

One would expect a great player such as Najdorf to find an active plan, and so it proves. Despite his wretched king’s side, his pieces can find active squares and White must tread carefully.

13.0-0!

Pilnik rises to the challenge and hastens to finish his development, rather than worrying about his b-pawn.

13 ... cxd4 14.cxd4

This is the critical position. White has an isolated d-pawn but has created a menacing formation in the vicinity of the black king. Black now needs to apply his sense of danger, which should warn him to prevent the white bishop from moving to c4 where it would prove most awkward.

14 ... Re8?

Najdorf’s enthusiasm to play actively gets the better of him. The correct move was 14 ... Be6 with good equalizing chances.

15.Bc4!
Well timed, threatening 16.Bxf7+! Kxf7 17.Qxh7+ with a crushing attack. The move that Black would like to play is 15 ... Be6, but it is probably too late for this now since White has the reply 16.d5. He might try to complicate with 16 ... Bxd5 17.Bxd5 Rxe2 but 18.Bxf7+ is again very strong, as is 18.Qc4.

15 ... h5

Physically attempting to keep the h-file blocked, but Black’s dark squares are getting weaker by the moment.

16.Rae1

Calmly bringing his final piece into the attack, although 16.Bf6 followed by 17.Qg5 would also have been difficult to meet. Black might survive after 16 ... Na5! (if 16 ... Bf8? 17.Qg5! followed by 18.Nf4! wins) 17.Bd3 Be6, although White has good attacking chances.

16 ... Re4
Najdorf decides that more active play is required. The alternative – sitting tight to await his fate – is hardly appetising. However, given his weak king’s side position and incomplete development, the plan is unlikely to succeed.

17.Nf4

Natural and very strong, since the pawn at g6 is coming under fire.

17 ... Qxd4

Black snatches the offered pawn. Now the game has reached its crisis, and White must find a way to break through.

18.Rxe4 fxe4

He might have tried 18 ... Qxe4, though the variation 19.Nxg6! Qxh4 20.Nxh4 gives him little hope of surviving long. Now Pilnik proceeds in spectacular style.

19.Nxh5! gxh5
The first point is that 19 ... Qxc4 allows 20.Nf6+ Kf8 21.Qh8+ Ke7 22.Qe8 mate.

20.Bf6!!

Again leaving the king’s bishop en prise. If 20 ... Qxc4 then 21.Qxh5 leads to mate.

20 ... Qc5

To defend the important g5 square.

21.Rd1!!

What makes this particular combination stand out is the manner in which all of White’s pieces contribute to the maximum extent in the attack. The rook now threatens to land on d5 with murderous effect.

21 ... Kf8

Black attempts to shift his king out of the firing line. After this move, White must still play with great energy to secure the win. In fact, there were better and worse alternatives.

(i) Firstly, if 21 ... Be6? then 22.Rd5! wins, since if 22 ... Qxc4 then 23.Qg5+ Kf8 24.Rxd6 is decisive, whilst 22 ... Bxd5 loses to 23.Qxh5! with mate to follow on h8.

(ii) Similarly, 21 ... Be7? succumbs to 22.Rd5! Bxf6 (or 22 ... Qxc4 23.Qg5+ Kf8 24.Bxe7+ Ke8 25.Ba3 and Black has to give up his queen to avoid mate) 23.Qg3+, and if 21 ... Bg4 22.Rd5 Qxc4 23.Qg5+ Kf8 24.Rxd6 again wins easily.

(iii) However, the most stubborn defence is 21 ... Ne7! when many sources give 22.Rxd6 as the winning line. But after 22 ... Qxd6! (and not 22 ... Qxc4? 23.Rd8+ and mates) 23.Qg5+ (other tries such as 23.Bxe7, 23.Qxh5 and 23.h3 are equally unconvincing after 23 ... Qd1+! 24.Bf1 Qg4, 23 ... Qxf6 and 23 ... Ng6! respectively) 23 ... Kf8 White’s various attacking ideas all seem inadequate.
For example, 24.Bxe7+ is simply met by 24 ... Qxe7, and if 24.Qg7+ then 24 ... Ke8 25.Qxf7+ (Black survives after 25.Bxf7+ Kd7 26.Bxh5 Qb4 or 25.Bb5+ Nc6 26.Qg8+ Qf8!) 25 ... Kd8 is fine for Black. Thus instead of 22.Rxd6? White must find another plan, the consistent idea obviously being 22.Rd5. Unfortunately, the move is less effective in this position, and after 22 ... Nxd5! the best White can get is a draw after 23.Qxh5! Nxf6! 24.Qxf7+, etc. If he tries 23.Qg5+ Kf8 24.Bxd5 (or 24.Qxh5 Ke8!) then 24 ... Qc7 is again adequate. So is there a win? It turns out that White does indeed have two very strong responses to 21 ... Ne7!.

(a) The first is 22.Bc3!, threatening 23.Qf6. If 22 ... Kf8 then 23.Qf6 Qxc4 24.Rxd6 wins, and 22 ... Qxc4 loses after 23.Rxd6 Qxc3 24.bxc3 Ng6 25.Qd8+ Nf8 26.Rd5, etc.

(b) The second winning line is 22.b4!, deflecting the queen. After 22 ... Qf5 23.Rxd6 wins, and if 22 ... Ng6 then 23.bxc5 Nxc4 24.cxd6 is pretty conclusive.

22.b4!!
A similar idea to that mentioned in the last note. White avoids 22.Rd5 Qxc4!, when mate is threatened on c1, and after 23.Qxh5! Qc1+ 24.Rd1 Qxd1+! 25.Qxd1 Be7! Black fights on.

22 ... Nxb4

Otherwise Black loses the h-pawn or the bishop on d6.

23.Qg3!!

A beautiful move. The queen cannot be taken because of mate on d8. Meanwhile the bishop is attacked and White menaces 24.Qg7+.

23 ... Bg4

Still Najdorf finds defensive resources, and now White has his queen, rook and king’s bishop en prise.

24.Rxd6! Nd3
A clever move, which temporarily keeps the queen away from the f4 square. If instead 24 ... Qxc4? then 25.Qf4! Ke8 26.Qh6 wins. The only other defensive try is the desperate 24 ... Ke8!? but after 25.h3! White wins, since 25 ... Qxc4 26.Qe5+ Be6 (26 ... Kf8 27.Be7+ Kg8 28.Qg5+ mates) fails to the very pretty bishop retreat 27.Bg5!!, which menaces 28.Qh8 mate and wins immediately (see diagram below).

Furthermore, after 25.h3 Nc6 the prosaic 26.hxg4 Qxc4 27.gxh5! Qc1+ (forced since 27 ... Ne7 28.Qe5 Qc7 29.Bg5! wins) 28.Kh2 Qh6 29.Qg4! Qh7 (to avoid losing the queen after 30.Qxe4+ Kf8 31.Be7+) 30.Qd7+ Kf8 31.Qxb7 wins.

25.Bxd3 Qc1+?

Najdorf tries one last tactic, which Pilnik side-steps nicely leaving him a piece up. The move is a mistake, since he misses the last chance to survive with 25 ... exd3 26.Qf4 Ke8!. After

27.Rxd3 the exposed position of Black’s king should ultimately prove fatal,
but there is certainly no quick win. For example, if 27 ... Be6 then 28.Qd2! gives White a dominant position, whilst after 27 ... Rc8 28.Rc3! Rd8! 29.Qa4+! wins the exchange. Nevertheless, this defence offered better drawing chances than the text move.

26.Bf1 Rc8

Najdorf lays his trap, but even in time-trouble a grandmaster would seldom fall for it.

27.h3! Qxf1+! 28.Kh2!

Of course not 28.Kxf1? because of 28 ... Rc1+ and mate next move. Black has regained his piece but his bishop is en prise and if it retreats then 29.Qg7+ leads to mate.

28 ... Qc1 29.hxg4 hxg4 30.Qxg4 Qh6+

31.Kg3
Avoiding 31.Kg1? Rc1+ 32.Rd1 Rxd1+ 33.Qxd1 Qxf6.

31 ... Rc3+ 32.f3 Black Resigns.

1943

Boleslavsky, I – Botvinnik, M
Sverdlovsk
Ruy López (C82)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4

The so-called Open Variation is more dynamic and tactical than the solid Closed Variation (5 ... Be7, as seen for example in our 1909 game). There is a huge amount of opening theory on both variations, and at the time of writing the line played in this game is “book” at least until move twenty-seven.

6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 d5 8.dxe5 Be6 9.c3

This is the point where Black has to choose between a number of equally interesting lines, such as 9 ... Nc5, 9 ... Be7 or the move actually played.

9 ... Bc5

Natural and aggressive, although the defensive qualities of the bishop are sometimes missed on the king’s wing if the game explodes on that side of the board.

(see next diagram)

10.Nbd2 0-0 11.Bc2 f5

Again the boldest choice. The main alternative to this advance is 11 ... Bf5, supporting the knight.

12Nb3
Best, since 12.exf6 Nxf6 frees Black’s game.

12 ... Bb6 13.Nfd4

This is such a powerful position for the knight that Black is really forced to exchange.

13 ... Nxd4 14.Nxd4 Bxd4 15.cxd4

Current theory gives 15.Qxd4 as slightly stronger, although chances are still pretty even after 15 ... c5 16.Qd1.

15 ... f4!

Black must strive for activity against the white king otherwise the two bishops will prove troublesome.

16.f3 Ng3!

We are still in opening theory and this sacrifice has become very heavily
analysed, although no definite conclusion has been reached.

17.hxg3

If he declines with 17.Rf2 then 17... Qh4 leads to further complications with chances for both sides.

17 ... fxg3


18.Qd3

So that 18 ... Qh4 can be met by 19.Qxh7+. The game now heads down a famous queen sacrifice variation.

18 ... Bf5 19.Qxf5
Otherwise the black queen will arrive on h4 with telling effect.

19 ... Rxf5 20.Bxf5 Qh4 21.Bh3

The point of White’s play is now revealed; the king is safe and he has two powerful bishops. Black, as compensation, will pick off the central pawns and will advance his queen’s side pawn majority.

21 ... Qxd4+ 22.Kh1 Qxe5 23.Bd2

White has little choice but to attempt to complete his development in this manner.

23 ... c5?!

Nowadays it is recognized that 23 ... Qxb2 is playable immediately. Then 24.Bf4 d4 25.Bxg3 c5 leads to murky lines, and in fact the game actually transposes into one of these.

24.Rae1?!

White should play 24.Bc3! d4 25.Rae1! Qf4 26.Re4! Qh6 and now 27.Be1 (or 27.Ba5) gives him the better game.

24 ... Qxb2 25.Bf4 d4?!

In a game from 1962 against Teschner, Honfi revived the superior 25 ... Qf6!, which Ragozin had played against Boleslavsky himself in 1942. The Teschner – Honfi game continued 26.Bxg3 d4 leading to a complicated position, but with the queen more active than on b2.

26.Bxg3?!

Boleslavsky obviously wishes to capture the g-pawn, but this wastes too much time and permits the black pawns to advance. Better would have been 26.Be6+ Kh8 27.Bd5! Rd8 28.Re7!, with excellent play along the seventh rank.

26 ... d3
Despite the inaccuracies, the game has now transposed back into current theory. Of course, neither player can be criticized for not finding the absolute best lines, since it took another thirty years of practice before even a partial assessment of the variations was established.

27. \textit{Be5}?!

Better again is 27.\textit{Be6}+ \textit{Kh8} 28.\textit{Bd5}! with 29.\textit{Re7} to follow. In addition, 27.\textit{Re7} has been played, as after 27 ... d2 28.\textit{Be6}+ \textit{Kh8} 29.\textit{Rd7} c4 30.\textit{Rd1} \textit{Qf6}! (only not 30 ... c3? 31.\textit{Be5}! c2 32.\textit{Bxb2} \textit{cxd1Q+} 33.\textit{Kh2} h5 34.\textit{Bxg7}+ \textit{Kh7} 35.\textit{Bc3+} winning) the game is still in the balance.

27 ... \textit{Qxa2}

Now Black has four connected passed pawns. The question, as often occurs in this variation, is whether White can get at the king before the pawns promote.

28. \textit{Bd6}!
Threatening 29.Be6+ winning the queen.

28 ... Qb2?!

A strange square for the queen, leaving the c-pawn undefended. Botvinnik should perhaps have played 28 ... c4!.

29.Be6+

Boleslavsky does not like the look of 29.Bxc5 d2 30.Rd1 Re8, so delays capturing the c-pawn.

29 ... Kh8 30.Be5

Again Boleslavsky decides to decline the pawn, since after 30.Bxc5 d2 31.Rd1 Qe5 forks the bishops.

30 ... Qd2?

Undoubtedly c2 is a better square for the queen, because on the d2 she impedes the advance of the d-pawn. On 30 ... Qc2 a draw by repetition might result from 31.Rc1 Qe2 32.Rce1, etc, or White might try for more.

31.f4

The f-pawn joins the attack, and at the same time 31 ... Qh6+ is prevented.

31 ... c4 32.f5

With the unpleasant threat of 33.f6!.

32 ... Rf8 33.Re4

Preparing to double rooks on the f-file.

33 ... c3 34.Re4

Not 34.Rg4? Qh6+ 35.Bh2 (or 35.Kg1 Qe3+ winning the bishop) 35 ... c2 followed by 36 ... d2 and wins.
34 ... Rf6!

Black is quite prepared to give up the exchange in order to stop 35.f6.

35.R4f2

Reckoning that preserving the two bishops is better than capturing the rook. Black survives after 35.Bxf6 gxf6 36.Rg4 h5.

35 ... Qh6+ 36.Kg1 b4

On 36 ... c2 37.Bf4! is strong.

37.Rf3! d2

Necessary, as 37 ... c2 is met by 38.Rxd3 threatening mate on d8.

38.Bb3!

Unfortunately for Botvinnik, the bishops are very adept at stopping the advancing pawns.
38 ... Qh4

Trying to bring the queen back into the game, but perhaps 38 ... a5 was better.

39.Rd3!

Suddenly White’s pieces spring to life and Black is hanging on.

39 ... Rf8 40.Rg3

Hitting the other weak point in the black position, g7.

40 ... Qe7!?  

40 ... Rf6 is more circumspect.

41.Bd4!

White assesses the position after 41.Bxg7+ Qxg7 42.Rxg7 Kxg7 as
sufficiently unclear to justify the continuation of his slow build-up with the
text move. In fact, it is probable that he would lose that endgame.

41 ... Rf6 42.Re3 Qd7!

The correct square for the queen, defending e8 and supporting a later ... a4
advance.

43.Rf4

Gradually White’s pieces converge on the black position. The f-pawn is
inviolate due to the back-rank mate.

43 ... a5 44.Rfe4 Rf8 45.f6

White has to do something active else Black simply plays 45 ... a4 and the
pawns roll down the board.

45 ... gxf6 46.Rg3

If 46.Bxf6+ then 46 ... Rxf6 47.Re8+ Kg7 48.R8e7+ Qxe7 49.Rxe7+ Kh6 is
fine for Black. Now 46 ... a4 is prevented because of 47.Bxf6+ Rxf6 48.Rg8
mate.

46 ... h6 47.Rh4

Is White’s attack potent enough to force a win?

47 ... Kh7
Now 48.Rgh3 Qf5! 49.Rxh6+ Kg7 50.Be3 Qb1+ 51.Kh2 Qxb3 52.Rh7+ Kg8! wins, only not 52 ... Kg6? 53.g4!! and mate next move by 54.R3h6 cannot be avoided.

48.Kh2

The idea behind this move is to prepare Be3, which is impossible at the moment because of 48 ... d1Q+.

48 ... f5 49.Be3!

Again threatening mate.

49 ... Qc6 50.Bf4

Yet again shunning the win of the queen, which would leave Black with good chances to exploit his pawn surplus.

50 ... Rd8
Of course, 49 ... a4? is answered by 50.Bxa4.

51.Be5! Qb7?

51 ... Rd7? is unfortunately met by 52.Bg8 mate, but the correct defence was 51 ... Qd7!, which leads to a draw by repetition if White plays the simple 52.Bf4. If he tries for more with 52.Be6!? then 52 ... d1Q? loses to 53.Bxf5+! Qxf5 54.Rg7+ Kh8 55.Rxh6+ and mate next move. Instead 52 ... Qxe6 draws after 53.Rg7+ Kh8 54.Rg3+!, etc.

52.Be6!!

This is what Botvinnik missed: the f-pawn can only be defended in one way.

52 ... Rf8 53.Bf4?

There was a beautiful win in 53.Rgh3!!. The mate threat forces 53 ... Qg7. Then 54.Bxg7 Kxg7 55.Bb3 is an easy win, so Black’s only try is 54 ... d1Q but 55.Bxf8! threatens mate, and after 55 ... Kg6 56.Rxh6+ Kg5 White has a fantastic forced win.
The key move is 57.R3h4!! whereupon 58.Be7 mate cannot be prevented without the loss of the queen, since 57 ... Qd8 fails to 58.Bc5!! Qc7+ 59.Kh3 Qxc5 60.g3!! and 61.R4h5 mate.

53 ... Qg7

As in the note above, this is forced. The difference is that Black gets a rook rather than a bishop for the queen.

54.Rxg7+ Kxg7 55.Bb3

Reaching an ending with the fascinating material imbalance of two bishops versus five pawns.

55 ... Rd8 56.Be5+

Enabling the rook to come to the d-file.

56 ... Kg6 57.Rd4 Re8
Black must try to penetrate with his rook.

58. Bf4

This wins, but it does allow Black to get some counterplay. The natural 58. Rd5! was very strong, particularly since 58 ... Ra8? permits White to weave a mating net by 59. Rd6+ Kg5 (both 59 ... Kh7 60. Rd7+ and 59 ... Kh5 60. Bf7+ lead to mate) 60. Kg3!. White would therefore win the a-pawn and the rest would be relatively straightforward.

58 ... Re1 59. Rd6+ Kg7?

This should lose instantly, as would 59 ... Kh5? (60. Kg3! leads to mate). Instead, 59 ... Kh7! was mandatory. Then 60. Bxh6? d1Q! 61. Bxd1? (61. Rxd1! draws) 61 ... Rxd1 62. Rxd1 Kxh6 wins, whilst 60. Rxd6+ leads to very similar positions to those in the game.

60. Bxh6+! Kh7

61. Bg5?
Missing 61.Bf8!, when mate by 62.Rh6 cannot be stopped without ruinous loss of material.

61 ... Rb1!

By attacking the bishop from behind Black stakes a claim for a draw.

62.Bc2 Rc1

Now 63.Bb3 Rb1 would be a draw. Boleslavsky plays for more, and he realizes that this entails giving up a bishop for two pawns to prevent them from queening.

63.Bxf5+! Kg7 64.Rd7+ Kf8

Carefully avoiding 64 ... Kh8? 65.Bf6+ Kg8 66.Be6+ Kf8 67.Rd8 mate.

65.Bxd2 cxd2 66.Rxd2

Now Black has only one pawn for the bishop, but he still has hopes of salvaging the draw.

66 ... b3 67.Rd8+ Ke7 68.Ra8

Placing the rook behind the pawn, as recommended by the endgame experts.

68 ... Ra1 69.g4 Kf6

Rather than playing 69 ... a4 immediately, Botvinnik elects to try to hold up the advance of the g-pawn.

70.Rb8 a4 71.Rb4!

Cutting off the king and attacking both pawns.

71 ... Kg5 72.Kg2 Kf6

Black cannot do much to improve his position. If Boleslavsky should now attempt to win the a-pawn with 73.Bd7 then 73 ... a3 74.Rxb3 a2 75.Ra3
Rd1! draws.

73.Rb6+ Ke5 74.Rb5+ Kf6

Not 74 ... Kd4? since 75.g5! wins.

75.Rb6+?

75.Bd3 followed by the careful advance of the g-pawn would have offered winning chances.

75 ... Ke5 76.Rb4 Kf6 77.Kh2 Kg5 78.Rb5

The last few moves have been rather aimless, but the best plan for White is still to try to get his remaining pawn moving up the board.

78 ... Rc1!?

Dangerously allowing the discovered check in order to have the chance to push the b-pawn.
79. Bd7+ Kf4

If 79 ... Kf6 then 80. Rb6+ Kg5 81. Bxa4 Kxg4 82. Bxb3 leaves White with rook and bishop against rook. This is a theoretical draw although in practice the side with the extra piece often triumphs.

80. Be6

Again the pawnless ending is avoided. 80. Rb4+ Kg5 81. Bxa4 b2 82. Rxb2 Kxg4 should be a draw but it requires very accurate defence.

80 ... Rc2+ 81. Kh3 b2 82. Ba2

If 82. Bf5? then 82 ... a3! 83. Bxc2 a2! 84. Rxb2 a1Q 85. Rb4+ and White must fight for the draw.

82 ... a3 83. Rf5+

If 83. Rb3 then 83 ... Rc1 leads to similar positions to the game continuation.

83 ... Ke3

Black threatens to play his rook to a1, so White must defend.
84.Ra5 Rc3 85.Kh4
Or 85.g5 Kf4+ 86.Kh4 Rc1 with a similar outcome.

85 ... Kf4 86.Ra4+ Ke5 87.g5 Rc1
Leading to a forced draw.

88.Rxa3 Ra1
More accurate than 88 ... b1Q 90.Bxb1 Rxb1.

89.Rb3 Rxa2
The rook and pawn ending is drawn.

½–½

1944
Reshevsky, S – Vasconcellos  
Boston  
French Defence (C02)  

1.e4 
Not Reshevsky’s most common choice of first move. In this game he decides to have some fun with an open game.  

1 ... e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5!? 
An old line introduced by Steinitz in a correspondence game way back in 1887.  

4 ... Nd7  
The most natural move is 4 ... Nc6. For example, 5.Nf3 Bxc5 6.Bd3 Nge7 7.0-0 Ng6 leads to an equal game. 

5.Nf3 Bxc5 
And here Black should consider instead 5 ... Ne7 followed by 6 ... Nc6, delaying the recapture of the pawn for a few moves. 

6.Bd3 Ne7 7.0-0 Nc6 8.Bf4 Qc7  
Black believes that he threatens the pawn on e5, but White has an excellent reply in store. He could have tried 8 ... a6 or the dull but solid 8 ... Be7 followed by 9 ... 0-0. Not, however, 8 ... 0-0? first, because of the routine bishop sacrifice 9.Bxh7+ Kxh7 10.Ng5+ Kg6 11.Qd3+ f5 12.Qg3, with a strong attack. 

9.Nc3!  

9 ... a6 10.Re1!?
White has a fine position and Black will find it difficult to create a safe haven for his king. His best chance lies in preparing queen’s side castling by 10 ... Nb6 followed by 11 ... Bd7. Instead, he sees the chance of forking the white pawns on f2 and b2, but it must be regarded as highly risky.

10 ... Qb6!? 11.Bg3 Qxb2

Black decides he might as well be consistent and so he grabs the pawn. Now Reshevsky uncorks a devastating and prolonged onslaught against the uncastled king, the consequences of which could not possibly have been accurately calculated; therefore this is an interesting example of an intuitive sacrificial attack by a player not known for such flights of fancy.

12.Nxd5!?

Smashing open the position and relying on an intuitive assessment that his active army of pieces will be able to generate decisive threats against the black king.

12 ... exd5 13.Rb1
Kicking the queen and gaining an open line for the queen’s rook.

13 ... Qa3 14.e6!

With every white piece beautifully developed, such a breakthrough looks as though it should prove successful. For example, if now 14 ... fxe6?! then 15.Ng5! Nf8 16.Qf3! gives White all the play.

14 ... Nf6!

The correct defensive move.

15.exf7+ Kxf7 16.Bh4

If the knight can be eliminated then Black’s defensive resources would be severely depleted.

16 ... Nb4?

Black tries to exchange the strong light-squared bishop, but the knight is
needed to defend the e5 square. The best try is 16 ... Be7!, when there is no immediate win for White, despite his obvious attacking chances. Moves such as 17.Ng5+ or 17.c4 followed by pressure against f6, e6, b7 and d5 offer White great opportunities for a successful assault, but Black has defensive resources.

17.Ne5+ Kf8

If 17 ... Kg8 White wins, somewhat prosaically, by 18.Bxf6 Nxd3 (else the queen enters the attack) 19.Qxd3 Qxd3 20.Nxd3! with an endgame victory in sight.

18.Bxf6

Removing another defender. Black cannot recapture on f6 because of 19.Qh5!! fxe5 20.Rxe5! Bd7 (other moves also lose, for example if 20 ... Be7 then 21.Qf3+ Ke8 22.Bg6+ and 23.Qxa3) 21.Qf3+ Kg7 22.Rg5+ Kh6 23.Qf6 mate.

18 ... Nxd3 19.Bxg7+! Kxg7 20.Rxb7+!!
A beautiful sacrifice, which attempts to deflect the bishop from the defence of the g4 square.

**20 ... Be7!**

A good try, but insufficient. If instead **20 ... Bxb7** then **21.Qg4+ Kf6 22.Qf3+ Ke7** (or **22 ... Kg7 23.Qf7+ Kh6 24.Qf6+ Kh5 25.g4 mate**) **23.Qf7+ Kd6 24.Qd7 mate**, or if **20 ... Kh6** then **21.Qd2+! Kh5 22.Rg7!** is crushing (for example **22 ... Bxf2+ 23.Kf1! Bh4 24.Nf7** leads to mate).

**21.Qh5! Rf8**

Black still cannot grab the rook. On **21 ... Bxb7 22.Qf7+ Kh6 23.Ng4+ Kg5 24.Qg7+ Kf5** (24 ... Kh5 25.Qh6+ Kxg4 26.h3+ and 27.g4 mate) **25.Nh6+! Kf4 26.Qg3** is mate.

**22.Qg5+! Kh8**

After this move, we have a remarkable position where all of White’s pieces...
are en prise. Reshevsky has it all under control, however, and finds an attractive mate in seven.


Mate follows.

Black resigns.

1945

Ragozin, V – Bronstein, D
Moscow
Evans Gambit (C52)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4!?

Captain Evans’ famous gambit, which even today makes those playing Black think twice before replying 3 ... Bc5. Ever the creative romantic, Bronstein allows Ragozin to play the gambit because he has prepared a highly unusual antidote.

4 ... Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5

Nowadays 5 ... Be7 is a popular response.

6.d4 d6 7.Qb3

Pressurizing f7, and no doubt expecting the usual 7 ... Qd7 with an interesting game in prospect. But Bronstein is ready with his ingenious idea.

7 ... Nh6!?
Bronstein had played this before and had lost to Sokolsky the previous year, so Ragozin would hardly have been expecting a repeat performance. The idea is to return the pawn in order to get the two bishops and some open lines on the king’s side.


Surely this can’t be good for Black?

9 ... Kf8 10.dxe5!

If 10.Nbd2?! then 10 ... exd4 11.cxd4 Qf6! turns out to be excellent for Black, whilst if 10.0-0 then Black plays 10 ... Bg4! with the initiative.

10 ... Qe7 11.Bd5 Nxe5 12.Nxe5!

Calmly exchanging pieces and leaving Black with an uncomfortable position.

12 ... Qxe5 13.Qa3!?
Sokolsky, in the game referred to above, played here 13.0-0 and also secured an advantage.

13 ... Bb6 14.Nd2

14 ... Bc5?

There are a number of alternatives that might give Black slightly better – though hardly satisfactory – chances.

(i) 14 ... Qg5!? 15.0-0-0! Qxg2 16.Rhg1! with a very strong attack for the pawn.

(ii) 14 ... Qf4 15.0-0-0 Bc5 (Black dare not capture on f2 since the open file would quickly prove fatal) 16.Qb2 with a better game.

(iii) 14 ... c6! 15.Bb3! (not 15.Nc4? Bc5! with the advantage) 15 ... Qc5! and White can now swap queens with an equal game or try the wild 16.Qb2!? , which leads to unfathomable complications after 16 ... Qxf2+ 17.Kd1.
15.Qb2 c6 16.Bb3 b5

An awkward move, which demonstrates the difficulties that Black has in completing his development. He would like to be able to play 16 ... d5, but then 17.0-0-0! seizes the initiative and threatens to blow Black off the board with ideas such as exd5, f4 and Rhe1, etc.

17.0-0

White believes that his opponent’s attack will be too slow and lacking in force to be of any real concern.

17 ... Ke7

That this is Black’s only method of finishing his development is rather a sad reflection on his opening strategy.

18.Nf3 Qg7 19.Kh1

Side-stepping any ... Bh3 ideas.

19 ... Bd7 20.e5!

A classic Evans’ Gambit thrust, opening the position for the benefit of the white forces. If now 20 ... dxe5 then 21.Nxe5 hits f7 and d7.

20 ... Raf8

White meets 20 ... Bg4 with 21.Nd4!, exposing the weakness on c6.

21.exd6+ Kxd6

White would have a perfect attacking formation after 21 ... Bxd6 22.Rfe1+ Kd8 23.Rad1.

22.Nd4!?
Not the simplest continuation by any means, but designed to prevent Black from trying any tactical ideas such as 22 ... Bh3. The disadvantage is that it removes an important piece from the defence of the king and lets Black get his own king into some sort of relative safety.

22 ... Kc7

The king has reached c7 via f8, e7 and d6. Now Bronstein might have felt that his position was not so bad after all.

23.Rad1

Continuing to build up pressure along the central files.

23 ... Bd6 24.Rfe1!

Ragozin will not be rushed, and since his position really does not have any weaknesses one can understand his desire gradually to improve his attacking formation.
24 ... Qg5 25.Be6!

Ragozin decides that it is finally time for action, and his first objective is to exchange the bishops, thus further exposing the black king.

25 ... Rf6!?

An interesting alternative is 25 ... Qf4. White could then play sensibly (surely Ragozin’s intention) with 26.Nf3, or he might try the more complex line 26.g3!? since 26 ... Qxf2 is met by 27.Re2! Qf6 28.Qd2! and White will break through along the d-file.

26.Bxd7 Kxd7

Now Black’s king is stuck in the centre.

27.a4

Beginning the penetration on the queen’s side, although 27.c4! was probably even stronger, for after 27 ... Rg8 28.g3 b4 the spectacular 29.Nf3!! poses Black all sorts of problems.
If here 29 ... Rxf3 then 30.Qxb4! – with the threats of 31.Qb7+ and 31.Qxd6+ – wins, so Black might try 29 ... Qf5 30.Nh4! Qxf2 31.Re2 winning, or 29 ... Qg7 30.c5! Rxf3 31.Rxd6+ Kc7 32.Qxb4 again with a won game.

27 ... a6 28.axb5! cxb5

He must try to keep the a-file closed.

29.Qa2!

Attacking the pawn on a6.

29 ... Ra8

It might have been slightly better, though probably futile in the long run, to interject 29 ... Rg8 30.g3, which at least provokes a slight weakness in the pawn structure.

30.Nf3!
With all White’s pieces directed at the king, the end cannot be far away.

30 ... Qc5 31.Ne5+

Closing in for the kill.

31 ... Kc7

If 31 ... Kc8 then 32.Qg8+ is decisive.

32.Qa5+! Kc8

And not 32 ... Qb6? 33.Qxb6+ Kxb6 34.Nd7+ nor 32 ... Kb7? 33.Nd7

winning.

33.Nd3

So that 34.Re8+ is in the air.

33 ... Qh5?!

Keeping a watch on the e8 square and threatening 34 ... Qxh2 mate. However
34 ... Qc7!, threatening the exchange of queens, afforded a better chance of
survival – although White would have potent attacking ideas such as c4 after
regrouping with 35.Qa1 or 31.Qa2.
34.h3

Missing the more accurate knock-out punch 34.Nf4!!.

(i) 34 ... Rxf4? 35.Rxd6 leads to mate.

(ii) If 34 ... Bxf4 then 35.Qd8+ Kb7 36.Rd7+ Kc6 37.Qxf6+ Kxd7 38.Re7+ Kd8 39.Qf8+ and mate next move.

(iii) Black must therefore move his queen again, but 34 ... Qf7 35.Nd5! Qh5 36.h3 is decisive, as 36 ... Rf3! (hoping for 37.gxf3? Qxh3+ and mates) is met by the nice switchback move 37.Nf4!! and White wins.

(iv) Other queen moves are no better, for example on 34 ... Qc5 35.Re8+ (35.Nd5 also wins) 35 ... Kb7 36.Rxa8 Bc7! (36 ... Kxa8 is met by 37.Qd8+ and 38.Qxf6) 37.Rd7! wins.

34 ... Kb7

Nothing Black tries can alter the fact that his king is fatally exposed.
35.c4!

Forcing open more lines. Black tries a counter-attack but we have already seen the remedy.

35 ... Rf3!? 

So that 36.gxf3? is answered by 36 ... Qxh3+ 37.Kg1 Rg8 mate.

36.Nf4!! 

In the same manner as in the note to White’s thirty-fourth move, this lovely knight move is decisive.

36 ... Rxf4 

Or 36 ... Bxf4 37.Re7+ Kc6 38.Re6+ Kc5 37.Rd5+ and wins. And if 36 ... Qc5 White simply takes the rook.

37.Rxd6 

Mate cannot now be prevented.

37 ... Rf7 38.Qb6+ Black Resigns.

1946

Geller, E – Kogan, E 
Odessa 
Sicilian Defence (B53)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4

This is an underestimated move that enables White to bypass mountains of Sicilian theory, whilst keeping a slight initiative.

4 ... Nc6 5.Bb5 Bd7
This is the natural move, but an interesting and surprising alternative is the self-pin, 5 ... Qd7!? There is no obvious way for White to exploit the position of Black’s queen, since ... Nxd4 is always in the air. For example 6.Nc3 Nxd4 7.Nxd4 Nf6 and the position will be level after White recaptures the queen.

6.Bxc6 Bxc6

The alternative is 6 ... bxc6 followed by 7 ... e5! and Black has good counterplay.

7.Nc3 Nf6 8.Bg5 e6 9.0-0

This is somewhat unusual and slightly out of character for an aggressive player such as Geller. King’s side castling is of course perfectly acceptable but in this position White often castles on the queen’s side and attacks down the centre or on the king’s wing. For instance, 9.0-0-0 Be7 10.Rhe1 0-0 11.Kb1 Qc7 12.Qd2 (not 12.Bxf6?! because after 12 ... Bxf6! 13.Qxd6 Qb6 Black has a very strong initiative) 12 ... Rfd8 14.Nd4 Rab8 15.f3 followed by g4 with attacking chances.
9 ... Be7 10.Rad1 0-0 11.Rfe1 Qc7

This move is rather passive and allows Geller to build up a strong attack. More active would be 11 ... Qa5, which places the queen in a very versatile position, eyeing c3 and the fifth rank and preparing queen’s side operations.

12.h3 b5 13.Nh2!

A fine multi-purpose move; the knight heads for g4 and clears the third rank for his rooks. In some variations, the f-pawn may also join the attack.

13 ... Rfd8 14.Rd3

Geller’s build-up seems quite slow but in practical play is very difficult to meet.

14 ... a5

Black tries to counter-attack on the queen’s side, though White’s attack will arrive first.

15.Rf3 b4

After the white knight retreats, Black may develop some play down the c-file and against the e-pawn. However, Geller has prepared an amazing response.
16.Rxf6?!

A spectacular exchange sacrifice, which might have been accepted in one of two ways. After 16 ... Bxf6 17.Bxf6 gxf6 (or 17 ... bxc3 18.Bxd8 Rxd8 19.Qxc3 with a slight edge) White has a number of potential attacking ideas, four of which fail.
(i) 18.Qxf6? bxc3! 19.Ng4 exb2! (other moves also win but this is the most ruthless) and now White has a choice. Firstly, 20.Nh6+ Kf8 21.Nf5! exf5 22.exf5 looks worrying because of the threat of mate on h8, but is met by 22 ... Be4!!, and if 23.Qh6+ Ke8 (not 23 ... Kg8? since 24.f6 wins) 24.Rxe4+ Kd7 Black wins, whilst 23.Rxe4 loses to 23 ... b1Q+ 24.Kh2 d5+. Secondly, 20.Qh6 is met by 20 ... f5 21.Nf6+ (or 21.Qxe6+ Kh8 and White has nothing) 21 ... Kh8 22.Nh5 Qf7 23.exf5 exf5 and Black wins.


(iv) 18.e5? bxc3 19.exf6 Kh8 and White’s attack peters out.

This does not look too promising for White, but two other ideas cause more problems.
(v) 18.Nd5!? exd5 19.Ng4! Qe7 20.Nxf6+ Kh8 (20 ... Kf8 21.Nxh7+ leads to a draw) 21.e5!, with the clever idea that 21 ... dxe5 fails to 22.Qh4!. Then 21 ... Qf8 22.Re3! (intending 23.Rg3 with a mating attack) 22 ... Qh6 23.exd6 Rxd6 24.Ne8+ Kg8 25.Nxd6 Qxd6 26.Rg3+ Kf8 27.Qg7+ Ke8 28.Re3+ Kd8 29.Qxf7 gives White several pawns and a dominant position for the piece. However, in the line above 21 ... Rg8! forces 22.Nxg8 Kxg8 and White is struggling to prove that he has enough compensation.

(vi) Finally, rather than going for his opponent’s throat, the quieter 18.Ne2 and 18.Nd1 are worth considering, since White is only the exchange behind but has a useful attacking initiative in compensation.

There is also the other way of accepting the sacrifice, namely 16 ... gxf6!, which turns out to be a strong defence.

(i) If 17.Bxf6 then Black wins by 17 ... e5.

(ii) Similarly, 17.Bh6? bxc3 18.Re3 (or 18.Ng4 e5 19.Qxc3 Kh8 wins) 18 ... Kh8 is an easy win for Black.

(iii) Best is 17.Ng4! since 17 ... bxc3? is met by 18.Nxf6+ Kh8 (not 18 ... Kf8? 19.Bh6 mate, nor 18 ... Kg7? 19.Ne8+ Kg6 20.Qg7+ Kh5 21.Qh6 mate, nor 18 ... Bxf6 19.Qxf6 and 20.Bh6 wins) 19.Nd5+ e5 20.Qxc3! and White has a decisive advantage. Black thus must continue 17 ... e5! 18.Nh6+ and now Black has three choices.


(c) 18 ... Kh8! 19.Qc4 (or 19.Nxf7+ Kg7 20.Nxd8 Rxd8 21.Nd5 Bxd5 22.Bxf6+ Bxf6 23.Qxd5 and Black should have little problem in converting his advantage) 19 ... bxc3! 20.Nxf7+ Kg7 21.Bh6+ Kg6! (21 ... Kg8 22.Nxd6+ Kh8 23.Nf7+ Kg8 25.Nxd8+ leads to mate) 22.Re3 d5!! wins the knight on f7 and the game.
16 ... bxc3 17.Ng4

Leaving the rook en prise in order to bring another piece into the attack. Whether or not it is sound, it at least has the benefit of complicating things still further. Instead, 17.Rf3 is safely answered by 17 ... Bxg5! 18.Rg3 e5 19.Qxc3 Bf4 and wins, whilst if 17.Qxc3 then 17 ... Bxf6 18.Bxf6 gxf6 19.Qxf6 (or White can recover the exchange by 19.Ng4 e5 20.Qe3 Kh8 21.Qh6 Rg8 22.Nh6 and 23.Nf5) 19 ... Kf8 and the king, although undoubtedly facing an awkward immediate future, should ultimately be safe in the centre.

17 ... h5!?

18.Bh6!?

Throwing more fuel on the fire, and leading to an ever-increasing tactical mêlée, although the alternative 18.Nh6+ was a simpler method of continuing the attack. Then after 18 ... gxh6 (forced otherwise 19.Rxf7 is decisive) 19.Rxh6 e5 (again the only move) 20.Qe3! (better than 20.Bxe7?, which hopes for 20 ... exd4? 21.Bf6! mating, but which is actually a poor choice since 20 ... Qxe7! gives Black the advantage) 20 ... f6 21.Bh4 Bf8 22.Qg3+ Bg7 23.Bxf6 Be8 (else 24.Qg6 is strong) 24.Bxd8 and White has a material advantage although his rook on h6 is in some danger.

After the text move Black has a bewildering array of possible captures, three of which lose in quick time, whilst the remaining leads to an unclear position.

(i) 18 ... gxf6? 19.Nxf6+ Kh8 (19 ... Bxf6 20.Qxf6 mates) 20.Bg7+!! Kxg7 21.Ne8+ Kg6 (or 21 ... Kf8 22.Qh8 mate) 22.Qg7 mate.


Given these hazardous lines it is perhaps natural that Kogan plays the following defensive pawn advance.

18 ... e5

White now has four pieces – not to mention the b-pawn – en prise.

19.Qe3!

This is of course the appropriate square for the queen. Capturing on c3 would be too slow and would permit Black to capture the knight with impunity.
19 ... hxg4

Black cannot stand the sight of the majority of the white army staring at his king and therefore captures the knight.

This is certainly better than both 19 ... gxf6? when 20.Qf3! Kh8 21.Nxf6 Rg8 22.Qxh5! forces mate and 19 ... g6?! 20.Qg5! with a powerful attack, but a viable alternative is 19 ... Bf8!. Then 20.Bxg7 Bxg7 21.Nh6+ Bxh6 (on 21 ... Kf8 22.Rxf7+ follows, and if 21 ... Kh7 then 22.Nf5! Bxe4! 23.Rh6+ Kg8 24.Qxe4 Bxh6 25.Nxh6+ is roughly level, whilst 21 ... Kh8? loses to 22.Qg5!) 22.Rxh6 (22.Qxh6 leads to a similar if more melodramatic finish after 22 ... cxb2 23.Re3! b1Q+ 24.Kh2 h4! 25.Qxh4 Kf8! and now 26.Rh6 Ke8 27.Rh8+ is a draw) 22 ... Kf8 23.Qg5 Ke8 24.Rh8+ Kd7 25.Qf5+ Ke7 26.Qg5+ with a draw by perpetual check.

20.Bxg7!

This is the only way to keep up the momentum.

(see next diagram)
20 ... Kxg7?!

A fascinating situation. Here Black avoids a very attractive but fatally flawed continuation, but at the same time misses a safe method of forcing a draw.

(i) Firstly, Black might have erroneously tried 20 ... Bxe4?, hoping for 21.Qxe4? Kxg7! 22.Rf5 (or 22.Rxf7+ Kxf7 23.Qh7+ Ke6 24.Qg6+ Bf6 and Black prevails) 22 ... cxb2 23.Qxg4+ Kf8 24.Qh5 (24.Qg6 Qc4! wins; 24.Rh5 Bf6!) 24 ... f6 25.Qh8+ Kf7 26.Qh7+ Ke6 27.Rf3 Rh8! and Black wins. All very clever, but unfortunately White has a beautiful combination at his disposal, beginning with 21.Qh6!! Bh7 22.Re4!!.
Now 22 ... Qd7 fails after the simple 23.bxc3 Rab8 24.Rxg4 Qxg4 (forced) 25.hxg4, so Black has to try 22 ... cxb2. But then White plays 23.Rxg4! b1Q+ 24.Kh2.
Now despite his two queens Black is lost, for example if 24 ... Qxc2 then 25.Bf8+ Qg6 26.Rgxg6+ Qxg6 27.Rxg6+ Bxg6 28.Qg7 is mate.

(ii) However, Black can draw rather easily with 20 ... Bxf6! 21.Bxf6 Kf8!. This move is surprisingly awkward for White, since tries such as 22.Qh6+ Ke8 or 22.Bxd8 Rxd8 23.Qxc3 leave Black with the advantage. White does best to try to force a draw with 22.Qg5 cxb2 23.Qg7+ Ke8 24.Qg8+ Kd7 25.Qxg4+ Ke8 26.Qg8+, etc, although Black might even fancy playing for a win by 22 ... Qb7!? when the king escapes via c7. In that event White can just about keep in the game with 23.bxc3!, for example after 23 ... Rdb8 (the rook was attacked; other moves are inferior) 24.Qg7+ Ke8 25.Qg8+ Kd7 26.Qxf7+ Kc8 27.Qf8+ Kc7 28.Qe7+ Bd7 29.Rd1! Ra6! (29 ... Qc6 30.Rxd6!) 30.Bxe5! Re8 31.Bxd6+ Kc8 White has some practical chances of saving the game by utilizing his king’s side pawns, although Black should win.

21.Qh6+

Now the white queen and rook will be able to coordinate and will cause Black some difficulties. White is almost certainly able to force a draw at any
moment and thus risks little by playing on.

21 ... Kg8 22.Rf5!

White has a forced draw available (22.Rxf7 Kxf7 23.Qh7+ Ke8 24.Qg6+ Kf8 25.Qh6+ Kf7 26.Qh7+, etc) but he prefers to continue the attack. His great strength now is that the rook threatens to get behind the queen creating a devastating battery.

22 ... Be8!

Good defence from Kogan, who spots that 22 ... f6? loses to 23.Qg6+ Kf8 24.Rh5! with mate to follow.

23.Rh5 f6!

Again the only move to avoid mate.

24.Rh4

This menaces 25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Rxg4 when Black has to give up a bishop to avoid mate. Nevertheless, Black’s best move is probably 24 ... cxb2, when 25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Rxg4 Bg6! 27.Rxg6 (27.Qxg6 Qc4!) 27 ... Ke8! 28.Rg8+ Kd7 presents White with a choice.
He could either enter an inferior endgame with 29.Qxe7+? Kxe7 30.Rg7+ Ke6 31.Rxc7 Rdc8! 32.Rb7 Rxc2, or he could continue the attack with 29.Qf5+! Kc6 30.Rg3! Kb7 31.Rb3+, when the situation remains complicated.

24 ... Qc8!?

The idea behind this odd-looking move is demonstrated in the variation 25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Rxg4 Qxg4! 27.hxg4 cxb2! and White has to settle for a draw. But removing the queen from the seventh rank enables Geller to pursue his adversary in another way.

25.Qh8+!

The queen checks on h8 rather than h7.

25 ... Kf7 26.Rh7+ Ke6 27.Qg7
This is Geller’s shrewd idea. White now threatens both the bishop and the pawn on g4.

27 ... Kd7

The only defence is to run the king to the queen’s side.

28.Re3!

The hasty 28.Qxe7+ Kc6 29.Re3 allows the defence 29 ... Qd7!. By using this cunning move order, Geller restricts his opponent’s defensive possibilities.

28 ... cxb2?

After a great rearguard effort, Kogan finally cracks. He has worked out that although White wins his queen the b-pawn will promote. Unfortunately, he has clearly ceased his calculations prematurely since White then has a forced win. The correct defence is 28 ... Kc7!, which frees d7 for the queen or rook to interpose. White’s best is then 29.Rxc3+ Bc6 30.Qxf6! Rd7! and after 31.Rxe7 Rxe7 32.Qxe7+, White will have three pawns for the bishop with a
difficult ending ahead.

29.\text{Qxe7+ Kc6} 30.\text{Rc3+ Kb6} 31.\text{Rxc8} 

Although Black immediately gets another queen his position is wrecked and White has a comfortable win.

31 ... \text{b1Q+} 32.\text{Kh2 Rd7} 

Unhappily for Black, if the rook is captured White plays 32.\text{Qb7+ Kc5} 33.\text{Qd5+ Kb6} 34.\text{Rb7+ Ka6} 35.\text{Rxb1} and wins. The move he plays prevents 33.\text{Qb7} mate but seems easily refuted.

33.\text{Qxe8 Rxh7?} 

Black misses a very interesting attempt to force perpetual check in 33 ... \text{Qc1!}. Now White must find a number of superb moves to prevent the draw, starting with 34.\text{Rc6+!!}. If now 34 ... \text{Kxc6} then 35.\text{Qxd7+ Kc5} 36.\text{Qc7+ Kb4} 37.\text{Qb7+ Kc3} 38.\text{Rc7+ Kd2} 39.\text{Qxa8} wins since the king blocks the queen’s route to f4. Instead, 34 ... \text{ Kb5} makes life more awkward for White. He must
find 35.a4+!! when 35 ... Kxa4? fails to 36.Rc4+ Ka3 (or 36 ... Kb5
37.Qxd7+ Kxc4 38.Qc6+ Kd4 39.Qd5+ Kc3 40.Qd3+ Kb2 41.Rb7+ Ka1
42.Qc3+ Ka2 43.Qc4+ Ka1 44.Qa4+ Qa3 45.Qxa3 mate) 37.Rc3+ Kb2
38.Qxd7 Kxc3 39.Qc6+ Kd2 40.Qxa8 and again there is no perpetual
available. Black can try 35 ... Kb4 but then, with extremely accurate play,
White can triumph: 36.Rb6+ Kc5 (36 ... Ka3? 37.Rb3+ and because the rook
can interpose on g3 White has time to capture the rook on d7; 36 ... Kxa4?
37.Qxd7+ wins) 37.Rb5+ Kd4 (37 ... Kc4? 38.Qe6+ Kc3 39.Rb3+ Kxc2
40.Qc4+ wins) 38.Rd5+ Kc3 (if 38 ... Kc4 then 39.Qxd7! Qf4+ 40.Kg1 Qc1+
41.Rd1!! Qxd1+ 42.Kh2 Qc1 43.Qc6+ Kd4 44.Qxd6+ Kc3 45.Rc7+ Kb2
46.Qxf6 and White has a clear advantage; or if 38 ... Kxe4 then 39.Qxa8!
Qf4+ 40.Kg1 Qc1+ 41.Rd1+! and the discovered check wins) 39.Rd3+ Kxc2
40.Qxd7 Kxd3 41.Qxd6+ Ke2 (or 41 ... Kxe4 42.Qxf6 Qf4+ 43.Qxf4+ Kxf4
44.Rh4! and wins) 42.Qxf6 Qf4+ 43.Qxf4 exf4 44.Rf7 gxh3 45.Rxf4 hxg2
46.Kxg2 and White should be able to win the endgame. Certainly it was
worth Black trying this line as one slip by White lets him secure the draw. As
it is, White now wins immediately.

34.Qc6+ Black resigns.
1947

Galuszka – Sliwa, B
Cracow
Queen’s Gambit Accepted (D20)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nc3

An uncommon reply to Black’s acceptance of the Queen’s Gambit. The more normal moves are 3.e4 and 3.Nf3 (as seen in our games from 1904 and 1937).

3 ... e5

Black takes advantage of the fact that White’s previous move did not prevent this advance.

4.dxe5

Preferring to simplify. He could have tried 4.e3 (with the idea of regaining the gambit pawn on c4 with a free game) or 4.d5 c6 5.e4 Nf6 with equality.

4 ... Qxd1+ 5.Kxd1?!

Rather cavalier in his attitude to the safety of his king. Recapturing with the knight would have led to an even game after 5 ... Nc6 6.e4 Nxe5 7.Bf4 Bd6.

5 ... Be6

Sensibly keeping an eye on the c4 pawn and preparing rapid queen’s side deployment.

6.e4 Nc6 7.f4!?
White reckons on having sufficient time, given that queens have been exchanged, to support his advanced pawn before continuing with his development, but it allows Black to seize the initiative.

7 ... 0-0-0+

Castling with gain of time.

8.Kc2!?

Allowing his king to be chased into a corner; hence 8.Bd2 might have been considered.

8 ... Nd4+

This centralizing check is a very natural move to play, although 8 ... Nb4+ 9.Kb1 f5 is another way to exploit White’s lack of development.

9.Kb1 b5!?
Black refrains from playing 9 ... f5 and prefers to support the c-pawn. This is predicated on a tactical finesse in the event that White continues with the threatened 10.f5; the idea is that 10 ... Nxf5! is very strong, since 11.exf5? Bxf5+ mates and 11.Nxb5 is met by 11 ... Nd4! 12.Nc3 (if 12.Nxd4 Rxd4 hitting the pawn on e4) 12 ... Bb4 with a fine position.

10.Nf3!

Correctly avoiding the pitfall and challenging the knight.

10 ... a6?!

This move defends the pawn on b5 but does nothing to prevent the advance of the f-pawn. A more proactive approach to the position would have been 10 ... b4!. If then 11.Nxd4 Rxd4 12.f5 Black has 12 ... bxc3 13.fxe6 fxe6 and he is fine. Better is 11.Ne2!, leading to an interesting and complicated game after 11 ... Nxf3 12.gxf3.

11.a4!?
White passes up the chance to remove the knight by 11.Nxd4, even though 11 ... Rxd4 12.Be3 Rd8?! 13.f5 Bd7 gives Black a miserable position. To retain the initiative Black could try the clever sacrifice 12 ... c5!? Then 13.Bxd4 cxd4 14.Ne2 Bc5 gives him a dangerous pawn majority, and 13.f5?! is met by another exchange offer in 13 ... Rxe4! 14.Nxe4 Bxf5, again giving him good compensation. Safe enough is 13.Be2 although Black certainly has at least equal chances, but 13.a4! is best and threatens to break up the black pawn chain to White’s advantage.

11 ... Nb3 12.Ra2!?

The alternative was the immediate 12.f5!, the main point being that 12 ... Nxa1 is met by 13.fxe6! Nb3 (or 13 ... fxe6 14.Kxa1 b4 15.Ne2 with a clear advantage) 14.exf7! Ne7! (best, since 14 ... Nh6? loses to 15.Bg5! Rd7 16.e6) 15.axb5 axb5 16.Be2 with huge compensation for the slight material deficit. Black could try instead 12 ... b4 but 13.fxe6 Nxa1 14.exf7! is very strong: for example, 14 ... bxc3 15.fxe8Q Rxc8 16.Bxc4 wins, as the incredible try 16 ... Rd1!? just fails to 17.Rf1 (not 17.Rxd1? c2+! winning) 17 ... Rxf1 18.Bxa6+ Kd8 19.Bxf1 Nb3 20.Bc4 Nd2+ 21.Nxd2 cxd2 22.Bxd2 and White has the better chances. Also, 14 ... Nh6 15.Bxc4 bxc3 16.Kxa1 is clearly better for White. Finally, after 12 ... b4 13.fxe6 the other option is 13 ... bxc3 but White again emerges on top by 14.bxc3 fxe6 (14 ... Rd1 is similar to the actual game when 15.Bxc4! again gives White great compensation) 15.Bxc4 Nxa1 16.Bxa6+ Kb8 17.Kxa1.

12 ... b4

If Black inserts 12 ... Nxc1 13.Kxc1 before 13 ... b4 then 14.f5! is still the strong response.

13.f5!

That this advance is the correct response to Black’s push of the b-pawn should not come as a surprise given the comments to the last few moves.

13 ... bxc3

13 ... Bd7 is best answered by 14.Nd5 with chances for both sides after, for
example, 14 ... Nxc1 15.Kxc1 Bxf5 16.exf5 Rxd5 17.Bxc4 Rc5 18.b3.

14.fxe6

Another example of the Irish Pawn Centre, as seen in our game from 1910 (and also getting a mention in the notes to the 1911 game).

14 ... Rd1

Tempting, since 15 ... Rxc1 mate is the brutal intention, but White’s response is more than adequate. In any event, Black was already struggling to meet the dual threats of 15.exf7 and 15.Bxc4.

15.Bxc4!

Forced, but in return for the exchange White will be able to pick off the knight and then exploit the exposed king.

15 ... Rfh1 16.Bxb f6
Trying to break up White’s curiously strong central pawn mass, rather than allowing 16 ... fxe6 17.Bxe6+ Kb7 18.bxc3, which is also in White’s favour.

17.bxc3 Be7


18.Bc4!

White’s minor pieces begin to run amok. If Black now tries to defend the pawn on a6 by 18 ... Kb7, then 19.Rb2+ follows, and after 19 ... Ka7 20.Nd4! is crushing.

18 ... a5

Although this keeps the pawn on the board, he is now subjected to a vicious onslaught.

19.Ba6+
19 ... Kd8?

Running this way is hopeless, as White now efficiently demonstrates. Better, although ultimately futile, was 19 ... Kb8. Then the impulsive 20.Rb2+? would be a mistake as 20 ... Ka7 21.Bc4 Rxc1+! 22.Kxc1 Ba3 gives Black good survival chances. Instead, a slower build-up by 20.Kc2 followed by 21.Be3 or 21.Bf4 should prevail, although Black is still in the game.


As well as chasing the king, White’s pieces are finding excellent posts.

21 ... Kf8 22.Rd7!

A powerful infiltration, which prevents the bishop moving in view of the mate on f7 that would follow.

22 ... g6

Creating an escape square. Other moves such as 22 ... c5 do not alter the outcome, but merely delay the inevitable.

23.Kc2!

Finally unpinning the bishop, with the threat of 24.exf6 Nxf6 25.Bh6+ winning.

23 ... h6

Other moves are equally inadequate.

24.Ba3!

The bishop on e7 still cannot move.

24 ... Rh7

Defending the bishop so that the knight can recapture on f6.
25.exf6!

If 25 ... Bxa3 then the rook delivers mate on d8.

25 ... Nxf6 26.Rd8+

Exploiting the pin on the bishop.

26 ... Kg7 27.Bxe7

Here Black could resign with a clear conscience.

27 ... g5 28.Bf8+ Kg6 29.e5 Ng8 30.g4!

The threat of 31.Bd3 mate is decisive.

Black resigns.

1948
Wood, B – Devos, P
Baarn
Nimzo-Indian Defence (E37)

There are numerous flaws in this game, but the mating combinations are reason enough to include the encounter in our collection. The player of the white pieces is the late BH Wood, founder and for a long time proprietor and editor of Chess magazine.


The idea behind the so-called Classical Variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defence is to be able to recapture on c3 without disrupting the pawn structure.

4 ... d5 5.a3

Provoking the bishop.

5 ... Bxc3+ 6.Qxc3 Ne4 7.Qc2 c5

All this is mainstream Nimzo-Indian theory and has been seen innumerable times in master practice.

8.dxc5 Nc6 9.exd5 exd5 10.Nf3 Bf5!?

The most dynamic move, whereas 10 ... Qa5+ 11.Bd2 Qxc5 leads to a quieter game.
11.b4

He takes time to defend the c-pawn, but the drawback is that Black can finish his development before White can castle.

11 ... 0-0


12.Bb2

The point of this move is that if now 12 ... Ng3?! then 13.Qc3 threatens mate on g7; after


12 ... d4!?
12 ... Re8!? has been a recent try in this position, but more common historically has been 12 ... b6!!, sacrificing the knight and leading to a highly complicated game after 13.b5 bxc5 14.bxc6 Qa5+. Black then has a strong attack but it remains to be seen whether it is sufficient reward for the sacrificed material.

13.Qc4

Removing the queen from the bishop’s diagonal.

13 ... Re8

Black ignores the threat to the d-pawn and increases the pressure along the e-file. If instead 13 ... Qf6 then 14.Bxd4 forces the exchange of pieces with the advantage.

14.Nxd4?!

Stronger is 14.Rd1!, since Black gets little chance of any decent counterplay with 14 ... Qf6 15.Bxd4 Nxd4 16.Qxd4.

14 ... Qf6!

A good idea – pinning the knight, preparing for ... Rad8 and with sly designs on the weak f2 square.
15.Ra2?

BH naturally wants to defend the bishop, thus unpinning the knight, but this move fails to prevent Black’s main threat. He could have tried to prevent the attack on f2 by the obvious 15.f3, but Black has the fabulous move 15 ... Rad8!!.
Here 16.fxe4 gives Black a commanding game after 16 ... Qh4+ 17.g3 (17.Kd1 is no better) 17 ... Qxe4!. Therefore, White might consider 16.Nxf5 (or 16.Nxc6) but with 16 ... Qxb2 Black threatens the rook and mate on d2. If White then thinks 17.Qc1 will defend everything he would be in for a stunning surprise when 17 ... Rd1+!! lands in front of him; 18.Qxd1 Qc3+ 19.Qd2 Qxd2 is mate, and 18.Kxd1 loses the queen to 18 ... Nf2+! 19.Ke1 Nd3+, etc.

In fact, instead of 15.f3 White’s best move is 15.Nxf5!. Then by 15 ... Qxb2! 16.Qc1! Qf6! 17.f3 Qxf5 18.fxe4 Qxe4 Black wins back the pawn with a far superior game, but at least White has a fighting chance of a draw.

15 ... Be6!

After this White’s queen is attacked and the pawn on f2 is in danger.

16.Nxe6

Other moves are worse. Black now restores material equality but more importantly has a winning attack.
16 ... Qxf2+ 17.Kd1 Rxe6

White has the two bishops but clearly his undeveloped pieces and exposed king will prove fatal.

18.Bc3

18.Kc2 might have been slightly better but after 18 ... Rd8 Black’s attacking ideas (19 ... Nd4+, 19 ... Rd2+) would be too strong.

18 ... Rd8+ 19.Kc2


19 ... Qe3

A simpler win was to be found in 19 ... Nxc3!, since 20.Kxc3 Re3+ 21.Kc2 Qe1 leads to mate, and 20.Qxc3 Re3! is equally convincing.

20.h4
With some vague idea of developing the rook on h3, although he never gets the chance. But other moves were no better.

20 ... Rd2+!

There are many ways to win, but the method chosen by Devos leads to some pretty mating patterns.


Or 22.Kb1 Nc3+ and wins.

22 ... Nd4+

Pushing the king to the edge.

23.Ka4 Qd1+

Leads to a forced win, although Black misses the quicker 23 ... Nc3+! 24.Qxc3 Ra6 mate.

24.Ka5 Ra6+

Again, there is a faster win by 24 ... Qa4+! 25.Kxa4 Nc3+! 26.Qxc3 Ra6 mate, but the text move leads to an even nicer checkmate.

25.Qxa6

The only move.

A rather beautiful finish.

1949

Rossolimo, N – Wallis, P
Southsea
French Defence (C06)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2

It is perhaps surprising that such an elegant attacking master as Rossolimo should play the solid Tarrasch Variation, but the line does permit White a methodical build-up of latent force.

3 ... Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3

A common variation in this opening. An example of an early f4 can be seen in our game from 1976.
5 ... c5 6.c3 Nc6

Another idea is 6 ... b6 with a view to exchanging White’s good bishop. A discussion of this strategy in a different variation of the French Defence can be found in the notes to our 1983 game.

7.Ne2 cxd4 8.cxd4

This is a standard position in this variation and Black normally continues 8 ... f6, which attacks the white pawn chain and leads to a complex middlegame. Wallis decides to go his own way.

8 ... Nb4!?

The idea behind this move is well-motivated; Black wishes to drive the bishop from the a6–f1 diagonal and then, after advancing his queen’s side pawns, bring his own bishop into play on a6. The drawback is that all this takes time and White will be able to progress the advance of his king’s side pawns with a strong attack.
9.Bb1 b5
Black continues with his plan. The b-pawn is usefully placed on this square and in some lines can support a black knight on c4.

10.0-0
White is ready for the rapid advance of his f and g-pawns.

10 ... a5!?  
Another idea is 10 ... Nb6 with the intention of 11 ... Nc4, when 11.f4 Nc4 12.Nf3 leads to an interesting game. Wallis, however, decides to leave the knight on d7 and in fact its influence on e5 is felt later in the game.

11.f4!
Far more dynamic than 11.Nf4 Qb6 12.Nf3, since a pawn storm is more likely to break through the black defences than piece play alone.

11 ... g6 12.g4!?
Typically, Rossolimo selects the most aggressive continuation whereupon the game explodes into a tactical furore. A more controlled continuation is 12.Nf3 h5!? (to prevent 13.g4) 13.Ng5! (intending 14.Nxf7!) 13 ... Nb6 14.a3! and Black’s game is compromised because 14 ... Nc6?! (better is 14 ... Na6 but White has a clear advantage) 15.Qc2! forces 15 ... Ne7 (on 15 ... Qc7? 16.Nxf7! wins). Therefore 12 ... Nb6 is better but White keeps the initiative after 13.g4 h5 14.h3.

12 ... h5!
An immediate and effective counter-attack. Safest now is 13.gxh5 Rxh5 14.Ng3 with equal chances, only not 13.h3? hxg4 14.hxg4 Qh4! and wins.

13.f5!?
13 ... Nxe5?

The sacrifice should be prefaced by 13 ... Qh4!, leading to some fascinating complications, impossible to calculate to a conclusion but certainly giving Black far better chances of victory than the text move.

Firstly, 14.gxh5? is a mistake since 14 ... Qxh5 15.Nf3 gxf5 leaves Black a pawn ahead with the attack.

Therefore, because of the threat to his g-pawn, White must play 14.fxe6! hoping for 14 ... Qxg4+? 15.Kh1 Qxe6 16.Nf4! Qb6 17.e6! with a crushing attack. After 14.fxe6 the time is right for Black to play his knight sacrifice 14 ... Nxe5!, which is far more potent here – with the queen on h4 – than in the game.
Now White has a difficult decision.

(i) Simply capturing on e5 is not good as demonstrated by the following line: 15.dxe5 Bc5+ 16.Nd4 (or 16.Kh1 hxg4! 17.exf7+ Kf8 and wins) 16 ... hxg4! (better than 16 ... Bxd4+ 17.Kh1 hxg4 18.exf7+ Kf8 19.Qe2) 17.exf7+ Kf8 18.Qe2 Nc6! and White is lost, for if 19.N2b3 then 19 ... Nxd4 20.Nxd4 Bxd4+ 21.Kh1 g3! and Black prevails.

(ii) Acceptance of the offering by 15.exf7+ Kd8 16.dxe5 leads to immense confusion, much of which resulting in a black win but with at least one variation that seems okay for White. Note that 16 ... Bc5+? can again be met by the surprisingly strong 17.Nd4!! and if then 17 ... Bxd4+ (17 ... hxg4 also fails to 18.f8Q+ Bxf8 19.Rxf8+! Rxf8 20.Ne4! and White should triumph) 18.Kh1, the threat to queen the pawn on f7 allows White to defend himself with a good position. Consequently Black’s best is 16 ... hxg4!.
Here White has a number of possible continuations.

(a) 17.Rf4!? is answered by 17 ... Qxh2+ 18.Kf1 Bc5! 19.f8Q+ (for 19.Be4 see below) 19 ... Rxf8 20.Rxf8+ and now the stunning 20 ... Ke7!!, which keeps the bishop on c5 (20 ... Bxf8? 21.Nb3!), gives Black a spectacular victory. For example, on 21.Rf6 g3!, with the deadly threat of 22 ... Bh3+, traps the king in a mating net. Moreover, on 21.Nc3 g3! is crushing since ... g2+ and ... Bh3+ are threatened. White could also try 21.Ne4!? Qh1+ 22.Ng1 Qxg1+ 23.Ke2 but Black has 23 ... Qh2+! 24.Ke1 Kxf8 25.Nxc5 Qg1+ 26.Ke2 Qxe5 with the advantage. Finally, if White tries 21.Nd4!? then 21 ... Bxd4! (not 21 ... Kxf8 22.N2b3! and holds) 22.Nb3 g3! and again the threat of 23 ... Bh3+ is decisive. Going back to the beginning of this variation, White can try the amazing 19.Be4!? but Black responds with 19 ... Nd3!! (not 19 ... dxe4? since 20.Nf3+ wins, and if 19 ... g3? then 20.Nb3! gives White some chances to hold the game), which blocks the d-file and wins. For example if 20.Bxd3 then 20 ... Qh1+ 21.Ng1 Qxg1+ 22.Ke2 Rh2+ and mates, so White does best to play 20.f8Q+ but after 20 ... Rxf8 21.Rfx8+ Bxf8 22.Bxd3 g3 Black will win.

(b) The more obvious 17.Rf2 is met by 17 ... Bc5, and now 18.Qe1? would be
a mistake as 18 ... g3! 19.f8Q+ Rxf8 20.hxg3 Rxf2!! 21.gxh4 Rf1+!! 22.Kg2 (forced) 22 ... Rx1 wins. Best is 18.Ne4! – White survives after 18 ... Qxh2+ 19.Kf1 Bxf2 (on 19 ... Qh1+ 20.Ng1 Bxf2 21.Nxf2 is fine) 20.Nxf2 g3! 21.Nxg3! Qxg3 22.Qd4 with another unclear position where White appears to have reasonable chances.

(iii) Another possibility is 15.exf7+ Kd8 (15 ... Nxf7?! 16.Nf4! hxg4 17.Qe2+ is fine for White) 16.Qe1!? offering the exchange of queens. Then 16 ... Qxg4+ 17.Qg3 Ned3 (or 17 ... Qxg3+?! 18.Nxg3 and White’s pressure against g6 gives him the edge) 18.a3 Nxc1 19.Qxg4 Bxg4 20.Nxc1 Nc6 21.Bxg6 Nxd4 leads to an unclear but roughly equal endgame, and 16 ... Qxe1 17.Rxe1 Ned3 18.Rf1 Bxg4 19.Nf3 (or 19.Nf4 Nxf4 20.Rxf4 Bh6! 21.Rf1 Be3+ 22.Kg2 Rf8 23.Bxg6 Ra6! and Black is fine) 19 ... Nxc1 20.Nxc1 Bxf3 21.Rxf3 is also approximately level.


(v) The best way to decline the sacrifice is 15.Nf4!.
(a) Then 15 ... hxg4 16.Rf2? is a mistake, since Black wins by 16 ... g3!
17.Rg2 gxh2+ 18.Kh1 Qxf4 19.dxe5 Bxe6 20.Nf3 Qc4 with three pawns to
the good. Correct is instead 16.Qe2! (White can also transpose to the line
above with 16.exf7+ but this is better) 16 ... Bxe6 (if 16 ... g3 then the benefit
of not taking the pawn on f7 is revealed since 17.Qxb5+! is check and after
17 ... Nec6 18.Nf3 gxh2+ 19.Kh1 Qg3 20.Ne5 White should triumph, whilst
17 ... Kd8 is met by 18.Qb6+ Ke8 19.h3! Bxe6 20.dxe5 Bxh3 21.Nxg6 fxg6
22.Bxg6+ and White’s attack comes first) 17.dxe5 Bc5+ 18.Kh1 g3 19.Nf3
and White has excellent chances of a victory.

(b) Thus Black must look for alternatives, but 15 ... Nxg4? is answered by
16.exf7+ Kd8 17.Nf3, etc, and 15 ... Bxe6 16.Nxe6 hxg4?! (here 16 ... fxe6!? 17.dxe5 Bc5+ 18.Kh1 hxg4 is possible when Black has some compensation)
and wins. Black might therefore try something wild like 15 ... g5!?, which
has the considerable advantage of plunging the game still further into
complications. Although with best play this is unlikely to be successful, it
gives him good practical chances. For instance, 16.dxe5?! Bc5+ 17.Kh1 hxg4
18.Qe2 gxf4 gives him certain possibilities to assault the white king. Perhaps
White does best to play 16.exf7+ Kd8 17.Ng2!, when he should be able to fend off the black army with a meaningful advantage.

14.dxe5 Bc5+

If 14 ... Qh4 then 15.Nf3! Qxg4+ 16.Kh1 gxf5 gives Black some attack for his piece, but after 17.Ned4 it appears that it is probably insufficient.

15.Kg2!?

The king might have gone into the corner since now, after 15 ... Qh4 16.Nf3! Qxg4+ 17.Kh1 gxf5, Black is a tempo up on the variation in the previous note, although the reply 18.Ned4 again gives White a safe position. In this line, if Black tries to utilize the long a8–h1 diagonal by 17 ... d4!?, White is able to establish a strong defence by 18.Nf4! Bb7 19.a3! Nd5 20.Nd3.

15 ... hxg4!?

Black’s best chances seem to lie with the open h-file, but consideration should also be given to the alternative of opening the g-file by 15 ... gxf5!?
16.gxf5 Qg5+ 17.Kh1. However, after 17 ... Bb7 White plays 18.Nf3! and again the defences hold firm.

16.f6!

By blocking the king’s side pawns in this manner White severely limits Black’s options.

16 ... Bb7!

Now Black’s only hope of generating any dangerous offensive ideas is to use the two raking bishops on the a7–g1 and a8–h1 diagonals.

17.Ng3

From here the knight joins the bishop and the other knight in watching over the e4 square. If now 17 ... d4+ White simply plays 18.Be4 and Black’s threats dry up.

17 ... Qc7!

A good attempt to keep the initiative alive.

18.Nb3?

A surprising error from Rossolimo, who wishes to exchange one of the black bishops but carelessly allows his opponent back into the game. There was nothing wrong with the simple 18.Qxg4 Qxe5 19.Nf3 Qc7 (note that 19 ... Qxf6? is impossible because of 20.Ng5! and wins) 20.Bf4, when White should have few problems in converting his advantage into the full point.

18 ... d4+

Black is now able to realize his threat of winning the e-pawn and the white king begins to look a little exposed again.


Perhaps Rossolimo had overlooked that the bishop on c5 cannot be taken on
account of 21 ... Qxh2 mate?

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{21.Qxg4}
\end{array}
\]

White must protect the knight but also prevent mate. The alternatives are as follows.

(i) The natural-looking 21.Ng3 fails to the ingenious manoeuvre 21 ... Qd5+! 22.Kg1 Bb6!, with the deadly threat of 23 ... d3+. If 23.Re1 (to answer 23 ... d3+ with 24.Be3) Black plays 23 ... a4!, embarrassing the knight (24.Nd2 d3+ wins everything) and winning the game.

(ii) If 21.Rf4 then Black’s most promising line is 21 ... g5! 22.Qf1! (others are worse; this move attacks b5 with some counter-chances) and now there are a number of decent ways of maintaining the pressure. Firstly, he could try 22 ... Ba7!? 23.Rxg4 Qxh2+ 24.Kf3 Rh3+ 25.Rg3! (not 25.Ng3? since Black has the stunning coup 25 ... Nd3!! and the knight lands on e5 with devastating effect because if 26.Qxd3 Qh1+ 27.Ke2 Rh2 is mate) 25 ... Rxg3+ 26.Nxg3 d3! and Black has approximate material equality but the exposed position of the white king should give him excellent possibilities of victory. Secondly, 22
... gxf4! is playable and after 23.Qxb5+ Kf8! 24.Qxc5+ (or 24.Nbxc5 f3+! 25.Kf1 Kg8! and White cannot prevent Black’s infiltration on the king’s side) 24 ... Qxc5 25.Nbxc5 Ne2! 26.Rb1 Ne3+ the black pawn mass should be enough to triumph.

21 ... Qxh2+ 22.Kf3 Nd3?  
A terrible move since the straightforward 22 ... Rh3+ forces 23.Ng3 and now there are two equally convincing ways to win. After 23 ... Bd6! 24.Bf4, Black simply plays 24 ... Bxf4 (in fact 24 ... Rh4 hitting the queen also wins) 25.Qxf4 Nd3 26.Qd6 Rxg3+! 27.Qxg3 Ne5+ 28.Kf4 g5+ winning the queen. Alternatively, 23 ... Nd3! threatens 24 ... Ne5+ and if 24.Bf4 then 24 ... Rh4 25.Nf5 (otherwise the queen is lost) 25 ... Qxf4+ 26.Qxf4 Rxf4+ wins easily.

23.Bf4  
The vital difference is that the bishop rather than the knight will be able to block the rook check. This gives White one or two additional resources that mean he might be able to salvage a draw.

23 ... Rh3+ 24.Bg3!  
Of course 24.Ng3? transposes to the line in the note to Black’s twenty-second move and loses.

24 ... Ne5+  
There is nothing better, but now the presence of the bishop on g3 allows White to reach an endgame.

25.Kf4 Nxg4!?  
Perhaps Black should have gone away to lick his wounds and played 25 ... Nd3+ with a draw by perpetual check. The endgame that now arises is fairly murky since White’s two active knights more than make up for his deficit in pawns.

Black has rook and three pawns for two knights but will find it difficult to mobilize the extra pawns; the knights are extremely well-placed and the pawn on f6 severely restricts Black’s activities.

28 ... Rd8 29.Kg4

A subtle little move, since if now 29 ... Rh2 30.Kg3! Rxb2?, White replies with 31.Rh1! and mate on h8 cannot be avoided.

29 ... Rh5!

This is a good square for the rook; there are chances of doubling along his fourth rank.

30.Nb7

White’s idea is to mount an attack against the f-pawn and it turns out very well for him. However with best play it is difficult to see how this can lead to more than a draw.
30 ... Rb8?

A very passive move which, as often is the case with endings involving rooks, is the wrong strategy. After 30 ... Rdd5!? the game remains in the balance. For example, if he tries to get his rook into the enemy position with 31.Rc1? Black continues 31 ... Rhe5! and on 31.Rc8+? (31.Kf3 is safe but not 31.Nbd6+? Kd7!) 31 ... Kd7 33.Rd8+ Kc7 34.Ned6 he can play 34 ... d3! and it is White who is in real trouble. Better is 31.Nbd6+ Kd7 (not 31 ... Kf8? 32.Rc1! wins) 32.Nxf7, when his advanced pawn on f6 gives him some drawing chances, although the black pawns in the centre are extremely dangerous after 32 ... Rhf5!.

31.Nbd6+ Kf8?

Again very negative. A better plan is 31 ... Kd7! 32.Nxf7 Rf5! followed by 33 ... e5 when he still has certain possibilities to exploit his passed pawns.

32.Ng5!

Now it is clear that, with the black rooks unconnected and his king stuck
passively in a corner, White has a clear advantage.

32 ... e5

The f7 pawn cannot be saved.

33.Ndxf7 e4

Black is helpless. For example, on 32 ... Re8 33.Nd6 wins.

34.Ne5

With the unanswerable threats of 35.Nxg6+ and 35.Ne6+.

34 ... Rxg5+ 35.Kxg5 e3 36.Rh1 Kg8 37.Kxg6

Mate follows in a few moves; if 37 ... Rg6 then 38.Nf7 and 39.Rh8 mate.

Black resigns.

1950

Gruber, A – Bozic, A
Yugoslavia
Grünfeld Defence (D95)

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.d4

Turning the opening into a Grünfeld Defence, whereas 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.g3 and 4.Qa4+ would keep the game in the realms of the English Opening.

4 ... Bg7 5.e3

This is known as the Closed Grünfeld, but Black usually has few problems against White’s restrained set-up.

5 ... 0-0 6.Qb3 dxc4
6 ... e6 and 6 ... c6 are equally solid alternatives.

7.Bxc4 Nbd7??

Surprisingly this natural move is an inaccuracy, although the great Keres once played it in a game in 1937 against Eliskases. 7 ... a6 with 8 ... b5 to follow is much better and gives Black a fine game, whilst 7 ... Nfd7 8.0-0 Nb6 is also playable.

8.Ng5!

An elementary but extremely strong attack as will be seen after the mandatory response. Incidentally, against Keres Eliskases missed this and preferred 8.0-0.

8 ... e6

Not 8 ... Qe8? 9.Nb5! and wins.

The threat of discovered check gives White the opportunity to secure a large material advantage.

10 ... Qc7 11.Nxc7+ Kh8 12.Nxa8

Black has some ideas of creating counterplay against f2 but if White can fortify his king’s side defences and survive the attack he will be left with a decisive material advantage.

12 ... Ng4! 13.h3?!

This is a dubious choice. There were a number of interesting alternatives.

(i) The retreat 13.Nd1?! allows Black to develop a lasting initiative with 13 ... Qh4! 14.Qc2 (if 14.Qc4!? Nhx2 15.Qf1!? Nf6 16.Qg1 Nfg4 with a strong attack) 14 ... Nhx2 15.Rg1 Qg4! and Black has a dominating position.

(ii) 13.0-0 Qh4! 14.h3 and if now Black has a choice.

(a) On 14 ... Nxf2!? White might try 15.Bd2 Nc5! 16.dxc5 Nhx3+ (clearer
than 16 ... Bxh3!? 17.Qd5! Bd7 18.g3 Qxg3+ 19.Qg2 Nh3+ 20.Kh1 Nf2+ 20.Rxf2 Qxf2 22.Qxf2 Rxf2 and Black has chances to draw with his control of the seventh rank and the two bishops) 17.gxh3 Qg3+ with a draw. But better is 15.Qc2! and Black does not have enough, as after 15 ... Nhx3+ 16.gxh3 Rxf1+ 17.Kxf1 White is safe. For example, if 17 ... Ne5 then 18.dxe5 Bxh3+ 19.Ke2 Bg4+ 20.Kd2 Qf2+ 21.Kd3 Qf5+ 22.e4 and wins.


(iii) Simplest for White is 13.Bd2! when 13 ... Nxf2 (or 13 ... Rxf2? 14.0-0-0 wins) 14.0-0 leaves White comfortably placed, whilst 13 ... Qh4 14.0-0-0! Nxf2 15.Nc7! Nxd1 16.Nxd1 leaves White two pawns ahead. The other try 13 ... Bxd4 loses to either 14.Nd5 Qe5 15.Bc3! or even more simply 14.Qc4!.

13 ... Nxf2!

White has to move his rook, for if 14.0-0? Black responds with 14 ... Nhx3+ 15.gxh3 Qg5+ 16.Kh2 Rxf1 and mate is inevitable.

14.Rf1

An interesting alternative is 14.Rg1!?, when Black should complicate things with 14 ... Bxd4!. After 15.Nd5 Qe5!? (15 ... Qh4!? is also possible: 16.g3 Qe4 or 16.exd4 Nhx3+ 17.g3 Qe4+ 18.Qe3 Qxd5 both give him decent play) 16.Qc4! Bxb2 17.Bxb2 Qxb2 18.Qd4+ looks good for White, but Black has 18 ... Ne5!! 19.Qxb2 Nfd3+! 20.Kd2 (not 20.Ke2? Rf2+ 21.Kd1 Nxb2+ 22.Kc1 Nbd3+ 23.Kd1 Nc4! and 24 ... Rd2 mate cannot be prevented) 20 ... Rf2+ 21.Kc3 (if 21.Kd1? Black again forces mate) 21 ... Nxb2 and the exposed position of his opponent’s king gives Black excellent drawing chances. In view of this White might venture 15.Qc4 but after 15 ... Bg7!, he will be subjected to an imposing black attack.
14 ... Qh4

With the powerful threat of 15 ... Ne4+ 16.Ke2 Ng3+, winning the rook with a decisive advantage.

(see next diagram)

15.Ke2

The only other option is 15.Qc4!? , defending the rook. Then 15 ... Ne4+ 16.Kd1 Nf2+ 17.Ke2 gets Black nowhere, but 15 ... Ne5! keeps him in the game. The d-pawn is pinned so White has to play 16.Qe2, but this is met by 16 ... Bxh3!! 17.dxe5 (17.gxh3? Nf3+ wins the queen) 17 ... Ne4+ 18.Kd1 Bg4! 19.Rf3 Ng5 20.Kc2 Nxf3 21.gxf3 Bxf3 22.Qd3 Rxa8 and Black has the advantage.

15 ... Ne5?!

There were two other methods of progressing the attack.
Firstly, 15 ... Qh5+ 16.g4! (simpler than 16.Kd2 Ne4+ 17.Nxe4 Rxf1 or 16.Ke1 Nd3+ 17.Kd2 Rxf1 18.Kxd3 when in both cases Black still has some initiative) 16 ... Qxh3 17.Rxf2 Qxg4+ 18.Kf1 Qh3+ with a draw.

Secondly, 15 ... Qg3 menaces 16 ... Qxg2, and 16.Rg1? fails to 16 ... Nhx3. Best for White is therefore 16.Qd5! Ne6 17.Qf3 Nh5 and now 18.Qxg3!? (18.Qd5? loses the queen after 18 ... Nf4+! 19.exf4 Re8+) 18 ... Nhx3+ 19.Ke1 Nxf1 20.Kxf1 Nhx3+ 21.Ke1 Nh2 22.Nc7 and the knight survives with an approximately level position. Also possible in this variation is 18.Qxf8+!? Bxf8 19.Rxf2, but after 19 ... Bg7 Black’s queen should prove to be superior to the white rooks.

The text move plays for more but it is a highly risky continuation.

16.dxc5!

It appears as though White can defend g2 by 16.Qd5, since 16 ... Bg4+?! 17.hxg4 Qxg4+ 18.Qf3! Rxf3 19.gxf3 Qf5 20.Kxf2 leaves him with more than enough pieces for the queen. However, Black has 16 ... Rf5! 17.Qd6 Qh5+!! 18.g4 (White loses his queen after 18.Kd2 Nce4+ 19.Nxe4 Nxe4+) 18 ... Qxh3 19.gxf5 Qg4+ 20.Ke1 (after 20.Kxf2 Nd3 is a delightful mate) 20 ... Nfd3+ 21.Kd2 Qg2+ 22.Ne2 Ne4+ and wins the queen and the game.

16 ... Bg4+!
17.hxg4

If 17.Kd2 Black has two viable options. Firstly, he can play 17 ... Rd8+. Then the principal line is 18.Nd5 (on 18.Kc2? Bf5+ mates) 18 ... Ne4+ 19.Kc2 (not 19.Kd3 as 19 ... Nxc5+ wins) and then Black’s best move is 19 ... Be2!! (better than 19 ... Nxc5 20.Qb4! Rxd5 21.Qxg4!), and now:


(ii) 20.Nf4 Bxf1 wins easily.

(iii) 20.Rf4 Qe1! and Black forces mate in short order.

(iv) 20.Qb4 is met by 20 ... Rxd5! and Black wins, for example if 21.Rf4 then 21 ... Qd8 22.Rxe4 Rxc5+!! 23.Kb3 Bd1+ 24.Ka3 Ra5+ 25.Qa4 Qd6+ and mate next move.


17 ... Qxg4+ 18.Kd2!

18 ... Qxg2
(see next diagram)

19.Rxf2?

After heroic defence Gruber slips and throws away the game. Clearly 19.Ne2? Ne4+ and 19.Re1? Ne4+ 20.Kd1 Nxc3+ 21.bxc3 Rd8+ fail, but a better option is 19.Qc4!. Bozic had thought that 19 ... Nd3+! (if 19 ... Ne4+!? then 20.Ke1 Bxc3+! 21.Qxc3+!! Nxc3 22.Rxf8+ Kg7 23.Rf2 reaching an unclear position where White has a material advantage but an exposed king) 20.Kxd3 Rd8+ would give him victory, but rather than capturing the knight White has 20.Ne2!.

Then none of Black’s possible methods of continuing the attack is sufficient.

(i) If 20 ... Rxa8? White plays 21.Rg1 and has an easy win.

(ii) After 20 ... Qxf1!? 21.Qxd3 White has to face a certain amount of discomfort, but he can survive and his material advantage will then prove to
be decisive.


19 ... Rxf2+

This is crushing. The white king must go forward to avoid the back-rank mate.


Interposing the knight merely delays the mate.

21 ... Rd2!

A pretty finale. Black’s intended 22 ... Qf5 mate will prove decisive.

22.Qd5 Qg2+ 23.Kf4 Rf2+

White resigns.

1951

Barden, L – Adams, W
Hastings
Two Knights’ Defence (C57)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6

The venerable Two Knights’ Defence.

4.Ng5 d5 5.exd5
Now everyone knows that 5 ... Nxd5?! is a highly risky move, allowing White to generate a massive attack. Weaver Adams, playing Black in this game, also knows this but decides to tempt Barden into overreaching himself in the ensuing tactical onslaught.

5 ... Nxd5?!

The normal options are 5 ... Na5, 5 ... b5 and 5 ... Nd4.

6.d4!

The other option is 6.Nxf7 (which has the wonderfully bizarre name of “Fegatello”, or “Fried Liver” Attack), and chess opening theory is undecided as to which is the better continuation.

It is rather a moot debate, however, since even if Black can theoretically survive the complications, in practical play White’s attack is usually sufficient to pose insurmountable problems for his opponent.

6 ... Bb4+
This clever check means that after White’s next the knight no longer has the useful c3 square at its disposal.

7.c3 Be7

Now White must sacrifice if he is to demonstrate an advantage, because 8.Qf3 fails to impress after 8 ... Bxg5! (only not 8 ... 0-0? 9.Nxf7!) 9.Bxd5 0-0 with equality.

8.Nxf7! Kxf7 9.Qf3+

Forcing the king into the open, for it must protect the pinned knight.

(see next diagram)

9 ... Ke6 10.Qe4!

White’s queen centralization has always been the key move in this opening. The alternative, 10.0-0, can also lead to an interesting situation after 10 ... Na5 (inviting the draw by repetition after 10 ... Na5 11.Qg4+ Kf7 12.Qf3+, etc) 11.Bd3! with excellent attacking chances.
10 ... Bf8?!

The idea behind this odd move is to free e7 for the knight, but if Black has to resort to such contortions he must be in trouble. Perhaps consideration should be given instead to the wild 10 ... b5!? 11.Bxb5 Bb7, although White still has all the chances. On 12.Bxc6 (12.f4 g6 is also interesting) 12 ... Bxc6 13.c4 Black can continue with 13 ... Nb4, and now if either 14.d5+ Nxd5 15.cxd5+ Qxd5, or 14.Qxe5+ Kf7, Black just about hangs on.

11.0-0 Nce7 12.f4 c6

Desperate defence which in practical play will surely prove fatal.

13.fxe5

With the terrible threat of 14.Qg4+. Black tries to run.
13 ... Kd7 14.Be2!

A simple retreat which menaces 15.c4, driving away Black’s only developed piece.

14 ... Ke8

Running the king to c7 might have lasted slightly longer, although after 15.c4 followed by 16.Bf4 White will prevail in the end.

15.c4

White’s pawn centre begins to roll.

15 ... Nc7 16.Nc3

With two pawns for the piece and a mighty centre, Barden can afford to complete his development before launching the final assault.

16 ... Be6 17.Bg5 Qd7
Unfortunately for Adams, castling queen’s side next move – which would be extremely useful – is illegal.

18.Rd1!

With this move Barden threatens to push the d-pawn with devastating effect. For example, after 18 ... Rd8 White plays 19.Bxe7 Bxe7 20.Bh5+ g6 21.Bxg6+ hxg6 22.Qxg6+ and mate next move.

18 ... Rc8

Other moves are no better.

19.Bxe7 Qxe7

If 19 ... Bxe7 then 20.d5 Bc5+ 21.Kh1 cxd5 22.cxd5 Nxd5 23.Nxd5 Bxd5 24.Rxd5 Qe7 25.Bh5+! forces mate.

20.d5!
The central pawns will decide the game.

20 ... Qc5+ 21.Kh1 cxd5 22.cxd5

If now 22 ... Nxd5 then 23.Nxd5 follows, and the dual threat of 24.Bh5+ and 24.Qa4+ is decisive.

22 ... Bd7

If the bishop retreats to f7 then 23.Qf5 wins immediately.

23.e6

The “space invader” pawns advance inexorably towards the black king.

23 ... Bb5

Black manages to save the bishop, but his weakness along the f-file is now revealed.
24.Qf4!


24 ... Kd8 25.Bxb5!

Barden swaps off the minor pieces, leaving his d-pawn free to continue its progress.

25 ... Nxb5 26.Nxb5 Qxb5 27.d6!

White’s threat of 28.e7+ Bxe7 (or 28 ... Kd7 29.Qf7) 29.dxe7+ Kxe7 30.Qf7 mate decides the game.

Black resigns.

1952

Geller, E – Golombek, H
Budapest
Nimzo-Indian Defence (E41)

Quite a well-known game – primarily because in the 1950s and 1960s Harry Golombek included it in as many sources as he could find – but nonetheless an excellent example of attack and counter-attack.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 c5

Not quite so common as 4 ... 0-0 but an excellent response to the Rubinstein Variation.

5.a3!?

Inviting Black to transpose into the Sämisch Variation by 5 ... Bxc3+ 6.bxc3. Golombek prefers to follow a more complicated line, since he was aware that Geller had won a number of attacking games with the Sämisch.
5 ... cxd4!?

Now 6.exd4 Bxc3+! 7.bxc3 d6 leaves White with rather weak pawns on the open c-file. Understandably, therefore, Geller prefers to divert the game into tactical channels which are more in keeping with his dynamic style.

6.axb4 dxc3

No doubt expecting 7.bxc3 0-0 with an interesting game.

7.Nf3!

A well-founded pawn sacrifice, which should probably be declined by 7 ... d5!, giving a roughly equal position after 8.bxc3 0-0. Golombek, however, asks Geller to demonstrate the potency of his idea.

7 ... cxb2!? 8.Bxb2

For his pawn White has the two bishops, better development and open lines. Geller, a naturally aggressive and tactical player, must have been pleased
with his opening strategy.

8 ... d5!?

Golombek immediately strikes in the centre, although it might have been more circumspect either to castle or to develop a piece or two on the queen’s side.

9.c5!

Rightly assessing that this move gives him excellent chances of using the long Black diagonal.

9 ... b6?

It would have much more sensible to get his king away from the centre by castling. After 9 ... 0-0 10.Bd3 chances are equal.

10.Bb5+!

A clever move, exploiting the weakness on the white squares.

10 ... Bd7 11.Bxd7+

The point of the previous move is revealed. If now 11 ... Nbxd7 then 12.c6! followed by 13.b5 or 13.Qa4 is very awkward to meet, and 11 ... Qxd7 is not an attractive option because of the reply 12.cxb6, regaining the pawn with a clearly better game.

11 ... Nfxd7
12.Qc2!?

Geller refrains from capturing on g7, since he does not wish to concede the g-file to Black after 12.Bxg7? Rg8. In that case White should defend the pawn on c5 with 13.Bd4, but with 13 ... Nc6! Black gets himself back into the game. Geller’s chosen move defends the c-pawn and renews the threat to g7. Interestingly, the Russian grandmaster Ragozin (one of the characters in our 1945 game) was watching this game and criticized 12.Qc2, preferring 12.Qa4!, preventing the development of the queen’s knight. After 12 ... bxc5 13.bxc5 White has threats such as 14.c6 and 14.e4, giving him good practical chances.

12 ... Nc6!

Very well played by Golombek, who spent over half an hour on this move. He understands that the c-pawn must be blocked and avoids the natural mistake 12 ... 0-0?, which loses to 13.c6! as follows: if 13 ... Nf6 14.c7! Qc8! (pinning the pawn) 15.Bxf6! gxf6 16.cxb8Q! Qxc2 17.Qg3+ Kg8 18.0-0 leaves White a piece ahead. Alternatively, 13 ... Qc7 (13 ... Qc8 is similar) fails to 14.Ng5! g6 (forced, since if 14 ... f5 then 15.Nxe6 wins, or 14 ... Nf6
15.Bxf6, etc) 15.Qc3! (threatening mate and positioning the queen so that it is now protected by the bishop) 15 ... e5 16.cxd7! and wins.

13.Bxg7

The game now cascades into a tactical mêlée, with both kings potentially exposed.

13 ... Nxb4!

Active play is Black’s chance of salvaging something from the game. Instead, 13 ... Rg8?, losing an important tempo compared to the game, is met by 14.Qxh7 Ne7 15.c6! Nf8 16.Bxf8 Rxf8 17.b5 and White is a pawn up with a clear advantage.

14.Qb1!

The right square for the queen, hitting the knight and keeping the pawn on h7 under threat.

14 ... Rg8

15.c6?

The purpose of this advance is to divert the knight on b4, so that White may capture on h7 without fearing the variation 15.Qxh7 Rxg7 16.Qxg7 Nc2+ 17.Ke2 Nxa1. Nevertheless, White could play this line and follow up with 18.c6! Nc5 19.Ne5! and 20.Rxa1, when although material is level Black is very disorganized and White has a clear edge. Note that after 15.Qxh7 Black cannot continue as he does in the game with 15 ... Nf6? since 16.Bxf6 Qxf6 17.Qxg8+ Kd7 18.Qxf7+ (18.Ne5+ also wins) 18 ... Qxf7 19.Ne5+ Ke7 20.Nxf7 Ne2+ 21.Ke2 Nxa1 22.Rxa1 Kxf7 23.cxb6 wins.

15 ... Nxc6

If Black tries 15 ... Nc5? then 16.Qxh7 Rxg7 17.Qxg7 leads to the line analysed above.

16.Qxh7

Finally White takes the pawn, but Golombek has a surprise in store for his opponent.
16 ... Nf6!!

A brilliant and necessary drawing combination, which Golombek had seen when playing his twelfth move. The passive alternative 16 ... Ne7 would have played into White’s hands, and after 17.0-0 he would have more than enough compensation for the pawn. As we have already observed, Geller should have bypassed this position by playing 15.Qxh7 when he would have had good winning chances, but it is still to Golombek’s great credit that he manages to save a draw against his powerful adversary.

17.Bxf6

Winning the rooks but allowing the counter-attack. White could have tried 17.Qh6!? and after 17 ... Ne4 18.Qh7 Ne7 19.0-0 the position is rather unclear.

17 ... Qxf6 18.Qxg8+ Kd7!

Carefully refraining from 18 ... Ke7? 19.Qg5!, forcing the exchange of queens and winning easily. After 18 ... Kd7, Black has a draw by perpetual check if White captures the rook on a8.
19. Ne5+!

An inspired attempt by Geller, with the same idea as above that if 19 ... Qxe5 then 20.Qxf7+ followed by 21.0-0 wins. Black must capture with the knight, thus blocking the queen’s path to a1. Golombek, however, finds a pretty way to draw.

19 ... Nxe5 20.Qxa8 Nf3+!

Clearing the diagonal and securing the draw.

21.gxf3

If 21.Ke2 then 21 ... Qb2+ 22.Kxf3 Qf6+ is drawn.

21 ... Qxa1+ 22.Ke2 Qa2+ ½–½

White might try to escape the checks via f1 and g2, but Black has everything under control with 23.Kf1 Qb1+ 24.Kg2 Qg6+ 25.Kh3 Qh5+, etc.
1953

Boleslavsky, I – Zirulinikov
USSR
Queen’s Gambit Accepted (D22)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4

Another Queen’s Gambit Accepted (see also our games from 1904, 1937 and 1947).

3.Nf3 a6

Not one of the main lines, this move invites 4.e4!? b5 with a complex game. Boleslavsky, however, has a surprise for his opponent.

4.e3 Bg4 5.Bxc4 e6

Now 6.h3 and 6.Nc3 are the most common moves, whilst 6.Qb3 and 6.d5 have also regularly been seen. Instead, Boleslavsky plays an obscure variation which immediately takes his opponent out of the books.
6. Nbd2!? Nf6

6 ... Nd7, with the idea of rapid queen’s side expansion through ... b5 and ... c5, is a worthy alternative, as is the immediate 6 ... c5.

7. h3 Bh5 8. g4

With this advance and his next move White is able to obtain the two bishops.

8 ... Bg6 9. Ne5 Nbd7 10. Nxg6 hxg6 11. Qf3!

An interesting attempt to exploit the absence of the bishop from the defence of the queen’s wing.

11 ... b5?!

Extremely dangerous since the open lines and weakened light squares are to White’s advantage. The safe 11 ... c6 leaves Black with a passive but sound position.
12. Bb3 c5

Black continues with his rather ill-conceived plan.

13. a4!

Boleslavsky expertly times his attack, waiting until Black’s frailty is at its maximum. If now 13 ... bxa4 then 14.Bxa4 leaves him with a clear advantage.

13 ... cxd4 14. exd4

The intermediary 14.axb5 is answered by 14 ... Ne5! and Black is fine. But now 15.axb5 is a real threat.

14 ... Rb8

Both 14 ... bxa4 15.Bxa4 and 14 ... b4 leave him very weak on the light squares.

15.axb5 axb5
16.g5!

Masterly play by Boleslavsky, who dominates both sides of the board. Now 16 ... Nh5! looks right although White retains the initiative after 17.d5!. For example, if 17 ... Qxg5 then 18.dxe6 fxe6 19.Qg4! Qe5+ (19 ... Qxg4? hxg4 wins) 20.Kd1 Nf4 21.Re1, with a strong attack. In addition, if 17 ... Nc5 then 18.dxe6 fxe6 19.Ra7 is good, whilst 17 ... exd5 18.Qxd5 Qe7+ 19.Kd1 Nf4 20.Qf3 followed by 21.Re1 gives White the advantage. Best is 17 ... Ne5 18.Qe4 Nf4! exploiting the fork on d3, which leaves Black with good possibilities of creating counter-chances.

16 ... Ng8?

With the commendable intention of transferring the knight to f5. However, the lack of development imposes too much strain on the black defences.

17.Ne4

White defends the g-pawn and centralizes the knight.
17 ... Qb6 18.Bf4

Also possible is 18.Be3 with 19.d5 in the air.

18 ... Bb4+ 19.Kf1 Rc8 20.Be3

So the bishop does move to e3 after all. The difference is that the black rook is now on c8 rather than b8, giving the queen a natural retreat square. More aggressive is 20.d5! with considerable pressure against e6. If 20 ... Nf8 then 21.Be3 Qd8 22.Ra7! (threatening 23.Qxf7 mate) 22 ... Ne7 23.Qe2! (threatening 24.Qxb5+) 23 ... Rb8 24.Bd4! (threatening 25.Bxg7) wins, and on 20 ... e5 White plays 21.Be3 and completely dominates the entire board.

20 ... Qb8 21.Ra6

Menacing 22.Bf4! Qb7 23.Nf6+, winning the queen. This explains Black’s next.

21 ... Rh4! 22.Kg2 Ne7

Zirulinikov finally re-develops the knight, but Boleslavsky can now double rooks on the a-file with the threat of 24.Ra8! Qxa8 25.Rxa8 Rxa8 26.Nf6+!, picking off the rook.

23.Rha1 Nb6

24. Rxb6!!

The culmination of Boleslavsky’s superb strategy is, as so often in grandmaster chess, a piece of incisive tactics. Black has no choice.

24 ... Qxb6 25. d5 Qb8


26. dxe6 Nf5

26 ... fxe6 is impossible because 27. Bxe6 Nf5 (otherwise 28. Qf7+ wins) 28. Bxc8 Qxc8 29. Ra8! Qxa8 30. Nf6+ wins the queen. Thus Black conceives the inventive defensive plan of using the white passed pawn as a shield for his king.

27. exf7+ Kf8

On 27 ... Ke7 White continues as in the game with 28. Bc5+! Bxc5 29. Nxc5
Rxc5 30.Ra8!, and the imaginative attempt 30 ... Rg4+!? 31.hxg4 Nh4+ fails to 32.Kh3 Nxf3 33.Rxb8 Nxc5+ 34.Kh4 Nxf7 35.Rb7+ and wins the knight.

28.Bc5+

A pretty combination.

28 ... Bxc5 29.Nxc5 Rd4!

He rightly refuses to allow White to win the queen with 29 ... Rxc5 30.Ra8 Rc8 31.Rxb8 Rxb8 32.Be6, when the two rooks are no match for the white monarch. For example, 32 ... Ne7? loses to 33.Qg3, and 32 ... Nd6 is answered by 33.Qd3 Rd8 34.Qxg6. Other moves are answered by 33.Bxf5 and 34.g6 with a clear advantage.

30.Ne6+

30 ... Ke7

Not 30 ... Kxf7? 31.Nxd4+ and wins. Now 31.Nxd4 is a mistake due to 31 ...
Nh4+.

31.Qe2!

A subtle move; the threatened discovered check is very difficult to meet.

31 ... Qb7+ 32.Kg1

There was another, albeit rather complicated, win in 32.f3 Nh4+ 33.Kh1 Rd2! 34.Qxd2 Qxf3+ 35.Kh2 Qxb3 36.Ra7+ Kxe6 37.Qd7+ Ke5 38.Qe8+!! (other moves allow Black to draw) 38 ... Rxe8 (38 ... Kf4 39.f8Q+) 39.fxe8Q+ Kf4 40.Qf7+! Qxf7 41.Rxf7+ Kxg5 42.Rxg7 with a won endgame.

32 ... Re4

The only chance.

33.Qf3!

Since 33 ... Re1+ fails after 34.Rxe1 Qxf3 35.Nd4+ and 36.Nxf3, Black is in virtual zugzwang. The knight cannot move because of 34.f8Q+, so he is reduced to shuffling his rook along the back rank.

33 ... Rb8

Defending the queen and thereby unpinning the rook.

34.Rd1!

With the elegant and decisive threat of 35.Bd5. In fact, the prosaic 34.Nc5 Nd4 35.Qd3! would also win.

34 ... Rxe6 35.Qxb7+ Rxb7 36.Bxe6

Black cannot recapture on e6 and is therefore left with a hopeless position.

36 ... Rb8 37.Bxf5 gxf5 38.g6 Kf6 39.Re1

Whatever Black plays, 40.Re8 will ensue.
Black resigns.

1954

Geller, E – Averbakh, Y
Kiev
Sicilian Defence (A05)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d3

Geller refrain from entering the open lines of the Sicilian and plays the King’s Indian Attack.

3 ... g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 d6

A frequently seen plan is 5 ... e6 followed by 6 ... Nge7, with the idea of a later ... d5 or possibly ... f5.

6.0-0 Nf6 7.Nbd2 0-0 8.a4

Discouraging Black from making the thematic ... b5 break.

8 ... Bd7 9.Nc4

A useful square for the knight, controlling e5 and with possibilities of occupying the e3 square at a later stage.
Averbakh elects to clarify things in the centre rather than continue with the obvious plan of 9 ... Qc8 and 10 ... Bh3, which is unlikely to be particularly effective against a grandmaster of Geller’s calibre.

10.exd5 Nxd5 11.Re1 Qc7

White now attempts to generate some attacking ideas on the king’s side, but Black is not behind in development and there are no conspicuous weaknesses in his position, so this strategy is unlikely to be immediately successful.

12.Ng5 Nb6 13.Ne3

True to his dynamic style, Geller avoids simplifying exchanges.

13 ... a5

Fixes the pawn on a4, which turns out to be a serious weakness as the game develops.
14.h4

With the transparent intention of 15.h5 gxh5 16.Qxh5, with a winning attack.

14 ... h6 15.Ne4

Threatening 16.Nxc5, which Black meets with another knight move.

15 ... Nd4

This also has the benefit of attacking the a-pawn.

16.h5!?

Geller complicates, and now the materialistic 16 ... Bxa4 is met by 17.hxg6 fxg6 and Black’s pawn structure is severely compromised.

16 ... g5

17.c3?!
White must defend the pawn on a4, but this leaves both a4 and d3 rather weak. However, it is difficult to suggest a viable alternative given that 17.b3? is answered by 17 ... Nxb3. With hindsight perhaps 17.Nc3 would be the safest continuation, with Bd2 and b3 to follow.

17 ... Nf5

The start of a sequence which sees all four knights exchanged and accordingly changes the nature of the game.

18.Qb3

With some vague intentions against the knight on b6 and the pawn behind it.

18 ... Nd6 19.Nd5

Forcing Black’s next move.

19 ... Nxd5 20.Qxd5

With this move White seems to have secured a good game, since he has pressure against the black pawns at b7 and e7.

20 ... Nxe4 21.Qxe4 Rab8

Clearly White cannot now capture the pawn at e7 because 22 ... Rfe8 wins immediately.

22.Qd5

White now begins to lose his way, making three consecutive unconvincing queen moves.

22 ... e6 23.Qa2

White presumably avoided 23.Qc4 because of 23 ... b5 24.axb5 Bxb5 25.Qe4 Rfd8, with plans of an assault against the pawn at d3.

23 ... Bc6
Challenging White’s most potent piece.

24.Qc4

Since if now 24 ... b5?, White responds with 25.Qxc5.

24 ... Bxg2!

Simple and effective positional play by Averbakh, who realizes that his active bishop and the vulnerable pawns at a4 and d3 give him a significant advantage.

25.Kxg2 Qc6+ 26.Qe4 Rfd8!

Correctly avoiding 26 ... Qxe4+ 27.dxe4, when one of White’s main weaknesses disappears.

27.Be3 Rd5!

Superficially preparing to double rooks on the d-file, but also containing a vicious threat which both grandmasters curiously overlook.
28.\texttt{Rad1}? 

Geller does not notice the real danger and plays this routine move to defend the pawn. He should have played 28.Kf1 (which might transpose into the game) or 28.f3 in order to block the threats along the diagonal.

28 \texttt{... Rbd8}? 

With the intention of exploiting the positioning of the white queen with 29 \texttt{... Rxd3 30.Rxd3 Rxd3}. Although Averbakh has a clear advantage after this move, he misses the crushing 28 \texttt{... f5! 29.Qf3} (here and on the next move White must avoid placing the queen on the fourth rank since \texttt{... Rd4+} wins the queen) 29 \texttt{... g4! 30.Qe2} and now 30 \texttt{... f4!} is decisive.
For example, if 31.gxf4 then there follows 31 ... Rxh5+ 32.Kg3 (or 32.f3 gxf3+ 33.Qxf3 Rh2+! 34.Kg3 Rh3+! and wins the queen) 32 ... Rh3+ 33.Kxg4 Qg2 mate, and if the bishop moves White again loses his queen to 31 ... Re5+.

29.Kf1?!

This time Geller spots the hazards and removes his king from the diagonal. However, since there is no time to manoeuvre the king to e2 (as Black’s reply shows) and since the king is poorly placed on f1, it would have been better to play 29.Kh2.

29 ... c4!

Cutting off the queen’s defence of a4 and exploiting the pin on the d-pawn.

30.d4 Qxa4

White is a pawn down with a passive position, a bad bishop and weak pawns. Geller has no choice but to try for disruption tactics on the king’s side in the
hope of provoking complications.

31.g4 Qd7

Sensibly bringing the queen back into the centre.

32.Ra1 a4 33.Re2

An immediate 33.f4 would have been more troublesome for Black.

33 ... b5

Averbakh decides to concentrate on the advance of his queen’s side pawns rather than opening the centre with 33 ... e5, which is also good for him.

34.Rae1

Still deferring f4.

34 ... b4!
The pawns continue their progress. If now 35.cxb4 then 35 ... Bxd4 36.Qc2 
(other moves are worse) 36 ... Qc6! and Black has a dominating position and 
must triumph.

35.f4

Geller finally realizes that drastic action is called for.

35 ... gxf4 36.Bxf4

If White can force g5 then he might create some complications. This takes 
time, however, and meanwhile Black’s action on the other wing proceeds 
relentlessly.

36 ... a3! 37.Rg2

If 37.bxa3 then 37 ... bxc3 and the d-pawn or a-pawn will fall.

37 ... Qe7!

An excellent prophylactic move from Averbakh. The hasty 37 ... axb2 38.g5! 
hxg5 39.Bxg5 gives White the attacking chances that he has been seeking.

38.Qe3!

Geller does his best to increase the pressure against g5 and h6.

38 ... Qf6

Defending h6 but also pinning the bishop, hence White’s reply.

39.Kg1 axb2!

Perfect timing from Averbakh, who appreciates that the game has reached the 
crisis point.

40.g5 hxg5 41.Be5

Not 41.Bxg5 because after 41 ... Rxa5 42.Rxg5 bxc3, White cannot play
43.Qxc3 and so the pawns will decide.

41 ... Rxe5

Averbakh avoids 41 ... Qh6, presumably on the grounds that it gives White tactical chances such as 42.Rxg5 Rxe5 43.Qxe5 bxc3 44.Kh1! c2 45.Reg1! b1Q 46.Rxg7+ Kf8 47.Qc5+ Ke8 48.Qc6+ Rd7 49.Qe8+ Ke7 50.Qc5+ Kf6 51.Qe5+ with a draw. However, this line is by no means forced and Black can win in a number of ways. For example, 42 ... f6! simply forks the bishop and rook and wins on the spot,

and 44 ... Rxd4! 45.Reg1 Rh4+ also wins easily. As well as 41 ... Qh6, Black can also win with 41 ... Qf5, as 42.Rxg5 Rxe5 43.dxe5 (or 43.Rxf5 Rxe3; 43.Qxe5 Qxe5 44.dxe5 bxc3) 43 ... b1Q is decisive. Having said all this, Averbakh’s choice also wins in elegant style.

42.dxe5

Or 42.Qxe5 Qxe5 43.dxe5 bxc3 winning.
42 ... Qxe5! 43.Qxe5

If 43.Qf2 Qxc3 44.Rxg5 Qc1 wins.

43 ... Bxe5 44.Rxg5+

On 44.cxb4 Black wins by 44 ... c3! 45.Rxg5+ Kh7 46.Rgxe5 c2.

44 ... Kh7 45.Rgxe5 bxc3 46.Rb5

Geller has managed to position his rook behind the b-pawn, which seems to halt its progress. In fact, Black can play 46 ... Ra8 followed by 47 ... Ra1, which will win a rook and leave him several pawns ahead. Instead of this, however, Averbakh reveals his own beautiful dénouement.

46 ... Rd1!!

A lovely finish that wins instantly, because if 47.Rxd1 then 47 ... c2! forces a pawn through, whilst if 47.Kf1 then 47 ... Rxe1+ 48.Kxe1 c2 and Black also queens.
White resigns.

1955

Barshauskas – Chesnauskas
Lithuania
English Opening (A18)

1.e4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4 d5 4.e5 Nfd7

Black selects a passive variation. Instead, he could try the provocative 4 ... Ne4!? when after 5.Nxe4 dxe4 6.Qg4 he has the choice of several interesting alternatives. For example, 6 ... Nc6 7.Qxe4 Qd4 8.Qxd4 Nxd4 gives him compensation for the pawn in the form of active piece play. Similarly, Black has good chances after 6 ... Bd7 7.Qxe4 Bc6, and he also has other possibilities such as 6 ... f5!? and 6 ... c5!?, both of which lead to exciting positions where Black is not without chances. If such complications are not to his liking, then the most common line is 4 ... d4! 5.exf6 dxc3 6.bxc3 Qxf6
with a level game.

5.d4

Hardly a poor move, although 5.cxd5 exd5 (if 5 ... Nxe5 then 6.d4 Ng6 7.dxe6 with a better position) 6.d4 is an easy route to a clear advantage.

5 ... dxc4 6.Bxc4 Nb6!?

The natural 6 ... c5 is a more common move in this position, with White maintaining a slight edge after 7.Nf3 (he can also try 7.d5!? Nxe5 8.Bb5+ but Black can equalize after 8 ... Bd7 9.dxe6 Bxb5!) 7 ... cxd4 8.Qxd4.

7.Bb3 c5 8.Nf3 Nc6

An interesting alternative is 8 ... Bd7, with the intention of exchanging on d4 and playing ... Bc6.

9.Be3

White might try 9.Bg5, since after 9 ... Qc7 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.0-0 Black will have some difficulty in completing his development, but after 9 ... Be7! 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 White has only a small plus.

9 ... cxd4 10.Nxd4!

A clever pawn sacrifice, which Black decides to accept. White gets little advantage after the prosaic 10.Bxd4.
10 ... Nxe5!?

Very risky, because White’s lead in development now becomes marked. Black could have played safe with 10 ... Nxd4 leaving his opponent with only a minimal edge after 11.Bxd4.

11.Qh5!

Threatening the knight and seizing the initiative. White gets an excellent game after 11 ... Qd6 12.Rd1! (but not 12.Ne4? Qb4+ with good chances) or 11 ... Qc7 12.0-0!, but Black should seriously have considered playing 11 ... Nd3+ immediately. If then 12.Kd2 Nxb2! intending 13 ... N2c4+ is interesting, since after 13.Kc2 Ba3 (not 13 ... N2c4? 14.Bxc4 Nxc4 15.Qb5+! wins) 14.Rab1! 0-0 15.Rxb2 Bxb2 16.Kxb2 Black has good survival chances despite White’s strong minor pieces. Alternatively, after 11 ... Nd3+ White could retreat with 12.Kf1 (but not 12.Ke2 Qxd4!! 13.Qb5+! Qd7! and wins) but 12 ... Nf4! (so that 13.Bxf4? is answered by 13 ... Qxd4) followed by 13 ... Ng6 seems to hold.

11 ... Qf6?! 12.Ne4
Forcing the black knight to check.

12 ... Nd3+ 13.Kd2!

Barshauskas assesses that Black will be unable to generate meaningful threats against his king so is quite prepared to use the piece aggressively.

13 ... Qe5

Other moves lose the knight.

14.Ng5!

By blocking the attack on his queen he renews the threat to the black knight. In addition, Black must prevent 15.Qxf7+.

14 ... g6 15.Qf3

Again attacking f7.

15 ... f6 16.Kxd3!

After Black captures the knight, he will be a pawn ahead but severely behind in development. On the other hand, White will also have some anxious moments because of the exposed position of his king.

16 ... fxg5 17.Rhe1!

17 ... Bc5?!

Chesnauskas clearly played this in order to make 18.Bd2 impossible. For that reason he ruled out the more defensive and natural-looking move 17 ... Be7 (which blocks the e-file) because 18.Bd2 attacks the queen and White will soon capture the pawn on e6 with telling effect. Black does however have an interesting alternative in 17 ... Bg7!, which has the benefit of controlling the long diagonal. Since 18.Bd2 is again prevented, White has to try other ideas.

(i) The wild 18.Bxe6?! leads to great complications that turn out ultimately to be in Black’s favour because of his strength along the diagonal. Black plays 18 ... Bxe6! 19.Nxe6 Qb5+! 20.Kc2 Qxb2+ 21.Kd1 (21.Kd3 Qc3+ is similar) 21 ... Qxa1+ 22.Bc1 Be5! and although White can win the rook on a8 by 23.Nc7+ it is insufficient to hold the game.

(ii) Another direct approach – which is better – is 18.Nxe6!, when 18 ... Bxe6 19.Bxb6 Qb5+! 20.Kc2 Rc8+ 21.Kb1 Rc6!? leads to a position where Black is hanging on by a thread. The threat of mate on b2 prevents the bishop on b3 capturing on e6, but White is clearly better and should ultimately triumph.
(iii) If those options are not to his liking, White could try a calmer approach with 18.Rac1 or 18.Rad1, gradually improving the position of his pieces. After either move Black should play 18 ... Rf8! 19.Qh3 and now the strong move 19 ... Nd5!, intending 20 ... Nf4+! 21.Bxf4 Qxd4+. White’s best is then 20.Bxd5! followed by 21.Qxh7, but at least Black has good fighting chances.

18.Nxe6?

Obviously pay-back time has come on e6, but at the crucial moment he carelessly allows Black off the hook. In fact, the right way is 18.Bxe6!, for if 18 ... Bxe6 then 19.Nxe6 threatens 20.Bxc5 and leaves Black helpless, the d8 and f8 squares being guarded by the knight; the knight cannot be taken and moves like 19 ... Be7 fail to 20.Bc5!.

18 ... Bxe6 19.Bxe6


19 ... Rd8+?
Black misses the chance that he has been given, and plays a move that leads to a forced loss.

The key move was 19 ... Rf8!, which is rather awkward to meet and should lead to approximately equal situations.

(i) Firstly, the seemingly clever 20.Bf7+? is actually a horrible blunder and loses to 20 ... Rxf7 21.Bxc5 Rxf3+ 22.gxf3 and now Black has the rather nice resource 22 ... 0-0-0+!, simultaneously checking the white king whilst removing his own king from the e-file, and therefore winning on the spot.


Here Black has two good tries, so long as he avoids 23 ... Bxe3? 24.Qxe3

20.Kc2

After this the situation is subtly different from the lines in the note above, and the change is sufficient to give White a won game.

20 ... Rf8


![Chessboard](image_url)

21.Bf7+!!
The purpose of this sacrificial check is to clear the e-file.

21 ... Kd7

If 21 ... Rxf7 then 22.Bxc5 wins because, unlike variation (i) in the note to Black’s nineteenth move above, 22 ... Rxf3 is not check, so White plays 23.Rxe5+ and finishes a rook ahead.

22.Qxb7+

Other moves also win but this is the most convincing.

22 ... Qc7

Or 22 ... Kd6 23.Rad1+ wins.

23.Be6+

After 23 ... Kd6 24.Rad1+ Bd4+ 25.Qxc7+ Kxc7 26.Bxd4, White is a piece ahead with a straightforward victory.

Black resigns.

1956

Podgorny, E – Stulik, V
Czechoslovakia
King’s Gambit (C35)

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 Be7

This line of the King’s Gambit is known as the Cunningham Defence, the original idea of which was to cause trouble with the bishop coming to h4 with an awkward check.

4.Bc4
A good response – White is not scared of 4 ... Bh4+ 5.Kf1 with a large lead in development.

**4 ... Nf6 5.Nc3**

5.e5 has a better reputation and leads to interesting play after 5 ... Ng4 6.0-0. The drawback of the text move is that Black now has a tactical counter at his disposal.

5 ... Nxe4!

If now 6.Nxe4 Black responds with 6 ... d5, forking the knight and bishop; after 7.Bxd5 (or 7.Bd3 dxe4 8.Bxe4 f5 9.Bd3 Qd6 with the advantage) 7 ... Qxd5 8.d3 Bf5 Black has a fine game.

6.Ne5!
White must take some positive action, since 6.0-0?! gets nowhere after 6 ... Nf6, followed by 7 ... d5. The main alternative is the desperado 6.Bxf7+!? which looks like it seriously disrupts the black position. However, after 6 ... Kxf7 7.Ne5+ (Black has the edge after 7.Nxe4 Nc6 8.d4 d5) 7 ... Kg8 (only not 7 ... Ke6? trying to keep the piece, since 8.Qg4+ Kxe5 9.d4+! and now 9 ... Kd6 10.Qxf4+ picks off the knight with a winning attack, whilst 9 ... Kxd4 is answered by 10.Be3+! Kxe3 11.0-0-0! and mate follows) 8.Nxe4 (or 8.Qh5 Nd6) 8 ... Bh4+ 9.g3 Qe7! 10.d4 d6 Black is on top.

6 ... Nd6

There are other fascinating variations at this juncture.

(i) 6 ... d5 7.Bxd5 Nxc3 8.Bxf7+ (not 8.dxc3 because 8 ... Bh4+! 9.g3 fxg3! 10.Bxf7+ Kf8 11.Qxd8+ Bxd8 12.hxg3 Bf6! gives him a winning advantage) 8 ... Kf8 9.bxc3 Bd6! (better than 9 ... Nc6 10.Nxc6 bxc6 11.Bc4 Bh4+ 12.Kf1 and White is fine). Now 10.Qe2? allows 10 ... Qe7 11.d4 Bxe5 and Black wins, but 10.0-0!? is very interesting since after 10 ... Bxe5 11.Ba3+ White can generate a worrying attack. For example, 11 ... Kxf7 12.Qh5+ g6 (Black might also be able to survive with 12 ... Kf6 but it is less clear – for
g5! 14.g3 Re8! and Black should be able to stop the attack. Instead of 11 ...
Kxf7 Black could also play 11 ... Bd6 12.Rxf4 Nd7! followed by 13 ... Nf6
and again he is fine.

(ii) 6 ... Ng5 has also been seen in this position, and then 7.d4 is probably the
best continuation but after 7 ... d6 neither 8.Nd3 nor 8.Nf3 gives White
equality.

(iii) The most complex line is 6 ... Bh4+!? 7.g3 fxg3 8.Bxf7+ (another line is
8.0-0!? which might lead to a draw after 8 ... gxh2+ 9.Kxh2 Qg5 10.Nxf7
Qg3+ 11.Kh1 Qh3+, etc) 8 ... Kf8 9.0-0 gxh2+ 10.Kxh2 Qg5! (much better
than 10 ... Bg3+? 11.Kg2 Qh4 12.Nf3! winning, as played by a young Paul
Keres in a 1932 correspondence game). White is now faced with the twin
threats of 11 ... Qxe5+ and 11 ... Qg3+ 12.Kh1 Nf2+, and if 11.Ng4 then 11 ...
Nf6; then since 12.Nxf6 gxf6 is advantageous for Black, White should

7.Bb3

Preserving the two bishops.

7 ... Bh4+

Rather than continue passively with 7 ... 0-0 or 7 ... Nc6, Black decides to
cause maximum disruption.

8.g3!?

The simpler course is 8.Kf1, but the text move is an excellent practical choice
that sacrifices additional material – White is already two pawns down – in
return for a large advantage in development.

8 ... fxg3 9.0-0

The pressure on f7 mounts.

9 ... gxh2+ 10.Kh1
A standard tactic in such situations is to tuck the king behind the pawn like this, thus obtaining a certain degree of shelter.

10 ... Bf6

Blocking the vital f-file, giving Black a moment’s breathing space. 10 ... 0-0 is likely to transpose into the game providing White avoids 11.Qh5? Qg5!, forking knight and queen; if White then tries to be clever with 12.Nxf7!, Black continues 12 ... Nxf7! (not 12 ... Qxh5? because 12.Nh6+ Kh8 13.Rxf8 is mate) 13.Bxf7+ Kh8 and the king is safe.

11.d4 b6!

With the open lines on the king’s side, Black must tread extremely carefully otherwise he will find himself mated. For example, if 11 ... 0-0 12.Qh5 Nc6? (12 ... b6! would transpose back to the game) then White simply plays 13.Rf3! and if 13 ... Nxd4 then 14.Rh3 h6 15.Bxh6! wins easily. With the text move Black correctly decides to make matters awkward for White along the diagonal.

12.Qh5 Bb7+

Usefully dislodging the king so that in some variations ... Bxe5 is with check. The disadvantage is that g1 is now available for the rook.
13.Kxh2 g6!?

Black has conceived an ingenious defensive idea that only fails because White finds a wonderful combination. With hindsight he might have preferred to castle, although this too enables White to mount a fierce attack against the king with 14.Ng4!.


(ii) The alternative is 14 ... Bxd4 but then 15.Bg5! is again very strong:


(b) If 15 ... Qc8 then 16.Bf6!! wins in beautiful fashion. For example, 16 ... gxf6 (or 16 ... Nc6 17.Bxd4 Nxd4 18.Nf6+! gxf6 19.Rg1+ Kh8 20.Qh6! Nf3+ 21.Kh3 Ng5+ 22.Rxg5! fxg5 23.Qf6+ and mates in a few moves) 17.Nxf6+ Bxf6 18.Rxf6 Qe8 19.Rg1+ Kh8 20.Rh6! Be4 21.Qg5 Bg6 22.Qf6+ Kg8 23.Rgxg6+ and mate next move.

14.Qh6
Black’s correct continuation is not at all obvious. For example, 14 ... Bxe5 15.dxe5 Nf5 loses to 16.Rxf5! gxf5 17.Bg5 Qe8 18.Qf6 and mate ensues. 14 ... Qe7 is a better try, but 15.Nxf7! Nxf7 16.Bxf7+ Qxf7 17.Bg5! gives White a strong attack. True, he might survive with 17 ... Be5+! (not 17 ... Bxg5? as 18.Rae1+ wins) 18.dxe5 Qe6, although after 19.Bf6 White has all the winning chances.

14 ... Bg7!

This is the idea. If now 15.Qxg7? Black continues with 15 ... Qh4+ 16.Kg1 Qg3 mate, and if 15.Qf4 Black simply castles and is safe.

15.Nxf7!!

A brilliant response which required careful calculation.

15 ... Bxh6

If 15 ... Qe7 then 16.Bg5! Bxh6 17.Bxe7 Nxf7 18.Rae1 Ne5 19.Bf6 wins, so Black has to accept the sacrifice.
16.Nxd6+ cxd6

Or 16 ... Ke7 17.Bxh6 with decisive threats: if 17 ... Kxd6 18.Bf4+ Kc6 (or 18 ... Ke7 19.Rae1+ and mates) 19.Bd5 mate.

17.Bf7+ Ke7

If the king goes to f8 then 18.Bxh6+ wins.

18.Bxh6

White had foreseen that in this position, despite being a knight for queen down, his attack must prevail. He threatens 19.Rae1+ and if 18 ... d5 then 19.Rae1+ Kd6 20.Bf4+ Kc6 21.Bxd5 mate, whilst if 18 ... Nc6 then 19.Nd5 is also mate. Black could try 18 ... Qc8, but White has a forced mate with 19.Nd5+! Bxd5 20.Bg5+ Kf8 21.Bxd5+ Kg7 22.Rf7+ Kg8 23.Re7+ Kf8 24.Rf1 mate, and if 18 ... Qc7 then 19.Bg5+ Kf8 20.Bd5+ Kg7 21.Rf7+ Kg8 22.Bh6 mates next move.

18 ... Qg8

Black desperately tries to give up his queen to deflect White from his attack, but to no avail.

19.Bxg8

If now 19 ... Rxg8, White concludes with 20.Bg5+ Ke8 21.Rae1+ Be4 22.Rxe4 mate.

Black resigns.

1957

Larsen, B – Teschner, R
Wageningen
Queen’s Gambit (D17)
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6

The Slav Defence, which includes some exceedingly dull variations but also some extremely exciting ones, depending mainly on how the players are feeling.

3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.a4

This is the best way to play for an advantage, since it prevents the ... b5 advance, one of the main points of the Slav.

5 ... Bf5 6.Nh4!?

An interesting alternative to the two main lines, 6.e3 and 6.Ne5.

6 ... Bc8

This retreat, which leaves d7 free for the knight, is generally regarded as safer than 6 ... Bg6 7.Nxg6 hxg6 8.e4 or 6 ... Bg4 7.h3 Bh5 8.g4 Bg6 9.Nxg6, but 6 ... Bd7!? 7.e4 e6 8.Nf3 Bb4 is an enterprising alternative.
7.e4

7.e3 is more restrained, though it allows Black to equalize by 7 ... e5 8.Bxc4 exd4 9.exd4 Be7.

7 ... e5! 8.Bxc4!?


8 ... exd4 9.e5!

Now the point of Larsen’s aggressive opening strategy is revealed. If now 9 ... dxc3 then White replies with 10.Bxf7+!.

9 ... dxc3!!

Fantastic imagination from Teschner, who has noticed that the specifics of the position allow him to fall into Larsen’s trap.
10. Bxf7+!?

Larsen must have thought that Teschner had blundered, since he continues with his intended plan. Perhaps he should have played instead 10. Qxd8+ Kxd8 11. exf6, although Black has a clear edge after 11 ... Bb4!.

10 ... Kxf7!!

Teschner refuses to protect his queen; the point of Black’s clever play will be shown in a couple of moves.

11. Qxd8 exb2

Now Black threatens both 12 ... bxa1Q and 12 ... Bb4+ winning the queen. But surely White can escape with a queen check?

12. Qc7+

This seems to do the trick, since after Black escapes from check White can play 13. Bxb2. Incidentally, if instead 12. e6+ Kxe6 13. Qxc8+ then 13 ... Nbd7 wins.

12 ... Ke6!!

The idea is revealed. If White now continues with 13. Bxb2, Black utilizes the controlling influence of his king and is able to trap the queen with 13 ... Na6. After 14. Qxc8+ Rxc8 15. exf6 gxf6 Black emerges a pawn ahead, whilst 14. Qa5 loses to 14 ... Bb4+ 15. Qxb4 Nxb4 with ... Nc2+ in the air.
13. Qxc8+

Larsen decides to keep his queen on the board, at the expense of allowing his adversary to promote to a new queen as early as the fourteenth move.

13 ... Nbd7! 14. Qxb7!?


14 ... bxa1Q 15. Qxc6+ Kf7

Having boldly accomplished its middlegame task, Teschner attempts to guide the king back to safety.

16. e6+ Kg8

And not 16 ... Ke7? 17. Nf5+! nor 16 ... Ke8 17. Qxa8+. 
17.0-0!

Correctly getting his king into safety. If 17.Qxa8? then 17 ... Qxc1+! 18.Ke2 Qc2+! (if 18 ... Qxh1? then 19.exd7! forces the promotion of the pawn because 19 ... Nxd7? 20.Qd5 is mate) 19.Ke3 Nb6! 20.Qd8 Nbd5+ wins the queen or forces mate. Similarly, 17.exd7 is unconvincing due to 17 ... Bb4+ 18.Kf1 Qd4! and the threat of mate means White has no time to capture the rook on a8, whilst the interesting try 17.e7 can be met by 17 ... Bxe7! 18.Qxa8+ Kf7 and if 19.Qxh8 then 19 ... Qxc1+ 20.Ke2 Qc2+ 21.Ke3 Bc5+ and mate follows.

17 ... Qe5

After the obvious 17 ... Nb6 White continues with 18.Qc7! and the threat of 19.Qf7 mate forces 18 ... Nfd7 19.exd7, and White is still in the game.

18.Qxa8 Qxe6

At the cost of returning some material, Black has managed to remove the dangerous e-pawn from the board. However, White will have two pawns for
a knight and, together with the passed a-pawn, this gives him chances to draw.

19. \textit{Qxa7 Qd5}

The other problem that faces Teschner is his lack of king’s side development. Therefore he now tries to unravel his pieces, although this takes time and permits Larsen to activate his own army.

20. \textit{Qc7 Kf7 21.Nf3 Bd6 22.Qc2}

Another idea is 22.Ng5+ Kg8 (or 22 ... Qxg5 23.Qxd6 and White is fine) 23.Qc8+, attempting to keep White bottled up. The advantage of Larsen’s move is that the useful Rd1 is now at his disposal.

22 ... h6

Prevents a check on g5 but weakens the white squares around the king. If instead 22 ... Re8 then 23.Rd1, followed by a check on the a2–b8 diagonal, is rather awkward to meet.

23. \textit{Nh4!}

Immediately exploiting the weakness created. It is instructive to observe how Larsen subtly probes the black position for vulnerable points, rather than pursuing the obvious strategy of advancing the a-pawn.

23 ... \textit{Qe4 24.Qa2+}

Larsen continues with the plan of disrupting his adversary’s coordination.
Teschner’s problem is that his exposed king does not allow him to exploit his material advantage in the middlegame, whilst were he to exchange pieces then White’s passed a-pawn would give him good chances of holding the game. Nonetheless, the latter course is likely to be the best chance of securing victory.

24 ... Ke7

If 24 ... Nd5 then 25.Rd1! N7f6 26.Nf3 keeps up the pressure.

25.Nf3

An interesting alternative idea here is 25.Ba3!, since 25 ... Qxh4?! can be answered by 26.Re1+ Ne4 (else the bishop is lost and White is doing well) 27.g3 Qg4 28.Qd5!, which regains the piece and gives White the initiative. Black does better with 25 ... Bxa3, although he has very few winning chances after 26.Qxa3+ followed by 27.Nf3.

25 ... Ne5
Teschner clearly believes that he has better chances with fewer minor pieces on the board.

26.Nxe5 Qxe5 27.g3

Preventing the mate on h2.

27 ... Qd5

Again offering an exchange, which Larsen refuses.

28.Qc2 Kf7

To protect the g6 square from an invasion by the white queen.

29.Rd1 Rc8

So that Black would have an endgame advantage after 30.Rxd5? Rxc2 31.Rxd6 Rxc1+.

30.Qe2 Qe6

Still trying to get the queens off, but Larsen does not oblige.

31.Qf3 Rc2

He tries to generate some activity by seizing the seventh rank. The drawback is that his own second rank is also weakened.

32.Be3

The bishop is finally developed on move thirty-two.

32 ... Ra2 33.Qb7+ Be7 34.Bc5!

The pawn on a4 is indirectly defended, for if 34 ... Rxa4? then 35.Bxe7 Qxe7 36.Qb3+ wins the rook.

34 ... Re2 35.a5
White has made all the progress during the last few moves and his a-pawn looks ever more menacing as it continues its advance.

35 ... Qc4

36.Be3?

Larsen leaves the a-pawn undefended. The alternative is 36.Bb6, when the queen and bishop would be rather out of the game but the pawn would be safe.

36 ... Qa4!

Forking the pawn and the rook. Has Teschner won the pawn and with it the game?

37.Rd4 Qxa5

He takes his chance and grabs the pawn.
38. Qb3+

Larsen’s idea is to force perpetual check, because if now 38 ... Kg6? then 39. Qd3+ wins the rook.

38 ... Ke8?

Black can avoid the draw by 38 ... Kf8! 39. Qb8+ Ne8 40. Rf4+ (if 40. Rd7 then 40 ... Re1+ 41. Kg2 Qa6! with 42 ... Qf1+ to follow is strong) 40 ... Bf6. In this position White can cause some discomfort for his opponent by 41. Qb3; perhaps Teschner was nervous about this but there are several ways of avoiding danger and ultimately his material advantage should prevail.

39. Qb8+ Kf7

Forced, as 39 ... Bd8 loses to 40. Rxd8+! Qxd8 41. Qb5+ and picks off the rook.

40. Qb3+ Ke8?

Teschner makes the same decision as on move thirty-eight and thus permits perpetual check.

41. Qb8+ Kf7 42. Qb3+

It is rather a shame that Teschner did not go for the win at the end of the game, since his magnificent conception in the opening deserved more.

½–½

1958

Tal, M – Panno, O
Portoroz
Ruy López (C92)

Though an extremely famous game, this battle royal is here because it meets
all the author’s criteria for inclusion.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7

Another Closed Ruy López (for example, see also our 1909 game).

6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3

This is of course one of the most frequently encountered positions in chess at the highest level.

9 ... Nd7!?

The main alternatives are Smyslov’s 9 ... h6, Breyer’s 9 ... Nb8, Zaitsev’s 9 ... Bb7 or Chigorin’s 9 ... Na5.

10.d4 Nb6

The original idea behind 9 ... Nd7 was to continue with 10 ... Bf6, overprotecting the king’s pawn, but this allows 11.a4!. The interpretation chosen by Panno – an idea of the Bulgarian master Minev – was relatively novel at the time, and players on the white side of the Ruy López had yet to uncover the easiest route to an advantage.

11.Be3

A slightly better option is 11.Nbd2 and then 11 ... Bf6 12.d5! or 11 ... exd4 12.cxd4 with a small plus.

11 ... exd4 12.cxd4 Na5

Black has tried 12 ... d5 here, but after 13.Nc3 dxe4 14.Nxe4 White has the edge.

13.Bc2 c5 14.e5!?
When this game was played, Tal was at the height of his powers and he invariably played the sharpest moves in positions like this. The advance of the pawn creates the type of wild position in which he excelled, but it does allow Black some counter-chances. Most players would prefer 14.Nc3 and indeed this was the continuation in the game between Gligoric and Olafsson in the following year. After 14 ... Nac4 15.Bc1 cxd4 16.Nxd4 Bf6! the position was balanced, White eventually winning an exciting struggle. Another option is 14.b3, which prevents the black knights from landing on c4.

14 ... dxe5!

Incredible as it may seem, Panno thought for an hour before making this move. The alternatives also lead to chaotic variations.

(i) 14 ... cxd4?! 15.Bxd4 with all guns blazing at the black king (for example if 15 ... Nc6 16.Bxh7+ and 17.Qc2+ wins).

(ii) 14 ... Nac4!? 15.exd6 Qxd6 (15 ... Nxe3 16.dxe7! or 15 ... Bxd6 16.Qd3 are both strong for White) 16.Bg5! with an excellent position; for example, if

15.Nxe5 Nbc4!

Panno’s strategy seems to be working – his counterplay on the queen’s side looks impressive.

16.Qd3!?

The obvious move was 16.Qh5, which might appear aggressive but peters out to a draw after 16 ... g6 17.Nxg6 hxg6 18.Bxg6 fxg6 19.Qxg6+ Kh8. Tal puts the queen on d3, plunging into deep complications. In fact, as will be seen, this move prompts a weakness on the king’s side before the bishop on c2 slides to b3 to challenge the knight. Now the tame 16 ... g6? permits 17.Bh6! and White would be in the driving seat again; Panno chooses a much more interesting move.

16 ... f5! 17.Bb3!

Despite the solidity of 16 ... f5, it does create a weakness down the long white diagonal, and Tal immediately attempts to exploit this. Tal would not have given much thought to a passive alternative such as 17.Nxc4, since after 17 ... bxc4 his d-pawn is chronically weak.

17 ... f4!?  

The other point to Panno’s active defence, chasing the bishop away and opening the f5 square for his own bishop. It is very double-edged, however, since the bishop on d2 attacks the knight on a5. Perhaps 17 ... Bf6 would have been a safe attempt to simplify the position in his favour, concentrating on the weak white pawn in the centre.

18.Bd2 Nxb3!

An excellent move, avoiding the obvious 18 ... Bf5? because of 19.Bxa5! with advantage.
19.Nc6!?

In the critical position Tal goes for broke. This move allows Panno the chance of picking up two knights and a rook for his queen, a technically superior material imbalance. However, when making this move, Tal appraised the position that occurs in a few moves, believing he would have attacking chances against the black king.

A much safer alternative was 19.Qxb3. Black could then adopt a number of plans.

(i) 19 ... Qd5! 20.Nxc4 bxc4 21.Nc3! (else after 21 ... Bb7 Black has the initiative) 21 ... Qxd4 with chances for both sides.

(ii) 19 ... Bf6!? 20.Nxc4 bxc4 21.Qxc4+ Kh8 and Black has compensation for the pawn sacrificed.

19 ... Nxa1! 20.Nxd8 Bf5!

20 ... Bxd8? will lose a piece when White rounds up the knight on a1.

A fascinating situation. This is the position that Tal played for when he entered into this variation with 19.Nc6. The tragicomic positioning of Black’s minor pieces in the corner of the board means that White has the chance to drum up a quick attack against the king, and in particular against the g7 square. If, however, Black can ride the storm and coordinate his pieces without losing too many pawns, then his material advantage will be easily enough for victory.

23 ... Rxd4?!

By capturing with the rook, Panno shows that his plan is to try to coordinate his pieces. Instead of this, there was the opportunity to create a dangerous passed pawn with 23 ... cxd4, the drawback being that White might have had sufficient time to create strong mating threats. For example, White could try 24.b3!? so that 24 ... d3? loses to 25.Qg4! g6 26.Qe6+ Kh8 29.Be5+ and 24 ... Bg6?! 25.bxc4 d3 26.Qg4 d2 27.Rd7 prevents the pawn queening.

However, Black could play 24 ... Nd6!, saving the knight and moving it to the defence of the king.
This line certainly looks interesting, but one can understand Panno trying to keep control of the position with 23 ... Rxd4, which is also strong for Black.

24.Qg4 Bg6!

Panno brings his bishop back into the game and defends g7.

25.Qe6+ Bf7!

Yet again Panno finds the best defence. Instead, the natural 25 ... Kh8? allows 26.Be5! Nxe5 27.Qxe5 Rg8 28.Qxc5! Nc2 29.Ra7! and White will obtain a pawn majority on both sides of the board.

26.Qf5!

A cunning move by Tal. Now most players would try 26 ... Bg6 but Tal has prepared 27.Rxg7+!! Kxg7 28.Bh6+! Kxh6 29.Qxf8+ Kg5 30.Qxc5+ and 31.Qxd4.

The combination is even deeper than this, however, since if Black first plays 26 ... Rd1+ 27.Kh2 and then 27 ... Bg6 (so that the rook is no longer captured on d4 by the queen), White again plays 28.Rxg7+!! Kxg7 29.Bh6+! Kxh6 30.Qxf8+ Kg5 and now 31.f4+! Kh5 32.g4+ Kh4 33.Qf6 mate.

26 ... Nc2!

Not only does Panno avoid the lines above, but he finds a nice idea, enabling his knight to re-enter the game. If 27.Qxc2? then 27 ... Rxf4 leaves Black in a commanding position.

27.b3

Black has defended very well and in this situation he has a number of attractive options, any of which looks at least worth a draw. However, Panno wants a win and his continuation is by far the most double-edged. The simplest alternative was 27 ... Rd1+ 28.Kh2 Nd2! 29.Bxd2 (not 29.Qxc2? Nf1+ followed by 30 ... Ne3+ winning the queen) 29 ... Rxd2 30.Qxc5 with equal chances.
27 ... Bg6!?

28.Rxg7+!!

The same combination as outlined above, but here it is that much more difficult because the rook on d4 is protected by the knight.

28 ... Kxg7 29.Bh6+! Kxh6 30.Qxf8+ Kg5 31.bxc4!!

This is the mark of Tal’s genius. He avoids the obvious 31.Qxc5+ in order that his queen can keep the king in a mating net.

31 ... bxc4?!

The more natural 31 ... Rxc4 gives away the d-file to White’s queen. Nevertheless, it looks a better choice.

32.g3!

Tal is a long way behind on material, but the exposed position of Black’s
king gives him good practical chances, particularly considering that Panno was running desperately short of time. There is a hidden threat to trap the bishop with 33.f4+ Kh5 34.f5! (but not 34.g4+ Kh4 35.Qh6+? Kg3! 36.Kf1 Re4! and 37 ... Re1 mate, which merely emphasizes the dangers to both sides in this unbalanced position).

32 ... Be4!

Avoiding the threat and intending 33 ... Rd1+ and 34 ... Rh1 mate.

33.h4+ Kg4!!

A brilliant move from Panno. The obvious continuation was 33 ... Kg6 but that would have succumbed to 34.f3! Bd3 35.h5+! Kg5! (not 35 ... Kxh5? because 36.Qf6! wins) 36.Qg7+ Kf5 37.Qxh7+ and wins.

34.Kh2!

Otherwise it is White who is mated.
34 ... Bf5!

White was threatening 35.Qf4+ Kh5 36.Qg5 mate and 35.f3+ Bxf3 36.Qc8+! Kh5 37.Qf5+ Kh6 38.Qg5 mate. It is a tribute to both players that they continually find the best moves in a delicate position whilst under severe time pressure.

35.Qf6!?

White had the option of winning the bishop by 35.f3+ Kxf3 36.Qxf5+ but Tal clearly felt that with the black king supporting the passed c-pawns, White would be struggling to draw.

35 ... h6 36.Qe5!

Yet again Tal plays a dual-purpose move, preventing the black king from settling on f3 (which it would have done after 36.Qxh6) and at the same time planning a mate after 36 ... Be4? 37.Qf4+ Kh5 38.Qf7+! Bg6 (or 38 ... Kg4 39.f3+! Bxf3 40.Qg6 mate) 39.Qf3+ Rg4 40.Kh3! and mate follows.

36 ... Re4! 37.Qg7+!? 

Tal could have tried 37.f3+ Kxf3 38.Qxf5+ Ke3 39.Qxc5+, but again he prefers a more complicated manoeuvre that picks off the knight instead of the bishop.

37 ... Kf3!

If 37 ... Kh5? then 38.f3! traps the king and wins after 38 ... Re2+ 39.Kg1 Re1+ 40.Kf2.

38.Qc3+ Ne3?

After the simple 38 ... Kxf2 39.Qxe2+ Re2!, Black can force a draw. Panno’s choice appears equally drawish after 39.fxe3? Rxe3, but Tal has a stunning continuation up his sleeve.
39.Kg1!!

Almost putting Black into zugzwang. Tal’s subtle point is that he has been able to improve the position of his king, but Black has no useful move.

39 ... Bg4 40.fxe3 h5!

Panno defends superbly and side-steps two devious pitfalls. If 40 ... Kxg3 then 41.Qe1+ Kh3 42.Qf2! wins. And if 40 ... Rxe3, which looks very strong, then 41.Qf6+! Ke2 42.Qf1+ Kd2 43.Qf4!, forking the rook and bishop. Now, on the other hand, Black looks to be consolidating his position.

41.Qe1 Rxe3?

Although an obvious capture, this move might be the decisive mistake because it allows Tal to capture the pawn on a6, giving him a passed pawn. The alternative was 41 ... Re6!, setting up a seemingly impregnable fortress, with a probable draw.

42.Qf1+
The game was adjourned at this point.

42 ... Ke4 43.Qxc4+ Kf3 44.Qf1+!

Ensuring the black king is out of position when White takes on a6.

44 ... Ke4 45.Qxa6 Kd4?

Black has better chances to hold the game if he grabs the pawn with 45 ... Rxg3+, but Panno wants to defend his c-pawn with his king. It quickly becomes clear that the a-pawn is the decisive factor in the ensuing ending.

46.Qd6+ Kc4 47.a4 Re1+ 48.Kf2 Re2+ 49.Kf1 Ra2

Black has apparently one last chance – but it is illusory.

50.Qa6+ Kd4 51.a5!

Still Tal finds little combinations to improve his position. Now 51 ... Be2+ 52.Qxe2 Rxe2 53.Kxe2 is a won king and pawn ending.
51 ... c4 52.Qb6+ Kd5

If 52 ... Kd3 then 53.Qb1+ picks off the rook.

53.a6 Ra1+ 54.Kf2 c3 55.a7 c2 56.Qb3+ Kd6 57.Qd3+!

Wherever the king moves to, White wins. For example, if now 57 ... Ke6 then 58.Qe4+ Kf6 59.Qd4+ wins the rook, and if instead 58 ... Kf7 then 59.Qxc2 wins easily, because 59 ... Rxa7 is answered by 60.Qh7+. A brilliant game by both sides, which understandably won a special prize for being the most interesting game of the tournament.

Black resigns.

1959

Jensen, P – Nilsen, K
Norway
Queen’s Gambit (D45)

In this Semi-Slav Defence Black usually plays the bishop to the more active square d6, but there is of course nothing really wrong with its location on e7.

7.Bd3 0-0 8.0-0 h6?!

Not at all in accordance with the correct strategy in this type of opening. More in keeping with the requirements of the position was 8 ... dxc4 9.Bxc4 b5.

9.Qc2

The immediate 9.e4 advance is also possible.

9 ... b6

Still Black pursues his painfully slow plan, which is highly dangerous in this opening. He will have to tread extremely carefully when the game is opened up since he is behind in development and is lacking in piece activity.

10.e4!
The thematic advance keeps the initiative.

10 ... dxe4 11.Nxe4 Bb7 12.Ng3!

Correctly avoiding the exchange of pieces. Black might have been contemplating the sort of manoeuvre that Mark Dvoretsky recommends in his famous instruction manuals – that is 12 ... Nxe4! 13.Bxe4 Nf6 – which eases his game somewhat.

12 ... Rc8

Obviously preparing to strike at the centre with 13 ... c5, but White sees it coming and is ready to react.

13.Rfe1 c5

Black reckons that after 14.dxc5 Nxc5 he will have a sound position.

14.d5!!
Not at all obvious, since it entails the genuine sacrifice of a key central pawn.

14 ... exd5 15.Nf5!

This is the real point of the previous move. The knight attacks the bishop on e7 and the pawns on g7 and h6.

15 ... Re8

Forced.

16.Bxh6!!

A stunning complementary sacrifice, which if accepted might lead to the following lovely variation: 16 ... gxh6+ 17.Nxh6+ Kf8 18.Nxf7!! Kxf7? 19.Ng5+ and 20.Ne6 wins. Black can survive if he plays 18 ... Qc7, although he clearly has a wretched position after 19.N7g5.

16 ... dxc4

Black hopes to create a diversion by taking this pawn and attacking the bishop.

17.Bxc4!

The bishop on h6 still cannot be captured. After 17 ... gxh6 18.Nxh6+ Kg7 the simple 19.Bxf7, with 20.Qg6+ looming, wins rather easily.

17 ... Be4

Perhaps Black should have attempted to reduce the opposing army with 17 ... Bxf3. White has several good replies, the best of which is 18.Nxg7!, when 18 ... Bd5 loses to 19.Bxd5 Nxd5 20.Ne6!! and 18 ... Be4 is also inadequate because of the response 19.Rxe4 Nxe4 20.Qxe4 Nf6 (or 20 ... Rf8 21.Ne6! winning) and now 21.Qg6! wins. After the text move, the brutal 18.Rxe4 Nxe4 19.Qxe4 will give White a comfortable victory, but Jensen finds something altogether more impressive.
18.Ng5!!

A beautiful move to be able to play at the board, the point of which is 18 ... Bxc2 19.Bxf7+ Kf8 (19 ... Kh8 is met in the same way) 20.Bxg7 mate, which deserves a diagram.
18 ... gxh6


19.Bxf7+


19 ... Kf8

On 19 ... Kh8 20.Nxe4 is the simplest.

20.Ne6+

Winning the queen and the game.
20 ... Kxf7 21.Nxd8+ Bxd8

It makes little difference that Black misses the slightly better 21 ... Rcxsd8 since 22.Nxe4 gives White an easy victory.

22.Nd6+

Forking everything; so Black concedes.

Black resigns.
1960

Spassky, B – Foguelman, A
Mar del Plata
Caro-Kann Defence (B18)

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3

As one might expect given his natural attacking style, Spassky adopts the most classical method of meeting Black’s Caro-Kann Defence.

3 ... dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6

Black has to be somewhat careful in this variation, otherwise his bishop can become exposed to a rapid attack by White’s pawns.

6.h4

When Spassky met the same opponent four years later at the Amsterdam Interzonal, he preferred the immediate development of the bishop with 6.Bc4. In that game, too, he quickly obtained a strong attack and won in short time.

6 ... h6

6 ... h5 has also been played but the text move is most common.

7.N1e2

One of several useful schemes of development available to White, most of which aim for rapid piece action.

7 ... Nf6 8.Nf4

A more aggressive post than f3.

8 ... Bh7
Black cannot allow his bishop to be exchanged on g6.

9.Bc4

9 ... e5?!

Foguelman stakes a claim for originality, but the move is rather loosening. The idea is demonstrated in the variation 10.dxe5 Qxd1+ (10 ... Qa5+ is also interesting) 11.Kxd1 Ng4 and if 12.Nh3 Nxe5 13.Re1 then 13 ... Nbd7 14.f4 0-0-0! gives Black the advantage. Spassky finds a better and more active continuation, and for this reason 9 ... e6 and 9 ... Na6 are superior to 9 ... e5.

10.Qe2!

Ignoring the attack on the d-pawn in order to pin the e-pawn and seize the advantage.

10 ... Qxd4

Or 10 ... e4 11.Be3 with a fine game. For example, 11 ... Nbd7 12.0-0-0 Qc7

11. 0-0

White, who is ready to seize the open d-file at an appropriate moment, has clearly obtained fine compensation for his pawn.

11 ... b5?!

Black can hardly afford to waste more time with this loosening manoeuvre; 11 ... Be7 was slightly better, though 12. Rd1 would then harass the queen.

12. Bb3 Bc5?!

Another dubious choice by Foguelman, although he clearly would not relish his position after the passive 12 ... Be7. For example, 13. Rd1 Qc5 14. Be3 Qb4 15. c3 Qa5 16. Nfh5 and White has a fine game.

13. Be3!

Black’s bishop sortie was designed to meet 13. Rd1 with 13 ... Qxf2+ 14. Qxf2 Bxf2+ 15. Kxf2 exf4. Spassky is not so obliging and decides to keep the queens on the board.

13 ... Qd6 14. Rd1 Qe7 15. Bxc5

Spassky trades bishops, which has the affect of highlighting his lead in development.

15 ... Qxc5 16. Nfh5!

Now castling would be met by 17. Nxf6+ gxf6 18. Qd2! and Black’s king is dangerously vulnerable.

16 ... Nhx5 17. Nhx5 0-0 18. Qg4!

Spassky had a fascinating combination at his disposal which would have regained the pawn. After 18. Rd5!? cxd5 19. Qxe5 the threat of mate forces 19
... f6 and then 20.Qxd5+ Qxd5 21.Bxd5+ Kh8 22.Bxa8 Bxc2 leaves material level. However, Spassky’s attack would more or less have dissipated so his chosen continuation is far better.

18 ... g6

Forced.

19.Rd3!

The rook can now join the attack along the third rank.

19 ... a5

Intending 20 ... a4 trapping the bishop.

20.Rfd1!!

Ever alert, Spassky realizes that after 20 ... a4 he can play 21.Bxf7+! Kxf7 (or 21 ... Rxf7 22.Rd8+ Rf8 23.Qe6+ Kh8 24.Qf6+ Kg8 25.Qg7 mate) and now
victory can be secured by either:

(i) 22.Rd7+ Kg8 (or 22 ... Nxd7 23.Rxd7+ Kg8 24.Rg7+ Kh8 25.Rxh7+! Kxh7 26.Qd7+ mates) 23.Qe6+ Kh8 24.Rf7! and the threat of 25.Qf6+ wins; or

(ii) 22.Rf3+ Ke7 (or 22 ... Kg8 23.Qe6+ Kh8 24.Rxf8+ Qxf8 25.Qxe5+ Kg8 26.Rd8!! gxh5 27.Qg3+ and wins) 23.Rxf8 Kxf8 24.Qf3+! Ke8 25.Qf6!, etc.

20 ... Ra7 21.Rd6!

A powerful move, intending 22.Rxg6+, but possibly even stronger is 22.Rd8! when Black is almost helpless. For example, if 22 ... a4 then 23.R1d6! (threatening 24.Rxf8+ Kxf8 25.Qc8+, as well as 24.Rxg6+) forces Black to give up his queen with 23 ... Qxd6.

21 ... Kh8 22.Nf6! a4 23.Nxh7!

The point of White’s play is that 23 ... Kxh7 loses to 24.Bxf7!.

23 ... axb3

Black must have thought that the dangerous position of this pawn would give him time to recapture the knight.

24.Nxf8!
Spassky has calculated the tactics to perfection, since if now 24 ... bxa2 then 25.Nxg6+! fxg6 26.Qxg6!! Qxd6! 27.Rxd6 a1Q+ 28.Kh2 Qa5 29.Qxh6+ mates. He also had to consider 24 ... Qxd6!? 25.Rxd6 bxc2 26.Nxg6+! fxg6 27.Qc8+! (not 27.Qxg6? c1Q+ 28.Kh2 Qf4+) 27 ... Kg7 28.Rxc6 and wins, as well as the game continuation.


24 ... bxc2 25.Nxg6+! fxg6

King moves lead to a quick mate.

26.Rd8+ Kg7

This allows a spectacular finish, but after 26 ... Kh7 27.Rc1 the win is in no doubt.

27.Rg8+!!

This lovely sacrificial finish wins against any defence.
27 ... Kxg8 28.Qxg6+ Rg7
Or 28 ... Kf8 29.Qf6+! Kg8 30.Rd8+ Kh7 31.Rh8 mate.

29.Rd8+ Qf8 30.Rxf8+ Kxf8 31.Qxc2 Kg8 32.Qc5
Black resigns.

1961

Hort, V – Keres, P
Oberhausen
Ruy López (C71)

In this variation of the Ruy López, known as the Steinitz Defence Deferred, 5.d4 is an innocuous continuation. More to the point is 5.0-0 or 5.Bxc6. Perhaps the young Vlastimil Hort was confused since in the Steinitz Defence proper, after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb4 d6, White can indeed play 4.d4! with advantage.

A more dynamic idea is 8.c3!?, sacrificing a pawn for some initiative.

8 ... Rb8 9.Bc6+ Bd7 10.Bxd7+ Qxd7 11.Qxd4
It would not be unfair to say that White’s opening play has been rather insipid, with the result that his Spanish bishop has been exchanged and the advantage of the first move has dissipated. Moreover, if he is not careful his opponent’s queen’s side pawn majority might gather unstoppable momentum.
11 ... Nf6 12.0-0 Be7

Black quietly completes his development.

13.Nc3 0-0 14.a4

The advance of the a-pawn is frequently a useful possibility in the Ruy López.

14 ... Rfe8

With this move Keres begins to mount some pressure against the e-pawn.

15.Qd3

Intensifying the threat to the pawn on b5.

15 ... b4 16.Nd5 a5?!

This allows White to exchange knight for bishop. The immediate 16 ... Nxd5!
was better.

17.b3?

White should take the opportunity to remove the dark-squared bishop with 17.Nxe7+, when a draw is the most probable outcome.

17 ... Nxd5!

Hort is not given a second chance.

18.exd5 Bf6!

Occupying an excellent square and controlling the a1–h8 diagonal.

19.Rb1 c5!?

A brave move, as the d-pawn looks weak after 20.dxc6 Qxc6. Keres reckons that the attack he would get on the pawn on c2, his strong bishop and the open lines would more than compensate for that weakness. Hort concurs, and prefers to develop his bishop.
20.Bf4 Be5!?

Another interesting choice from Keres. Although his bishop is beautifully placed on the long diagonal, it is technically a bad bishop, operating on the same colour squares as his fixed pawns. Therefore, he decides to offer it for exchange. After 21.Bxe5 Rxe5 Black would have a sound position, but the reduction in material would make a win very difficult.

21.Be3?!

There seems little merit in retaining this piece, so 21.Bxe5 was better.

21 ... Rbc8!

With the idea of 22 ... c4! 23.bxc4 Qxa4 with considerable pressure on the queen’s side.

22.Qc4 Qf5!

By deserting the a-pawn, Black tempts White into overreaching himself.
23.\textit{Qb5}?

And Hort falls for it. White’s position is just not strong enough for such pawn-hunting to be successful. Instead, he should try to activate his rooks by 23.\textit{Rfe1} or 23.\textit{Rbd1}.

\textit{23 \ldots Qxc2 24.Qxa5 f5!}

It is now apparent that White’s tactics are misguided. Black threatens to win the bishop with 25 \ldots f4, forcing White to concede a crucial weakness.

\textbf{25.f3 Bb2!?}

Keres decides to win the b-pawn, giving him two connected, protected passed pawns and, seemingly, an easy win. However, White has some clever resources and the simpler plans of 25 \ldots Bxh2+ followed by 26 \ldots Rxe3, and 25 \ldots Qd3 26.Bf2 Qxd5 were more clear-cut routes to victory.

\textit{26.Qa6!}
This must have been the move that Keres did not consider. Hort indirectly defends his bishop by attacking the rook on c8.

26 ... Qxb3 27.Bf2 c4!

This looks very strong, as 28.Qxd6? loses to 28 ... c3, but Hort has an ingenious defence.

28.Qb7!!

The hidden point to this move is that if now 28 ... c3?, White actually wins with 29.Bd4! because of the mate on g7.

28 ... Rb8?!

This drives the queen to a7 but this turns out to be a better square than b7, since Black must now be on the look-out for the tactic 30.Rxb2! Qxb2 31.Bd4!.

29.Qa7 Ra8?!

Keres therefore decides to put his rooks on a8 and b8, but he misses the superior 29 ... Qc2!, when White’s 30.Rxb2 fails to 30 ... Qxb2 31.Bd4 Rb7!! 32.Qxb7 Qxd4+ 33.Kh1 Qf2!! 34.Rg1 b3 and wins.

30.Qb7 Reb8 31.Qd7 Qc2 32.Qxd6

Hort grabs the pawn, relying on his own passed pawn against Black’s two.

32 ... b3 33.Qe6+ Kh8 34.d6 Bf6!

This move, placing the bishop in a good defensive position, prepares the sacrifice that follows.

35.Rfc1

A natural move that looks like winning the pawn on c4.
35 ... Qxc1+!!

A very well-judged queen sacrifice. This move is a true sacrifice, since the implications are impossible to calculate comprehensively. The presence of the white d-pawn is a complicating factor in the equation.

36.Rxc1 b2 37.Rb1 c3 38.Qe2!!

Superb defending by Hort. This move is far better than the tempting 38.Qxf5, since after 38 ... Rxa4 White has no control over the e-file (hence 39.d7 is useless) and Black therefore wins with 39 ... Ra1.

38 ... Rxa4 39.d7 h6?

In terrible time pressure, Keres naturally wishes to make an escape square for his king, but this move is an inaccuracy. The problem-like move 39 ... Rg8!! wins, since after 40.Qe8 Ra1!, the bishop defends the d8 square.

40.Qe8+ Kh7 41.d8Q?
Here Hort misses a subtle defensive resource. The best line is a beautiful echo of Keres’ missed win: 41.Qxb!! c2! (better than 41 ... Ra1 42.Rf1! c2 43.Qxb2!) 42.Qxb2!! Bxb2 43.Rf1!! (compare this to 39 ... Rg8!! in the previous note) and after 43 ... Ra8! 44.Bb6 Ra1 45.d8Q Rxf1+ 46.Kxf1 c1Q+ 47.Kf2, White has chances to survive.

41 ... Rxd8 42.Qxa4 Rd2!!

Black has only two pawns for the queen, but White cannot prevent the c-pawn from advancing with deadly effect. The best attempt 43.Qb5 loses to 43 ... c2! 44.Qf1 Rd5!!, which wins in all variations:

(i) 45.Re1 Bc3.

(ii) 45.Be3 cxb1Q 46.Qxb1 Ra5 47.Kf2 Kg8 48.Qc2 Ra1 49.Qc8+ Kf7, etc.

(iii) 45.g3 cxb1Q 46.Qxb1 g6! (defending f5) 47.Kg2Bg7, etc.

43.Rxb2 cxb2 44.Qb3 Rd8!
Again the agility of the rook to swing round to a8 and a1 is decisive.

45.Qc2 Rb8 46.Qb1

On 46.Qxf5+ Kg8 47.Qb1 Ra8 wins.

46 ... g6! 47.g4 Ra8 48.Kg2 Ra1 49.Qc2 b1Q 50.Qc7+ Bg7 51.Bd4 Qf1+! 52.Kg3 f4+! 53.Kxf4 Qc1+!

Three accurate moves by Keres force the exchange of queens and win the game.

White resigns.

1962

Nezhmetdinov, R – Chernikov, O
Rostov-on-Don
Sicilian Defence (B35)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6

This is the Accelerated Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence. In the early years of the century this move was considered dubious because White can now, by playing 5.c4, create the famous Maróczy Bind. This features pawns on c4 and e4, preventing Black’s thematic counterplay ... d5. At one time, this was thought to give White a large positional advantage; nowadays the more level evaluation of such positions reflects the fact that Black can generate good play against the white pawn centre.

5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 0-0

In this variation Black delays moving the d-pawn so that at the right moment it can advance two squares to d5.

8.Bb3 Ng4

In the 1958-59 US Championship Reshevsky, Black against Bobby Fischer,

9.Qxg4 Nxd4 10.Qh4!?

Theory gives 10.Qd1 as normal and reckons White to have a small advantage. Nezhmetdinov, who was one of the Soviet Union’s most original players, decides to try an amazing twist in a line previously thought to lead to rather dull play.

10 ... Qa5!

Black’s active reply, focusing on the weak c3 square, threatens 11 ... Nxb3 followed by 12 ... Bxc3+.

11.0-0 Bf6

In this position, the drawing line is 12.Qh6 Bg7 13.Qh4 Bf6, etc. White cannot play 12.Qg3 or 12.Qf4 because of 12 ... Qxc3! and 13 ... Ne2+. To
avoid this, in 1961 Fischer tried 12.Qg4 in another game against Reshevsky, reaching an equal position after 12 ... d6 13.Qd1 Nc6 14.Qd3. Nezhmetdinov was a master who loved to challenge conventional wisdom, and he uncorks a remarkable conception.

12.Qxf6!!

This is the thunderbolt lurking in the depths of such a “dull” position. Nezhmetdinov’s sacrifice of queen for just bishop and knight was played after forty-five minutes’ thought. If now 12 ... Nxb3 13.axb3 Qxa1! then 14.Qxe7!! and Black is unable to meet the threat to his rook on f8. For example, if 14 ... Qa5 15.Bh6 Qd8 then 16.Nd5!! wins.

12 ... Ne2+

Black avoids the line above, but Nezhmetdinov had clearly considered this response.

13.Nxe2 exf6

If we take stock of the position after White’s spectacular sacrifice, it is apparent that he has compensation in the form of (i) a large lead in development; (ii) control over the dark squares; (iii) active minor pieces and in particular the two bishops; and (iv) no weaknesses in his own position compared with several in Black’s.

14.Nc3 Re8

Black decides to defend the very weak f6 square laterally with this rook. It is hard to suggest a better alternative. If he attempts to break free with 14 ... d5!? then White obtains a strong attack. Play might continue 15.Nxd5 Be6 16.Nxf6+ Kg7 17.Bd4 with an unclear situation. In fact, Nezhmetdinov himself was planning 15.Bd4!? with wild complications.

15.Nd5!

During the next few moves White’s attack develops with a beautiful harmony. There seems little active counterplay available to Black, so he sits
and waits for the crisis to occur.

15 ... Re6 16.Bd4

The doubled f-pawns are very weak, but it is the absence of black pawns on the c and e-files that makes his life really difficult. The knight on d5 and the bishop on d4 can never be challenged by black pawns.

16 ... Kg7 17.Rad1

With classical style, White brings all his pieces into play. As Blackburne used to say, never commence your final attack until your queen’s rook is in play.

17 ... d6 18.Rd3 Bd7!

Black is really tied up, but sees that a glimmer of play might be achieved on the a6–f1 diagonal.

19.Rf3
Mounting pressure on f6. Once this pawn falls, as it inevitably will, it looks as though Black’s game will disintegrate.

19 ... Bb5 20.Bc3 Qd8

Black’s queen is short of decent squares; if 20 ... Qa6 then 21.Nc7 ensues.

21.Nxf6! Be2!

If instead 21 ... Bxf1 then 22.Ng4+! Kg8 23.Bxe6! fxe6 24.Nh6 is checkmate.

22.Nxh7+!!

Already heavily behind on material, White throws in his knight for good measure. If Black takes the piece, he loses in dramatic fashion: 22 ... Kxh7 23.Rxf7+ Kh6 (since 23 ... Kg8 24.Bxe6 wins) 24.Bxe6 Bxf1 25.Bd2+! (better than 25.Bg7+ Kh5 26.Kxf1 Qg8! when the win is not clear) 25 ... g5 26.Bf5!, tying Black up and forcing 26 ... Qh8 (26 ... Qg8? 27.Rf6+ Kh5 28.g4+ Kh4 29.Rh6 mate).
In this fascinating position, White must tread carefully, otherwise Black escapes from the stranglehold. The key move is 27.h4!! when Black loses if he tries 27 ... Rg8 to 28.hxg5+ Kh5 29.Kxf1! Rg7 (to prevent 30.Rh7+) 30.Bc3!. Therefore he must play 27 ... Be2! 28.Bxg5+! Kh5 29.f3! Bxf3 30.gxf3 Qd4+ (else 31.Rh7+ and wins) 31.Kg2 Rh8 but now the sting at the tail-end of the combination, 32.Rf6!! threatens mate thus winning the queen with a won ending.

22 ... Kg8! 23.Rh3!

Simply threatening to withdraw the knight to g5 with crushing effect. Control of the long black diagonal is White’s main plus, which is appropriate, since the queen gave herself up for the dark-squared bishop on move twelve.

23 ... Re5!

So Black prevents White’s plan by blocking the diagonal.

24.f4
And White tries to drive the rook away.

24 ... Bxf1?

After defending excellently, Black misses his first chance. He should have considered 24 ... Rh5!! 25.Nf6+ Kf8 26.Nxh5 Qb6+! 27.Rf2 gxh5! and it is White who is suddenly rather tied up, despite regaining material equality. There would be chances on both sides.

25.Kxf1 Re8?

Again Black misses 25 ... Rh5!! 26.Nf6+ Kf8 27.Nxh5 gxh5 28.Rxh5 Ke7 (else 29.Rh8+ wins) 29.Rf5! Qb6 30.Rxf7+ Ke8 and the position is very unclear. This time Black has the material advantage (although White’s pawns are strong) but has an exposed and uncoordinated position. Perhaps White has winning chances, but he would have to find the right plan.

26.Bd4?

White should simply take the rook as 26.fxe5! Rxc3? 27.bxc3 leaves him
with a clear advantage, and if 26 ... dxe5 then 27.Bd5 with good winning chances. Instead, he tries to preserve the dark-squared bishop.

26 ... b5?

The idea behind this strange pawn push is to continue ... Rc4 followed by ... Rxd4. But for the third and final time, Black should try 26 ... Rh5! 27.Nf6+ (27.Ng5? Rc7!) 27 ... Kf8 28.Nxh5 gxh5 29.Rxh5 Ke7 and again he has some counter-chances.

27.Ng5!

Finally White is able to play this deadly retreat.

27 ... Rc7

 Apparently defending f7, but allowing this exciting game to end with an elegant combination.


Forking everything.
30 ... Kh7 31.Nxd8 Rxe4 32.Nc6 Rxf4+ 33.Ke2

And White has a clearly winning endgame.

Black resigns.

1963

Cobo Arteaga, E – Ivkov, B
Havana
French Defence (C18)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 Ne7

Slightly less common than the normal 4 ... c5 but the game quickly transposes back to the main lines.

5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.Qg4
In this complex but well-known line of the Winawer Variation, White grabs a couple of pawns with his queen and then attempts to consolidate before Black breaks through in the centre.

7 ... Qc7 8.Qxg7 Rg8 9.Qh7 cxd4 10.Ne2

10.Kd1 and 10.Qd3 are also playable, but this is the main line.

10 ... Nbc6 11.f4 dxc3 12.Qd3 Bd7

White now has several possible continuations, such as 13.Rb1, 13.Nxc3, 13.Qxc3, 13.h4, 13.Ng3 or the move chosen.

13.Be3

13 ... Nf5

Here 13 ... Na5!? and 13 ... d4!? are both very interesting alternatives.

14.Bf2
Perhaps 14.Nd4 is more accurate, challenging the knight on f5 and preventing the d-pawn from advancing.

14 ... d4!?

14 ... 0-0-0 is a reasonable option, but the text move is the most ambitious attempt for the initiative.

15.Ng3?!

The point of Black’s belligerent pawn advance is that after 15.Nxd4 Ncxd4 16.Bxd4, he can continue either with 16 ... Nxd4 17.Qxd4 a6 followed by 18 ... 0-0-0, or with 16 ... 0-0-0 immediately, and in both cases he has a strong initiative in return for the pawn deficit. This might, however, have been a better choice than the text move, which hands Black the initiative and with material remaining level.

15 ... 0-0-0 16.Nxf5

If 16.Ne4 then Black might try the sacrificial 16 ... Nxe5!? 17.fxe5 Qxe5, with a fine attacking position. His threats include 18 ... Nd6, 18 ... Bc6 and 18 ... Rg4, and White will struggle to defend.

16 ... exf5 17.Bh4?

Of course not 17.Bxd4? Be6 winning a piece, but h4 does not turn out to be a happy square for the bishop. A sterner test would be 17.g3 when Black has a number of tries such as 17 ... Rge8 or 17 ... f6, or again perhaps 17 ... Nxe5!? 18.fxe5 Qxe5+ 19.Be2 Bc6 followed by 20 ... Rge8.

17 ... Rde8

Black has a superb position; White elects to vacate the e-file but it does little to improve his position.

18.Kf2 Rg4!

All of Black’s pieces are bearing upon the fragile white centre. If now 19.Bg3 Black must strike before White can consolidate with 20.Be2. After 19 ...
Nxe5! 20.fxe5 f4! 21.Be2 (other moves are similar) 21 ... fxg3+ 22.hxg3 Rg5
23.Qxd4 Rxe5 Black has a fine position. White could play 20.Qxd4, but again after 20 ... Nc6! 21.Qxc3 Qb6+ forces 22.Kf3 and leaves Black with the better game. Nonetheless, these lines are better for White than those after his selected move.

![Chess board image]

19.g3? Rxe5!!

A surprise, since although the knight sacrifice has been in the air for some time, the rook offer is very complex and relies on accurate calculation.

20.fxe5

Forced, because 20.Bh3 loses to 20 ... Rxf4! 21.gxf4 Re3! and 22 ... Qxf4+.

20 ... Nxe5 21.Qd1

This is met by a stunning combination, which White can avoid with 21.Qe2, covering the second rank. Then Black has a number of promising tries, but the decisive continuation is 21 ... Qc5!!, with the brutal threat of 22 ... d3+
23.Qe3 Rf4+! 24.gxf4 Ng4+ winning. White can play 22.h3 but then 22 ...
Re4 23.Qh5 d3+ 24.Kg2 Rhx4! 25.gxh4 Bc6+ 26.Kg3 Qe3+ wins, so White’s
best defence is 22.Bh3!. Black’s victory is secured if he continues 22 ...
Re4 23.Qh5 d3+ 24.Kf1 (not 24.Kg2 Re2+) 24 ...

Here White is lost as the following analysis demonstrates.

(i) 25.Qxh4 dxc2!! 26.Qf4 (if White tries to prevent the bishop moving to b5
with 26.a4 he loses to 26 ... Qd5! 27.Bg2 Qd1+ 28.Rxd1 cxd1Q+ 29.Kf2
Ng4+) 26 ... Bb5+ 27.Kg2 Qd5+ 28.Kg1 (28.Kf2 Nd3+) 28 ... Qd1+ 29.Bf1
(or 29.Kg2 Bc6+ 30.Kf2 Nd3+ 31.Ke3 Qd2+ 32.Kd4 Nxf4 winning) 29 ...
Qxa1 30.Qxf5+ Nd7 31.Qxb5 c1Q, etc.

Be4+ 29.Kg1 Qe3+ 30.Rf2 Nf3+ 31.Kf1 (if 31.Kh1 then 31 ... Qxf2!
32.Qg4+ Kc7 33.Qf4+ Kd8! 34.Qd6+ Ke8! 35.Qb8+ Kd7 and White’s
checks run out) 31 ... dxc2! 32.Qg4+ (or 32.Rxf3 c1Q+ 33.Rxc1 Qxc1+
34.Kf2 Qd2+ 35.Kg3 Qe1+ 36.Kf4 Bxf3 37.Qxf3 c2 and Black’s c-pawn will
tell) 32 ... Kc7 33.Qg3+ Kc6 34.Rxf3 Bxf3 35.Qe1 Qd2! and wins. White
might try to diverge in this variation with 28.Rhe1 but Black plays 28 ...
Be4+ 29.Kh3 Bg6! 30.Qh8+ Kd7 31.Kg2 Be4+ 32.Kg1 (or 32.Rxe4 Qxe4+ 33.Kg1 Qe3+ 34.Kh1 dxc2, etc) 32 ... Qg4+ 33.Kf2 Qf3+ 34.Kg1 Qg2 mate.

21 ... Rxh4!!

A beautiful clearance sacrifice, which leaves Black with just a knight for two rooks. Ivkov has calculated the consequences accurately and the black queen and knight force victory.

22.gxh4

With hindsight 22.Be2 might have held out longer, but Black would have an easily won game.

22 ... Ng4+ 23.Ke1

The alternatives are no better. If 23.Ke2 then 23 ... Qe5+ and mate next move, whilst 23.Kg2 loses to 23 ... Bc6+ (more ruthless than 23 ... Ne3+) 24.Kg1 d3! 25.cxd3 Qf4 26.Qe2 Qd4+ 27.Qf2 Qxf2 mate. A tougher nut to crack is 23.Kg1, but again after 23 ... d3! 24.cxd3 Qf4 25.Qe2 Black wins with 25 ... Qd4+ 26.Kg2 Bc6+ and now 27.Kh3 Nf2+ 28.Kg3 f4 is mate, and 27.Kg3 is met by 27 ... Qd6+ 28.Kh3 Qf4! 29.Rg1 (or 29.Ra2 Nf2+ 30.Qxf2 Qg4 mate) 29 ... Nf2+ 30.Qxf2 Qxf2.

23 ... Qf4! 24.Qe2

Or 24.Qd3 Qf2+ 25.Kd1 Ne3+ and wins.
24 ... Bb5!!

Without this Black’s combination would fail. If now White captures the bishop, Black mates on d2.

25.Qg2 Qe3+

After 26.Kd1 Nf2+ wins, and 26.Be2 is answered by 26 ... Qd2+ 27.Kf1 Ne3+ and Black forces the win of the queen with a decisive advantage.

White resigns.

1964

Bronstein, D – Larsen, B
Amsterdam
King’s Indian Defence (E75)
Of all the great creative geniuses of the twentieth century, Bronstein and Larsen are, along with Tal, right at the top of the list.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6

Larsen plays the King’s Indian Defence, which for decades was Bronstein’s favoured reply to 1.d4.

5.Be2 0-0 6.Bg5

The Averbakh Variation. The main reason for playing the bishop to g5 is to discourage Black from his common freeing manoeuvre of moving the knight on f6 followed by ... f5. A further point is that if Black simply occupies the centre by 6 ... e5, then 7.d5! blocks the position and White is ready for a king’s side attack. Moreover, in some variations Black is tempted into ... h6, but after the bishop retreats, say to e3, White may gain a tempo with Qd2, hitting the pawn on h6.
6 ... c5

This is the traditional method of meeting Bg5. In recent years, many have preferred piece play through ... Nbd7 or ... Na6.

7.d5 e6

Boleslavsky, another King’s Indian aficionado, tried 7 ... Qa5!? against Averbakh himself in 1953, but White had few problems after 8.Bd2.


Typical Bronstein. The bishop retreats to a rather strange square. The normal move here is 9.Bd2, but Black seems to have little problem equalizing with 9 ... exd5 10.exd5 Bf5. White has also tried 9.Bh4!?, but 9 ... exd5 10.exd5 Na6 11.0-0 g5! 12.Bg3 Nh5 gives Black counterplay. After Bronstein’s choice, Boleslavsky recommends 9 ... e5!? 10.Bd2 Nh7 followed by ... f5, but Larsen has formulated a strong sequence of moves that Bronstein clearly underestimated when playing 9.Bf4.

9 ... exd5 10.exd5

10.cxd5 was possible, leading to a kind of Bf4 Benoni position, with the addition of the moves ... h6 and Be2.

10 ... Re8!

A subtle move, highlighting the drawback of 9.Bf4. If Bronstein now castles, then 11 ... Ne4! 12.Nxe4 Rxe4 gains a tempo by attacking the bishop and Black would take the initiative.

11.Nd2?!

Bronstein therefore prefers to defend e4. However, the knight blocks the retreat of the bishop, a fact that does not go unnoticed by Larsen.

11 ... Nh5!

Bronstein is faced with an unpleasant choice. It would take a brave man to try
12. Be3, since Black can generate an enormous attack with the obvious 12 ... Rxe3! 13. fxe3 Qh4+ 14. Kf1 (or 14. g3!? Nxe3 15. Nf3 Qh3 16. Rg1 and White is only just hanging on) 14 ... Ng3+ 15. hgx3 Qxh1+ 16. Kf2. Thus he tries another idea.

12. Bg3 Bg4!?

The start of a typically aggressive plan by Larsen. A quieter line is 12 ... Nxe3 13. hgx3 Nbd7, when Black has all the chances.

13. 0-0

13. f3?! is dubious, because after 13 ... Nxe3 14. hgx3 Bf5 Black’s bishop pair is very strong.

13 ... Nxe3 14. hgx3 Bxe2!

Larsen continues on the adventurous path. He could still have chosen 14 ... Bxc3 15. Bxg4 Bg7 with a modest advantage. Instead, the text move leads to complications.

15. Nxe2 Bxb2!
The point of Larsen’s play – White will have to expend considerable time to recapture the pawn, during which Black can complete his development with a powerful position.

16.Rb1 Bg7 17.Rxb7 Nd7

White’s rook is offside and he now has the option of withdrawing the piece or leaving it to fend for itself in enemy territory. Bronstein’s decision was probably influenced by the lack of a sensible plan after a rook retreat. For example, if 18.Rb3 then 18 ... Qa5 followed by 19 ... Ne5 is very strong.

18.Nf4!? Nb6!

Black now threatens 19 ... Qc8!, winning the rook.

19.Re1

It looks as though Black can win the c-pawn by 19 ... Rxe1+ 20.Qxe1 Bc3, but White has 21.Nxg6!!.
Here 21 ... fxg6 loses to 22.Qe6+! Kh8 23.Qxg6! Nd7 (23 ... Qg8 24.Qxh6+ Qh7 25.Qxh7 mate) 24.Qxh6+ Kg8 25.Qe6+ and 26.Rxd7. And if 21 ... Bxd2, then 22.Ne7+! and 23.Qxd2 wins. With Larsen’s next move, however, White looks to be in real trouble.

19 ... Be3!

With the threat of 20 ... Bxd2 and 21 ... Nxc4.

20.Ne4!!

Brilliantly turning the game on its head – Bronstein switches from defence to counter-attack.

20 ... Bxe1

It was still possible to retreat the bishop to g7 but Larsen prefers to keep things wild.

21.Ne6!!
This is the real point of Bronstein’s attack. He sees that his trapped rook is potentially a powerful weapon, particularly if the knight is captured: 21 ... fxe6 22.Qg4! Re7 (22 ... g5!? 23.Qh5 is also possible) 23. Qxg6+ Kf8 24.Nf6!! Rxb7 25.Qg8+ Ke7 26.Qg7 mate. Bronstein also had to foresee a number of other complicated variations, and it is no wonder that time-trouble was a factor throughout the rest of the game.

(i) 21 ... Qc8 22.Nf6+! Kh8 23.Rxf7! and 24.Rh7 mate.

(ii) 21 ... Rxe6 22.dxe6 fxe6 23.Qg4! and wins.

(iii) 21 ... Bb4!? 22.Qf3! (22.Nxd8? Rxe4! is unclear) 22 ... Re7 23.Nf6+! Kh8 24.Qf4! and wins.

Larsen finds his way through these calculations and finds the best move.

21 ... Bxf2+!!

A normal mortal would be forgiven for not even considering this, but both Bronstein and Larsen knew it to be Black’s best move. Its deep point is
twofold. Firstly, the knight on e4 is deflected so that 22.Nxf2 loses quickly to 22 ... fxe6. Secondly, the king is lured to the open f-file, which allows Black to gain a valuable tempo with a rook check.

22.Kxf2

Bronstein takes the bishop, but serious attention also has to be given to the alternative king moves.

(i) 22.Kh1? allows 22 ... Bxg3!!, beautifully sacrificing the queen (23.Nxd8 is met by 23 ... Rxe4 winning because of the threat of 24 ... Re1+).

(ii) 22.Kh2!? Bd4! 23.Nxd8 Raxd8 24.Nd2 Nd7! 25.Rb3 Ne5 26.g4 Kg7 and Black has more than sufficient compensation for the queen.

(iii) 22.Kf1 Bd4! is even stronger than in the previous line because White’s king is exposed.


22 ... fxe6 23.Qg4

White continues according to plan, but now Black can use the rook check to gain a move enabling his king’s rook to reach f6, defending the sixth rank.

23 ... Rf8+ 24.Kg1 Rf6
25. Qh3?

Bronstein goes wrong at the critical moment. 25.dxe6! is the right move, with the following variations.

(i) 25 ... Qf8 (if 25 ... h5 then 26.e7 Qxe7 27.Rxe7 hxg4 28.Nxf6+ Kf8 29.Rb7 Nxc4 30.Rd7! and draws) 26.e7 Rf1+ 27.Kh2 Qf5! 28.Qxf5 Rxf5 and now the stunning move 29.Rxa7!!.
The point behind this beautiful move is that 29 ... Rxa7 loses to 30.e8Q+, whilst 29 ... Re5 allows 30.Nf6+! Kg7 (30 ... Kf7? 31.e8Q+) 31.e8Q+ Rxa7 32.Qb8 and White has the edge. Black must therefore play 29 ... Rb8! 30.Rb7! Ra8 31.Rxb6 Re5! drawing.

(ii) The ambitious try 25 ... Nxc4!? might continue 26.e7 Rf1+ 27.Kh2! (27.Kxf1 Ne3+ and Black should have a small advantage in the ending) 27 ... Qe8 and the position is finely balanced.
White should continue 28.Qe2!, and if 28 ... Rf5 then 29.g4 Qf7? (or 29 ... Rf7 30.Qxc4 wins; but better is 29 ... Qc6! 30.gxf5 Qxb7 31.Qxc4+ d5 32.Nf6+! Kf7 33.Nxd5 with roughly equal chances) 30.gxf5 Re8 31.fxg6 Qe6, and now 32.Qf1! threatens 33.Nf6+. If 32 ... Qe5+ (32 ... Qxe4? 33.Qf7+ and mate next move) then 33.g3 Qh5+ 34.Kg1 Qxg6 35.Qxc4+ wins. Another line is 28 ... Qc6! when 29.Qxc4+ d5 (not 29 ... Rf7? because 30.Nf6+! Kg7 31.e8N+! Kh8 32.Qxf7 leads to mate) 30.Qxf1 Qxb7 31.Nf6+ leads to a position where White has some chances but where Black should be able to hold his opponent to a draw.

25 ... Qf8! 26.Ng5

Leaving the rook en prise. The thing that Bronstein overlooked when playing 25.Qh3? is shown after the main variation, 26.Nxf6+ Qxf6 27.Qxh6. Here White still looks in control, but Black has 27 ... Qd4+! 28.Kh2 Qh8!!, pinning the queen and winning the game.
With the text move Bronstein tries a last attempt to corner the black king, but it is insufficient.

26 ... Rf1+!

Simple but important. The white king is forced onto the h-file, which Black exploits with his next move.

27.Kh2 Rf5!
The idea now becomes clear – White is fatally exposed to a pin along the h-file.


White’s position is clearly hopeless. A breathtaking game, full of delightful tactics from both players.

White resigns.

1965

Uitumen, T – Lein, A
Sochi
Ruy López (C61)

Some sources (for example one recent CD-ROM database) state that this game was played in Moscow during 1961, but it is from the Chigorin
Memorial tournament at Sochi in 1965.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4

Bird’s Defence has never had much of a reputation but as this game shows, it demands respect otherwise White can find himself in real trouble.

4.Nxd4

4.Ba4 and 4.Bc4 are also possible but exchanging knights is the sternest test of Bird’s invention.

4 ... exd4 5.0-0

The natural move, avoiding 5.c3 Qg5! 6.Bf1 with an unclear position. Now Black has a number of options, including 5 ... Ne7 (not 5 ... Nf6?! 6.e5 Nd5 7.Qf3 with a clear advantage) and 5 ... Bc5, but Lein elects to kick away the bishop.

5 ... c6 6.Bc4
The retreat 6.Be2?! is rather too passive, but 6.Ba4 is a playable alternative.

6 ... Nf6

In the second round of the famous St. Petersburg tournament of 1914, Blackburne tried 6 ... g6 7.d3 Bg7 against Alekhine and drew an entertaining duel with the future World Champion.

7.Re1

If 7.e5 then Black replies 7 ... d5! and after 8.exf6 dxc4 he has the edge. Better is 8.Be2 Ng8 9.d3, but 9 ... Bc5 gives Black a good game.

7 ... d6 8.c3

This is more entertaining than the safe 8.d3 Be7 9.Nd2 0-0, when White’s advantage is minimal.

8 ... Ng4!

The right move, with the objective of putting the knight on the useful e5 square.

9.h3

If White tries to dislodge the knight with 9.Be2 then 9 ... dxc3 10.bxc3 (10.Nxc3 is similar) 10 ... Qh4 11.Bxg4 Qxg4 12.Qxg4 Bxg4 equalizes.

9 ... Ne5 10.Bf1

He preserves the two bishops, although 10.d3 Nxc4 11.dxc4 dxc3 12.Nxc3 is perfectly playable.

10 ... d3!?

An interesting move, since it looks difficult to maintain this pawn in its advanced position. Now White should probably play 11.Re3, with 12.Bxd3 to follow. In the meantime, Black can develop a king’s side attack with 11 ... g5 or 11 ... Qh4 but White should be able to defend.
11.f4?!

Superficially aggressive but in reality this advance weakens the a7–g1 diagonal and hands the initiative to Black.

11 ... Qb6+! 12.Kh1 h5!?

A clever and dangerous move that leaves the knight en prise in order to prepare 13 ... Bg4.

13.fxe5


13 ... Bg4!
Exploiting the situation of the white king, because 14.hxg4? hxg4 is mate.

14.Qb3 Qf2!

Not unexpected but very menacing. White now elects to capture the b-pawn, and indeed this looks like the only move, but also possible is 15.Rd1!. This appears odd since the rook moves to a square covered by the bishop, but it is hard for Black to demonstrate anything other than a draw.

(i) On 15 ... Bxd1 White simply recaptures and has a fine position after 16.Qxd1 0-0-0 17.Bxd3 dxe5 18.Qe2!.

(ii) If instead 15 ... Be2!? then 16.Qxb7! Rd8! (16 ... Bxf1 17.Qxa8+ Ke7 18.Rxf1 Qxf1+ 19.Kh2 and White has winning chances; or 16 ... Bxd1 17.Qxa8+ Kd7 18.Bxd3 and White has at least perpetual) 17.Qxc6+ Rd7 18.Qc8+ Ke7 19.exd6+ Kxd6 and after 20.e5+ the position is a mess, but White has a probable draw if he feels that playing for a win (for example with ideas such as b3/Ba3 or c4/Nc3) is too risky.

15.Qxb7 Rd8

Black endeavours to exploit White’s inaccurate move order.

16.Rd1

Now this is less effective since after Black’s next move the white queen cannot recapture. Despite this, it is still best since the bishop is diverted from the defence of the black king.

16 ... Bxd1

White cannot recapture so has to go after the opposing king.

17.Qxc6+ Ke7
18.Qc7+?

Uitumen must have believed that this attractive check would force the black king out into the open to meet its end, but in reality the move is a terrible mistake. The correct continuation is 18.Bxd3!, which is likely to lead to a draw with best play.


(ii) 18 ... Rh6 19.Bb5! (with a nasty threat of 20.Qc7+) 19 ... Bg4! (the try 19 ... Rg6 fails to 20.Qc7+ Ke6 21.Bc4+ d5 22.exd5+ Rxd5 23.Qc6+ Ke7 24.Qxd5 Qe1+ 25.Kh2 Qg3+ 26.Kg1 Qe1+ 27.Bf1 Be2 28.Qc5+ Ke8

18 ... Rd7 19.exd6+

Forced, because the bishop and queen are both en prise.

19 ... Kf6!!

A nonchalant move, which leaves the rook unprotected and seemingly puts the king in serious danger. But if now 20.Qxd7 then 20 ... Qxf1+ 21.Kh2 Qf4+ 22.Kg1 Bxd6 23.Qf5+ Qxf5 24.exf5 Bg3!, with 25 ... Re8 and 26 ... Re1 mate to follow.

20.e5+!

This seems to cross Black’s plans since the b8–h2 diagonal is blocked by the king.

20 ... Kxe5 21.Qxd7 Qxf1+ 22.Kh2 Bxd6!
A remarkable position. Black threatens 23 ... Kd5+! (an attractive and unusual discovered check by the king) with mate to follow unless White gives up his queen.

23.c4 Qf4+

An even prettier win could be found in 23 ... Bg4!, which leaves White helpless.

24.Kh1 Kf6 White resigns.

White now has to concede his queen to avoid mate.

1966

Popov, L – Buljovcic, I
Yugoslavia
Alekhine’s Defence (B05)
1. e4 Nf6

This is Alekhine’s Defence, although it is now well-known that it was first played many years before Alekhine ever conceived the idea.

2. e5 Nd5 3. d4 d6 4. Nf3

This relatively quiet line, which concentrates on piece play, poses Black more long-term problems than the aggressive Four Pawns’ Attack (4.c4 Nb6 5.f4).

4 ... Bg4

The true “hyper-modern” continuation would be 4 ... g6 followed by ... Bg7, with pressure against the centre, but after 5.Bc4 White maintains a territorial advantage that usually lasts until the middlegame.

5. h3

Not the most dynamic choice, since Black has a reasonable line that leads to full equality. The normal move, 5.Be2, causes a few more problems.

5 ... Bxf3

Despite giving White the two bishops this should lead to a level game.

6. Qxf3 dxe5 7. dxe5 e6 8. Qe4

The queen finds a strong central post, from where she is difficult to shift.

8 ... c6

Another even easier way to play the defence is 8 ... Nd7 9.Bc4 Nc5 10.Qe2 Nb6!, exchanging a knight for one of the bishops; White then has absolutely no advantage whatsoever.

9. Bc4 Nd7 10.0-0 Qc7

A useful little move, keeping an eye on e5 and preparing queen’s side
11.Re1 h6?!

It would be better simply to castle. White’s only lever in this position is the f2-f4-f5 advance. With the black king safely tucked away on c8 or b8 and the rooks connected, such a plan would be unlikely to bring any tangible rewards.

12.a4!

A good psychological choice because it discourages Black from castling. The next move prevents the further advance of this pawn but disrupts the integrity of the queen’s side pawn structure.

12 ... a5!? 13.Nc3!

White does not mind having doubled pawns since the open b-file should more than compensate.
13 ... Nxc3 14.bxc3 Rd8?! 

Although less attractive than a few moves ago, 14 ... 0-0-0!? is still possible and should have been seriously considered. Black’s principal concern after the text move is that his king is somewhat awkwardly stuck in the centre, and if he attempts to castle on the king’s side then the advance of White’s f-pawn will cause him severe problems.

15.f4

White’s pawns begin to roll. One example of the sort of mess Black can get into is 15 ... Be7 16.f5 exf5 17.Qxf5 0-0 (if 17 ... Bc5+ 18.Kh1 Nb6 then 19.e6! is very strong) 18.Bxh6! gxh6 19.Qg6+ Kh8 20.Qxh6+ Kg8 21.Bd3! f5 22.Bc4+ Rf7 23.Qg6+ Kh8 24.Bxf7 and wins.

15 ... g6

Desperately trying to forestall 16.f5; there are no prizes for guessing White’s next move.

16.g4! Be5+

Black might try 16 ... Nc5!? but White plays 17.Qf3 Bg7 (so that e5 becomes vulnerable if the f-pawn advances) 18.f5! (anyway) 18 ... gxf5 19.gxf5 exf5 (if 19 ... Bxe5 20.fxe6 Nxe6 21.Bxe6 fxe6 22.Qh5+ wins a piece) 20.e6!, with a strong attack.

17.Kh1 Nb6

Black is rightly intent on removing White’s powerful king’s bishop from the board, but it is too late.
18.f5!!

This looks like an error, but Popov has calculated the ensuing combination very accurately.

18 ... gxf5 19.gxf5 exf5

Because the knight attacks the bishop on c4, Buljovcic presumably made this capture under the assumption that White could not retake with the queen. However, Popov has seen further and has prepared a beautiful winning combination. Thus, instead of the text move, Black should have considered 19 ... Nxc4!. The pugnacious 20.fxe6? does not quite succeed, since 20 ... Qxe5! 21.exf7+ Kxf7 22.Rf1+ Ke7 23.Qxc4 Qd5+! forces the queens off and leaves a roughly even endgame. But the simple 20.Qxc4 threatens the bishop and actually leaves Black in some difficulties.
For example, 20 ... Be7 21.fxe6 fxe6 22.Qxe6 gives White a clear advantage, whilst 20 ... Qe7 is met with a stunning demolition: 21.f6! Qf8 22.Rb1! Rd7 (22 ... b6? 23.Rxb6! Bxb6 24.Qxc6+ Rd7 25.Rd1! wins) 23.Rxb7!! Rxb7 24.Qa6! Rc7 (or 24 ... Rb8 25.Qxc6+ Kd8 26.Rd1+) 25.Rd1! Ba7 (the only way to prevent the check on a8) 26.Qd3! winning everything. Best for Black is 20 ... Rd5! but after 21.Qg4! Qe7 (if 21 ... Rxe5 then 22.Bf4! Rxe1+ 23.Rxe1 Qd8 24.fxe6 Qd5+ 25.Kh2 wins; and on 21 ... exf5 22.Qg7 Rf8 23.e6! is also very strong) 22.Rb1! b6 23.f6! Qf8 24.c4! Rd8 (24 ... Rd4 is met with the same response) 25.Qf3!, Black is in a complete bind.

20.Qxf5!!

Leaving the bishop en prise.

20 ... Nxc4 21.e6!

The first point of Popov’s combination is that this pawn thrust uncovers a threat to the bishop on c5.
21 ... Bd6

Black’s other plausible defences are also insufficient.

(i) On 21 ... Qe7? 22.exf7+ is decisive.

(ii) If 21 ... fxe6 then 22.Rxe6+ Be7 (on 22 ... Kd7 there follows 23.Re5+ Kd6 24.Qe6 mate) 23.Qg6+! Kd7 (23 ... Kf8 24.Bxh6+ and wins) 24.Rxe7+!! Kxe7 25.Qg7+ Kd6 26.Bf4+ and wins the queen.

(iii) 21 ... Ne5!? is a clever try, hoping for 22.Rxe5? Rd1+ 23.Kh2 (23.Kg2 Rg8+ wins) 23 ... Qxe5+!! 24.Qxe5 Bd6!, recovering the queen with a won endgame. Unfortunately for Black, after 22.Bf4! White wins easily.

(iv) Finally, defending the bishop by 21 ... b6 loses rapidly to 22.exf7+ Kf8 23.Qf6!.

22.exf7+ Kf8 23.Qf6!

This is decisive against all black defences, but we are most fortunate that the
line played by Buljovcic permits Popov to produce the prettiest dénouement.

23 ... Be5

If 23 ... Rh7 then 24.Bxh6+ Rxe6 25.Qxe6+ Kxf7 26.Re6! leads to mate in a few moves.

24.Bxh6+!

Popov could also have won with the less elegant 24.Ba3+ c5 (24 ... Nxa3 25.Rxe5) 25.Bxc5+ Qxc5 26.Qxd8+ Kxf7 27.Qd7+ Qe7 28.Rf1+ Bf6 29.Rxf6+! Kxf6 30.Rf1+, but the text move is artistically the best choice.

24 ... Rxh6 25.Qxh6+

If now 25 ... Kxf7 (or 25 ... Ke7 26.Qh4+ and 27.Qxc4) White triumphs by 26.Qh7+ Bg7 27.Rf1+ Ke6 (on 27 ... Ke8 28.Qg6+ Kd7 29.Rf7+ is decisive) 28.Qf5+! Ke7 (or 28 ... Kd6 29.Rad1+ Ke7 30.Qf7 mate) 29.Qf7+ Kd6 30.Rad1+, winning the queen.

25 ... Bg7 26.Re8+! Rxe8

Forced as 26 ... Kxf7 27.Qe6 is checkmate. Now perhaps Buljovcic expected 27.fxe8Q+ Kxe8 28.Qe6+ Qe7 29.Qxc4, leaving White the exchange ahead.
27.Qxg7+!! Kh7 28.fxe8N+!

A lovely under-promotion – forking king and queen – to decide the game.

Black resigns.

1967

Pachman, L – Calapso, R
Venice
Queen’s Indian Defence (E13)


This simple development is an interesting line against the Nimzo-Indian, and often leads to a hybrid between the Nimzo and Queen’s Indian (characterized by the fianchetto of the black queen’s bishop) Defences.
4 ... b6 5.Bg5

A natural looking move leading to exciting play. White must be careful to avoid handing the initiative over to Black, who is frequently able to set his king’s side pawns rolling.

5 ... h6 6.Bh4 Bxc3+

The standard exchange in the Nimzo-Indian, creating the doubled pawn structure on c3 and c4.

7.bxc3 d6 8.e3 Nbd7 9.Bd3 Bb7

The game has transposed into a fairly well-known line in the Queen’s Indian. Black will now try to start a pawn storm against the white king’s side defences, whilst White will seek active counterplay on the other wing.

10.0-0 Qe7

A useful square for the queen, since not only is queen’s side castling now
possible but in addition the c5 square is given further cover.

11.Nd2 g5 12.Bg3 h5!

More accurate than 12 ... 0-0-0, which allows White to strike first with the sharp 13.c5! dxc5 14.Qa4, seizing the initiative.

13.f3?!

13.h4! is better, since it disrupts the black attack. After 13 ... Rg8 (or 13 ... Ng4 14.hxg5 Qxg5 15.Nf3 and White is better) White then continues 14.f3 0-0-0 15.hxg5! Rfxg5 16.Bh4 and he has a fine position.

13 ... h4!

Black does not give his opponent another chance to get in h4.

14.Bf2 Qf8!?

An original plan, but the obvious 14 ... 0-0-0 followed by 15 ... Rdf8 is probably more effective.

15.h3

Weakens the dark squares around his king but necessary in order to provide some obstacle to Black’s intended ... g4 advance.

15 ... Qg7 16.a4

Despite Black’s decision to keep his king in the centre, White begins queen’s side operations.

16 ... a5

White will now be looking to break through the centre, either by e4 and e5 or with the classic Queen’s Indian c5 thrust.

17.Re1 Nh5 18.e4 Nf4
An attractive square for the knight, although it is unclear whether it actually has much of a debilitating effect on White’s position.

19.Bf1 e5

Had Black castled then White could have tried 20.e5 dxe5 21.c5! with a strong attack.

20.c5!

Black must do something to prevent the impending 21.cxd6 cxd6 22.Nc4, when his position would lie in ruins.

20 ... bxc5

If 20 ... dxc5 21.dxc5 Nxc5 then 22.Bxc5 bxc5 leaves White with a significant positional advantage, with ideas such as Rb1, Nc4-e3 and Qb3 to follow.

21.Rb1?!
This does not turn out to be as good as it looks, so the immediate 21.dxc5! would have been better.

21 ... Ba6!

Of course 21 ... Bc6? would lose to 22.d5, but now Black is able to unravel himself.

22.Bxa6 Rxa6 23.dxc5 0-0!

An excellent decision, spurning the win of a pawn by 23 ... dxc5 for after 24.Nc4 White would have a fine game.

24.Nc4 Qf6

Defending the key d6 square, rather than risking the capture of the white c-pawn. This must be the right strategy, since 24 ... Nxc5?! 25.Bxc5 dxc5 26.Qd7! is awkward to meet.

25.cxd6 cxd6 26.Ne3

Not surprisingly, Pachman intends to exploit the weakened white squares.

26 ... Rc8 27.c4 Nc5

The two knights are quite strong in this type of blocked position, so Pachman exchanges his bishop for one of them.

28.Nd5 Qe6 29.Bxc5 Rxc5

Black avoids the exchange of the other knight in order to mount an assault against the white c-pawn. Pachman therefore seeks active play before his opponent can execute that plan.

30.Rb7!
If now 30 ... Rxc4 White continues 31.Re7! and now:

(i) 31 ... Qc8 32.Re8+! (only not 32.Rxe5? because 32 ... Qc5+! wins) 32 ... Qxe8 33.Nf6+ Kf8 34.Nxe8 and wins.

(ii) 31 ... Qg6 32.Rxe5! and if the rook is taken 33.Ne7+ wins.

(iii) 31 ... Qh6 32.Nxf4 exf4 33.Qd5!, forking the rook and the f7 pawn.

30 ... Nxd5

Calapso spots the trap.

31.exd5!

Pachman declares his intention of trying for a win. 31.cxd5 would be comfortably met by 31 ... Qc8, with a sound game.

31 ... Qc8?
With hindsight Calapso would have been better advised to try 31 ... Qf5!, when White’s most aggressive continuation is 32.Re4 with good attacking possibilities.

32.Qc1!!

A startling reply, leaving the rook en prise. If now 32 ... Qxb7 then 33.Qxg5+ Kf8 34.Qd8+ Kg7 35.Re4 follows and the terrible threat of 36.Rg4+ practically forces 35 ... Qb1+ 36.Kh2 Qxe4 37.fxe4, when the queen is likely to defeat the two rooks. For example, if 37 ... Rxc4 then 38.Qh4 Rxa4 39.Qg5+ followed by 40.h4 and Black will find it difficult to stop the progress of the pawn.

32 ... f6?

The line above at least makes it hard for White, whereas this move hands the victory to him on a plate. But the best try would have been 32 ... Qf5!. For example, if White plays 33.Re4 then 33 ... Ra8! 34.Rg4 f6! 35.Rxh4!? (hoping for 35 ... gxh4? 36.Qh6!) and now Black can survive with 35 ... Rac8!, threatening 36 ... gxh4 37.Qh6 Rcc7! as well as 36 ... Rxd5.
33.Qb1!

A devastating blow which threatens 34.Rb8 but also 34.Qh7+. Calapso prevents the former and succumbs to the latter.

33 ... Qe8 34.Qh7+

It’s mate next move. Calapso collapses.

Black resigns.

1968

Bronstein, D – Zaitsev, A
Berlin
Sicilian Defence (B30)


An interesting variation of the Closed Sicilian that has enjoyed a high degree of popularity in the 1980s and 1990s.

4 ... Nd4!?

There are numerous other plans available to Black at this juncture, but Zaitsev’s choice is certainly a good option.

5.Bd3!?

There are alternatives to this retreat, although White should avoid 5.Nxd4?! cxd4 6.Ne2 Qg5! when Black seizes the initiative. Perhaps simplest is to leave the bishop to its fate by castling.

5 ... Nxf3+

Rather uncommon and understandably so, given that the move does little to improve Black’s position and merely aids his opponent’s development.
6.\text{Qxf3 Bd6?!}

An eccentric idea.

7.\text{Qe3}!

An extremely original move from Bronstein, with ideas such as 8.e5 now in the air. For example, if Black is careless and continues 7 ... Ne7, then White replies with 8.e5 (8.Nb5 Qb6 is good but not quite as convincing) and 9.Qxc5.

7 ... e5!?

Faced with the unpleasant threat of 8.e5 Be7 9.Qg3 with annoying pressure, Zaitsev plays a defiant move that looks a little strange, and certainly leaves the white squares weakened.

8.\text{Nb5}

Bronstein now plays a series of aggressive moves designed to cause
maximum inconvenience for his opponent.

8 ... Qe7

If 8 ... Be7 then 9.Qg3! is hard to meet, since both the e-pawn and the g-pawn are under attack and 9 ... Bf6 is met by 10.Nd6+. Now Zaitsev surely expected 9.Qg3, which gives White the edge.

9.b4!?

Bronstein comes up with a kind of long-deferred Wing Gambit. His idea is simply to force open more lines.

9 ... cxb4 10.Qg3

Heading for g7.

10 ... Bb8!?

An interesting idea which preserves the two bishops. Moreover, Zaitsev must have noticed that he now threatens 11 ... a6, trapping the knight.

11.Qxg7

Bronstein has calculated that he can capture the pawn and extricate his knight.

11 ... Qf6 12.Qxf6

Forced, since 12.Qg3 loses to 12 ... a6.

12 ... Nxf6 13.a3!
The saving coup that Bronstein would have foreseen several moves ago. The idea is that after 13 ... a6 14.axb4 the black pawn is pinned, so the knight is safe.

13 ... d5!

Black correctly turns his attention to the centre.

14.f3 Rg8

Beginning a manoeuvre on the king’s side that ultimately leaves him with a poor position. There is clearly nothing wrong with this rook move, so the suspect moves come later.

15.g3 Bh3?

Zaitsev develops the bishop with tempo, since he now threatens to win the f-pawn with 16 ... Bg2. There is, however, a flaw in his reasoning.

16.exd5!
The knight cannot take the pawn because of 17.Bxh7! Rg7 18.Be4 with a won game.

16 ... Bg2

In order to maintain some activity Black continues with his plan to win the f-pawn, despite the obvious cost in terms of positional damage.

17.Rg1 Bxf3 18.d6

Material is level but the presence of this pawn gives White excellent prospects, as the black bishop is entombed.

18 ... bxa3

If 18 ... Kd7, White continues 19.Rf1! e4 20.Bxe4! Nxe4 21.Rxf3 with a clear advantage, because if the d-pawn is captured the pawn on f7 falls.

19.Rf1 e4 20.Be2!

A good choice by Bronstein. If instead 20.Be4 then 20 ... Ng4! is irritating and there is a risk that Black can get the upper hand. The other alternative is also unconvincing, as Black maintains rough equality after 20.Bxe4 Nxe4 21.Rxf3 Nxd6 22.Nxd6+ Bxd6 23.Bxa3.

20 ... Rg5

Or 20 ... Ng4 21.Bxf3 exf3 22.Rxf3 Nhx2 23.Re3+ and 24.Rxa3, which is to White’s advantage.
21.c4!?  

Bronstein played this in order to maintain the dominant knight on b5, but there were two other equally good moves. Firstly, 21.Bxa3 Bxe2 22.Kxe2 Ng4 (or 22 ... Rxb5 23.Rxf6 and Black’s pawns are fatally weak) 23.Nc3 Nxb2 24.Rh1 Ng4 25.Rxh7 leaves White with a won ending. Secondly, 21.Bxf3 exf3 (not 21 ... Rxb5? 22.Be2! wins) 22.Rxf3 Ng4 (or 22 ... Rxb5 23.Rxf6) 23.c4 Nxb2 24.Rxa3 and White is again on top.

21 ... a6  

We have already seen that lines such as 21 ... Ng4 fail after 22.Bxf3 exf3 23.Rxf3 Nxb2 24.Rxa3.

22.Rxa3  

Pinning the pawn on a6 and thus preserving the knight on its outpost.

22 ... Bxe2 23.Kxe2
Not 23.Rxf6? Bxc4!.

23 ... Nd7


24.d4

Now Black must take en passant or face a pawn storm through the centre.

24 ... exd3+ 25.Kxd3

The white king enters the game with telling effect. White is winning easily here, mainly as a result of the dismal position of his adversary’s rook and bishop in the corner.

25 ... Rc5 26.Bf4

Move twenty-six and the bishop finally joins the fray.

26 ... f6

If 26 ... Nb6 then White maintains the pressure by 27.Re1+ Kd8 28.Be3! and the c-pawn is safe whilst Black is pushed backwards.

27.Kd4 b6

Defends the rook, but takes away the useful b6 square from the knight.

28.Re1+ Kd8 29.Re6

Black has very few decent options at his disposal; meanwhile, White has a variety of unpleasant ambitions such as Rae3 or Nc7.

29 ... Ne5

The tactical shot 29 ... Rxc4+ 30.Kxc4 axb5+ only leads to a lost position after 31.Kb4 Rxa3 32.Kxa3.
30. Bxe5!

Black’s idea was that 30.Rxf6 Nxc4 hits the rook and gives him some chances of saving the game.

30 ... fxe5+ 31. Rxe5 Rxc4+!

Now this tactic works, since 32.Kxc4? is met by 32 ... axb5+ 33.Rxb5 (33.Kb4? Rxa3 34.Kxa3 Bxd6+! wins the rook and the game) 33 ... Rxa3, with a likely draw.

32. Kd5!

Bronstein has seen further, and side-steps the tactical ambush.

32 ... Rc5+

Black still cannot win the knight and this move merely leads to the exchange of rooks, when Black is hopelessly lost in the endgame. Alternatives are little better, however, since the white king will penetrate via e6 or c6: 32 ... Rc2
33.Ke6! Rd2 (if 33 ... Rxhr then 34.Rf3! wins) 34.Rh5 Re2+ 35.Kd5 Rd2+ 36.Kc6 Rc2+ 37.Kb7 is one example.

33.Ke6 Rxe5+ 34.Kxe5

Black is completely tied up, and can only move his king or rooks’ pawns.

34 ... Kd7 35.Kd5 a5 36.Ra4

Quietly closing in for the kill.

36 ... h5 37.Rf4

With the unstoppable threat of 38.Rf7+ Ke8 39.Ke6 and 40.d7+ followed by 41.Rf8 mate. At resignation, Black’s rook and bishop remain confined to their corner, having sat there for the last twenty-seven moves.

Black resigns.

1969

Lutikov, A – Taimanov, M
Moscow
Sicilian Defence (B48)

This game is an excellent illustration of missed defensive resources. For many years this was held out to be an example of perfect attacking chess – but as so often is the case, under close scrutiny flaws can be found. Nevertheless, it is a hugely enjoyable battle.


Mark Taimanov – apart from being a proficient concert pianist – is best known in the chess world for patenting the variation of the Sicilian Defence which bears his name. The system is based on the Paulsen Variation, augmented and tailored into a solid yet dynamic system by Taimanov and others.
5.Nc3 Qc7

The pure Taimanov is 5 ... Nge7, but this hybrid line, which has many of the characteristics of the original Paulsen variation, has proved the most enduring.

6.Be3

One of the most popular replies.

6 ... a6 7.Bd3 b5

Slightly more common is 7 ... Nf6, but this early queen’s side action is also a viable plan in this variation.


The normal continuation is 9.0-0. Lutikov’s move, which exerts some pressure against the dark squares on the king’s side, is practically unknown in this position.
9 ... Bb7 10.Qe2 Ne7

Such a deployment of the knight is frequently seen in the Taimanov.

11.f4

An aggressive and also somewhat loosening advance that leads to a sharp game.

11 ... b4 12.Nb1

The knight will later emerge via d2.

12 ... Ng6 13.Qf2

Most players would prefer to defend the pawn by castling.

13 ... Bd6!

Increasing the pressure against the f-pawn. If now 14.Bxg7!? then 14 ... Nxf4! 15.Bxh8 Nxd3+ 16.cxd3 Qc1+ 17.Ke2 Qxh1 leaves Black with two active bishops but with his queen misplaced. If instead 14.g3, then 14 ... f5!? is an interesting attempt to exploit the weakness along the a8–h1 diagonal, whilst 14.e5 is met by the calm 14 ... Be7!, with 15 ... Bh4 in the air. Lutkov thus prefers another option.

14.Be3

An admission that his ninth move was rather a waste of time.

14 ... 0-0 15.Nd2 Rac8 16.h4?!
A crucial moment – rather than castling White prefers to advance the king’s side pawns. This is a commendably direct strategy, but if Black is able to break through on the queen’s side or in the centre, then the safety of the white king will be of major concern.

16 ... Qc7

A subtle retreat, putting further pressure on the f-pawn, which cannot advance due to the reply 17 ... Bg3.

17.e5

White finally feels inclined to push this pawn, although 17.g3 might have been more restrained.

17 ... Bc5!

Cleverly emphasizing the weakness in his opponent’s pawn structure, since after 18.Bxc5 Qxc5 19.Qxc5 Rxc5 White cannot defend all the pawns.
18.h5!

Really the only chance is for White to chase away the knight.

18 ... Bxe3 19.Qxe3 Ne7

White’s idea is that 19 ... Bxg2 can be met by 20.Rh2, winning a piece.

20.Nc4!?

In his desire to occupy the d6 square, White decides to leave the g-pawn en prise. Black might be able to grab the pawn, but 20 ... Bxg2 21.Rg1 Bd5 22.Nd6 Rb8 23.Qg3 g6 is very uncomfortable for him, and if 21 ... Nf5 then not 22.Bxf5 exf5 23.Rxg2 Qxc4, but 22.Qf2! and again White has the initiative.

20 ... Nf5 21.Qd2

If 21.Bxf5 then either 21 ... Qxc4! 22.Bd3 Qd5! and Black has a fine game, or 21 ... exf5!? 22.Nd6 Qxc2 23.Nxc8 Rxc8 with compensation for the exchange.

21 ... Bd5 22.Ne3

White is happy to exchange a pair of minor pieces.

22 ... Nxe3 23.Qxe3 Qc5

Lutikov had realized that the g-pawn could not be captured, since 24.Rg1 Bd5 25.Qg3 g6 26.hxg6 fxg6 27.Bxg6! would be the petulant response.

24.Qg3

He refuses to enter into an inferior ending and takes his chances with a king’s side attack.

24 ... h6!

A useful prophylactic move that slows down the attack.
25. Rh4!?

Lutikov is clearly not going to be deviated from his aggressive course, and is prepared to allow the black queen to enter the heart of his position.

25 ... Qg1+?

Taimanov rises to the challenge, although the prosaic 25 ... Kh8! followed by 26 ... Rg8 would have been better because it stamps out White’s attacking ambitions and leaves him with a significant advantage.

26. Kd2

This certainly feels like the right square for the king rather than e2. After 26. Ke2 Rxc2+! 27. Bxc2 Bc4+ 28. Kd2 Qd4+ 29. Kc1 Qg1+, White can avoid perpetual by 30. Bd1!? but 30 ... Rc8 31. f5! Rc5! poses some awkward problems for White, who faces the threat of 32 ... Bb3+ 33. Kd2 Rd5+. Therefore, he must give up his rook and following 34. Rxc4! Rxc4+ 33. Kd2 Qd4+ 34. Ke1 exf5 he probably has no more than a draw.
26 ... Qd4!

Taimanov avoids 26 ... Qxa1? 27.Rg4 winning immediately, as well as 26 ... Qxg2+? 27.Qxg2 Bxg2 28.Rg1 and again 29.R4g4 will be difficult to meet.

27.f5!

Natural and necessary, since the attacking try 27.Rg4 backfires after 27 ... Be4! 28.Rxg7+ Kh8 and Black’s threats such as 29 ... Rg8 give him a clear advantage. Now 27 ... Qxb2? loses to 28.f6! g6 29.hxg6, etc, so Black has to resort to more energetic ideas.

27 ... Rxc2+

A pretty move leading to some complex variations, but is it enough?

28.Kxc2

Now White seems to come out on top after the obvious 28 ... Rc8+ 29.Kd1 Qg1+ (29 ... Qxb2 is similar) 30.Qe1 Qxg2 31.Qe3! Qxb2 32.Rb1.

28 ... b3+!? 
This imaginative move keeps the pressure on White, who should accept the sacrifice and try to hold on.

After 29.axb3! Bxb3+ (29 ... Rc8+? 30.Bc4 gets nowhere) 30.Kd2 (30.Kxb3? Rb8+ 31.Kc2 Qxb2+ is less clear and Black has enough to draw) 30 ... Qxb2+ 31.Ke3 Qxa1 32.f6!, Black has to try for perpetual check with 32 ... Qg1+ but 33.Ke2! Qd1+ 34.Kf2 Qd2+ 35.Kg1! enables White to escape with a won game (35 ... Qg5 36.Rg4! winning).

The other move for White is 29.Kd2?, but this is less good since the bishop has not been diverted to b3; thus 29 ... Qxb2+ 30.Ke3 Qxa1 31.f6 Qg1+ 32.Ke2 Qxg2+! forces the exchange of queens. Then 33.Qxg2 Bxg2 34.Rg4 (or 34.axb3 Bd5 35.b4 gxf6 with a roughly level ending) 34 ... bxa2 35.Rxg7+ Kh8 36.Rh7+ gives White the draw.

29.Kd1? Qg1+ 30.Qe1!?

Keeping the material advantage, rather than allowing the line in the note above: 30.Kd2 Qxa1 31.f6 Qxb2+ 32.Ke1 Qxg2 (32 ... Qc1+? 33.Kf2 Qg5 34.Rg4! is dangerous) 33.Qxg2 Bxg2 34.Rg4 (34.axb3 Bd5, etc) 34 ... bxa2
35.Rxg7+ Kh8 36.Rh7+, with the draw. In this variation, White might try to improve with 31.Rg4!? threatening mate in four, but Black has 31 ... Qxb2+ 32.Kd1 exf5!, when 33.Rxg7+ Kh8 34.Bxf5 is met by 34 ... Qd4+ 35.Ke1 (not 35.Ke2? Bc4+! 36.Ke1 Qa1+ 37.Kd2 Qb2+ 38.Kd1 Qe2+ 39.Kc1 Qf1+ and 40 ... Qxf5 wins; in these lines if White diverges Black can force the queens off with a won endgame) 35 ... Qg1+ 36.Kd2 Qxg2+ 37.Qxg2 Bxg2 38.Rxg2 Re8, with a likely draw.

30 ... Qxg2

A peculiar position, with Black only having two pawns for a rook. However, the exposed position of the white king – together with the annoying presence of the black b-pawn – means that White is actually in some danger.

31.Qf1?

White wants to exchange the queens, but it is a poor decision to leave Black’s dangerous pawn on the board. Better is 31.axb3!, since White is safe after 31 ... Bxb3+ 32.Kc1 Rc8+ 33.Kb1 (for example, 33 ... Rc2 34.Rb4 Rxb2+ 35.Kc1 Rc2+ with a draw). Thus Black should try 31 ... Qxb2! and now:
(i) 32.Rc1 Bxb3+ and Black must try to force a draw. One plausible continuation is 33.Bc2 Rc8 34.Rh2 Rc5! 35.Re2 Bxc2+ 36.Rxc2 Qd4+ 37.Qd2 (not 37.Ke2? Rxe5+, nor 37.Rd2? Rxc1+ 38.Kxc1 Qa1+, in both cases winning the queen) 37 ... Qg1+ 38.Qe1 (38.Ke2? Rxe5+ 39.Kf3 Rxf5+ 40.Ke2 Rf2+ wins) 38 ... Qd4+ with perpetual.

(ii) 32.Qa5!?, defending the rook, is a very interesting idea and enables White to avoid perpetual after 32 ... Qxb3+ with 33.Kd2 Qb2+ 34.Ke1 Qxe5+ 35.Kf2. Black will of course have good chances of drawing the game due to the absence of white pawns, but White is unlikely to lose.

31 ... Bf3+!

A clever check, forcing the king to e1, because 32.Kc1 is answered by 32 ... Qg5+! 33.Kb1 Qxh4 and White cannot capture the bishop as 34 ... Qe1+ mates next move.

32.Ke1

Now when Black captures the e-pawn it will be with check.

32 ... Qxb2

Compared with the analysis in the note to White’s thirty-first move, here Black has the huge additional asset of the pawn on b3.

33.Rb1 Qxe5+

Check.

34.Kf2 bxa2

The humble pawn continues its journey.

35.Ra1 Qf6!?

Taimanov continues to produce imaginative ideas, but it is questionable whether this is better than the more obvious 35 ... Bd5.
36. Kg3

Calmly defending the rook with the king, although 36.Rf4 was a good alternative, attempting to bring the piece back into the game. After 36 ... Bd5 things would be as unclear as ever.

36 ... Bg2!

Another unexpected idea. Neither king nor queen can capture the bishop.

37. Qg1 exf5

Taimanov makes a good practical decision to grab White’s penultimate pawn. The threat is now 38 ... Qg5+.

38. Qd4 Qg5+ 39. Kh2

The retreat to f2 would be met in the same way.

39 ... Be4!!
The black bishop, a key piece throughout this game, delivers a beautiful and powerful blow. Black now threatens 40 ... Qg2 mate as well as 40 ... Qxh4+, so White has to give up the exchange.

40.Rxe4 fxe4 41.Qxe4

White now menaces mate on h7, but it is easily dealt with.

41 ... Qxh5+

Had White played 39.Kf2 then this would not be check, and in that case Black would have to exploit the king’s position on the f-file by 41 ... g6!. At this point the game was adjourned, but Lutikov resigned without resuming. The resignation is somewhat premature, but it is understandable given that White would face a long and in the end futile defence against the black passed pawns. Even if White can win the two pawns on the a-file, he will still have to face four king’s side pawns marching down the board.

White resigns.

1970

Vasjukov, Y – Matanovic, A
Skopje
Ruy López (C91)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

The opening, a Ruy López, follows our game from 1958 until the ninth move.

3 ... a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.d4

At the time this game was played, this variation was significantly less analysed than the more common 9.h3 (for which see our 1958 game), and thus was a good choice for Vasjukov who was seeking to secure victory in this last round game.
9 ... Bg4

The omission of 9.h3 permits Black to pin the knight in this manner.

10.d5

There are several other lines available to White, of which 10.Be3 is perhaps the most interesting.

10 ... Na5 11.h3!?

An unusual move, and somewhat unnecessary since 11.Bc2 is likely to transpose into the game anyway.

11 ... Bh5

Black decides that the two bishops are not worth having in such a blocked position and therefore refrains from 11 ... Nxb3.

12.Bc2 c6
The correct strategy, attacking White’s advanced centre.

13.dxc6 Qc7 14.Nbd2 Qxc6?!

Had Black retreated his bishop on move eleven to c8 or d7, then this would be a good way to recapture, since the open c-file and control of the white squares give him good chances to generate pressure on the queen’s side. But with the bishop tucked out of play on h5, the correct strategy is to force open the centre with a well-prepared ... d5. To that end, the queen is required on c7 in order to protect the e5 pawn, and thus 14 ... Nxc6 was indicated.

15.Nf1 Rfe8

With ... d5 difficult to achieve, Black decides to strengthen his position with sensible – albeit rather routine – Ruy López manoeuvres.

16.Ng3 Bg6

The bishop is out of play here, but Black clearly believes that it does have a future so he refrains from swapping it for the knight on f3.

17.Nh4

The purpose of this move is not to exchange the knight for the bishop but rather to occupy the powerful f5 square.

17 ... Bf8 18.a4!?

Typical Ruy López strategy, attempting to attack on both sides of the board. This is usually a double-edged plan, since it can provide Black with counter-attacking opportunities that he would not otherwise be able to create.

18 ... Nd7

Black’s conception is to occupy the a2–g8 diagonal with his bishop after a later ... f7. The drawback is that it provides excellent squares for the white knights.

19.Nhf5!
With the simple but powerful plan of advancing the h-pawn.

19 ... Nb6

Given the likely preponderance of white pieces that will migrate towards his king, it is questionable whether Black should remove this knight to the queen’s side. Possibly Matanovic still has intentions of preparing the ... d5 advance, but this is rather optimistic and White never gives him the chance.

20.axb5 axb5 21.h4

Now 22.h5 must be considered a threat, since after 22 ... Bxf5 White would get a fine game by either 23.Nxf5 or 23.exf5!?.

21 ... f6 22.h5 Bf7

Appears to be a safe haven for the bishop, but now White’s attack gathers a natural momentum.

23.Qg4!

23 ... Kh8 24.Nh4!

An interesting regrouping stratagem, with the intention of placing this knight on g6 and the other on f5.

24 ... Nb3?!

Superficially attractive, but this is where Black begins to lose the thread of the game. Better is 24 ... Nac4!, relieving some tension by forcing the exchange of rooks. After 25.Rxa8 Rxa8 26.Ng6+ Black plays 26 ... Bxg6 27.hxg6 h6! and survives.

25.Bxb3!

An excellent decision, removing Black’s most active piece. Vasjukov has realized that it will be the knights that dictate the rest of the game and is more than pleased to exchange his Spanish bishop. The move also has the benefit of deflecting the black bishop from the defence of the king.
25 ... Bxb3 26.Ng6+

Immediately exploiting the absence of the bishop. If now 26 ... hgx6? then 27.hxg6 and 28.Qh5 forces mate.

26 ... Kg8 27.Nf5!

With the vexing threats of 28.Nh6+! gxh6 29.Nxe5+, winning the queen and 28.Nxf8, followed by 29.Qxg7 mate. Consideration could be given here – and on the next move – to 27 ... hxg6!? 28.hxg6 Bf7, but after 29.gxf7+ Kxf7 30.Qh5+ Kg8 31.Rxa8 White has a ready-made attack down the h-file and should win. Matanovic thus pursues another course.

27 ... Qc7!

The obvious defensive move yet very strong, since following 28.Nh6+? gxh6 none of the discovered checks available to White is effective (29.Nxf8+ Kxf8 30.Bxh6+ Ke7!, etc).

28.Be3 Rxa1

Intending to block the a-file with his knight.

29.Rxa1 Na4!

If we take stock of the situation, it is clear that White’s obvious attacking motifs such as Nh6+, Bh6, h6 and Nxf8 do not quite work, and it appears as though Black has an impenetrable position. On closer inspection we can see that Black is rather constrained, since he cannot move his knight (because of Ra7) and the queen must defend the second rank or Nxf8 followed by Qxg7 mate follows. Moreover, the queen cannot stray to d7 because of Nh6+, nor f7 because of Nxe5! and Nh6+. Vasjukov has observed these features of the position and finds a spectacular combination in an attempt to break through.
30.c4!!

At first sight this looks crazy – surely the pawn can safely be captured either way? Matanovic, however, is clearly disinclined to take with the pawn since this would block the bishop’s diagonal and leave him even weaker on the light squares. White could then happily continue with 31.g3!, followed by 32.Kg2 with h6 and Rh1 to follow. Having rejected 30 ... bxc4, Matanovic can see no reason to shun the capture with the bishop, although in fact it turns out badly as a result of some inspired play from White.

30 ... Bxc4? 31.Rc1!

The first point is revealed by this move. The rook switches to the c-file and pins the bishop. The threat is 32.b3 winning a piece, and 31 ... Qb7 is answered by 32.Rxc4!! bxc4 33.Nh6+! gxh6 34.Ne7+ Kf7 35.Qg8+! Kxe7 36.Qxh7+, winning the queen and the game. Since, as we have seen, the queen cannot go to d7 or f7, the only move other than his actual choice is 31 ... Nc5. White then would continue with the brilliant 32.b3!!. If the bishop moves White simply plays 33.Nxf8 and 34.b4, so Black must take the pawn. After 32 ... Bxb3 (if 32 ... Nxb3 then White continues as in the game) White
would play 33.Nxf8! Rxf8 (or 33 ... Kxf8 34.Nxd6! and wins) 34.Bxc5 dxc5 35.Rxc5!.

Now Black’s queen must defend g7, and since 35 ... Qb7 is met by 36.Rxb5, Black has to play 35 ... Qa7. But then 36.Nh6+ Kh8 37.Rc8! Qe7 (on 37 ... Qa3 38.Nf5! g6 39.hxg6 leads to mate) 38.Qd7!! wins.

31 ... Nxb2 32.Bb6!!
A beautiful deflecting sacrifice, based on the variation 32 ... Qxb6 33.Nxf8, and now 33 ... Qc7 34.Nd7!! Qxd7 35.Nh6+ wins, whilst 33 ... Re7 is met by 34.Nxe7+ Kxf8

35.Qd7 and triumphs. Here it is worth noting that if Black had played 31 ... Ne5 32.b3 Nxb3, White would have continued with 33.Bb6 Qxb6 34.Nxf8 Re7 35.Nxe7+ Kxf8 36.Nf5! (necessary because the rook is under attack from the knight on b3) and the mate threat enables White to preserve his rook.

32 ... Qb7

The only other line worthy of consideration is 32 ... Qf7 33.Nxe5! Qb7 (33 ... fxe5 34.Nh6+) 34.Rxc4! and wins, as 34 ... bxc4 fails to 35.Nh6+ Kh8 36.Nef7+ Qxf7 37.Nxf7+.

33.Rxc4!
This sacrifice should come as no surprise given its prevalence in the notes.

33 ... Nxc4

33 ... Qxb6 is again answered by 34.Nxf8.

34.Nh6+

Wins the queen, as we have seen.

34 ... gxh6 35.Ne7+ Kf7 36.Qg8+! Kxe7 37.Qxh7+ Ke6 38.Qxb7

The queen is far stronger than the rook and bishop.

38 ... Nxb6 39.Qxb6 f5 40.Qxb5 Rd8 41.Qd5+ Kf6 42.exf5 Kxf5 43.Qf7+! Ke4 44.Qc7

White now wins a piece so Black calls it a day.

Black resigns.

1971

Ljubojevic, L – Planinc, A
Vrsac
Ruy López (C78)


Planinc, a most original player, here plays a sharp and complex side-variation of the Ruy López with which he enjoyed much success in the seventies.

6.Bb3 Bb7

The Arkhangelsk Variation, named after a town in Russia. By the end of the twentieth century similar lines (often beginning with 6 ... Bc5) had become very popular at the highest levels.
7.d4

An active continuation. If now 7 ... exd4?! , White replies with 8.e5! Ng4 9.h3 Nh6 10.Bxh6 gxh6 11.Bd5! Bg7 12.Re1 and he will regain his pawn with the advantage.

7 ... Nxd4 8.Nxd4


8 ... exd4

9.e5

After the game Ljubojevic recommended 9.c3!? Nxe4 10.Re1, when the aggressive 10 ... Bd6? loses, as Arthur Bisguier found when he played the move against Bobby Fischer in 1970. Fischer cleverly exploited the exposed knight by 11.Nd2! Bxh2+ 12.Kf1! d5 13.Qh5 and 14.Qxh2. A better idea is 10 ... Qh4!? leading to unclear complications, but probably best is 10 ... Be7
11.Qg4 0-0 12.Rxe4 Bxe4 13.Qxe4 Bf6, with equal chances.

9 ... Ne4 10.c3

10.Qf3 is tempting but Black is safe enough after 10 ... Qe7, and 10.Qxd4? loses a piece to the old López trap 10 ... c5! followed by 11 ... c4.

10 ... d3!?

This used to be thought safer than 10 ... dxc3, but 11.Qf3 (if 11.Nxc3 Black has 11 ... Nxc3 12.bxc3 Qh4! with the initiative) 11 ... d5! 12.exd6 Qf6! (only not 12 ... Nxd6? because 13.Bxf7+! gives White a winning advantage) is a risky but playable line for Black. Then on 13.d7+ Black can try 13 ... Kd8 with an unclear situation, whilst 13.Re1 can lead to a liquidation by 13 ... 0-0 14.dxc7 Kxc7 15.Qxf6 Nxf6 16.Nxc3 and Black has active play in the endgame.

11.Qxd3

11.Qf3 is also possible and usually leads to wild complications.

11 ... Ne5

This is the obvious drawback of White’s previous move. The knight forks queen and bishop and therefore enables Black to obtain the two bishops.

12.Qg3 Nxb3 13.axb3 Qe7!

Typical Planinc. This provocative move seems to be a mistake because of White’s reply.

14.Bg5!?

It looks natural to develop the bishop in this way, but the piece is poorly placed on g5. An interesting alternative plan is 14.c4!?, with the idea that 14 ... bxc4 15.bxc4 Qe6 16.b3 enables him to develop his remaining pieces. Black still has the initiative but at the same time White’s queen’s side play gives him reasonable chances.
14 ... Qe6 15.f4

Again a natural move which seems to give White a strong central dominance, but in view of Black’s response it would have been safer to develop the knight with 15.Nd2.

15 ... f6!!

A brilliant conception, the point of which only becomes clear after Black’s eighteenth move. Surely opening the e-file must favour White?

16.exf6 Bc5+ 17.Kh1

White now threatens 18.fxg7 and the awkward 18.Re1 is also in the air.

17 ... gxf6!! 18.Re1

If now 18 ... Be4 then 19.Bxf6! wins.

18 ... 0-0-0!!
Sacrificing the queen, in return for which Black gets a rook and then a bishop, for White must defend against ... Rd1 mate.

19.Rxe6 dxe6 20.Qe1

The most sensible method of preventing mate. The queen is removed from the g-file and also guards the important d2 square.

20 ... fxg5 21.Nd2

Ljubojevic realizes that he must develop the knight and therefore has no time for 21.fxg5. For example, one possible continuation would be 21 ... Rhf8 22.Nd2 Rxd2! 23.Qxd2 Rf2 and the threat to g2 wins the queen.

21 ... gxf4 22.Qxe6+

Capturing with check, but the extra pawn is of little use to White and in fact the queen merely provides Black with a gain of tempo when he plays a subsequent ... Rg6. However, it is difficult to recommend a defensive plan for White that is any better given the immense power of the two black bishops.
22 ... Kb8 23.Nf3

At least on f3 the knight physically blocks the long diagonal.

23 ... Rhg8 24.c4

Trying to free his game, but there is little constructive action that he can undertake.

24 ... b4

Keeping the position blocked.

25.Rf1 Rg6

Black begins the process of penetrating into the heart of the white position.

26.Qf5 Be3

This self-supporting construction is very strong. White is more or less powerless to prevent Black’s advances, so decides to create an escape square for his king.

27.h3 Rg3!

The prelude to a lovely finale.

28.Qxh7

Ljubojevic picks off another pawn.

28 ... Bxf3!!

If now 29.gxf3 then 29 ... Rd2 followed by 30 ... Rgg2 is decisive. But where is the win if White recaptures with the rook? Planinc has it all worked out.

29.Rxf3 Rd1+ 30.Kh2 Bg1+ 31.Kh1

How is Black to make progress? Discovered checks seem to get nowhere.
31 ... Rg7!!

This is the beautiful retreat that Planinc had foreseen. The rook cannot be taken because 32 ... Bd4+ wins the queen.

32.Qh8+

White’s problem is that after most queen moves Black has 32 ... Bf2+ 33.Kh2 Bg3+ 34.Rxg3 fxg3 mate. Other than the move he chooses, the only other possibility is 32.Qc2 so that the discovered check can be answered by 33.Qxd1. But 32 ... Re1! renews the mating threat, and if White tries 33.g4 Black wins with 33 ... fxg3 34.Kg2 Bc5 35.Rf1 Rxf1 36.Kxf1 g2+, etc. Therefore, White might play 33.Qd2 Bf2+ 34.Qxe1, but after 34 ... Bxe1 35.Rxf4 Bg3 the endgame is lost.

32 ... Kb7 33.Rd3!

As one would expect from such a wonderful player, Ljubojevic does not make things easy for Planinc and finds a clever resource. If instead 33.g4 Black had several winning methods, the simplest of which is 33 ... Bd4+!
34.Kg2 Re7!, menacing both 35 ... Bxh8 and 35 ... Re2+.

33 ... Re1!

Of course 33 ... Rxd3? is met by 34.Qxg7 with a likely draw.

34.g3

34.g4 is answered in the same way.

34 ... Bd4+ 35.Kh2

If 35.Kg2 Black wins by 35 ... Rxg3+ 36.Rxg3 Bxh8.

35 ... Rge7!

The same pretty conclusion as described in the note to White’s thirty-third.

White resigns.

1972

Csulits, A – Bade
West Germany
Queen’s Pawn (D02)

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.g3

A quiet opening which frequently transposes into the Catalan or Semi-Tarrasch systems if White plays a later c4.

3 ... Bf5

Black goes his own way, developing the bishop outside the pawn chain before it is impeded by ... e6.

4.Bg2 e6 5.0-0 Be7
In this type of position White often advances his c-pawn to challenge the centre. Here, he decides to complete his development first.

6.b3 0-0 7.Bb2

Now the natural continuation is 7 ... c5, but Black prefers more passive piece manoeuvres.

7 ... Re8 8.Nbd2 Nbd7

Again 8 ... c5 would be more dynamic, but there is nothing wrong with the unpretentious text move.

9.Nh4!?

An interesting strategy. White attempts to secure the two bishops, although his king’s side would be rather compromised after 9 ... Bg4!? 10.h3 Bh5 11.g4 Bg6 12.Nxg6 hxg6.

9 ... Bf8
Black ignores the knight and readies himself for control of the e-file.

10.c4!

White correctly judges that the time is right to make the thematic c-pawn advance.

10 ... c6 11.Nxf5 exf5

White has succeeded in obtaining the two bishops and has disrupted his opponent’s pawn structure. Furthermore, a timely exchange of pawns on d5 is likely to leave Black with an isolated d-pawn.

12.e3

Played so that the e-pawn is not a target on e2.

12 ... Qa5 13.a3

Despite weakening the b3 square, the move is useful in preparing the advance of the queen’s side pawns.

13 ... Ne4

The knight is difficult to dislodge from this square, since if White plays f3 the e-pawn is rather vulnerable.

14.b4 Qa6

No doubt expecting 15.cxd5 cxd5, when the open c and e-files offer Black good chances.

15.Bh3?!

An intriguing surprise for Black, but one of dubious merit.

15 ... Nxd2 16.Qxd2 g6?!

Black is seeing ghosts. There was no need to defend the pawn, as 16 ... Qxc4!
17.Rfc1 Qa6 18.Bxf5 Nf6 leaves him with a fine position – White’s dark-squared bishop is hemmed in by his own pawns and there are no weaknesses in the black position.

**17.Rfc1!**

An enterprising choice that marks the start of the real excitement in this game. If Black now risks 17 ... dxc4 then White continues 18.a4!, with the threat of 19.Bf1, recovering the pawn with a clear plus. Then if Black tries to hold on to the pawn, he can find himself in trouble. For example, after 18 ... Nf6 19.Bf1 Ne4 20.Qe1 Nd6?! 21.d5! cxd5?! (better is 21 ... Bg7) 22.Qc3! f6 (forced) 23.b5! Qb6 24.Qxf6 Nf7 (again forced) 25.Qxb6 axb6 26.Bg2 Red8 27.Rd1!, White regains the pawn and Black’s position is seriously weakened.

**17 ... Qb6**

So Black decides to err on the side of caution by trying to get his queen to rejoin the battle.

**18.cxd5 cxd5**
Black’s pawn structure is significantly worse than in the note to the sixteenth move.


An admirable conception. White realizes that controlling the open long black diagonal is worth the exchange, particularly when he also obtains a queen’s side pawn majority and has the weak black d-pawn to attack.

20 ... Rad8 21.Rac1 Bxc5!?

Rather than sit back and allow White gradually to build up a huge positional advantage, Black decides he might as well grab the offered material. But now his weak dark squares become a serious problem.

22.dxc5 Qe6 23.Qd4

Forcing Black to enter into an awkward pin.

23 ... Kg7 24.Rd1

Because the knight is pinned, White threatens to capture the pawn on d5. It is a hazardous course, however, since after it takes the pawn the white bishop will be pinned against his queen. Black now frees the g6 square for his king in order to unpin the knight.

24 ... g5!? 25.Bxd5!?

White is prepared to risk the pin. The other plausible plan is 25.h4 h6 (or 25 ... gxh4?! 26.gxh4 Kg6 27.Kh1!, followed by 28.Rg1 with a powerful attack) 26.h5, which keeps the black pieces in the awkward bind.

25 ... Qe7

The queen must protect the knight.

26.Rc1

Again 26.h4 h6 27.h5 was a another good plan, but White prefers the text
move with the threat of 27.Qxf6+ Qxf6 28.Bxf6+ Kxf6 29.Bxb7 followed by 30.c6, and a menacing pawn advance is looming.

26 ... Kg6?!

Frees the knight, but at the expense of further exposing his king. The safer option was 26 ... Kg8!, when the pin on the bishop forces the sequence 27.Qxf6 Qxf6 28.Bxf6 Rxd5 29.Bxg5 and Black’s active rooks give him at least equal chances.

27.e4!

Defending the bishop and thus renewing the threat of exchanging on f6 followed by the capture of the b-pawn. The resulting passed c-pawn would give White a winning endgame.

27 ... fxe4 28.Bxe4+!

The point behind White’s last move is revealed. After 28 ... Nxe4 White wins the queen with 29.Qg7+ Kf5 (or 29 ... Kh5 30.Qxh7+ Kg4 31.h3+ Kf3
32.Qh5+ and mate next move) 30.Qxh7+ Ke6 31.Qxe4+ Kd7 32.Qxb7+ Ke6 33.Re1+, etc.

28 ... Qxe4

Or 28 ... Kg7 29.Qxf6+, etc.

29.Qxf6+ Kh5 30.Qxf7+

If 30.h3, with the intention of 31.g4+ Kh4 32.Qh6 mate, Black holds with 30 ... Qg6.

30 ... Qg6

Forced, since if 30 ... Kh6 then 31.Bg7 mate, whilst 30 ... Kg4 is answered by 31.h3+ Kxh3 32.Qh5+ winning the queen.

31.g4+!?

It looks right to draw the black king further out into the open, although after the straightforward 31.Qxb7, Black would be struggling to prevent the successful advance of the c-pawn.

31 ... Kh4!

Correctly avoiding 31 ... Kh6? 32.Bg7+! Qxg7 33.Qh5 mate. Consideration could also have been given to 31 ... Kxg4, since it is not clear how White would immediately exploit the exposed position of the monarch.

32.Qxb7

The queen is well-positioned on the seventh rank, as the black pawn on h7 cannot now be left undefended.

32 ... Re4

The ending after 32 ... Qe4 33.Qxe4 Rxe4 once again favours White, so Black keeps the queens on the board and rightly tries to generate counterplay with his major pieces.
33.f3

Necessary in order to defend the g-pawn.

33 ... Re2 34.Qc7!

Suddenly the situation begins to look ominous for Black, given the rather brutal mate threat on g3 and the attack on his rook.

34 ... Rd1+!!

A very clever attempt to confuse White. Other moves lose in short order so Black’s idea is certainly worth trying.

35.Rxd1 Rg2+!

This is the point of Black’s play. If now 36.Kxg2 then 36 ... Qc2+ with perpetual check.

36.Kh1!
So White avoids the draw in the correct manner. If 36.Kf1 then Black forces perpetual with 36 ... Qa6+ (only not 36 ... Qc2? since after 37.Rd2! the black queen is incapable of guarding the g3 and h7 squares and White thus wins).

36 ... Qc2

Black fights on, with a double attack on the two white pieces.

37.Qd6?

A tempting idea, protecting the rook and threatening 37.Qh6 mate, but White misses 37.Rd2! winning instantly (as described above). The text move is also good enough to win, but Black’s swindling opportunities are greatly enhanced.

37 ... h5!!

Black comes up with another ingenious move, preventing the mate and preparing to use the
king in the attack by 38 ... Kh3!. White has to be careful now, since 38.Bd4? loses to 38 ... Kh3 39.Bg1 Qe2! followed by 40 ... Rxg1+. In addition, on 38.gxh5? Kh3 39.Qe6+ (it is too late for 39.Rd2 since 39 ... Qb1+ 40.Rd1 Qxb2 41.Rd2 Qc1+ 42.Rd1 Qe3 wins) 39 ... g4! Black forces mate. White’s only move is again 38.Rd2!, when 38 ... Qxd2 39.Qxd2 Rxd2 40.Be5 leads to an unclear endgame. The most likely result would be a draw, for example 40 ... hxg4 41 fxg4 Kxg4 42.c6 Kf3 43.h3 Rd1+ 44.Kh2 Rd2+, etc.

38.Be5?

White fails to find 38.Rd2 and although h2 is defended Black now has a forced win.

38 ... Kh3!

Mate cannot now be stopped.

![Chess diagram]

39.c6 Rxh2+

After 40.Bxh2 Qg2 is checkmate.
White resigns.
1973

Browne, W – Zuckerman, B
New York
Queen’s Gambit (D60)

1.d4

Browne generally opens with 1.e4 so this move must have come as a surprise to Zuckerman.

1 ... d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bc7 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Bg5 0-0 6.e3 Nbd7

Reaching a standard position in the Queen’s Gambit Declined. In our game from 1919 Przepiórka continued with the popular 7.Rc1, but here Browne elects to play straightforward developing moves.

7.Bd3 dxc4

Black exchanges the pawn as soon as White has developed the bishop, thus gaining a tempo since it must move again to recapture.

8.Bxc4 c5 9.0-0 a6

Zuckerman follows the recommended strategy of preparing queen’s side expansion.

10.a4 cxd4

All this is still mainstream opening theory.

11.exd4 Nb6 12.Bb3 Bd7

In this position White might continue 13.a5 but after 13 ... Nbd5 it is difficult to see much of an advantage for either side. 13.Qe2 is also possible but Browne goes his own way.
13. Ne5!? Bc6!

A good decision for if White exchanges on c6 Black will be able to plant a knight on d5, before attacking down the b-file.

14. Bc2 Nbd5

A powerful post for the knight.

15. Bb1 Nb4

Though this puts the knight out of play, the reasoning is clear. Black wants to control the c2 and d3 squares so that White cannot create the queen and bishop battery along the diagonal.

16. Re1 g6

Again designed to blunt the bishop’s teeth.

17. Bh6 Re8
White has a fine game, but it is not clear whether he can generate any real attacking possibilities. Browne, who needed a victory in this game to win the tournament, finds an original manoeuvre which transfers his rook on a1 to the highly aggressive h3 square. This takes six moves and though Zuckerman has several opportunities to reduce the pressure, he is slightly careless and fails to take them, giving Browne the opportunity to launch a ferocious and brilliant sacrificial combination.

18.Ra3!? Qd6 19.Ne2!

Clearing the third rank for the rook.

19 ... Rad8

With hindsight, Black would be better off playing 19 ... Bf8 (for example if 20.Bf4 then 20 ... Qd5 is fine), but Zuckerman’s choice appears equally sensible.

20.Rh3 Qd5
Threatening 21 ... Qxg2 mate.

21.Nf3!

More bold tactics from Browne, who refrains from exchanging pieces in an attempt to keep things lively.

21 ... Qa5?!

This is where Zuckerman begins to underestimate his opponent’s attacking chances.

22.Nc3 Nbd5?!

Continuing with his risky plan. It was not too late for 22 ... Bf8, when Black is fairly safe.

23.Ne5!

Leaving the a-pawn to its fate.

23 ... Nxc3 24.bxc3 Bxa4 25.Qe2

White’s entire army is pointing at Black’s poor king. The immediate problem for Zuckerman is to prevent 26.Nxf7!.

25 ... Bd7?!

By first playing 25 ... Bb5!?, Black can weaken the white centre thus granting a few more defensive options. For example, after 26.c4 Black could even try 26 ... Bc6!? 27.Nxf7!? Rxd4! when 28.Qxe6? fails to 28 ... Bd8!. White might therefore continue with 28.Ne5 or 28.Ng5, but after 28 ... Bb4! Black is back in the game.

26.Bg5

A subtle retreat, increasing the tension against the black pieces and also letting the rook peer menacingly down the h-file.
26 ... Nd5

Zuckerman has to try this freeing move, otherwise White simply builds up pressure on the f6 knight by 27.Qf3 with a powerful attack.

27.Nxf7!!

Crashing through. After the routine continuation 27.Qf3 Black can survive with 27 ... f5, although admittedly White has an excellent game as a result of the weak dark squares around the king.

27 ... Bxg5!

If the knight sacrifice is accepted then 28.Rxh7+ Kg8 29.Qe4 (or 29.Qg4) and the white queen penetrates with lethal effect. Black’s other option is 27 ... Nxc3, forking queen and bishop. But White has 28.Qd2!, pinning the knight, and if 28 ... Kxf7 then 29.Rxh7+ Kg8 (on 29 ... Kf8 30.Bxe7+ Rxe7 31.Qh6+ leads to mate) 30.Rxe7 Rxe7 31.Bxe7 Re8 32.Bf6 with a clear advantage. The text move, however, looks like a good defence.
28.Rxh7!!

The star move that completely destroys the black pawn shield. If now 28 ... Kxh7 then 29.Qh5+ Kg7 30.Qxg6+ Kf8 31.Nxg5 forces 31 ... Re7.

(i) In this position Browne intended 32.Re3?! , since 32 ... Nxe3? loses to 33.Qf6+ Kg8 34.Qxe7. However, Black can survive with 32 ... Rg7! 33.Qh6 (if 33.Rf3+? then 33 ... Kg8 34.Qh6 Qa1! and Black wins) 33 ... Qa1!
34.Qh8+ Rg8 35.Rf3+ Ke7 36.Qh7+ (White gets nowhere with 36.Rf7+ Kd6 37.Qe5+ Kc6) 36 ... Kd6 37.Nf7+ Kc7 38.Nxd8 Rxd8 and if anything Black has the better chances.

(ii) White should instead continue 32.Qh6+ Rg7! (not 32 ... Kg8? 33.Bh7+ Kh8 34.Rxe6! and wins) 33.Rxe6! Qa1 (or 33 ... Bxe6 34.Nxe6+ Kf7
35.Nxg7 and wins) 34.Qh8+ Rg8 35.Rf6+! Ke7 (35 ... Nxf6? 36.Qxf6+ Ke8 37.Qf7 mate) 36.Rf7+ Kd6 37.Qe5+ Kc6 38.Rf6+! Be6! (not 38 ... Nxf6 39.Qc5 mate nor 38 ... Kb5? 39.Qxd5+ Ka4 40.Qc4+ and 41.Qb4 mate)
39.Rxe6+ Kb5 (39 ... Kd7? 40.Qxd5+ Kc8 41.Qc4+ and 42.Re1 wins)
40.c4+! and the exposed king is sucked deeper into enemy territory and cannot survive long.
28 ... Nf6

Black rightly declines the sacrifice and brings the knight back to attack the rook. There were other ways of declining.

(i) 28 ... Nxc3? 29.Qd3 Qf5 30.Qxc3, uncovering an attack on the queen with an easy win.

(ii) 28 ... Nf4 29.Qg4 Qxc3 (or 29 ... Kxh7 30.Nxg5+ Kg7 31.Qxf4 Rf8 32.Qg3 and the twin attack on g6 and e6 gives White a clear advantage) 30.Rf1 Kxh7 (the clever try 30 ... Qc4 31.Nxg5 Ne2+ fails to 32.Kh1 Ng3+ 33.hxg3 Qxf1+ 34.Kh2 Qxb1 35.Qh4! and White forces mate) 31.Nxg5+ Kg7 32.Qxf4 Re7 33.Qe5+ Kh6 (or 33 ... Kg8 34.Bxg6) 34.Qf6! and wins.

(iii) 28 ... Ne7 29.Bxg6! Nxzg6 30.Qh5 Qf5 (forced) 31.Nd6! Qf6 and now 32.Rf7! wins the queen.

(iv) If 28 ... Bb5 then 29.Qe4 Ne7 30.Nxg5 and triumphs.

29.Bxg6! Nhx7?
The threats included 30.Nxd8 as well as 30.Rh5, so Zuckerman decides that it is time to take one of the white pieces. An interesting and somewhat better alternative – though ultimately futile – was 29 ... Rf8! 30.Nxd8 and now there are a variety of choices.

(i) 30 ... Rxd8 31.Qf3! indirectly protects the rook and the queen will come to h3 (or in some variations b7) with a winning attack.

(ii) 30 ... Nxh7 31.Nxe6 Bxe6 32.Qxe6+ Kh8 (or 32 ... Kg7 33.Bb1 with a clear advantage) 33.Qh3! Qc7 34.Re5! Bf6 35.Rh5 and wins.

(iii) 30 ... Qxd8! 31.Rh3! is simple and strong, when White has no material disadvantage and all the attacking chances.

30.Qh5

Suddenly it is apparent that Black is going to lose the knight and with it any real chance of saving the game.

30 ... Qxc3

The best chance.

31.Qxh7+ Kf8 32.Rf1!
Tucking the rook safely on the f1 square gives Black no possibilities of back-rank tactics.

32 ... Qxd4

If 32 ... Bf6 then 33.Nh6! Bg7 (else mate on f7) 34.Qg8+ Ke7 35.Qxg7+ Kd6 36.Qe5+ Kc6 37.d5+, winning the queen.

33.Ne5!

And not the careless recapture 33.Nxg5?, when Black can survive with 33 ... Re7. By centralizing the knight, White menaces 34.Qf7 mate and prevents the black queen from covering h8, so 34 ... Re7? is now met by 35.Qh8 mate.

33 ... Qf4 34.Nxd7+

Although this leads to victory it is a shame that Browne did not find the immediate finish 34.Bh5! with the threat of 35.Ng6 mate. This can only be avoided by giving up the queen but mate follows in a few moves anyway.
34 ... Rxd7 35.Qh8+!

Accurately played; White now wins both rooks.

35 ... Ke7 36.Qxe8+ Kf6

If 36 ... Kd6 then 37.Rd1+ wins.

37.Qxd7 Kxg6

Black is completely lost but Zuckerman plays on until Browne’s time-trouble is over.

38.Qxe6+ Bf6 39.Qe8+ Kh6 40.g3 Qb4 41.Re1 a5 42.Re6 Qb2 43.Qf7!

Winning nicely.

43 ... Kg5 44.h4+ Kg4 45.Qg6+ Kh3 46.Qf5 mate.

1974

Tal, M – Miagmasuren, L
Nice
Queen’s Gambit (D31)

1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 Bb4

This early bishop sortie is very popular and can transpose into a number of queen’s pawn openings. It has many Nimzo-Indian characteristics but, as in this game, it can also transpose into the Queen’s Gambit.

3.Nf3 d5 4.d4 Ne7?!

4 ... Nf6 would be the more common Ragozin Defence. This development of the knight gives the game an independent flavour.
5.e3

As usual Tal continues with simple and effective development.

5 ... c5

The usual break in positions with the knight on f6. It remains to be seen what difference having the knight on e7 will make.

6.Bd3 Nbc6

One obvious implication of the unusual placement of the knight is that Black must always consider whether castling falls into the standard Bxf7+ sacrifice.

7.0-0 dxc4

This deflects the bishop from the dangerous b1–h7 diagonal.

8.Bxc4 0-0 9.a3
Now 9 ... Bxc3 10.bxc3 Qc7 is possible but Miagmasuren was probably concerned that White’s thematic e4 advance could not be forestalled.

9 ... cxd4!? 10.exd4 Bxc3 11.bxc3 b6

There is a natural means of development for the black bishop along the a8–h1 diagonal. The drawback is that e6 is left with little protection.

12.Qd3!

An ideal attacking post for the queen.

12 ... Bb7 13.Re1

Tal could have launched his attack immediately with 13.Ng5!? , since 13 ... Nf5 14.Nxe6!

and 13 ... g6 14.Qh3! h5 15.g4 are both very good. But 13 ... Ng6! 14.Qh3 (on 14.Re1 Nce7 holds) 14 ... h6 is safe enough, as neither 15.Nxf7? Rxf7 16.Bxe6 Qf6! nor 15.Nxe6? fxe6 16.Qxe6+ Kh7 17.Bd3 Qf6 gets White anywhere.

13 ... h6?!

Unnecessarily weakening the king’s side. Much more sensible is the obvious 13 ... Ng6, when despite his fine position there is no direct way for White to break through.

14.Ba2!

With the dual purposes of preparing a later Bb1 and an advance of the c-pawn. Now Black should finish his development with 14 ... Qd6!, but carelessly moves his rook with the intention of meeting 15.Bb1 with 15 ... Ng6.

14 ... Re8?
15.Rxe6!!

This is what Black did not take into account.

15 ... fxe6

Black takes the rook and there does not appear to be any alternative. However, the amazing 15 ... Nxd4!? is a good try and is by no means easy to refute. After 16.cxd4 Black continues with 16 ... Bxf3!, removing the dangerous white knight and leading to the following situation.
If 17.gxf3 fxe6 18.Bxe6+ Kh8 it is not at all clear how White should continue, and 17.Qxf3 fxe6 18.Bxe6+ Kh8 19.Bxh6 gxh6 20.Qf6+ Kh7 appears to be no better than a draw. Perhaps White’s best 17.Rxh6! gxh6 (best) 18.Qxf3 (18.gxf3 opens the g-file but Black responds with 18 ... Qd6! with 19 ... Qg6+ in the air) 18 ... Qxd4 (the clever 18 ... Nf5?!, attempting to take advantage of the weak back rank, fails to 19.Be3!, and if 19 ... Nxe3 then 20.Bxf7+ Kh7 21.fxe3 is good for White, whilst 19 ... Nd6 is met by 20.Qg4+ Kh7 21.Qf4! with strong pressure against h6) 19.Bxf7+! (19.Qxf7+ is less clear after 19 ... Kh8 because of the threats of 20 ... Qxa1 and 20 ... Qd1 mate) 19 ... Kh7 20.Rb1, with an unclear position.

16.Bxe6+ Kf8

Not 16 ... Kh8? since 17.Ng5! forces victory.

17.Nh4

A strong move, although there was a simple and natural alternative in 17.Qh7!, threatening 18.Bxh6. If Black tries to defend with 17 ... Ng6!? (17 ... Nd5? fails to 18.Qg8+ Ke7 19.Qf7+ Kd6 20.Bxd5 with a crushing attack)

17 ... Ne5!

The only way to prevent a devastating queen check on the f-file. For example, if 17 ... Na5? then 18.Qf5+! Nxf5 19.Ng6 is mate.

18.Qh7! N7c6!


19.Qg8+ Ke7 20.Nf5+ Kf6 21.dxe5+ Nxe5

Of course, capturing with the king leads to disaster after 22.f4+ Ke4 23.Ng3+ Kd3 24.Qh7+ Kxc3 25.Ne2 mate.
22.Qxg7+

Starting a forcing sequence which pushes the black king out into the open.

22 ... Kxe6 23.Nd4+ Kd6 24.Bf4!?

Spurning the simple 24.Qxb7 in view of the reply 24 ... Qd7 when unless the white queen retreats to the a6 square (but not 25.Qe4? Nf3+! and wins) the queens will be exchanged. However, with 25.Qxd7+ Kxd7 26.Bxh6 White obtains a significant advantage in the ending due to his three connected passed pawns. Tal’s alternative idea is to win the knight and keep the black king in the centre of the board.

24 ... Bd5?!

After this the king becomes critically exposed, whereas 24 ... Qd7! again threatens to exchange queens and gives him a glimmer of hope. With 25.Qf6+ Kc5 26.Nb3+! Kc4 27.Bxe5, the king is horribly exposed and cannot capture on b3 because of 28.Qf4! Rxe5 (else 29.Qb4+ Kc2 30.Qb1+ Kd2 31.Qd1 mate) 29.Qb4+! Kc2 30.Qb1+ Kxc3 31.Qb4+! Kd3 32.Rd1+ and wins the queen, but nevertheless Black has outside chances of surviving.

25.Re1

With the powerful threat of 26.Rxe5 Rxe5 27.Qxe5+ Kc5 28.Ne6+, forking king and queen.

25 ... Kc5
26.Rxe5!

Better than 26.Bxe5?!; when 26 ... Rg8! gives Black counterplay on the g-file. After the text move, 26 ... Rg8 is answered by 27.Rxd5+!! Kxd5 (or 27 ... Qxd5 28.Qc7+ Qc6 29.Qxc6 mate) 28.Qe5+ Kc4 29.Qb5+ Kxc3 30.Ne2+ Kc2 31.Qc4+ Kd1 (if 31 ... Kb1 then 32.Qb3+ leads to mate) 32.Qc1+! Kxe2 33.Qf1 mate.

26 ... Rxe5 27.Qxe5


27 ... Qd7

Avoiding the threat and preparing 28 ... Re8! with mate on e1.

28.Nc2!

Not only covering the back rank but also closing the mating net around the opposing king.
28 ... Re8 29.Qd4+
If 29.Be3+ Kb5 30.c4+ Kxc4 31.Qd4+ Kb5 32.a4+ Ka5 Black is still alive.

29 ... Kc6 30.c4!
This little pawn advance is the key to unlock the black defences.

30 ... Be6
Black has to protect the queen, otherwise 31.Nb4+ wins.

31.Qe4+
The queen and bishop scythe through the position and force the king up the board again.

31 ... Kc5 32.h3!

Tal times his moment to create an escape square to perfection. Without any
tactical tricks on the back rank Black has little hope of lasting long.

32 ... Bf5

Other moves meet with a similar conclusion.

33.Be3+ Kd6 34.Qf4+

If 34 ... Re5 then 35.Nd4 – with 36.Nf3 to follow – wins.

34 ... Ke7 35.Nd4

After, say, 35 ... Bd3 White simply continues 36.Qxh6 and, since 36 ... Bxc4 37.Bg5+ Kf7 38.Qh7+ Kf8 39.Bh6+ wins, Black is left with a pretty hopeless position. Even so his resignation is rather premature, though against Tal the result is not in any doubt.

Black resigns.

1975

Vaganian, R – Planinc, A
Hastings
English Opening (A32)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.Nf3

Vaganian knows that Planinc is an expert with the Benoni defence, which is one reason why he avoids 3.d5.

3 ... cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6 5.Nc3 Bb4!?
An interesting alternative to the usual continuations 5 ... Nc6 and 5 ... d5.

6.Ndb5!?

With two such creative individuals as Vaganian and Planinc, one can expect imaginative developments. The move chosen by Vaganian is rather unusual, and many players would select more conservative alternatives such as 6.g3, 6.Bd2 or 6.Qb3.

6 ... 0-0

Immediately safeguarding his king’s position, before commencing operations in the centre. 6 ... d5 was also possible (7.Bf4 0-0 8.Nc7? Nh5!), but it is a feature of innovative attacking players like Planinc that castling frequently occurs before complications are sought.

7.a3 Bxc3+ 8.Nxc3 d5

Black has a fine position with an edge in development.
9. Bg5
Black has no problems after 9.cxd5 exd5 10.e3 Nc6.

9 ... h6!!
An exciting pawn sacrifice, which had been seen a few times before.

10. Bxf6
With hindsight it is clear that 10.Bh4 would have been more prudent, although after 10 ... d4 11.Ne4 g5 12.Nxf6+ Qxf6 Black has the better game. Vaganian thrives in unclear tactical situations so decides to accept the sacrifice, knowing that he is bound to be subjected to uncomfortable pressure.

10 ... Qxf6! 11.cxd5 exd5
Black’s advantage is clear. He has open files for his rooks and good chances of a lasting initiative. Nevertheless, if White can consolidate his position with 12.e3! followed by 13.Be2 and 14.0-0, then Black’s isolated d-pawn may prove to be a weakness.
12.Qxd5

But this is a little too greedy. White’s exposed queen and poor development make this pawn grab highly dangerous.

12 ... Rd8! 13.Qf3?!

White understandably wishes to get the queens off the board, but Black has a strong reply. It was better to play 13.Qb3, although Black would have all the chances. One possible continuation is 13 ... Na6! 14.e3 Be6 15.Qxb7 (15.Qb5 is safer) 15 ... Nc5 16.Qf3 Qg6!, with huge compensation for the pawns.

13 ... Qb6!

Attacking the weak queen’s side, thus preventing White from finishing his king’s side deployment.

14.Rd1

It is not easy to suggest an attractive alternative; 14.b4?! leaves the queen’s
side full of holes.

14 ... Rxd1+ 15.Nxd1 Nc6 16.Qe3

Again White offers an exchange of queens, rather than playing the obvious 16.e3, when Black retains the advantage with 16 ... Be6 17.Be2 Rd8. Vaganian is tempted by the possibilities on e8, but with no support the queen can do little damage and meanwhile Black can create worrying threats.

16 ... Nd4!

With the idea of 17 ... Nc2+.

17.Qe8+ Kh7 18.e3

White finally plays the move he probably should have made six moves earlier. White could have tried 18.Qxf7, but after 18 ... Be6! 19.Qf4 Nc2+ 19.Kd2 Rd8+! 20.Kc1 (not 20.Kxc2? Qb3+ 21.Kb1 Qxd1+! 22.Qc1 Qxc1+! 23.Kxc1 Bb3!! and 24 ... Rd1 mate), Black has a strong attack.
18 ... Nc2+!

The start of a pretty combination, although it is probable that Vaganian misses a drawing resource towards the end of the game.

19.Kd2 Bf5!

Sacrificing the rook to gain one tempo.

20.Qxa8

Otherwise Black’s rook enters the game with fatal effect.

20 ... Qd6+! 21.Kc1?!

If the king moves to e2 then Black mates by 21 ... Qd3+ 22.Kf3 Qxd1+ 23.Be2 Nd4+! 24.Kf4 (24.Kg3 is similar, whilst 24.exd4 Qb3+ mates) 24 ... Nxe2+ 25.Kf3 Ng1+ 26.Kf4 Qd6+! 27.Kxf5 g6+ 28.Kg4 (28.Ke4 f5 mate) 28 ... f5+ 29.Kh4 g5+ 30.Kh5 Qg6 mate. However, 21.Kc3! Qxd1 22.Qxb7 appears to offer Black no immediate win and it is even possible that in some lines he has to take a draw. For example, one illustrative variation is 22 ... Na1!? 23.Qxa7 Qb3+ 24.Kd4 Qxb2+ 25.Kc5 Nb3+ (or 25 ... Qe5+ 26.Kb4) 26.Kb5 and White has chances of surviving. In addition 22 ... Qc1, although it looks strong, can readily be answered by 23.Bd3! Ne1+ 24.Kd4 Bxd3 25.Rxe1 26.Qc4+ Ke5 and White lives.

Instead, perhaps Black has winning chances after 21 ... Qe5+!? although it is not easy to find the long series of correct moves that lead to an endgame advantage. After 22.Kd2 (best) 22 ... Qd5+ 23.Kc3 (23.Ke2 Qd3+ again wins) 23 ... Qa5+ 24.b4 (24.Kb3 Na1+ 25.Ka2 Qd5+ 26.Bc4 Qxc4+ 27.Kxa1 Qc1+ 28.Ka2 Be6+ 29.b3 Qc2+ 30.Ka1 Qxb3 31.Nc3 Qxc3+ 32.Kb1 Bf5+ 33.Ka2 Qc2+ 34.Ka1 Be6 and wins) 24 ... Qxa3+ 25.Kd2 Qxb4+ White can try 26.Nc3!?, and then the game might continue 26 ... Na3 27.Ke2 Qxc3 28.Qd8 Nc4 29.Qd4 Qc2+ 30.Ke1 Nb3 31.Qd2 Qb1+ 32.Ke2 Bd3+ 33.Kf3 Bxf1 34.Rxf1 Qxf1 35.Qxb2 Qd1+ with a pawn advantage, which might be sufficient to win. Such protracted lines, however, offer numerous chances to go wrong and in practical play White is quite likely to escape with a draw.
21 ... Na1!!

For a creative player like Planinc, this move must have been a joy to make on the board. In addition to the aesthetic appeal of playing a knight into a far corner, it gives him a dangerous attack.

22.Qxb7?

This move loses to a beautiful idea. There are other attempts to save the game, although there is only one continuation that leads to a drawish outcome.

(i) 22.b4? Nb3+ 23.Kb2 Qd2+! 24.Kxb3 Qc2 mate.

(ii) 22.e4? Bxe4 23.Bc4 Qc5 and now:


(b) 24.Nc3 Qxc4 25.Qd8 (else 25 ... Qd3) 25 ... Nb3+ 26.Kd1 Nd4! and 27 ...
Qd3+ wins.

(iii) The right method is 22.Bc4!! Qc5! 23.Nc3!! (not 23.b3? Nxb3+ and wins) 23 ... Qxc4.

Now White’s best continuation is 24.Qd8! Nb3+ (24 ... Qb3 25.Qd1! holds) 25.Kd1 Qg4+ (if 25 ... Nc5 then 26.Qd5 is fine) 26.Ke1 (if 26.Ne2!? then Black can cause continuing problems with 26 ... Qxg2 27.Rg1 Qe4! 28.Ke1 Qb1+ 29.Qd1 Qxb2 and his queen’s side pawns become a dangerous factor) 26 ... Qxg2 27.Rf1 (27.Qd5? fails to 27 ... Qxd5! followed by 28 ... Be4) 27 ... Bh3! (27 ... Nc5 28.Qd5! Nd3+ 29.Kd2 gets Black nowhere because 29 ... Qxf1? loses to 30.Qxf5+) 28.Qd3+ f5, and though White is somewhat tied up and Black can back the exchange when he pleases, the endgame is by no means easy and the game is likely to finish in a draw.

22 ... Qc7+!! White resigns.

A stunning blow. If 23.Qxc7 then 23 ... Nb3 is mate. The final position deserves a diagram.
1976

Jensen – Schorr, L
Biel
French Defence (C05)

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2
Jensen essays the solid Tarrasch Variation in answer to Black’s French Defence, as also seen in our game from 1949.

3 ... Nf6

The other popular variation is 3 ... c5.

4.e5 Nfd7 5.c3 c5 6.f4

Aggressive but also loosening which is why, at the time of writing, piece development by 6.Bd3 is somewhat more popular.
6 ... Nc6 7.Ndf3 Qa5

The traditional move in the French would be 7 ... Qb6 but the text move was quite common in the 1970s.

8.Bd2?

The original method of unpinning the c-pawn was 8.Kf2, but it became apparent that White could secure an advantage with 8.Be3! cxd4 9.Nxd4 Nxd4 10.Bxd4. Slightly better for Black is 8 ... b5! 9.dxc5 b4, attacking the pawn chain, but even then 10.Nd4 Qxc5 11.Qa4! gives White all the play. Jensen’s choice in this game is shown by his opponent’s reply to be faulty.

8 ... Qb6!

A good manoeuvre that attacks the white pawns on b2 and d4.

9.Bc1

After this retreat we have transposed into the 7 ... Qb6 variation, only with
Black to play; the loss of a move is sufficient to hand the initiative to the second player. Another possibility was 9.Qb3, although White has a wretched pawn structure after 9 ... Qxb3 10.axb3 cxd4 11.cxd4.

9 ... cxd4 10.cxd4 Bb4+

A standard idea in the French Defence, and particularly potent now that White has mislaid a tempo.

11.Kf2

He has to move his king as 11.Bd2 loses the d-pawn.

11 ... Be7

Having done its job of inconveniencing the white king the bishop returns to the king’s side. An examination of the situation reveals how difficult it is for White to complete his development: if the queen’s bishop moves he loses the b-pawn, whilst the other bishop cannot be placed on its natural d3 square since the d-pawn falls.

12.g4!?

Hence White decides that tactical operations should commence.

12 ... f6!

Schorr rightly considers that a break-up of the pawn mass will be likely to cause more problems for his opponent than himself.

13.Kg3!?

This strange haven for the king has been seen before in similar positions, although it is difficult to have much confidence in its viability.
13 ... fxe5

An interesting alternative here is 13 ... g5!?, when 14.fxg5 fxe5! 15.dxe5 Ndxe5 leaves White’s king horribly exposed. Better is 14.exf6 but Black remains on top after 14 ... gxf4+ 15.Bxf4 Nxf6, followed by 16 ... Rg8.

14.fxe5 0-0

Natural and strong. The white king is looking less comfortable now that Black has seized the open f-file.

15.Ne2

If White tries 15.Bd3, hoping for 15 ... Nxd4 16.Nxd4 Qxd4? (16 ... Nxe5! is actually playable and bears some resemblance to the game) 17.Bxh7+ winning the queen, then Black can respond with the same sacrifice as played in the game.

15 ... Ndxe5!
Smashing apart the white centre. On 16.Nxe5 Black recaptures the knight with 16 ... Nxe5 and since 17.dxe5 loses to 17 ... Qf2+ 18.Kh3 Qh4+ 19.Kg2 Qxg4+ 20.Ng3 Qxd1, White is left with a pawn down in a lost position.

16.dxe5 Nxe5 17.Bg2?

White should have ventured 17.Nxe5, for after 17 ... Qf2+ 18.Kh3 Qh4+ 19.Kg2 the pawn on g4 is defended. Then Black might try 19 ... Rf2+ 20.Kg1 Bc5, but 21.Nd4! holds. Instead of 17 ... Qf2+ Black should probably prefer 17 ... Bd6!, which regains one of the sacrificed pieces. If White risks 18.Bf4?! , his king is dragged up the board by 18 ... Bxe5! 19.Bxe5 Qe3+ 20.Kh4 g5+ 21.Kh5 Qxe5 and he must tread carefully to avoid being mated. In any event, in return for his piece Black will have two pawns and strong pressure against the exposed king.

17 ... Nxg4!!

An excellent follow-up sacrifice. Now White gets a worse position than had he accepted the knight on the previous move.
18.Kxg4

If White declines the piece by 18.Ned4 then Black has 18 ... h5! (clearer than 18 ... Qc7+ 19.Kxg4 e5+ 20.Kg3 exd4+ 21.Kf2 and White hangs on), with the decisive threat of 19 ... Qc7+ 20.Kh3 Nf2 mate; White’s defensive tries merely delay the inevitable (for example 19.Bh3 e5! wins a piece).

18 ... Qf2!

Showing admirable restraint to avoid the tempting 18 ... e5+. The text move cuts off the king’s retreat and threatens 19 ... Qxg2+ (in fact 19 ... g6 mates even quicker) 20.Ng3 e5+ 21.Kh5 Qh3+ 22.Nh4 Qxh4 mate.

19.Ng3

The bishop cannot be saved, since 19.Qf1 and 19.Rg1 are both met by 19 ... e5+ 20.Kh5 Rf5+ 21.Ng5 g6+ 22.Kg4 Rxg5 mate, whilst 19.Bh3 loses to 19 ... Qxf3 mate.

19 ... e5+ 20.Kh5 Rf5+

A simpler win would have been 20 ... Qxg2, intending 21 ... Qh3+ 22.Nh4 Qxh4 mate. This can only be prevented by 21.h3 or 21.Ng5, but then 21 ... Qxg3 and 21 ... Rf6 respectively lead to mate in short order.

21.Nxf5

Otherwise Black forces mate.

21 ... g6+?

Black again complicates matters unnecessarily. After 21 ... Bxf5 the threat of 22 ... Bg6+ means that White cannot survive for long. For example, if 22.Qxd5+ Kh8 23.Qxe5 then 23 ... Bg6+ 24.Kg4 Qxg2+ 25.Qg3 h5+ 26.Kf4 Rf8+ 27.Ke3 Bc5+ 28.Nd4 Re8+ 29.Kf4 Qe4+ 30.Kg5 Be7 is mate.

22.Kh6

Forced (22.Kg4 Bxf5 mate) and seemingly hopeless, but it turns out to be
rather difficult to finish White off.

22 ... Bf8+

22 ... Bxf5? would be disastrous after 23.Qxd5+ Kf8 (23 ... Kh8? 24.Qxe5+ leads to mate) 24.Rg1 and Black’s attack runs out of steam – and pieces.

23.Kg5 Qxg2+

It seems odd to consider an alternative to this capture with check, but 23 ... Bxf5!? has some subtle aspects worth exploring. After 24.Qxd5+ Kh8 the careless 25.Qxe5+ loses to 25 ... Bg7!.
For example, 26.Qg3 h6+ 27.Kf4 (or 27.Kh4 Bf6+ 28.Bg5 hXg5+ 29.Nxg5 Qd4+ and mates) 27 ... Be5+!! 28.Kxe5 Re8+ 29.Kd5 (other moves lose more rapidly) 29 ... Be4+ 30.Kc4 Qc2+ 31.Kb4 a5+ 32.Kxa5 Qc5+ 33.Ka4 Ra8+ 34.Kb3 Bc2 mate. Instead, 25.Qxb7 looks like a tougher defence, but Black can win with the brilliant 25 ... Re8!!, with the idea of 26 ... Bg7! and 27 ... h6 mate. The only real chance for White is then 26.Qc6 but Black plays the beautiful 26 ... Kg8!!.
This creates an inescapable mating net, since if 27.Qxe8 then 27 ... h6+ 28.Kf6 Qb6+ 29.Kxe5 Qd6 is mate.

24.Kf6!

Dangerous as it looks, this is the only move offering any survival chances, because 24.Ng3 Be7+ 25.Kh6 Qh3+ 26.Nh4 Qxh4+ 27.Nh5 Bf8 is mate.

24 ... Bxf5

Finally taking the knight.

25.Qxd5+

If 25.Rg1 then 25 ... Bg7+ 26.Ke7 Qf2 and the queen returns (for example, via b6) to harass the king with decisive effect.
25 ... Kh8 26.Rg1?!

This should hand the game to Black. There were two more testing alternatives, which lead to fascinating positions. In both cases only with accurate and imaginative play can Black prevail; the following variations are simply magnificent.

(i) 26.Rd1 Bg7+ 27.Ke7 Qc2! (bringing the queen back into the attack) 28.Qd8+! (other moves lose immediately) 28 ... Bf8+!!.
This unconventional move wins, whereas 28 ... Rxd8? 29.Rxd8+ Bf8+ 30.Rxf8+ Kg7 31.Rf7+ forces a draw by perpetual check. But now 29.Qxf8+ loses to 29 ... Rxf8 30.Kxf8 Qxd1, and the superior 29.Kxf8! can be met by 29 ... Rxd8+ 30.Rxd8 Qc7! 31.Rd1 (other moves are worse, for example 31.Ra8 Qg7+ 32.Ke8 Kg8 and mate next move) 31 ... Qg7+ 32.Ke8 Kg8!! 33.Kd8 (the only other defence against mate is the hopeless 33.Bh6) 33 ... Qf6+! 34.Kc7 (34.Ke8 Qf8 mate) 34 ... Qc6+ 35.Kb8 (35.Kd8 Qc8+ 36.Ke7 Qf8 mate) 35 ... b5!! 36.Kxa7 (36.Rd8+ Kg7 37.Be3 Be4 leads to mate) 36 ... Be4 37.Rd8+ Kg7 38.Rb8 Bxf3 39.Be3 Qc7+ 40.Ka6 Qxb8 and wins.

(ii) 26.Qxb7!? Re8! with the threat 27 ... Re6+ 28.Kf7 Re7+.

(a) Now 27.Rg1 Qc2! is again very strong as 28.Ng5 (28.Nxe5 Re6+ 29.Kf7 and now 29 ... Rxe5 and 29 ... Qc5 both win) 28 ... Be7+ 29.Kxe5 (or 29.Qxe7 Qc6+ winning) 29 ... Bxg5+ mates in a few moves.

(b) If 27.Qd5 then 27 ... Bg7+ 28.Kf7 Qc2!! forces mate, for if 29.Kxe8 then 29 ... Qc8+ 30.Qd8 Qe6+ 31.Qe7 Qg8+ 32.Qf8 Qxf8 is a lovely mate.

(c) The best try is 27.Rd1, but 27 ... Bc8! wins. If 28.Qb3 then 28 ... Be6
29.\text{Qb7 Qh3} wins, and 28.\text{Qc6} loses the queen and the game after 28 ... \text{Re6+ 29.Qxe6 Qxf3+ 30.Kxe5 Qe2+} and 31 ... \text{Bxe6}. Finally, 28.\text{Qd5} is answered by the ubiquitous 28 ... \text{Qc2! 29.Nh4 Qf2+ 30.Nf3 Qb6+} and mate follows.

26 ... \text{Bg7+ 27.Ke7}

In this position, with the benefit of examining the variations in the previous note, it is evident that Black should play 27 ... \text{Qc2!} and the threat of 28 ... \text{Qc7+} forces mate in a few moves. For instance, 28.\text{Qa5 Qc8! 29.Kd6 Qc6+ 30.Ke7 Qd7} mate.

27 ... \text{Bf8+?}

After the excitement of chasing the king up the

board, it is Black rather than White who stumbles at the last hurdle. After this disastrous move White wins because of the threat of 29.\text{Qxe5+}.

28.\text{Kf7 Be6+]

29.Qxe6!

This is the easiest mode of winning, and White sensibly does not wish to tempt fate with the line 29.Kxe6 Qh3+ 30.Kxe5 Qf5+ (30 ... Re8+ 31.Kd4 Bg7+ 32.Kd3) 31.Kd4 Bg7+ 32.Ne5! (other moves lose the queen) and although Black has no immediate way of making progress, White faces some uncomfortable moments ahead. After the text move Black is lost because 29 ... Qxf3+ fails to 30.Qf6+ Qxf6+ (30 ... Bg7 31.Qxf3 Rf8+ 32.Ke7 Rxf3 is similar) 31.Kxf6, with a winning material advantage.

Black resigns.

1977

Littlewood, J – Horner, J
Chorley
French Defence (C16)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 b6!?
This odd-looking move is one of Nimzowitsch’s original conceptions and is based on sound strategic principles. In the French Defence the central black pawns are located on the light squares, leaving the queen’s bishop dreadfully constricted. Nimzowitsch thus concocted a plan in which Black attempts to effect an early exchange of this problem piece for White’s correspondingly good bishop on f1. The whole idea looks odd, but was eventually made popular by the late Armenian World Champion Tigran Petrosian. The positional emphasis of the opening is such that in many lines Black even retreats the bishop on b4 to f8 rather than permit its exchange – a manoeuvre which occurs in the present game.

5.Qg4

Immediately trying to exploit the absence of the bishop.

5 ... Bf8!

With the centre blocked such a time-wasting move is not as damaging as in an open position.
6.a4

White has an enormous variety of possible continuations in this position, and selects an interesting plan of light-square restraint. Alternatives include developing the king’s knight to h3, f3 or even e2, and 6.Bg5, 6.Bb5+, 6.Nd1!? (with the idea of 7.c3) and 6.h4 have all been played.

6 ... Ba6!?  
Horner continues with his plan but as a result of White’s previous move the exchange of bishops can be prevented. Accordingly, a change of strategy with 6 ... Nc6 might have been a safer idea.

7.Nb5!

The point of the sixth move is that now 7 ... c6? loses to 8.Nd6+ Bxd6 9.Qxg7.

7 ... Qd7

From here the queen will defend g7 after a later ... f5.

8.Nh3!?

The normal move is the simple 8.Bd3 but Littlewood’s idea is to use the knight on the effective post f4.

8 ... Ne7 9.Bd3

Another idea here is 9.Nf4, with the intention of putting pressure on g7 by 10.Nh5.

9 ... Bb7

A passive retreat which signifies the failure of his opening strategy because now White has an easy game. Perhaps the risky 9 ... Nf5!? 10.Bxf5 exf5 11.Qf4 c6 should have been tried, although this too looks far better for White.

10.0-0 a6
Finally driving away the knight but leaving himself with a large disadvantage in development, which Littlewood begins to exploit.

11.Na3!


11 ... c5!

Black’s hopes lie in the counter-attack against the white centre.

12.c3 Nbc6

Again Horner declines the a-pawn and prefers to develop a piece. His king’s side is rather congested and the knight on e7 prevents the bishop from guarding the c-pawn, a fact of which Littlewood immediately tries to take advantage.

13.Be3! c4?!
Strategic suicide and unnecessary because the c-pawn was not really in danger – after 13 ... Rc8 14.dxc5, Black replies 14 ... Nxe5.


Because Black has not yet castled, White transfers this knight to d2, where it will support the b3 advance in the event that Black ever plays ... 0-0-0.

15 ... h6

Taking away g5 from the white pieces, but the immediate 15 ... Nf5 is a better defence.

16.Nd2

White is now fully prepared to launch his assault.

16 ... Nf5

Now 17.Bxf5 exf5 18.Qf4 is possible, but there is no need for White to exchange his good bishop.

17.Nf4

From this square the knight eyes e6 and g6 and can also jump to h5.

17 ... g6?

The notion behind this move is to prevent 18.Nh5, but the phrase “red rag to a bull” springs to mind. Littlewood, a famously aggressive player, is now in his element as he sacrifices the knight for two pawns and a massive attack. Black had to castle queen’s side and hope to survive the inevitable onslaught.
18.\textbf{Nxg6! h5}\\
Acceptance by 18 ... fxg6 is playable, although after 19.Qxg6+ Qf7 (on 19 ... Kd8 20.Bxf5 exf5 21.Qxb6+ Qc7 22.Qf6+ and 23.Qxh8 wins) 20.Bxf5 exf5 21.Qxb6 Nc6 22.e6! Qe7 (the queen must stay on the second rank to defend the queen’s bishop) 23.Bf4, White would have three pawns and a strong attack in return for the sacrificed piece.

19.\textbf{Qg5}!?\\

19 ... \textbf{Bh6}!\\
With the pawn on h5 rather than h6 it is not advisable to take the knight, since in the line 20.Qxg6+ Qf7 21.Bxf5 exf5 22.Qxb6 Nc6 23.e6! Qe7, White has 24.Bg5! Qg7 25.e7! winning. Therefore 23 ... Qg7 would be necessary, but White can build up a crushing attack by 24.Bg5! with Rae1, f4 and e7 to
follow.


(i) If here 25.fxe3 Black replies 25 ... Bxe3+ 26.Kh1 and then can get at least a draw with 26 ... Rhx2+!! 27.Kxh2 Qh5+ 28.Kg3; he can retain an attack with 28 ... Qg5+ 29.Kf3 (29.Kh3? loses to 29 ... Bc8+) 29 ... Bxd2 30.g3, or can try 28 ... Bc8!, hoping for 29.Rf3? Qg4+ 30.Kh2 Qh4+ 31.Rh3 Bxh3 and Black wins. However in this last line White can force perpetual check with 29.Rf8+!! Kxf8 (not 29 ... Kd7? 30.Rd8+ Ke6 31.Qb6+ Kf7 32.Qf6 mate) 30.Qd8+ Kg7 31.Qf6+ Kh7 32.Qe7+, etc.

(ii) Better is 25.Nf3!, when White has four pawns for the piece and a clear advantage, but will face some awkward moments as Black attacks down the open files facing the white king.

Instead of these lines Littlewood uncorks a spectacular queen sacrifice which, although it gives him good practical chances, allows Black with accurate play to get back into the game.
20.Nxh8?! 

True to his nature, Littlewood casually leaves the queen en prise.

20 ... Bxg5 21.Bxg5

White has rook, bishop and pawn for the queen but more importantly the black king is trapped in the centre and will be subjected to a fierce attack from the minor pieces.

21 ... Nc6?!

Horner spurns the opportunity to generate counterplay by 21 ... Kf8!?, attempting to capture the knight. The threat is 22 ... Kg8 when in the event that White puts his bishop on f6 then Black continues 23 ... Ng7 followed by 24 ... Kxh8. However, things are not quite that simple since White can try the immediate 22.Bf6, when 22 ... Ng7 is answered by 23.f4! Kg8 24.Rf3! Kxh8 25.Rg3! Rg8 26.Rg5! and wins. In this line 24 ... h4 prevents 25.Rg3, but then White plays 25.Rh3! Nh5 (or 25 ... Nf5 26.Bxf5 exf5 27.Rxh4 with the advantage, and if 25 ... Kxh8? then 26.Rxh4+ Kg8 27.Rh7! wins) 26.Rxh4 Nxf6 27.exf6 with 28.Rh7 and 29.Nxf7 to follow. But Black should not immediately discard the whole idea because 21 ... Kf8 22.Bf6 Kg8! is a better move order. The subtle point is that on 23.f4 Black replies 23 ... Ne3!, forking rook and bishop.
In this position White has three choices.

(i) On 24.Bb1? Black wins with 24 ... Nxf1 25.Kxf1 Nb3!, forcing the exchange of the knight before White can play Nf3 and Ng5.

(ii) An interesting try is 24.Bd1!? hoping that Black might try to capture the knight with the rook by 24 ... Kh7, for then 25.Rf3! Nxd1 26.Rh3! Rxh8 (or 26 ... Nxb2 27.Rxh5+ Kg8 28.Nf3 and wins) 27.Rxh5+ Kg6 28.Rxh8 Ne3 29.g4!! Nxc4 30.Rg8+ gives him a decisive advantage. But with a careful transposition of moves by 24 ... Nxd1! 25.Raxd1 (if 25.Rf3 Nxb2 White is two moves behind the line above and is struggling) 25 ... Kh7! 26.Rf3 Rxh8 27.Bxh8 Qxa4 28.Rc1 Kxh8 Black prevails.

(iii) Best is 24.Rf3!! Nxc2 25.Rg3+ (25.Rh3 Nxa1 26.Rxh5 just fails after 26 ... Qxa4) 25 ... Kf8 26.Rc1! Qxa4 27.Rg7, with excellent attacking chances. For instance, on 27 ... Ne3 28.Rxf7+ Ke8! (not 28 ... Kg8? 29.Nf3! Nf5 30.Ng5 with a winning initiative) 29.Re7+ Kd8 (of course not 29 ... Kf8? 30.Ng6+ Kg8 31.Rg7 mate) 30.Rxb7+ Kc8 White retains the advantage but Black is still in the game.
After Black’s unambitious text move he is reduced to passive defence.

22. Rae1
Defending the e3 square thus making the ... Kf8 idea less appealing.

22 ... Nce7
The knight blocks the path of the bishop so that queen’s side castling becomes a possibility.

23. Bd1!
Although Black’s next move saves the h-pawn, the bishop is ideally placed on d1 to support the advance of the king’s side pawns. Moreover, forcing the knight to move means once again that castling is rendered impossible.

23 ... Ng6
Not 23 ... h4 since 24. Bh5! is very strong.
24.\textbf{Nxg6 fxg6} 25.\textbf{h3!}

Beginning the pawn storm. Largely because of his inability to castle and the total ineffectiveness of his queen’s rook and bishop, Black is powerless to prevent his opponent’s plan.

25 \textbf{... Qh7} 26.\textbf{g4 Nh6}

If 26 ... hgx4 27.hxg4 Nh4 (on 27 ... Ne7 White continues with his plan of 28.f4, etc) White gets a decisive advantage with 28.f4! (better than 28.Re3 Kd7 29.Rh3?, which fails to 29 ... Nf3+! and now 30.Kg2 Qxh3+! 31.Kxh3 Rh8+ 32.Kg3 Nxc5 with a roughly level position or 30.Rxf3? Rh8! and Black wins) 28 ... Kd7 29.Re2, with 30.Rh2 to follow.

27.\textbf{Kg2 Kd7} 28.\textbf{f4 Bc6}

On 28 ... Rf8 White can easily prepare the advance of the f-pawn by 29.Rf2, and then either Ref1, or Nf1 and Ne3.

29.\textbf{Bf3}!?

Not strictly necessary but setting the trap 29 ... Bxa4? 30.Nxc4!.

29 \textbf{... Rh8}

Hoping for some favourable tactical tricks down the h-file.

30.\textbf{Rh1 Bxa4}

Snatching the pawn on offer.
31.Ra1 Bc2?

After this Black is hopelessly lost. He had to try to keep the position closed with 31 ... Bb5, when White would have to engineer the f5 breakthrough by manoeuvring his knight to e3 and a rook to f1. Black would certainly face a very difficult task but White would still have to convert his advantage into victory.

32.Rxa6

With the brutal threat of 33.Ra7+ winning the queen.

32 ... Kc6

If 32 ... Rc8 then 33.Rxb6 followed by 34.Ra1 wins, but now the c-pawn falls.

33.Nxc4 hxg4

If 33 ... Kb5 forking rook and knight, then White continues 34.Rxb6+ Kxc4

34. hxg4 Qg7 35. Na5+!

Since Black loses the queen if he retreats to c7 or d7, he advances the king but walks into a pretty mating net.

35 ... Kb5 36. Be2+ Ka4 37. Ra1 mate.

1978

Panczyk, K – Schurade, M
Zakpane
Queen’s Gambit (D66)

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 d5

This game follows Mikenas – Lebedev, our game from 1941, until move thirteen.


As mentioned in the notes to our 1941 game, this is somewhat inferior to 10 ... b5!!.
11.Bg3!

Panczyk is as alert in 1978 as Mikenas was in 1941; this retreat preserves the dark-squared bishop and gives White a slight edge.

11 ... Nxc3 12.bxc3 c5 13.0-0 b6?

Lebedev preferred 13 ... a6 against Mikenas and this game shows why it is a superior try.

14.d5!

This thematic advance contains the poisonous trap of 14 ... Nf6? 15.d6!, winning the bishop. The Swedish grandmaster Gideon Ståhlberg once managed to win a game with this particular ambush.

14 ... Nb8

The e-pawn is under attack and since 14 ... exd5 loses the exchange to 15.Bxd5, there is little choice.
15.Ne5

From this square the knight dominates the position. It puts pressure on the f-pawn and hence on its neighbour on e6. Moreover, in some lines the knight can jump into c6 to cause considerable havoc. Another option was 15.d6 Bf6 16.e4, with a commanding centre and a huge positional advantage. In this variation White must still tread carefully and should avoid the plausible but flawed 16.Bd5?, since 16 ... exd5 17.Qxd5 Qd7! 18.Qxa8 Nc6! followed by 19 ... Bb7 wins the queen.

15 ... a6

His intention of expanding on the queen’s side is too slow to prevent White’s progress. However, it is not easy to suggest a superior plan for Black, who is almost completely tied up.

16.dxe6

This wins, but there was an even more convincing continuation in 16.Nxf7!. If 16 ... Rxf7 then 17.dxe6! and now:
(i) 17 ... Qxd1 18.exf7+ Kf8 19.Rfxd1 wins.


(iii) 17 ... Rf8 18.Bd5! and the rook on a8 or the knight on b8 is lost.

Alternatively, if 16 ... Kxf7 then White plays 17.dxe6+ Bxe6 (17 ... Kg8 18.Bd5) 18.Bxe6+ Kxe6 (or 18 ... Kf6 19.Qf3+, or 18 ... Kg6 19.Qc2+ Kh5 20.Qe4 wins) 19.Qg4+ Kf7 20.Qf3+ Kg8 21.Qxa8, with an easy victory.

16 ... Bxe6

If 16 ... fxe6 then 17.Qg4 attacks the e-pawn, and if then 17 ... Rf6 White replies with 18.Qe4 Ra7 19.Ng4!, hitting the rook and the knight on b8.

17.Bxe6 fxe6 18.Qg4

18.Qb3 is also strong.

18 ... Qc8

If Black defends the pawn with 18 ... Rf6, White increases the pressure with 19.Rfd1! (19.Qe4 Qd5 is less convincing) 19 ... Qc8 20.Qe4 Ra7 21.Ng4! Rf8 and now 22.Nxh6+ gxh6 23.Qg6+ Kh8 24.Qxh6+ Kg8 25.Qg6+ Kh8 26.Be5+ wins.

19.Qe4!

Now the obvious 19 ... Nd7 loses a pawn to 20.Nc6! Bf6 21.Qxe6+, so Black elects to move the rook.

19 ... Ra7 20.Ng6! Rf6

If 20 ... Rf7 (20 ... Re8 is the same) then 21.Bxb8 Qxb8 22.Qxe6. White clearly has a massive positional advantage, but how is he to convert that into victory?

21.Qa8!!
A fantastic winning move, the point of which is that 21 ... Rxa8 22.Nxe7+ Kf7 23.Nxc8 nets White a piece. Black cannot now avoid decisive material loss.

Black resigns.

1979

Levitina, I – Gaprindashvili, N
Tbilisi
Sicilian Defence (B33)

The beautiful combination that lurks in the notes – which was missed by both players – is the principal reason why this game has been included.


This position has already been seen in our games from 1926 and 1933. It is
interesting to consider how the modern game of chess has evolved from the first half of the twentieth century, and perhaps there is no better illustration of this than the variation seen in the current game. The players now enter the murky waters of the Sicilian Pelikán, an ultra-tactical line popularized by the Soviet grandmaster Yevgeny Sveshnikov in the 70s and 80s, which epitomizes modern chess. Since this game was played, the introduction of computer programs and chess database software has seen a further trend towards tactics and pure calculation at the expense of the traditional more dogmatic approach to chess.


This position is more commonly reached from a different move order, namely 5 ... e5 6.Ndb5 d6. Black sometimes plays the move order seen in the game in order to avoid a couple of interesting sidelines that White can use to side-step the main theory (7.a4 and 7.Nd5). The associated drawback is that it gives White another option, that of 6.Nxc6, which leads to a very different type of game from that which Black normally seeks in the Pelikán.

8 ... a6 9.Na3 b5

Black’s play in the Pelikán/Sveshnikov is based on the advance of the queen’s side pawns to worry the white knights, together with the creation and utilization of a powerful central pawn mass.
10. Bxf6 gxf6

She is not concerned about the doubled pawns since this provides the possibility of a subsequent ... f5 advance, attacking White’s centre.

11. Nd5

The main line. Only the very brave are prepared to tangle with the wild 12. Bxb5!? axb5 13. Nxb5, with horrendous complications.

11 ... f5 12. Bd3

Here 12. exf5!? Bxf5 13. c3 is an interesting alternative, where White tries to use the active minor pieces to exploit the open lines pointing at the black king.

12 ... Be6 13. Qh5

This position has been reached thousands of times since the opening came to prominence in the middle of the 1970s. Traditional here is the sensible
developing move 13 ... Bg7, although 13 ... f4 and particularly 13 ... Rg8!
have also been played. Gaprindashvili plays an unusual alternative, which
attempts to route the knight to the useful c5 square. However, the whole
manoeuvre seems too slow for such an explosive position.

13 ... Nb8?! 14.0-0

Levitina continues with the simple development of her pieces.

14 ... Nd7 15.Rfe1 Nc5

The black knight finally reaches its destination but White has prepared a little
surprise.

16.Nf4!

A lovely move, threatening to win the pawn on f5.

16 ... Rg8!
On 16 ... exf4 17.exf5 recovers the piece with a winning attack, whilst 16 ... Nxd3 17.Nxe6! Qe7 18.cxd3 Qxe6 19.Qxf5 wins a pawn. The only attempt to save the pawn is 16 ... fxe4 but this fails to 17.Nxe6 Nxe6 18.Bxe4 Rc8 (if 18 ... Rb8 then 19.Bc6+ follows) 19.Bb7!. Gaprindashvili prefers to surrender the pawn in order to seize the open g-file.

17.exf5 Bd7

Now after simple moves such as 18.Rad1 Black can secure the two bishops, which combined with the open file and the central pawns would give her good attacking chances. Similarly, after 18.Qxh7!? Nxd3 19.Nxd3 Qg5 Black would have the initiative.

18.f6!?

An imaginative move, with the idea that 18 ... Qxf6 19.Nd5 Qd8? 20.Qf3! is very strong.

18 ... Nxd3! 19.cxd3

After 20.Nxd3 Black can safely capture on f6 with a good game (and if then 21.f4?!, Black has the reply 21 ... Bc6!).

19 ... Qxf6 20.Nd5 Qg7!

Not 20 ... Qd8? since 21.Qf3! threatens both 22.Nf6+ and 22.Nc7+!. Now White must defend against the mate on g2 but this gives Black time to regroup.

21.g3

The natural 21.Qf3!? looks very good, as again it seems impossible to prevent both knight checks. But Gaprindashvili would have continued 21 ... Qxg2+! 22.Qxg2 Rxg2+ 23.Kxg2 Bc6!, winning the knight and leading to an unclear ending where the two bishops give Black excellent compensation. After the text move White menaces 22.Nc7+, and if 21 ... Bg4? then simply 22.Qh4! renews the threat of 23.Nf6+ and wins.

21 ... Be7!
A brilliant resource. If 22.Nc7+? Kd8 23.Nxa8 then 23 ... Bg4! traps the queen.

22.Qf3

Levitina does not fall for the trap.

22 ... Rc8 23.Rac1?!

Looks good, but better is 23.d4! – if 23 ... Bc6 White continues 24.dxe5 dxe5 25.Rad1, with an excellent game.

23 ... Qg4!

Black offers the exchange of queens, after which her troubles would be over.

24.Nc7+

Levitina sees no reason not to continue with her attack on the queen’s side,
though she must be extremely careful not to allow the weaknesses on the light squares around her king to be exploited.

24 ... Kf8 25.Qb7

Charging in with the queen, intending to consume the pawns on a6, b5 and possibly d6. If instead 25.Qxg4 Rxg4 26.Nxa6, Black can regain the pawn with a slight advantage by 26 ... Ra4! 27.Rxc8+ Bxc8 28.Nc7 b4 29.Nc4 Rxa2, etc.

25 ... Kg7

Finally connecting the rooks and putting the king in relative safety.

26.Qxa6

The first pawn falls; unless Gaprindashvili can conjure up some threats against the king she will soon be completely lost.

26 ... Bg5! 27.Rc2
The rook has to stay on the c-file to protect the knight on c7.

27 ... b4

Black saves the threatened pawn by advancing it.

28.Nab5

White seems to be in total control, but this complacency soon provides her opponent with a stunning opportunity.

28 ... Qf3!

Now 29 ... Bh3 is coming, but Levitina believes that it can be easily dealt with. This however turns out to be a serious error of judgement, and therefore 29.h4! is necessary.

29.Qxd6?

Now White should lose. The win is spectacular but quite difficult to spot. Will Gaprindashvili find the path to victory?

29 ... Bh3!

The correct move. Levitina had clearly anticipated this and her response is to put her queen on the long diagonal thus preventing mate. The defence is, unfortunately, flawed.

30.Qc6

30.Qxe5+ Bf6 31.Qe4 loses to the same brilliant idea, whilst 30.Qd5 loses the rook after 30 ... Qxd5 31.Nxd5 Rxc2.

30 ... Qf5?

Black misses it. The winning combination is 30 ... e4!! 31.Qxe4 (the only move to prevent mate is the desperate 31.Ne6+ fxe6 32.Qxe4 but 32 ... Qxe4 33.dxe4 Rxc2 leaves Black with a massive material advantage) and now the stunning 31 ... Rge8!! wins.
If 32.Qxf3 then 32 ... Rxe1 is mate, whilst after 33.Nxe8+ Rxe8, Black forces mate on g2 or e1.

31.Nd6

After this White controls the a8–h1 diagonal and thus has an easily won game.

31 ... Qxd3 32.Nxc8 Rxc8 33.Qc4 Qf3

This time the defence to the threat of mate is elementary.

34.Qc6 e4

Too late.

35.Qxe4
Now, of course, 35 ... Re8 is simply met by 36.Nxe8+.

35 ... Qxe4 36.Rxe4 Bf5

A final tactical gesture.

37.Re5

37.Re8 is equally convincing.

37 ... Bxc2 38.Rxg5+ Kf6 39.Rc5

The endgame is hopeless for Black, who therefore capitulates.

Black resigns.

1980

Anders – Bellizzi
USA
Sicilian Defence (B20)

1.e4 c5 2.b4!!?

The Sicilian Wing Gambit, a profoundly unsound but highly entertaining attempt to derail Black’s strategy. Although it is by no means safe, Black is taken distressingly far from the apron strings of his opening theory.

2 ... cxb4 3.a3

Other moves such as 3.d4 or 3.Bb2 have also been tried but the text move is most common.

3 ... d5

As ever in the Sicilian, this counterstrike is the recommended remedy. Nevertheless, 3 ... bxa3 is also a perfectly playable line.

4.exd5
Attempts to demonstrate any compensation after 4.e5 do not seem convincing.

4 ... Qxd5 5.Nf3

Wing Gambiteers also play 5.Bb2, though in the 1984 US Championships Shirazi played 5.axb4? against Peters and had the ignominious distinction of having to resign instantly after 5 ... Qe5+, winning the rook on a1.

After 5.Bb2, your author had an enjoyable struggle against International Master Andrew Kinsman in the sixth and final round of a quickplay tournament. In Hinton – Kinsman (Ashtead Rapidplay 1995), Black continued with the recommended line 5 ... e5 6.axb4 Bxb4 7.Na3 Nc6 8.Nb5 Qd8 9.Nf3 Bg4 10.Be2 but then erred with 10 ... a6?.


wins, whilst 11 ... Bxe2 12.Qxe2 forces 12 ... Kf8 and White has a clear plus)
12.Bxe5 Bxe2 13.Qxe2 Kf8 (the only way to survive) 14.c3! (the sacrificial 14.Bxg7+? fails after 14 ... Kxg7 15.Qg4+ Kh6! and Black is safe) 14 ... Be7 15.Nd4 Qd7 16.0-0 Bf6?! (16 ... Nf6 looks better) 17.f4 h5 (with the idea of developing the rook on h6) 18.Rab1 Rc8 19.Qe4! b5 20.Ra1 Rh6 (Black had assumed that the a-pawn was safe because if 21.Rxa6 then 21 ... Bxe5 discovers an attack on the rook; but White now used most of his remaining time to conceive a combination that leads to a won game) 21.Nf5! Rg6 22.Rxa6!! Bxe5.

Now White played 23.Qxe5!, since if 23 ... Rxa6? then 24.Qxg7+ Ke8 25.Qxg8 is mate. Black continued 23 ... Nf6 but had a lost game after 24.Qd6+ Qxd6 25.Nxd6 Rd8 26.f5! Rg4 27.d4. Unfortunately, White was five minutes behind on the clock and after further adventures he lost on time in the inevitable time scramble.

5 ... e5

Although it creates open and interesting positions, the main drawback of the Wing Gambit is that White does not really have any appreciable lead in development for his pawn deficit. He therefore has to rely on short-term
tactics, which against correct defence should not succeed.

6.axb4 Bxb4 7.c3 Be7 8.Na3

White has little for the pawn except the tactical nuisance that 9.Nb5 might cause. Black therefore decides to exchange the knight, though this brings the bishop to a3 and prevents Black from castling on the king’s side.

8 ... Bxa3!? 9.Bxa3 Nc6

In order to castle Black intends to follow this with 10 ... Nge7, so White immediately pins the knight. More problems can be caused by 9 ... Qe4+!, which leaves White somewhat tied up after 10.Be2.

10.Qa4! Nf6

Black decides that this is safer than 10 ... Nge7 11.Bxe7 Kxe7 12.Qh4+ f6 13.Bc4, when White has seized the initiative.

11.Bb5
Increasing the pressure on the knight.

11 ... Bd7

If 11 ... a6 then 12.Bxc6+ bxc6 13.0-0 and White will pick off the e-pawn.

12.0-0

He has now completed his development, whereas Black is still having difficulties in finding a safe refuge for his king.

12 ... e4!?

Tempting, but with the king on e8 this is extremely dangerous. The safe move is 12 ... a6, threatening 13 ... Qxb5. If White tries to maintain the pin on the rook’s pawn with 13.Bb2, then Black simply castles on the king’s side.

13.c4!

Driving the queen from her central post.
13 ... Qh5?

Black can be forgiven for failing to realize it, but the queen is poorly placed on h5. After the superior 13 ... Qf5! the continuation that White plays in the game does not quite work (see below), so White must try other ideas. At the least he should be able to get a draw by 14.Bxc6 Bxc6 15.Nd4!? Qxf2+! 16.Rxf2 Bxa4 17.Nf5 Rg8 18.Ne7 Rh8 19.Nf5, etc. Other avenues of attack do not seem to be convincing, but the complications can quickly escalate, giving both sides practical chances. For example, after 14.Rfe1!? (as White played in the game) 14 ... 0-0-0 White has a number of interesting tries.

(i) 15.Nh4 Qg4! 16.g3 (if 16.Bxc6 Bxc6 17.Qxa7 Qxh4 18.Be7 Black has 18 ... Rxd2 19.Red1 e3!! winning) 16 ... Qh3! 17.Bxc6 Bxc6 18.Qxa7 Ng4!? 19.Reb1! Qxh2+ 20.Kf1 when both kings are in peril.


![Chess Diagram](image-url)
threatening 19.Be5, can be met by 18 ... Nd7! 19.Be5 Qxe5 20.Rxe5 Nxe5 and Black has the advantage.

14.Rfe1 0-0-0

Castling releases the pin, though with the queen on h5 White is better placed to attack than in the lines outlined in the note to move thirteen.

15.Bd6!!

White ignores the threat to his knight in order to construct a mating net around the black king.

15 ... exf3

This fails to a superb coup, but the alternative 15 ... Be8 also leads to a difficult defensive task. White would continue 16.Bxc6! Bxc6 17.Qxa7! and now 17 ... exf3 loses to 18.Qb8+ Kd7 19.Qc7 mate. Black must therefore capture on d6 but after 17 ... Rxd6 18.Qa8+ Kc7 (18 ... Kd7 is worse) 19.Qxh8, he is in severe trouble. For example, if he attempts to regain material with 19 ... exf3 then White continues with 20.Ra8!, giving this position.
Black faces the threat of 21.Qb8+ Kb6 22.Qxd6 and the obvious defences do not work: 20 ... Bd7? is met by 21.Qb8+ Kc6 22.Rb1 and wins, whilst 20 ... Rxd2 loses to 21.Qb8+ Kb6 (if 21 ... Kd7 then 22.Qd8 is mate) 22.Rb1+ Kc5 23.Ra5+ b5 24.cxb5. Therefore, Black has to counter with threats of his own, and the two main options are as follows.


(ii) 20 ... Qg6 has the benefit that from g6 the queen hits g2 and eyes the b1 square with back-rank mating threats, but White continues with 21.Qb8+ Kb6 22.g3!!.
In this position White is no longer in immediate danger of being mated and threatens the rook on d6. Black has a number of defensive ideas, none of which is satisfactory.

(a) 22 ... Rd7 23.Qa7+ Kc7 24.c5! leads to mate.

(b) 22 ... Re6 23.Rc1! and the threat of 24.Qd8+ Kc5 25.d4+ Kb4 26.Qb6+ Bb5 27.Qxb5 cannot adequately be avoided.

(c) 22 ... Ne4!? 23.d4!! Rxd4 24.Qe5! and Black has to give up material to prevent 25.Qa5 mate.

(d) 22 ... Nd7! 23.Qd8+! Kc5 24.Qa5+ b5 25.Qa3+ Kxc4 (the alternatives also lose: if 25 ... b4 then 26.Ra5+ Kb6 27.Qxb4+ Kc7 28.Ra7+ Kd8 29.Qa5+ Nb6 30.Qxb6+ Kc8 31.Qc7 mate, or if 25 ... Kd4 then 26.Qc3+ Kc5 27.cxb5+ Kb6 28.Qa5+ Kc5 29.bxc6+ Kc4 30.Qc3+ Kb5 31.Re5+ Rd5 32.Rxd5+, etc) 26.Qc3+ Kd5 27.Qxf3+ Kd4 28.Qe3+ Kd5 and now 29.Ra3! brings the rook into the attack and wins.

16.Qxa7!!
A fabulous and devastating queen sacrifice, which leads to mate against any reply. After 16 ... Nxa7 White plays 17.Rxa7, threatening mate on a8, and then in response to 17 ... Bxb5 he continues 18.Re7!! Nd7 19.Ra8+ Nb8 20.Rxb8 mate.

Black resigns.

1981

Adorjan, A – Tisdall, J
New York
Queen’s Gambit (D33)

1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 c5 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.d4 d5 5.cxd5 exd5

Starting as an English Opening, the game has now transposed into the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen’s Gambit.
6.g3!

This variation, championed by Schlechter and Rubinstein in the first decade of the century, is the strongest answer to the Tarrasch Defence.

6 ... c4

This – the Swedish Variation – is certainly playable but 6 ... Nf6 is the simplest and most common continuation.

7.Bg2

7.e4 is slightly premature, but 7.Bg5!? is a relatively untried attempt to disrupt the black development.

7 ... Bb4 8.0-0 Nge7

Now White has a number of possible lines. 9.a3 Ba5 10.b4!? is an active plan, whilst 9.Bd2 followed by 10.b3 is another method of creating play on the queen’s side. In addition, 9.Ne5 0-0 10.Nxc6 bxc6 leads to some interesting middlegame positions.
9.e4

The main line, opening the centre.

9 ... 0-0


10.exd5 Nxd5 11.Bg5

The other viable line is 11.Nxd5 Qxd5 12.Be3, with a marginal plus.

11 ... f6

If 11 ... Be7 then 12.Nxd5 Bxg5 (or 12 ... Qxd5 13.Ne5! Qe6 14.Bxe7 and if 14 ... Qxe7 then 15.Nxc6 bxc6 16.Bxc6 wins, whilst 14 ... Nxe7 15.Re1!
gives White a large advantage) 13.Nxg5 Qxg5 14.Ne3 leaves Black struggling. However, 11 ... Qa5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5 is possible and leads to an unclear game.

12.Nxd5!

This is based on the tactical idea 12 ... fxg5 13.Nxb4 Nxb4 14.Qa4! a5 15.Qb5 and the c-pawn falls.

12 ... Qxd5

13.Be3

13 ... Qf7

Sensibly removing the queen from the same diagonal as the white bishop, otherwise 14.Ne5 will ensue with telling effect.

14.d5!?

This aggressive advance is certainly good, but perhaps even better is 14.a3!. On 14 ... Ba5 then 15.d5 Rd8 16.Nd4! Nxd4 (16 ... Ne5?! embroils the game in murky complications that seem to be in White’s favour; for example 17.Qa4 Bb6 18.Nc6! bxc6 19.Bxb6 Rxd5! 20.Bxd5 Qxd5 21.Rad1, or 17 ... Bc7 18.Ne6! Bxe6 19.dxe6 and 20.Bxb7) 17.Qxd4 b5 18.Rad1 and White has the initiative. Alternatively, if 14 ... Bd6 then 15.Nd2 follows with pressure against c4 and ideas of jumping the knight to e4.

14 ... Rd8?

15.dxc6!!

The queen sacrifice leads to some exciting and intricate variations, where White’s active piece play gives him good chances for victory despite his nominal material disadvantage.

15 ... Rxd1 16.Rfxd1

The critical situation; Black has to make an important choice.

(i) If 16 ... bxc6 then White replies 17.Rd8+ Bf8 18.Bc5 Bb7 19.Rad1 Qc7 20.R8d7 Qc8 21.Bxf8 Kxf8 22.Nh4!, leading to this position.
White now threatens 23.Be4 as well as 23.Nf5 (in some lines followed by 24.Rf7+) and Black is in real trouble. His best try is to activate the bishop by 22...c3 23.bxc3 Ba6, since after 24.Be4 Be2 25.Rd2 Bg4 26.Bf5 Bxf5 27.Nxf5 Black has 27...Qe8 and his queen enters the game with chances of creating some drawing possibilities, although White is clearly dominant.

(ii) 16...Bf8 might transpose to the line above after 17.Rd8, or White may choose to continue 17.Nd4 with pressure along the h1–a8 diagonal.

(iii) 16...Bg4!? pins the knight but 17.cxb7! Qxb7 (or 17...Rb8 Bf4 and 17...Rf8 18.h3 Bh5 19.g4 Bg6 20.Nd4 Bd3 21.Rac1 both winning) 18.Ne5! is decisive.


The actual move chosen by Tisdall prevents 17.Rd8+ and is by no means easy to refute.
16 ... Ba5! 17.Nd4!

As in the variations in the note above, this knight centralization releases the power of the bishop and also threatens to penetrate the black defences via b5.

17 ... a6

Stops 18.Nb5, which would be the answer to 17 ... Bb6.


Finally, if 17 ... Bg4 then White replies 18.cxb7 Re8 (or 18 ... Rd8 19.Nc6! winning) 19.Nb5!

18.b4!

A brilliant deflection sacrifice. If Black attempts to keep control of d8 by 18 ... Bb6 then 19.Nb5! axb5 20.Bxb6 h6! (best, as if the queen’s bishop moves then 21.cxb7 wins) 21.Rd8+ Kh7 22.Re1! and the rook will land on e8 increasing the pressure. If instead 18 ... cxb3 then 19.Nxb3 is very strong and on 18 ... Bc7 (or 18 ... Bd8 19.Nb5!) then 19.cxb7 is possible because the queen no longer protects b7.

18 ... Bxb4

Tisdall prefers to grab the pawn but now the open b-file gives White another avenue of attack.
19.Rab1! a5

19 ... Qe7 is answered in the same way.

20.a3 bxc6?!

If 20 ... Bg4 then 21.cxb7 Rb8 22.Nc6! Qxb7

(or 22 ... Bxd1 23.Nxb8 Bd6 24.Rxd1 and wins; or 22 ... Rxb7 23. Rd8+) 23.Nxb8 Qxb8 24.Rd5!, followed by 25.axb4, leaves White with a decisive advantage, but a tougher defence is 20 ... Bxa3 21.cxb7 Rb8! (better than 21 ... Bxb7 22.Rxb7) 22.bxc8Q+ Rxc8, although after 23.Nb5 or 23.Nc2 White has an active position with an intimidating initiative.

21.axb4 axb4

After other replies White still captures on c6.

22.Nxc6 Bg4 23.Nxb4
Black can prevent the threatened 24.Bxa8 by moving the rook along the eighth rank, but White will quickly win the c-pawn and penetrate with decisive effect. Tisdall has had enough and thus decides to call a halt to proceedings.

**Black resigns.**

### 1982

**Braga, F – Timman, J**  
**Mar del Plata**  
**Caro-Kann Defence (B12)**

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5

The Advance Variation of the Caro-Kann Defence frequently leads to complex and tactical positions.

3 ... Bf5 4.Nc3 e6

Black has a host of theoretical moves at his disposal; Timman chooses a straightforward line that allows his bishop to be harassed.

5.g4 Bg6 6.Nge2 c5

Timman strikes at the centre, although again there are several viable alternatives, including 6 ... f6, 6 ... Be7, 6 ... Bb4 or 6 ... Ne7.

7.Be3

7.h4 used to be the main line in this variation, but the text move is now a popular choice.

7 ... Nc6 8.dxe5 Nxe5

A complicated alternative is 8 ... Qh4!? For example, 9.Nb5 Be4 (9 ... Nh6 is equally unclear) 10.Nc7+ Kd7 11.Nxa8 Bxh1 with wild play.
9.Nd4

An excellent post for the knight. If now 9 ... Bxc5, White wins a pawn by

9 ... Nf6

Earlier in the same year, at Wijk aan Zee against John van der Wiel, Timman
had essayed 9 ... a6? to defend the important b5 square. However, the move
turned out to be a mistake and van der Wiel obtained a winning position by
wins; 10 ... Nd7 is best but White has a clear plus after 11.f5 exf5 12.gxf5
Qe7 14.Kd2! and White wins the trapped bishop. Timman’s move against
Braga is a definite improvement and

leads to a wild middlegame, as do 9 ... Nc6 and 9 ... Nd7. which have also
been played in this position.
10.f4!

A brave advance that involves the sacrifice of a pawn.

10 ... Nexg4

Timman accepts the challenge.

11.Bb5+!

The point of Braga’s imaginative sacrifice is now revealed. 11 ... Nd7 loses the knight on g4 so Black is forced to place his king on a most unconventional square.

11 ... Ke7 12.Bg1?!

A better idea is 12.Qe2! with the plan of queen’s side castling, when White has meaningful compensation for his pawn deficit. Braga’s move leaves the f-pawn vulnerable, a fact which Timman exploits with his next move.

12 ... Qc7

The ideal placement for the queen, eyeing c5 as well as f4.

13.c6!

Both players are in an uncompromising mood. This ingenious advance attempts to capitalize on the poor position of the black king, for if now 13 ... bxc6? then 14.Nxc6+ Kd6 (14 ... Kd7 15.Ne5+ and 16.Nxg4) 15.h3! Nh6 16.f5! and 17.Bh2+ wins.

13 ... b6!

Useful because now c5 is protected. Now how should White continue his attack? Attempts to utilize the h2–b8 diagonal such as 14.h3 Nh6 15.Bh2 fail (15 ... Nf5!), whilst the sensible 14.Qf3 allows Black to ease the pressure with 14 ... a6. Thus Braga decides to tempt the queen away from her defensive duties with an original but perhaps rather reckless pawn sacrifice.
14.\textit{Qe2?! Qxf4}

Timman again remains unperturbed and accepts the offer.

15.\textit{c7!}

The point of White’s play; the tactic mentioned in the note to White’s thirteenth move still applies, for if now 15 ... \textit{Qxc7} then 16.\textit{Nc6+ Kd6} (16 ... \textit{Kd7?! 17.Ne5+ Kc8 18.Nxg4 Bh5! 19.h3 Bb4! is an interesting alternative when Black has three pawns for the piece but has some play against the white knights) 17.h3 wins a piece and maintains an enduring initiative.

15 ... \textit{Ne4!}

Timman correctly permits White to check on c6 in order to pursue his own counterplay. If he had instead defended c6 by 15 ... \textit{Ne5?!}, then White would complete his development with 16.Be3 and 17.0-0-0 and would have a ready-made attack.

16.\textit{Nc6+ Kd6}
Timman prudently rejects 16 ... Kf6 17.Bd4+ Kg5 18.Rg1!, when the black king is in real peril, but a fascinating possibility is 16 ... Kd7!? 17.Ne5+ Kxc7 18.Nxg4 and now 18 ... Nxc3! (18 ... Bh5 19.h3 Bxg4?! 20.Bh2! Bxe2 21.Bxf4+ Bd6 22.Bxd6+ Nxd6 is less good) 19.bxc3 Qe4 20.Nf2 (forced) 20 ... Qxe2+!. If then 21.Kxe2? Black can chase the king around the board with 21 ... Bh5+! 22.Ke3 Bc5+ 23.Kf4 (White cannot relinquish control of f3 otherwise 23 ... Bf3 traps the rook) 23 ... g5+! 24.Kg3 f5!, followed by 25 ... f4+, and the black pawns will march down the board with an easy win. Therefore White must recapture with the bishop and after 21.Bxe2 Bxc2 Black’s pawn mass gives him slightly the better chances.

17.h3!

Not only attacking the knight, but more importantly freeing the h2 square for the bishop. This weakness along the h2–b8 diagonal prevents Black from attempts such as 17 ... Nxc3 18.bxc3 Be4? because 19.hxg4 Bxh1? 20.Bh2 wins. Therefore, Timman follows a different path.

17 ... Qg3+ 18.Kf1


18 ... Qf4+ 19.Ke1

White can do nothing else but repeat the position, as on 19.Kg2? Nxc3 20.bxc3 Be4+ wins.

19 ... Qg3+ 20.Kf1

Will Timman settle for a draw?
20 ... Qxc3!!

An attractive combination, which if answered by 21.bxc3 gives White a lost position after 21 ... Ng3+ 22.Ke1 Nxe2 23.Kxe2 (on the move that White wants to play, 23.hxg4, Black wins with 23 ... Nxe1! 24.Rxg1 Kxc7, etc) 23 ... Kxc7! 24.hxg4 a6! and White loses a piece and the game.

21.Qxg4!

Having seen the variation described above, Braga decides he might as well keep things lively in an attempt to confuse his opponent. If 21.hxg4 then Black has a nice win in 21 ... Ng3+ 22.Kg2 Be4+! 23.Kh2 (or 23.Qxe4 Qd2+! and wins the queen) 23 ... Nxe2 24.bxc3 Bxh1 25.Kxh1 Kxc7.

21 ... Qxb2?

This pawn grab, which attacks rook and bishop, allows White opportunities to complicate matters. The way to secure victory is 21 ... Ng3+!, which wins in all variations.
(i) 22.Kf2 Nxh1+ 23.Kf1 Qf6+ (the most clear-cut) 24.Ke2 (24.Kg2 Be4+) 24 ... Kxc7! and White is lost.

(ii) 22.Kg2 Be4+! 23.Qxe4 (on 23.Kf2 Nhx1+ 24.Kf1 Qf6+ 25.Ke1 Kxc7 again wins easily, and if 23.Kh2 then 23 ... Qd2+ 24.Kxg3 Kxc7 and 25 ... Bd6 is the simplest) 23 ... Qd2+ 24.Kxg3 dxe4 25.Rd1!? Qxd1 26.Bc5+ Kxc7 27.Rxd1 Bxc5 and Black has a comfortable material advantage.

(iii) 22.Qxg3+ Qxg3 23.Bh2 Qxh2 24.Rxh2 Kxc7 leaves White hopelessly lost.

22.a4!

Protecting the bishop and thereby jettisoning the rook. It might have been tempting to try 22.Bh2+!?, hoping for 22 ... Kd7? 23.Nb8+! Ke7 (23 ... Kc8? 24.Ba6 mate) 24.c8Q. But after 22 ... Kc5! White just does not have enough compensation. For example, if 23.Qg1+ then 23 ... Kxb5 wins, and on 23.Qe2 Black’s best is 23 ... Qf6+ 24.Kg2 (24.Ke1 Qxa1+) 24 ... Qg5+ 25.Kf1 Bh5! 26.Bg1+ Qxg1+! 27.Rxg1 Bxe2+ 28.Kxe2 Nc3+ 29.Kd3 Nxb5 and wins. If White tries to force the c-pawn home with 23.Nb8, Black calmly continues
23 ... Qxb5+ 24.Kg2 Bd6! and White’s attack runs out after 25.Rhb1 Qc4 26.Bg1+ d4.

22 ... Qxa1+

Timman now has a marked material advantage but as a consequence White’s pieces are able to swarm around his king. However, if Black had removed the dangerous c-pawn with 22 ... Kxc7?!, White would have continued with 23.Bd4!, preserving the rook and continuing with the attack.

23.Kg2


23 ... f5?

Timman reckons that he has chances of victory by badgering the white queen, but this move is a mistake and actually risks losing the game. Bringing the queen back into the game via c3 should persuade White to take a draw with 24.Bh2+ Kc5 25.Bg1+ (25.Nb8? fails to 25 ... Qd2+ 26.Qe2 Qxe2+ 27.Bxe2 Bd6) 25 ... Kd6, etc.

24.Qh4?

The right move but in the wrong order. Better would be first 24.Bh2+!, when 24 ... Kc5 25.Nb8! wins (25 ... Be7 26.Na6+ Kd4 27.Qf3! Qc3 28.Rd1+, or 25 ... Qxh1+ 26.Kxh1 fxg4 27.c8Q+) and 24 ... e5 25.Qh4! (only not 25.Bxe5+? Qxe5 26.Qxg6+ hxg6 27.Nxe5 Kxe5 and Black wins) leaves Black in terrible trouble as these variations show.
(i) If 25 ... Qc3 then 26.Bxe5+ Qxe5 27.Qd8+! Kc5 (or 27 ... Rxd8 28.cxd8Q+ and 29.Nxe5) 28.Nxe5 Bd6 29.Nd3+ and the king is forced to d4 and White’s material advantage is easily converted to victory.


24 ... Qf6!

The vital difference here is that the black queen blocks the path of her white counterpart to d8.
25. Bh2+

Since exchanging queens leads nowhere (25.Qxf6? gxf6 26.Bh2+ e5!), this is the only try.

25 ... Kc5

The king must venture out into the open because 25 ... Kd7? loses to 26.Qxf6 gxf6 27.Nb8+ Ke7 (not 27 ... Kc8 28.Ba6 mate) 28.c8Q.

26. Nb8!

Excellent timing, and if Black is careless he can find himself with a lost game.

26 ... Qxh4

The only alternative is to cover c8 by moving the bishop, but this loses the queen to 27.Nd7+.
27.c8Q+ Kb4

Not 27 ... Kd4 because he loses his queen after 28.Rd1+ Ke3 29.Rd3+ Ke2 30.Bg3!!, threatening 31.Rd1 mate.

28.Rb1+ Ka3

Forced (28 ... Ka5? 29.Nc6 mate).

29.Ra1+ Kb4

Again Black cannot escape the checks, since 29 ... Kb2 is met by 30.Be5+ with mate to follow.

30.Rb1+

If White stops checking then Black has ... Qf2+. Therefore 30.Na6+ Ka5 and 30.Nc6+ Kc3 31.Ne5+ Kd2 lead nowhere.

30 ... Ka3 31.Ra1+ Kb4

Drawn by perpetual check; a fitting end to a fantastic battle.

½–½

1983

Ljubojevic, L – Seirawan, Y
Tilburg
French Defence (C16)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4

Another example of the Winawer Variation of the French Defence. See also our games from 1932, 1935, 1963 and 1977.

4.e5 Qd7
An extraordinarily strange move, but study of our game from 1977 will demonstrate the logical positional motivation behind it. The idea is to continue with ... b6 in order to exchange White’s powerful light-squared bishop.

5.Qg4

After a straightforward developing move such as 5.Nf3, Black carries out his plan of 5 ... b6 with 6 ... Ba6 to follow.

5 ... f5

This advance fits in well with Black’s strategy, because it not only protects the g-pawn but also places another central pawn on a light square, thereby increasing the positional weight of his good bishop in the event that he can remove the light-squared bishops from the board.

6.Qg3 b6 7.Nh3

On 7.a3 Black can either exchange on c3 before playing 7 ... Ba6, or he might
consider the thematic 7 ... Bf8, preserving the good bishop.

7 ... a5?

This is over-finessing in an attempt to give a6 additional protection. The simple 7 ... Ba6! is correct when Black is ready to achieve his positional goal.

8.Nf4!

From f4 the knight threatens 9.Nxe6! Qxe6 10.Qxg7 winning the rook, which explains Black’s next move.

8 ... Qf7

With the bishop defending e6 the sacrifice clearly does not work, but Black now has the problem of how to complete his plan of ... Ba6 without allowing Nxe6.

9.a3 Bxc3+

If 9 ... Bf8!?, protecting the g-pawn, then 10.Be2! (threatening 11.Bh5) 10 ... Ne7 (10 ... g6!? might be better since d6 is then protected but Black is dreadfully underdeveloped) 11.0-0 Ba6 12.Nb5! is very awkward for Black, since 12 ... c6? is met by 13.Nd6+. Throughout the opening Black suffers from his unwise decision to play 7 ... a5.

10.Qxc3!

This clever recapture with the queen crosses Black’s plans.

10 ... Ba6

If he cannot play this then Black will face a miserable middlegame, being saddled with a very bad bishop.

11.Bxa6

As a result of Ljubojevic’s accurate play he has secured a large advantage. Black cannot now take with the knight since 12.Qc6+ wins.
11 ... Rxa6

12.Nxe6!!

A brilliant move, not just because of the following sequence, which wins the rook on h8, but also because Ljubojevic had to consider the resulting position and assess whether the queen would be dangerously out of play on that square.

12 ... Qxe6 13.Qxc7 Nc6

Far better than allowing White to capture the knight on b8, when Black would have zero compensation. After the text move Black has the potential to ensnare his opponent’s queen on h8.

14.Qxg7 Qg6

An interesting idea here is 14 ... Nxd4, when 15.Qxh8? Nxc2+ 16.Kd1 Nxa1 gives Black excellent chances. However, White can win with 15.0-0!, since Black’s intriguing resource 15 ... Nf3+!? does not quite work after 16.Kh1!
(better than 16.gxf3 Qg6+ 17.Qxg6+ hxg6, which also wins but is less convincing) 16 ... Qxe5 17.Qxe5+ Nxe5 (saving the rook) 18.Re1!, pinning the knight with an easy win.

15.Qxh8 Nd8!

The idea behind this move is to try to trap the queen with a subsequent 16 ... Nf7. This is an admirable and correct plan, but there is an interesting alternative in 15 ... Qxg2!?.

(i) White must be careful, since the natural 16.Rf1? would be a mistake as 16 ... Nxd4! causes real problems.

For example, if 17.Qxh7? then 17 ... Nf3+ 18.Ke2 Qg4! wins because of the dual threats of 19 ... Ng5+ 20.f3 Qg2+ 21.Rf2 Qxf2+ 22.Kxf2 Nhx7 and 19 ... Qc4+! 20.Kxf3 Qe4+ 21.Kg3 Qg4 mate. 17.Rb1 is better but Black has at least a draw by 17 ... Qg4 (threatening 18 ... Qe2 mate) 18.f3 Qg2 19.Rf2 Qg1+ 20.Rf1 Qg2, etc. Similarly, 17.Be3 leads to a draw after 17 ... Nxc2+ 18.Kd2 Nxe3 19.Kxe3 Qe4+ 20.Kd2 Qd4+, etc.
(ii) The win is achieved with the fantastic 16.Bg5!!, with the idea that 16 ... Qxh1+ 17.Kd2 Qxa1? (17 ... Qe4 is better but Black is lost after 18.Qxg8+ Kd7 19.Qxh7+ Kc8 20.c3) 18.Qxg8+ Kd7 19.e6+! Kc7 20.Bf4+ Kb7 21.Qf7+ Ka8 22.Qe8+ Kb7 (22 ... Ka7 23.Qd7+ amounts to the same thing) 23.Qd7+ Ka8 24.Qxc6+ Ka7 25.Qc7+ Ka8 26.Qb8 is mate. Instead of taking the rooks, Black should try 16 ... Qxg5, leading to this position.

Here the quiet 17.Kf1!! threatens 18.Rg1 and forces 17 ... Nce7. Then 18.Rg1 Qh6 19.Rxg8+ Nxc5 20.Qxg8+ Ke7 21.Qxd5 gives White a won endgame. Finally, the defensive 16 ... Nce7 is met by 17.Bxe7! Qxh1+ (if 17 ... Qe4+ 18.Kd1 Qg4+ 19.Kc1! Nxe7 20.Qxh7+ Ke6 21.Qb7! wins) 18.Kd2 Qxa1? (again this leads to mate but protecting the knight with 18 ... Qg2 is clearly hopeless after 19.Bh4) 19.Qxg8+ Kxe7 20.Qg7+ Ke6 (or 20 ... Kd8 21.e6! Kc8 22.Qd7+ Kb8 23.e7 and mates) 21.Qf6+ Kd7 22.e6+ Kc6 23.e7+ Kd7 24.Qf7 and mates in a few moves.

16.Bh6?!
Intending to escape via g7, and based on the tactic 16 ... Qxh6 17.Qxg8+ winning. But the move is not the most accurate, since by the paradoxical 16.e6!! (controlling f7) the white queen emerges next move on e5 (on 16 ... Qxg2 17.Rf1 keeps everything under control).

16 ... b5?

Black brings the rook into play but misses his opportunity to play 16 ... Nf7! 17.Qg7 Ngxh6, when he has two knights for a rook and three pawns and has outside chances of survival.

17.Bg7!

A most original method of attacking the knight on g8: White physically blocks the line of the defending piece.

17 ... Kf7

Despite first appearances 17 ... Qf7 was also possible, and leads to similar situations as in the game. Note that White could not capture on h7 because 18
... Rg6 would then win the bishop.

18.Bf6 Ne6

Black attempts to keep the queen bottled up. White in turn begins to bring his other pieces and pawns to the aid of her majesty.

19.h4! Rc6

He intends to bring the rook to his first rank and then uncover an attack on the queen, but Ljubojevic does not allow him this luxury.

20.h5! Qh6

Necessary to protect h7.

21.c3 Rc8!

Menacing 21 ... Ne7!.

22.f4!

An ingenious method of saving the queen. White might have tried the simpler 22.Bh4?!, but 22 ... Ng7! leads to this amazing position.
Now White can try 23.Kf1!? hoping for 23 ... Ne7? 24.e6+! Kxe6 25.Re1+ and wins (25 ... Kd6 26.Bxe7+ Kd7 27.Bf8, etc). However, Black can keep him tied up with 23 ... Re8!.

22 ... Nxf4

After 22 ... Ne7 23.Bg5! there are two lines.

(i) If 23 ... Nxf5? then either 24.fxg5 or 24.Qf6+ Qxf6 25.exf6 wins.

(ii) On 23 ... Qxg5! not 24.fxg5? Rxh8 and Black picks up another pawn with good drawing chances, but 24.Qxh7+! Qg7 25.Qxg7+ Kxg7 26.g3 and White’s extra pawns should be decisive.

23.0-0!
With the threat of the devastating 24.Rxf4! Qxf4 25.Qg7+ and wins. If now 23 ... Ne6? then 24.Rxf5 wins, and on 23 ... Ne7 White continues 24.Qg7+ Qxg7 25.Bxg7 and since the knight is en prise he emerges the exchange ahead.

23 ... Ne2+!

Seirawan find the only way to keep the game going and forces the king out into the open.

24.Kf2

Of course not 24.Kh1 or 24.Kh2, because of 24 ... Qxh5+ and mate next move. On f2 the king maintains the attack on the knight and thus prevents 24 ... Ne7 (25.Qg7+! would be the reply).

24 ... Nf4 25.g4!

A surprising but brilliant thrust, which prevents 25 ... Ne7 on account of 26.g5!, and threatens to advance the pawn with telling effect. Black must
therefore take the pawn.

25 ... fxg4

But what now? 26.Kg3? fails to the simple 26 ... Nhx5+.

26.Bg5!

This is the point of White’s previous play. In return for the sacrificed bishop, the knight on f4 will fall and the white queen will escape, leaving him with a decisive advantage.

26 ... Qxg5 27.Kg3!

Using the king to win the knight and correctly rejecting 27.Qxh7+? Ke6, when the knight is no longer pinned.

27 ... Nf6!

Seirawan does not capitulate and finds an ingenious idea that only just fails. The knight has to come to f6 in order to prevent 28.Qxh7+, but from f6 it no longer covers the rook. However, Seirawan has seen that 28.Qxc8? is met by 28 ... Ne4+! 29.Kh2 Qh4+ 30.Kg1 Qg3+ 31.Kh1 Qg2 mate.
28. Qxf6+!

Ljubojevic is alert and with this move is able to simplify into a won endgame.


Black has managed to emerge only the exchange down, and if he had, say, one extra pawn on g7 then he would have chances of holding the game. As it is, the weak pawns on d5 and h7 and the exposed position of his king prove fatal.

31 ... a4 32. Rae1 Rc6

On 32 ... Rf8 33. Re6 is strong, only not 33. Kg5 Rg8+! 34. Kh6? Rg6 mate!

33. Kg5 Rd6 34. Re5!

Winning a pawn.

34 ... h6+ 35. Kxh6 Kg8
Perhaps White will miss the threat of 35 ... Ng4+.

36.Rg5+ Kf7 37.Rgf5 Ke7 38.Kg5

Forcing the knight to move.

38 ... Ne4+ 39.Kf4 Nd2

Otherwise White returns the exchange and picks up another pawn with a won rook and pawn ending.

40.Re1+ Kd7 41.Rf7+ Kc6 42.Re8!

The rooks infiltrate and administer the last rites.

42 ... Nc4 43.Re8+ Kb6 44.Rb8+ Kc6 45.Rfb7! Nxb2 46.Rxb5 Nc4

This was the sealed move but Seirawan resigned before resuming, since White’s victory is only a matter of time.

Black resigns.

1984

Kadas, G – Arkhipov, S
Kecskemet
Irregular Opening (A00)

1.h4!?

Exactly how provocative could one be with one’s opening move? Kadas has actually played this many times, and in some circles the opening bears his name.
1 ... e5 2.d4

White plays a Scandinavian Defence with the additional h4 thrown in for good measure. Kadas is a known adherent to the Scandinavian, and in this “reverse” format (which he also plays), a wild game seems assured.

2 ... exd4 3.Nf3 c5

More circumspect would have been 3 ... d5 or 3 ... Nc6. White now has the opportunity to play a genuine gambit.

4.c4?!

Tempting Black into the line 4 ... dxc3 5.Nxc3 with good compensation, but 4.c3 might have been a better way of doing so. Besides, the alternative method of sacrificing a pawn by 4.e3?!, creating a kind of Icelandic Gambit, might have been better still.

4 ... d5!?
Black might have done better simply to develop a piece or two (4 ... Nf6!), but clearly both sides smell blood.

5.e3!

A bold and necessary decision, which again tries to lure Black into pawn captures. This time, he cannot resist.

5 ... dxe3?!

This is starting to get too greedy, and Black should really have commenced his development with 5 ... Nf6 or 5 ... Nc6.

6.cxd5!

This idea is seen frequently in the Icelandic Gambit. The king will be well-placed on f2 and White’s pieces are ready to spring into action. The bishop will come to c4 or b5 and the rook is then free to take a commanding post on the open e-file.

6 ... exf2+

Black decides to go for broke, since White gets a fine game after 6 ... Nf6 7.Nc3.

7.Kxf2
7 ... Nf6?

Very careless, particularly considering that White’s continuation is fairly conspicuous and not hard to avoid. Black is very much still in the game after 7 ... Bd6 8.Bb5+ Bd7 9.Re1+ Ne7.

8.Bb5+ Bd7

8.Nbd7 is even worse.

9.Re1+ Be7 10.d6?

Whilst this move does look strong, and indeed leads to a fine attacking position for White, it is by no means the best. A more conclusive line is 10.Bxd7+ Qxd7 (10 ... Nbxd7 is no better) 11.d6 and White gains a piece with decisive effect.

10 ... Bxb5 11.Rxe7+ Kf8

Strangely, material is now completely equal, although the position of White’s
rook provides him with an enormous advantage.

12.Ng5

White avoids the careless 12.Ne5?, which would be a terrible blunder, allowing 12 ... Ne4+ 13.Kg1 Nxd6.

12 ... Be8?!

Defending the f7 pawn, but this was also possible by the much more active 12 ... Bc4!. Then 13.b3!? looks very strong, because 13 ... Be6 is impossible (14.Rxe6! is the reply) and 13 ... Bd5 loses to 14.Nc3 Qxd6 15.Nxd5 Qxd5 16.Qxd5 Nxd5 17.Rxf7+, followed by 18.Bb2. However, the clever 13 ... Nc6! gives Black chances of survival. If 14.bxc4 then 14 ... Nxe7 15.dxe7+ Qxe7 leads to an unclear situation; thus the rook has to move, but 14.Rxb7 is met by 14 ... h6! 15.bxc4 hgx5 16.Bxg5 (16.hxg5? loses to 16 ... Ne4+!) 16 ... Ne4+ 17.Kg1 Nxg5! 18.hxg5 Qxg5, and White’s exposed king gives Black at least equal chances. In reply to 12 ... Bc4 White’s best plan is probably simple development with 13.Nc3, but Black is then given a chance to consolidate with moves like 13 ... h6 then 14 ... Nbd7 or 14 ... Nc6.
13.Qb3

The mounting pressure against f7 prevents Black from taking the pawn on d6 (14.Rxf7+ leads to mate), so he is faced with serious problems which are not helped by the weakness at b7.

13 ... Ng4+

Black could have tried the immediate 13 ... c4 but it would have been defeated by 14.Qxc4! Qb6+ 15.Be3!. If then 15 ... Qxb2+ 16.Kg1 Black is unable to capture on a1 so loses, and 15 ... Ng4+ 16.Qxg4 Qxb2+ 17.Qe2! Qxa1 18.Rxe8+! is an easy win. Finally, if 15 ... Qb5 (15 ... Qc6 loses even more quickly to 16.Rxf7+ Kg8 17.Bc5!) 16.Rxf7+ Kg8 17.Qxb5 Bxb5 18.Rxb7 wins.

14.Ke1!?

Kadas must have been aware of Black’s ... c4 ideas, since by this unnatural retreat he keeps his king away from the a7–g1 diagonal which would be opened by the pawn advance.
14 ... c4

Here it looks as though Black has a more tenacious defence in 14 ... Nh6 when White’s obvious plans are readily refuted.

(i) For example, the natural 15.Qxb7 is met by 15 ... Nc6!, hitting the rook. After 16.Re2 Black cannot yet capture on d6, but he can play either 16 ... Rb8 or 16 ... Nf5 with good chances.

(ii) If White attempts merely to improve his position with a move like 15.Bf4 then 15 ... Nc6! is again very hard to meet, and Black will actually come out on top.

(iii) The only move is the brilliant tactical shot 15.Nxe6+!!., when the fork of king and queen forces 15 ... fxe6. Then 16.Bxh6! cannot be answered by 16 ... gxh6 because 17.Qf3+ Kg8 18.Qg4+ Bg6 19.Qxe6+ leads to mate. Thus 16 ... Qxd6 is obligatory, but 17.Rxg7! forces the win: Black’s checks run out after 17 ... Qe5+ 18.Kd2! Qd4+ (or 18 ... Qd5+ 19.Qxd5 exd5 20.Rxb7+ Kg8 21.Rg7+ Kf8 22.Rxa7+, etc) 19.Kc1 Qg1+ 20.Kc2 Qf2+ 21.Nd2 Qf5+ 22.Kc1 and he is lost.

15.Qf3

This is more accurate than 15.Qxc4, which can be answered by 15 ... Qa5+ and 16 ... Qf5 with defensive chances.

15 ... Nf6

The f-pawn cannot move on account of 16.Ne6+ so this is the only way to defend f7.

16.Qxf6!!

The fact that 16.Qxb7 also causes Black insurmountable problems does not detract from the beauty of this concluding combination.

16 ... gxf6
Black might have interjected 16 ... Qa5+ at this point, hoping for 17.Nc3? gxf6 18.Ne6+ fxe6 19.Bh6+ Kg8 20.Rg7+ Kf8 21.Rxb7+ Kg8 22.Rg7+ Kf8 23.Rxa7+ Kg8 24.Rxa5 Rxa5 when Black emerges ahead. Clearly, White would have avoided this pitfall with the simple 17.Qc3!, which wins rather easily.

17.Ne6+!

This pretty clearance sacrifice is a necessary follow-up to the queen sacrifice.

\[17 \ldots fxe6 18.Bh6+\]

Black’s king is now caught in a vicious “windmill” mechanism and White mops up very efficiently.

\[18 \ldots Kg8 19.Rg7+ Kf8 20.Rxb7+ Kg8 21.Rg7+ Kf8 22.Rd7+ Kg8 23.Rxd8 Kf7\]

The only move to protect the bishop.
24.d7

But after this advance the bishop is lost.

24 ... Kg6 Black resigns.

1985

Afifi, A – Belyavsky, A
Tunis
Réti Opening (A13)

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6

Belyavsky invites his opponent to transpose into a Queen’s Gambit Declined with 3.d4.

3.g3

White prefers his Réti set-up.

3 ... dxc4 4.Bg2

Somewhat unusual. More common is 4.Qa4+, which safely regains the pawn.

4 ... a6!?

With the highly enterprising but dangerous intention of 5 ... b5, holding on to the pawn.
5.a4!?  

An obvious response, although the b3 and b4 squares are weakened by this advance. An interesting alternative is 5.Qc2, since White has excellent compensation for the pawn after 5 ... b5 6.Ne5! Ra7 7.b3 cxb3 8.axb3. Black does better with 5 ... Nc6 or 5 ... Nd7, returning the pawn with an equal game.

5 ... Nc6!  

An astute move, as 6.Qc2 can now be answered by the awkward 6 ... Na5!, with ideas of hopping the knight into b3.

6.a5  

Physically preventing the knight moving to a5. It is already apparent that White’s opening has not been a resounding success.

6 ... Bb4
Belyavsky develops the bishop and also attacks the a-pawn. Rather than passive defence, Afifi to his credit tries a clever tactical idea.

7.Ne5!?

Indirectly defends the a-pawn, since 7 ... Bxa5? loses a piece to 8.Bxc6+ bxc6 9.Rxa5 and 7 ... Nxa5 fails after 8.Qa4+ c6 9.Qxb4 Nb3 10.Ra3 Nxc1 11.Qxc4 and the knight is lost. Belyavsky finds a calm reply, although even better would have been 7 ... Bxd2+! followed by 8 ... Nxe5.

7 ... Nxe5 8.Qa4+ Bd7!

This looks as though it leaves the b7 square inadequately protected, but Belyavsky has seen further.

9.Qxb4 Ne7!

If now 10.Bxb7?, Black pins the bishop with 10 ... Qb8! and 11 ... N7c6 ensues, winning a piece (note that 11.Qc3 fails because 11 ... Qxb7 hits the rook on h1). Alternatively, 10.Qxb7? loses the queen to 10 ... N5c6! 11.Bxc6 N7xc6 and 12 ... Ra7.

10.f4

Hoping to drive away the knight before capturing the c-pawn.

10 ... Bc6!

Another alert continuation from Belyavsky, as is his next move.

11.Bxc6+ N7xc6!

Correctly leaving the knight on e5 en prise, in preparation of a well-calculated combination.

12.Qc3

Perhaps Afifi thought that Belyavsky had overlooked that moving the knight allows White to win the pawn on g7.
12 ... Qd5! 13.Rf1

The natural move is 13.0-0 but the reply would be 13 ... Nd4! with the powerful threat of 14 ... Nxe2+. Moreover, 13.Rg1 fails to 13 ... Nd4! 14.fxe5 Qe4! 15.Rg2!? (or 15.e3 Nc2+ 16.Kf2 Nxa1 and 17 ... Nb3) 15 ... Qxg2 16.Qxd4 Qh1+ 17.Kf2 Qxc1 and wins.

13 ... Ng4!

A beautiful idea, particularly in view of the echo of offering the other knight’s pawn.

14.Qxg7 Nhx2!!

Offering both rooks in order to distract the white queen.

15.Qxh8+

If White does not take some material then he has nothing to show for his horrible position.
15 ... Ke7 16.Qxa8

If White refuses the second rook by 16.Qxh7 then Black continues as in the game with 16 ... Qg2! and the white rook falls. He is then left with a lost position, as the following variation shows: 17.d3 Qxf1+ 18.Kd2 Nd4!! 19.Qxh2 Rh8!! 20.Qxh8 Qxe2+ 21.Kc3 Qxd3+ 22.Kb4 Nc2+ 23.Ka4 Qb3 mate.

16 ... Qg2! 17.d3

The only other move to avoid mate, 17.d4, loses in the same way.

17 ... Nd4

17 ... Qxf1+ 18.Kd2 Nd4 also wins, but the text is more convincing.

18.Rf2


18 ... Qg1+ 19.Kd2 Nb3+! 20.Kc3


20 ... Qxc1+ 21.Kb4 Qxb2!

Accurately played. Black spurns the rook in order to create the mating net.
22.e3


22 ... Nd2+ 23.Kc5 Qb5+


White resigns.
Ehrenfeucht, W – Latas, B
Myslenice
English Opening (A30)

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 b6 4.Bg2 Bb7 5.0-0 c5

In answer to White’s English Opening Black uses a symmetrical defence.

6.b3


6 ... Be7 7.Bb2 0-0 8.e3

Preparing to recapture with the e-pawn after a later d4 advance.

8 ... d6
Signifying his intention to play a Hedgehog System. The descriptive name comes from the pawns on b6, d6, e6 and later a6 which are said to be reminiscent of a hedgehog’s spikes. The alternative is to play the more active 8 ... d5.

9.Qe2 Nbd7

Typical of a Sicilian Defence or, as here, a Hedgehog System; normally in the English this piece is posted on c6.

10.Rd1 Qc7 11.Nc3 Rad8!?

The more traditional square for the queen’s rook is c8, with the other rook supporting the centre from d8. However, the set-up chosen by Latas is an interesting alternative.

12.d4 cxd4 13.exd4 a6

Rather than immediately countering in the centre with 13 ... d5, Black decides to complete his Hedgehog with a restricted but level game.
14.Rac1

This prevents 14 ... d5?, for after 15.cxd5 Black cannot recapture due to 16.Nxd5!.

14 ... Rfe8 15.d5

Ehrenfeucht stakes his claim for a territorial advantage in the centre.

15 ... e5

Black would face uncomfortable pressure along the c-file after 15 ... exd5 16.cxd5, thus he prefers to block the centre.

16.Nd2

White now decides on a strategy of queen’s side expansion and intends to support the advance of the c-pawn or a-pawn by b4 and Nb3.

16 ... Bc8?!

Black has to respond to his opponent’s operations and the natural way to do this is to use his f-pawn. Therefore, consideration should be given to 16 ... g6!, followed by 17 ... Nh5 and 18 ... f5.
17.b4 Nf8

Black now has to employ a cumbersome manoeuvre to effect the ... f5 push.

18.h3

Preventing the bishop from coming to g4, which would force 18.f3, a move that hems in the light-squared bishop.

18 ... N6d7 19.Nb3

If White attempts to halt Black’s next move by 19.g4?! then 19 ... Ng6 follows and the f4 and h4 squares are weakened.

19 ... f5!

After lengthy preparation but still strong.

20.a4
As usual in positions with the players advancing on opposite wings, the side whose king is being attacked must be extra careful. Here White might have an imposing presence on the queen’s wing, but if he makes a slip in his defence he could find himself mated.

20 ... e4!?

A double-edged decision, for although this frees the useful e5 square for the knight, it opens the long a1–h8 diagonal and gives d4 to the white knight.

21.a5 Ne5!?

Exchanging first on a5 is perhaps a safer course.

22.Na4

Surely this must force Black to exchange pawns on a5? After 22 ... bxa5 23.Bxe5! dxe5 24.c5, White’s pawns look extremely menacing.

22 ... Bg5!!
An amazing move. Black bravely ignores the threat to his b-pawn in order to keep up the momentum of his attack, but this allows White to obtain an enormous passed pawn on b6.

23.axb6 Qd7

With hindsight it is clear that f7 is the right square for queen, but at least the move has the benefit of attacking the knight on a4.

24.Ra1

Protecting the knight and avoiding 24 ... Bxc1.

24 ... Nd3!

Energetic play by Latas, who has to act quickly before White manages to force through one or more of his queen’s side pawns.

25.Rxd3!?

Ehrenfeucht decides that he cannot leave the knight in the heart of his position and therefore gives up the exchange to remove it. The alternative is 25.Bc3, which defends the pawn on b4. Then Black can continue his offensive with 25 ... Qf7 or he might consider the wild 25 ... f4!?, based on the tactical idea 26.Bxe4 (26.gxf4 Nxf4 is good for Black) 26 ... Nxf2! 27.Kxf2 Qxh3! with a strong attack. However, White has 27.Qxf2! Rxe4 28.g4! h5 (28 ... Ng6 is met in the same way) 29.Nbc5!! dxc5 30.Nxc5 Qe8 31.b7! and White triumphs.

25 ... exd3 26.Qxd3 f4

Black’s assault does not look particularly menacing, but it must be treated with respect. White could now play 27.g4, slowing down his opponent’s attack. For example, after 27 ... Qf7 28.c5! h5 (neither 28 ... dxc5 29.bxc5 nor 28 ... Ng6 29.c6 Ne5 30.Bxe5 Rxe5 is any better) 29.gxh5 Qxh5 30.c6! White must come first.

27.c5
But Ehrenfeucht continues with his pawn advance.

27 ... Qf7

Now it is clear that Black should have played ... Qf7 on his twenty-third move.

28.c6

Again 28.g4 is a safe way to stymie Black’s attack.

28 ... Bf5 29.Qc4?

After this White is in trouble. Far better is 29.Qc3!, in order to recapture on g3 with the queen. If 29 ... Bf6 then 30.Qf3 Be4 31.Qxf4 and White is fine, whilst on 29 ... fxg3 the reply 30.Qxg3 leaves Black with little to show for his broken queen’s side.

29 ... fxg3 30.fxg3

White has a number of serious weaknesses. His king is exposed, the pawn on g3 is vulnerable and Black has possibilities of exploiting the long a7–g1 diagonal.
30 ... Re3!

Despite its pedestrian appearance, Black’s build-up has now reached powerful proportions and cannot be ignored. For example, if 31.c7 then he continues with 31 ... Rde8!.

(i) Then on 32.Bd4 there follows 32 ... Rxg3 33.Bf2 (or 33.Rf1 Qg6! with the decisive threat of 34 ... Rxa2 35.Kxa2 Bf4+ and wins) 33 ... Be3! 34.Bxe3 Bxh3! 35.Rf1 Rxa2+ 36.Kh1 Qh5 and wins.

(ii) If White instead carries on with his pawn advance by 32.b7, then Black plays 32 ... Rxa2+ presenting White with a bewildering number of alternatives.

(a) Firstly, if White ignores his opponent (for example, by 33.b8Q), then he loses to 33 ... Rxa2+! 34.Kxa2 (or 34.Kh1 Qc5 35.Qc3 Bf4! 36.Kxc2 Qa2+ 37.Kb1 Bh2+ 38.Ka1 Be4+ 39.Qf3 Bxf3 mate) 34 ... Bxa2+! 35.Kxc2 Qc3+ 36.Kh2 Bf4+ 37.Kg1 (if 37.Qxf4 Re2+ 38.Kg1 Qg2 mate) 37 ... Qg3+ 38.Kf1 Qh3+ 39.Kf2 Bg3+ 40.Kg1 (or 40.Kf3 Bh4+ 41.Kf4 Ng6 mate) 40 ... Qh2+ 41.Kf1 Qf2 mate.
(b) If 33.Kh2 then White gets mated in the same way after 33 ... Rxg2+!.

(c) The problem-like 33.Be5!? is effective against 33 ... Bxh3? 34.Bxg3! or 33 ... dxe5 34.b8Q, and after 33 ... Be3+!? 34.Kh2! Rfx3+!? 35.Bxh3 Qh5 36.Qf1! Bxh3 37.Qxh3 Qxe5+ 38.Kg2 the situation is unclear. However 33 ... Rxe5! 34.c8Q Bxh3! 35.b8Q leads to this incredible position.

![Chess Board]

Black now wins by 35 ... Rxg2+ 36.Kh1 Rg1+!! 37.Rxg1 (or 37.Kxg1 Be3+ 38.Kh2 Qf2+ and mates) 37 ... Qf3+ 38.Kh2 Bf4+! 39.Qxf4 Re2+ 40.Rg2 Qxg2 mate. If, instead of promoting the second pawn, 35.Ra2 then 35 ... Bxh3! 36.Kh1 Be3+ 37.Kh2 Rfx3+ 38.Bxh3 Qf2+ 38.Kh1 Qf3+ 39.Kh2 Bf4+ is decisive.

(d) Finally, if 33.c8Q then 33 ... Bxc8! 34.bxc8Q Rxc8 35.Qxc8 Be3+ 36.Kh1 (on 36.Kh2 then 36 ... Qf2! and Black triumphs) 36 ... Rfxg2! 37.Kxg2 (or 37.Qc1 Qf2 and mates) 37 ... Qf2+ 38.Kh1 Bf4 wins.

Alternatively, if 31.Kh2 then 31 ... Bxh3! 32.Bxh3 (32.Kxh3? Qh5+ 33.Qh4 Qxh4 mate, and otherwise 32 ... Qf2 will win) 32 ... Qf2+ 33.Kh1 (33.Bg2? fails to 33 ... Rfxg3) 33 ... Rfxg3! (33 ... Qxg3 34.Qg4! is less clear) 34.Qf1!
Qe3! and Black has a winning attack. For instance, if 35.Bg2 then 35 ... Rg4! 36.Bf3 (if 36.Bh3 then 36 ... Rh4 wins) 36 ... Rh4+ 37.Kg2 Bf4! 38.Qg1 Qxb3 39.c7 Re8! 40.b7 Qc2+ 41.Kf1 Qc4+ 42.Kg2 Re2+ 43.Bxe2 Qxe2+ 44.Qf2 Rh2+ 45.Kg1 Qxf2 mate.

31.g4!?

An interesting alternative to the lines above, which gives the attack a different complexion.

31 ... Bd3!

Suddenly the white queen is struggling to find a safe square. The other benefit of this bishop manoeuvre is that f1 is taken away from the rook.

32.Qc3 Rde8!

The rook now joins the mêlée. White is now lost but he doesn’t yet realize it.
Ehrenfeucht does not appreciate the imminent danger and thus pushes his pawns rather than attempting to secure his king. A tougher defence is 33.Nd2! (33.Nd4?! Be4! and now either 34.Rf1 Qxd5 35.Bxe4 Qxe4 36.Qc2 Rg3+ 37.Kh2 Rd3 or 34.Qc4 Rg3! are both very strong for Black) when 33 ... Re1+ 34.Nf1! (the only move to avoid mate) 34 ... Be3+ 35.Kh2 gives Black a few problems. For example, if 35 ... Rxa1 36.Bxa1 Bxf1 37.Qxg7+ Qxg7 38.Bxg7 Bxg2 39.Kxg2 Kxg7? (39 ... Ng6! should still win) 40.b7 Ba7 41.c7 and it is White who wins.

In fact, simply 33 ... Rg3! gives Black a decisive attack, as the exchange of queens by 34.Qxg7+ Qxg7 35.Bxg7 here loses to 35 ... Re2!.

33 ... Rxe1+ 34.Kh2 Qxe4 35.Kh3 Qf4+ 36.Kh2 Re2+ 40.Kg1 Qg2 mate).

34.Re1

The only other way to prevent 34 ... Be3+ is 34.Bc1, but then 34 ... Re2! forces mate in a few moves.

34 ... Rxe1+ 35.Qxe1 Be3+!

Winning the queen alone is insufficient since White will promote, so Black also has to generate mating threats.

36.Qxe3 Rxe3 37.Bd4

It is now clear to Ehrenfeucht that he gets mated after 37.b8Q by 37 ... Re1+ 38.Kh2 Qf4+ 39.Kh3 Re3+ 40.Bf3 Rxf3+ 41.Kg2 Qxg4+ and mate next move. But the text move is also futile.

37 ... Re1+ 38.Kh2 Qf4+ 39.Kh3 h5!

Mate is inevitable.

40.b8Q Qxg4+ 41.Kh2 Qf4+ 42.Kh3 Bf5 mate.
1987

Korchnoi, V – Arnason, J  
Beersheva  
English Opening (A29)  

1.c4

Korchnoi has been a long-standing adherent to the English Opening.

1 ... e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6  
The Four Knights Variation.

4.g3 d5  
Arnason plays the Reversed Dragon line.

5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Bg2  
Black now has to take action to prevent 7.Nxe5!, which would win a pawn.

6 ... Nb6 7.0-0  
Korchnoi follows the main line and delays the decision of where to place his central pawns. This affords White maximum flexibility in his development.

7 ... Be7 8.b3  
8.a3 and 8.d3 are more common alternatives.

8 ... 0-0  
It is also possible to castle on the other wing, as in the Sicilian proper, but this is more solid.
9.Bb2 Re8

By 9 ... f6 Black could have adopted a sound set-up with the bishop on e6, but he prefers a different plan.

10.Rc1 Bg4 11.d3 Bf8

With both sides’ development largely complete, middlegame manoeuvres can commence.

12.Nd2

This places some pressure on c6 and Black has to decide whether White is really threatening 13.Bxc6. For example, 12 ... Rb8!? defends the pawn on b7, unpinning the knight on c6 in readiness for its advance to d4, but after 13.Bxc6!? bxc6 the weak doubled pawns on the file give White a slight advantage.

12 ... Qd7 13.Re1 Rab8
Otherwise Black will be forever wary of the white bishop on the long diagonal.

14.Nce4 Nd4 15.Nc5! Qc8?!

Far safer is 15 ... Bxc5 16.Rxc5 c6, when the game is still roughly level. Now Korchnoi finds a clever continuation which begins to give him the edge.

16.Nf3!

This looks odd since Black now has the option to double the white pawns, but if 16 ... Nxf3+? then 17.exf3 wins the pawn on e5, and after 16 ... Bxf3 17.exf3 the open e and c-files – together with the two bishops and the impending 18.f4! – give White a clear plus.

16 ... Nd7!

Challenging the knight on c5 like this is better than 16 ... Nc6, when 17.Na6! is awkward to meet – neither 17 ... bxa6 18.Rxc6 nor 17 ... Ra8 18.Nd2 is entirely satisfactory.

17.Nxd4 Bxc5

If 17 ... Nxc5 then 18.Nf3! attacks the black pawn on e5 and prepares the advance of the d-pawn.

18.Nf3

Note that he is not threatening to win a pawn, because 19.Nxe5 is answered by 19 ... Bxf2+ 20.Kxf2 Nxe5.

18 ... Bb6 19.Rc4!
Korchnoi is very alert and realizes that there is a chance of complicating things to his advantage with this subtle rook lift. The fact that the bishop is on b6 leaves the black king somewhat undefended.

19 ... Be6

The obvious move, but perhaps 19 ... Bf5!? is better. If then 20.d4 Black replies 20 ... e4! 21.Nh4 Nf6 22.Nxf5 Qxf5 with equality. White can improve with 20.Qc1!, with the idea of infiltrating via g5, when 20 ... Qd8 gives an even game and 20 ... f6 21.d4! e4 22.Nh4 Be6 23.Bxe4!? Bxc4 24.Qxc4+ Kh8 (not 24 ... Kf8? 25.Bg6! winning instantly) 25.Qd3! leads to an unclear situation.

20.Rh4!

Imaginative but very risky chess from Korchnoi. The rook begins the assault on the enemy king but there is a danger that it will be trapped.

20 ... f6
This defends e5 but also prepares the double-edged advance of the g-pawn to embarrass the rook.

21.d4!

Well timed; the rook on h4 prevents the reply 21 ... e4. If now 21 ... exd4 then 22.Nxd4 gives White a strong initiative, so Arnason elects to go after the rook.

21 ... g5!? 22.Rh6!

Korchnoi is aware that this involves the sacrifice of the rook, but assesses that the resulting exposed position of the black king represents good compensation. The alternative 22.Re4! is also good – after 22 ... Bf5 (or 22 ... Bd5 23.Nxd5! fxg5 24.Rg4 Bxg2 25.Rxg5+ with compensation) 23.Re3 Black still has some difficulties, given that 23 ... e4? 24.Nd2 wins the e-pawn whilst 23 ... exd4 24.Nxd4 Rxe3 25.Nxf5! enables White to generate a powerful attack.

22 ... Kg7 23.dxe5!!
Simply ignoring the rook in order to smash open the black defences.

23 ... Kxh6 24.exf6

White has only two pawns for the rook, but the exposed king and undeveloped queen’s side leave Black with a difficult defence.

(i) For example, if now 24 ... Nc5 then 25.Qc1! Ne4 (or 25 ... Rg8 26.Nxg5! Rxg5 27.h4 Qg8 28.Qf4! with pressure along the c1–h6 diagonal) 26.Nxg5! Nxg5 27.h4 Rg8 28.Qf4! Qf8 29.hxg5+ Rxg5 30.Bc1 Qg8 31.Be4! Bf7 32.Qf5! with the decisive threat of 33.Bxg5+ Qxg5 34.Qxh7 mate.

(ii) Attempting to move the king is also possible, and after 24 ... Kg6 (if 24 ... Kh5? then simplest is 25.Nxg5 Kxg5 26.Qd2+ Kg6 27.Be4+ Bf5 28.Bxf5+ Kxf5 29.Qf4+ Ke6 30.Qg4+ Kf7 31.Qh5+ Ke6 32.Rd1 when White threatens 33.Qd5 mate as well as 33.Qg4+ Kf7 34.Rxd7+ and wins) 25.Qd2 (25.Nxg5 is also possible as in the comment above but Black can defend with 25 ... Nxf6!) 25 ... h6 26.Nh4+! Kf7 (if 26 ... gxh4 then 27.Be4+ Bf5 28.Bxf5+ Kxf5 29.Qf4+ Kg6 30.Qg4+ and White again has a winning attack, and on 26 ... Kh7? 27.Qd3+ leads to mate) 27.Qc2 Nf8 (otherwise 28.Qg6+ or 28.Qh7+ follows) 28.Bf3! the following position is reached.
Now 28 ... gxh4 is refuted by 29.Bh5+ Kg8 30.f7+! Bxf7 31.Qc3! and wins, whilst 28 ... Rd8, attempting to refute the combination above by 31 ... Bd4, fails to 29.Bh5+ Kg8 30.Ng6! Rd7 31.Ne7+ and wins. Furthermore, if 28 ... Bg4 then 29.Qc4+! Qe6 (others lose the bishop on g4) 30.Bd5 wins, and 28 ... g4 29.Be4 Rd8 (or 29 ... Qd7 30.Bg6+ Kg8 31.Rd1! Qb5 32.Bh7+ Kf7 33.Ng6! threatening 34Nh8 mate; if 33 ... Nnh7 34.Ne5+ Kf8 35.Ba3+ c5 36.Qxh7 wins) 30.Bg6+ Kg8 31.Qc1! Nnh6 32.Qxh6 Rd7 33.Nxg6! the decisive threat of 34.Qh8+ Kf7 35.Ne5 mate. That leaves 28 ... Qd7! when things get even more complicated. White should continue 29.Rd1!, because 29 ... Qb5? loses to 30.Bh5+ Kg8 31.Nf5! Bxf5 32.f7+! Kh7 33.fxe8Q Rxe8 34.Qc3! Ne6 (to prevent mate on g7) 35.a4!. Better is 29 ... Qxd1+! and after 30.Qxd1 gxh4 White has to be careful otherwise Black’s preponderance of pieces might force at least a draw. For example, if 31.Qd2 Rbd8! (on 31 ... Ng6 32.Qxh6 Rg8 33.Bh5 Bf5 34.Qh7+ Ke6 35.f7 wins, and if 31 ... hxg3 32.hxg3 Kg6 33.Be4+ Bf5 34.Bxf5+ Kxf5 35.Qd5+ Kg6 36.g4! wins) 32.Bh5+ Ng6 33.Qxh6 then 33 ... Rd1+ 34.Kg2 h3+ 35.Kf3 Bd5+ 36.Kg4? (for the correct 36.e4! see below) 36 ... Be6+ 37.Kf3 (not 37.Kg5? Rd5+ 38.Be5 Rxe5 mate) leads to perpetual check. In this line White must play the hazardous-looking 36.e4!. Black’s pieces swarm around the king but White
can win. Thus 36 ... Bxe4+ 37.Kg4 (or 37.Ke2 Bc2+ 38.Kf3 Be4+ repeats) 37 ... Rg8 38.Kxh3! Bf5+ 39.Kg2 Be4+ 40.f3! Bd3 41.Qh7+ Kf8 42.Ba3+ c5 43.Bxg6! and White triumphs.

24 ... Rg8

In view of the mind-boggling variations above this is a sensible idea, defending the g-pawn.

25.Qd2


25 ... Kh5!?

Advancing the king in order to be able to play a later ... h6.

26.h3

Preventing 26 ... h6 as 27.g4+ Kg6 28.Qc2+ Kf7 29.Qh7+ mates.
26 ... Nc5

An interesting try here is 26 ... Nxf6!?, which returns some material in the hope that the removal of the dangerous f-pawn will ease the defensive task. White should continue 27.Bxf6 Bxh3 (others fare no better) 28.Nxg5! and now Black has a number of possibilities, none of which is satisfactory.

(i) 28 ... Qd7!? defends the second rank and offers the exchange of queens, but 29.Qf4! gives White a powerful attack (for instance 29 ... Be6 30.Nf7! Bxf7 31.Qh4+ and mate next move, or if 29 ... Bxg2 30.Nf7 again wins).

(ii) 28 ... Bf5 29.Bd5! and the threat of 30.Bf7+ is decisive.

(iii) 28 ... Qf5 29.Nxh3 Qxf6 30.Bf3+ Kg6 31.Nf4+ Kh6 (or 31 ... Kf7 32.Qd7+ Qe7 33.Bd5+ and wins the queen) 32.Kg2 and 33.Rh1+ wins.

(iv) 28 ... Bxg2 29.Kxg2 and now 29 ... Qf5 30.Nf3! Qxf6 31.Rh1+ Kg6 (31 ... Kg4 32.Qd7+ mates) 32.Rh6+ wins, and 29 ... Kg6 fails to 30.Qd5!! Kxf6 31.Qf7+! Ke5 (or 31 ... Kxg5 32.f4+ Kg4 33.Rh1 and mate next move) 32.Qf4+ Kd5 33.Qe4+ Kc5 34.Rc1+ Kd6 35.Nf7+ Kd7 36.Rd1+ Bd4
37. Rxd4 mate.

27. g4+ Bxg4

If 27 ... Kh6 then 28. Nxg5! Rxg5 29. h4 Qg8 (forced) 30. b4 (30. Qf4 also wins) 30 ... Na4 31. f7! Bxf7 32. hxg5+ Qxg5 33. Bg7+ Kg6 34. Be4+ wins the queen. After the text move White regains some material and keeps Black under great pressure.

28. hxg4+ Qxg4

If 28 ... Kxg4 one attractive win is 29. Bh3+! Kxh3 30. Ne5! when mate by 31. Qe3+ Kh4 32. Qg3+, etc can only be avoided by giving up the queen.

29. Ne5

The black king is in real danger but he is not dead yet.

29 ... Qh4
Arnason had a number of alternatives. Firstly, 29 ... Qf4? loses quickly to 30.Bf3+ Kh6 31.Kg2 with 32.Rh1+ to follow, and 29 ... Qf5?! leaves him in severe trouble after 30.e4! Qe6 (or 30 ... Qxf6 31.Re3! winning) 31.Re3! g4 (forced) 32.Bc1! with the terrible threat of 33.Rh3+! gxh3 34.Qh6 mate. If 29 ... Ne4!?, attacking f2, Korchnoi would have responded with 30.Qc2 which prevents the knight moving because of 31.Qxh7 mate. Best is then 30 ... Qf5! (only not 30 ... Bxf2+? as 31.Kf1! Nd2+ 32.Qxd2 Bxe1 33.Qc2! Qf4+ 34.Bf3+ wins) increasing the tension and hoping for 31.Bxe4? (which loses to 31 ... Qxf2+ with mate in a few moves), or 31.Bf3+? (when 31 ... g4! wins). If White tries 31.e3!? then 31 ... Nd6! 32.e4 Qe6 keeps the situation unclear, but 31.Qxe4! transposes back to the actual game and wins.

30.Qc2!

The position is full of hidden tactics. For example, if 30.Nf3? then Black replies with the thunderbolt 30 ... Qxf2+!! 31.Kxf2 Ne4+ 32.Kf1 Ng3 checkmate.

30 ... Ne4

Black has to stop 31.Qxh7 mate; if 30 ... Rh8 then 31.Bf3+ g4 32.Qf5+ forces mate, whilst 30 ... h6 is defeated by 31.Qf5! with 32.Bf3+ to follow.

31.Qxe4!

Correctly assessing that the resulting endgame is very much in his favour.

31 ... Bxf2+

The mate threat on h7 means that 31 ... Qxf2+ 32.Kh2 Qxe1 is not possible.

32.Kf1 Qxe4

Black must exchange queens otherwise 33.Bf3+ wins.

33.Bxe4 Bxe1 34.Kxe1

Nominally material is approximately level, but the giant passed pawn on f6 means that Black is lost. Korchnoi demonstrates this with his usual expert
efficiency.

34 ... Rbd8 35.f7 Rgf8 36.Ba3

Winning material.

36 ... Rxf7 37.Nxf7 Rd4 38.Bxb7 g4 39.Ne5 Kh4 40.e3

The rook is no match for the three minor pieces.

Black resigns.

1988

Nemet, I – Trepp, M
Switzerland
Nimzo-Indian Defence (E41)
1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 Bb4+

Trepp is playing the Bogo-Indian, named after Efim Bogoljubow who featured in our games from 1935, 1937 and 1940.

4.Nc3

Turning the opening into a Nimzo-Indian Defence.

4 ... c5 5.e3 Nc6 6.Bd2

More usual in this position is 6.Bd3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 d6, leading to a typical Nimzo-Indian pawn structure.

6 ... 0-0 7.a3 Bxc3 8.Bxc3 Ne4 9.Rc1

Preventing the doubling of his pawns.
9 ... Nxc3 10.Rxc3 exd4 11.Nxd4
An interesting recapture – rather than the natural 11.exd4 – that leads to some original play.

11 ... d5?!
Premature, as the sequel shows, but Black clearly felt the need to break out from his restricted position.

12.cxd5!

12 ... Qxd5 13.Nxc6!
After this exchange of knights, the black pawn on c6 is isolated and exposed to a frontal attack from the rook and queen.

13 ... bxc6 14.Qc2 Bd7 15.Rc5?!
Energetic and certainly not bad, but better is simply 15.Bd3! f5 (otherwise 16.Be4 is strong) 16.0-0 with a clear advantage.
15 ... Qa2!

In the absence of an active plan Black would face a miserable future because of the serious weaknesses within his position, namely a bad bishop and a very weak c-pawn. This queen sortie is justified because if White now plays the natural 16.Bd3, Black responds with 16 ... Qa1+! 17.Qb1 Qxb1+ 18.Bxb1 Rfb8! and if 19.b4?! a5! is strong, so White must play more passively with 19.Rc2, giving Black hope for the endgame. Incidentally, in this variation the sacrificial 17.Ke2? fails to 17 ... Qxh1 18.Bxh7+ Kh8 19.Rh5 (or 19.Qe4 Qxh2!) 19 ... Rfd8! 20.Qe4 (20.Bg8+? Kxg8 21.Qh7+ Kf8 22.Rg5 Be8 23.Qxg7+ Ke7; or 22.Qh8+ Ke7 23.Qxg7 Rg8) 20 ... Be8! and the threat of 21 ... Qd1 mate compels White to take perpetual check.

16.Kd2!?

An amazing move. It looks ridiculous to expose the king like this, but Nemeth has conceived a fabulous and original idea. The immediate threat is 17.Bc4 trapping the queen, so Black must act quickly.

16 ... Rfb8!
Trepp now surely expected 17.Kc1, which allows Black to obtain a clear advantage by 17 ... Rb3! 18.Bc4 (otherwise 18 ... Rab8! follows) 18 ... Qa1+ 19.Qb1 (or 19.Kd2 Qxh1 20.Qxb3 Qxg2 and Black comes out on top) 19 ... Rxa3!, when 20.bxa3? Qxa3+ regains the rook and 20 ... Kc2 Qxb1+ 21.Rxb1 Ra4 leaves Black a pawn ahead.

17.Kc3!

Nemet is not afraid to let his king wander forward. This defends the b-pawn and therefore renews the threat of 18.Bc4.

17 ... Qa1

The only move, but it does contain the disagreeable threat of 18 ... Qe1+ forcing the king further into the open. White could now try 18.Qd2 but Black counters with 18 ... Rb6!!.
Now 19.Qxd7 would lose to 19 ... Qxb2+! (19 ... Qc1+ 20.Kd4 Qd1+ 21.Bd3 is less clear) 20.Kd3 (or 20.Kc4 Rb3!) 20 ... Rb3+ 21.Ke4 Qxf2! (threatening 22 ... Qxe3 mate) 22.Qd4 (other moves are equally hopeless) 22 ... f5+ 23.Ke5 Rxe3+ and wins. Thus the bishop would be immune and White could do nothing to prevent Black continuing with 19 ... Rab8! with very unpleasant pressure against the b-pawn.

18.Qxh7+!

If 18 ... Kxh7 then 19.Bd3+ regains the queen with a pawn advantage.

18 ... Kf8!

He realizes that it is the white king that is in real danger, so that the queen is forced to retreat to protect b2.

19.Qc2 e5!?

Black reasons that if his bishop could join in the attack then he would have excellent chances, and thus is prepared to sacrifice the pawns on e6 and c6,
which are more of an obstruction than an asset. An alternative manoeuvre is 19 ... Qe1+, since White is unable to interpose 20.Qd2 due to 20 ... Rb3+!. Therefore, the king must move to d3 where it appears horribly exposed but is actually fairly safe. For example if 20 ... Be8 White has 21.Qe2! Rb3+ 22.Kc4! Qc1+ 23.Kxb3 Qxc5 24.Ka2 with a clear plus, and on 20 ... Rd8 21.Qe2 Qb1+ 22.Qc2 Bc8+ (or 22 ... Be8+ 23.Ke2) 23.Ke4! and 24.Kf3 is again fine.

**20.Rxe5**

Otherwise the bishop enters the game on f5.

![Chess board](image)

**20 ... c5!?**

Black bravely pursues his plan and now donates the other pawn to the cause. Another continuation is 20 ... Be6, since this threatens 21 ... Rb3+ 22.Kd4 Rxb2 with a very strong attack. Given that 21.Rxe6 fxe6 gets him nowhere, White has to risk lines such as 21.f3 Rb3+ 22.Kd4 Rxb2 23.Qc5+ Kg8 24.Ke4! and there is no immediate black victory.
21.Rxc5?

This is wrong and should lose. The only plausible method of staying in the game seems to be 21.Bb5!, when on 21 ... Qxh1 White has 22.Bxd7 Qe1+ (22 ... Qxh2!? is an interesting attempt to keep the attack alive, although 23.Rd5 should hold) 23.Kc4 Rd8.

In this fascinating position, White might try 24.Rd5 but he would then be subjected to severe pressure after 24 ... Rab8. Instead, he should play the forthright 24.Qh7!. This threatens mate and Black must take extreme caution if he tries to pursue the king. Thus 24 ... Qc1+ 25.Kb3 Rab8+ (25 ... c4+? 26.Ka2!) 26.Ka4! and now:

(i) 26 ... Qd1+? 27.Ka5! Qd2+ 28.b4! and wins.

(ii) 26 ... Qc4+ 27.Ka5! forces 27 ... f6 28.Qh8+ Qg8 (28 ... Kf7? 29.Be6+ wins) 29.Qxg8+ Kxg8 30.Be6+ Kf8 31.Rxc5 Rxb2 32.Rc7 with good chances of drawing the endgame.

21 ... Be6!
As a result of Black’s daring sacrifices, the white king is now exposed along the b, c, d and e-files, and consequently the threat of 22 ... Rb3+ 23.Kd4 Rxh2 is even more potent. This is exacerbated since the rook on c5 prevents the white queen from moving to that square with check.

22.g4

White is powerless to prevent 22 ... Rb3+ and this move is as good as any, since the opening of the a8–h1 diagonal affords some additional tactical possibilities.

22 ... Rc8?

At the critical moment, having attacked so resourcefully, Black incorrectly thinks that 22 ... Rb3+ is impossible on account of 23.Qxb3 Bxb3? 24.Bg2! Bd1! (24 ... Qa2? 25.Bxa8 wins) 25.Bxa8 Qc1+ 26.Kd4 Qxb2 + 27.Ke4 and White has realistic chances of survival. However, Black can win by interjecting 23 ... Qe1+! 24.Kc2 Bxb3+, etc. Thus 22 ... Rb3+! forces 23.Kd4 and then 23 ... Rxh2! leads to the following situation.
Now if the white queen moves to c3 to defend against the discovered check, Black wins by 24 ... Qd1+ 25.Ke5 (other moves also lead to mate, for example 25.Bd3 Rd8+ 26.Ke4 Qxg4+ 27.f4 Qg2+ 28.Ke5 Rd5+ 29.Rxd5 Qxd5 mate) 25 ... f6+! 26.Kxe6 Re8+ 27.Kf5 Rxf2+ 28.Kg6 Qxg4+ 29.Kh7 Qh4+ and mate next move. Thus White must try another tack, but 24.Bg2 simply loses a piece to 24 ... Rxc2+ 25.Rxa1 Rd8+! 25.Bd5 Rxc5 and 26 ... Rxd5+, and 24.Bc4 is met by 24 ... Rd8+! (only not 24 ... Rb1+? 25.Ke4 Rxh1 since 26.Bxe6 fxe6 27.Rc8+! Rxc8 28.Qxc8+ gives White perpetual check) 25.Ke5 Rxc2+ 26.Rxa1 Bxc4 and Black has a decisive advantage.

23.Kd3!

After this it is clear that White is about to turn the tables (for example if 23 ... Rxc5? then 24.Qxc5+ Kg8 25.Bg2 wins), so Trepp decides that dramatic measures are necessary.

23 ... Rd8+ 24.Ke2 Rd1

The alternative is 24 ... Rab8!? 25.Bg2! Qxb2 (25 ... Qa2? 26.Rb1!) 26.h3 Qxa3 and, although a pawn behind, Black’s active pieces and passed a-pawn
mean that he is unlikely to lose. The text move attempts to prevent the
development of the white king’s side pieces, and relies on the tactical idea

25.h3!? 

Nemet embarks on a further adventure by giving up his bishop. There was
29.Qxc2 Qxa3 30.Rb1 and things are in the balance.

25 ... Re1+!

Forcing the king to leave the defence of the bishop. White seems to be in
appalling trouble, but Nemet is ready to unleash his idea.

26.Kf3 Rxf1 27.Rh5!!

This is the stratagem conceived by Nemet; his queen and rook now combine
to force the black king to join its counterpart in the open. Moreover, the rook
on a8 is hanging.
27 ... Rxh1?

Black can and should secure an immediate draw by 27 ... Rxf2+ 28.Kxf2 Qxh1!, defending the rook. White must then force perpetual check with 29.Rh8+ Ke7 30.Qc7+ Kf6 31.Qc3+! Kg6 32.Qd3+ f5 33.gxf5+ Bxf5 34.Qd6+ Kf7 35.Qc7+ Ke6 36.Qc4+ Ke7 37.Qc7+, etc. In this line the queen cannot interpose (otherwise after the exchange of queens White wins the rook) nor can the king go to c6, thus Black is unable to prevent the perpetual.

28.Rh8+ Ke7

The difference from the note above is that, at an appropriate moment, White can grab the rook and try to force mate.

29.Qc7+ Kf6 30.Qf4+

If here (or on the next two moves) 30.Rxa8? then 30 ... Bd5+ 31.e4 (31.Kf4 g5+ and mate next move) 31 ... Rxh3+ wins the queen or forces mate.

30 ... Ke7 31.Qb4+ Kf6 32.Qd4+

Now that d5 is protected White can think about capturing the rook.

32 ... Ke7?

This loses; 32 ... Kg6! was correct. After 33.Rxa8 with best play White can get queen and three pawns against queen and bishop, but this is probably insufficient to win.

(i) 33 ... Qd1+? 34.Qxd1 Rxd1 35.Rxa7 and the white pawns are more than a match for the bishop.

(ii) 33 ... Rxh3+! 34.Kf4 (on 34.Ke2 Qh1! is best) 34 ... Rf3+! 35.Kxf3 Qh1+ 36.Kg3 (or 36.Kf4 Qxa8 37.Qd3+ Kf6 38.Qc3+ with perpetual) 36 ... Qxa8 37.f4! Bd5! 38.f5+ Kh7 and although White has some pressure the most likely result is again a draw.

33.Rxa8!
With the brutal threat of 34.Qd8 mate.

33 ... Rd1

With the king on e7 rather than g6, the defence 33 ... Rxhr 34.Kf4 Rf3+, which worked in the note above, fails to a magnificent line commencing 35.Kg5!.
Now 35 ... f6+ loses instantly to 36.Kg6!, so Black’s fate looks sealed. However, there is one last extremely imaginative try in 35 ... Rf5+!?. Then 36.gxf5 is forced and Black continues 36 ... Qg1+ and there is only one way for White to succeed.


(ii) 37.Kh4? Qxf2+ 38.Kh3 (others also lead to mate) 38 ... Bxf5+ and wins.

(iii) 37.Qg4?! f6+ 38.Kh5 (on 38.Kf4? g5+! 39.Kf3 Bd5+ 40.e4 Qxg4+ 41.Kxg4 Bxa8 and Black should be able to win) 38 ... Bf7+ 39.Kh4 Qh1+ 40.Kg3 Qxa8 and a draw is the most likely result.

(iv) 37.Kh5! g6+ (if 37 ... Qh1+ then 38.Qh4+!) 38.Kh6 Qh1+ 39.Kg7 Qxa8 40.Qc5+ Kd7 41.fxe6+ fxe6 and White’s extra pawns will eventually tell.

34.Rxa7+! Ke8

Or 34 ... Kf8 35.Qc5+ Kg8 36.Ra8+ Kh7 37.Qh5 mate.
35.Qa4+?

Now it is White’s turn to miss the best continuation. After 35.Qxg7! Black is in a mating net, as the following variations show.

(i) 35 ... Bd5+? 36.Kf4 and Black cannot prevent mate.

(ii) 35 ... Rd7 (the only decent try) 36.Ra8+ Ke7 (on 36 ... Rd8 37.Qg8+ wins) 37.Qf8+ Kf6 38.g5+!! and now:

(a) 38 ... Kxg5 39.Qg7+ Kf5 40.e4 mate.

(b) 38 ... Kf5 39.e4+ Ke5 40.Qc5+ and wins.

(c) 38 ... Ke5 39.Qb8+! Rd6 (39 ... Kd5 40.Ra5+ Kc6 41.Ra6+ Kc5 42.Qb4+ Kd5 43.Qd4 mate; or 39 ... Kf5 40.Qf4+ Kg6 41.Qf6+ and mate next move) 40.Qh8+! Kd5 41.Qd4+ Kc6 42.Ra6+ Kb7 43.Qa7+ Kc8 44.Qa8+ Kc7 45.Ra7+ Kb6 46.Qb7+ Kc5 47.Ra5+ Kc4 48.Qb5 mate.

35 ... Bd7

35 ... Rd7 should amount to the same thing after 36.Ra8+ Ke7 37.Qb4+ Rd6 38.Ra7+ Bd7.

36.Qe4+

And 36.Ra8+ is similar after 36 ... Ke7

37.Qb4+ Rd6 38.Qe4+ Re6. However, White’s move at least gives Black (in grievous time-trouble) one last chance to go wrong.
36 ... Kd8?

A terrible blunder, which leaves Black lost. The obvious 36 ... Be6 would have kept the tension, when White’s best winning attempt would be 37.Qb4 Rd7 (forced) 38.Ra8+ Rd8 39.Qb5+ Bd7 (again the only move) 40.Qe5+ Be6 41.Rxd8+ Kxd8 42.Kg2. In this position White would have four pawns for a piece and would have all the winning chances, but he would certainly need to be mindful of Black’s bishop and queen forcing perpetual check.

37.Ra8+! Bc8

If 37 ... Kc7 then White’s queen and rook force mate in a few moves by 38.Qf4+ Kc6 39.Qc4+ Kd6 (or 39 ... Kb7 40.Qa6+ Kc7 41.Qa5+ Kd6 42.Qb4+ Kd5 43.Ra5+ Ke6 44.Qe4+ Kd6 45.Qe5+ Kc6 46.Qc5+ Kb7 47.Ra7+ Kb8 48.Qc7 mate) 40.Ra6+ Ke7 41.Qc5+ Ke8 42.Ra8+ and mate follows.

38.Qc2 Qc1

As Black played this move his flag fell, but his position is hopeless. White
simply plays 39.Rxc8+, then checks with his queen and takes on c1.

Black lost on time.

1989

Malinin, V – Andreev, A
Leningrad
Benko Gambit (A58)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5!?

The dynamic Benko Gambit, which offers a pawn for rapid queen’s side development and open lines.

4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6

White accepts the gambit. There are methods of declining but as usual in opening theory, it is often the acceptance of a sacrifice that is its sternest test.

5 ... Bxa6

From this square the bishop is ready to exchange light-squared bishops if ever White moves the e-pawn.

6.Nc3 d6 7.Nf3 g6 8.g3

A popular line, normally a precursor to a fianchetto of the bishop. But Malinin has another idea in mind.

8 ... Bg7 9.h4!?

A wonderfully direct approach. This unusual idea has been tried in similar positions – for example, after White has played Nh3-f4 – but here it is almost unknown.
9 ... 0-0!? 

Black does not believe that White has serious intentions on the h-file. More circumspect would have been 9 ... h5.

10.h5!? 

White continues with his primitive attack.

10 ... Nhx5 11.Rhx5!? 

Very enterprising and probably unsound, but extremely difficult to meet over the board.

11 ... gxh5 12.Qc2 

With fairly blatant intentions of mounting an assault against the h7 square.

12 ... Nd7 13.Bg5 Nf6!?
The game Camejo – Quadrio, from the 1993 Portuguese Championships, continued with the more incisive 13 ... h6! 14.Bf4 Qa5! and Black quickly assumed the initiative after 15.Bd2 Nb6! 16.b3 c4!.

14.Bg2 Rb8 15.0-0-0?!

The sight of White castling on the queen’s wing in a Benko Gambit must have started Black’s adrenaline flowing. Seldom does White dare to do this, principally because of all the open files and diagonals that point towards his king.

15 ... Qa5

Black has developed an impressive attacking formation, and has various tactical motives in mind. In particular, he eyes the pawns on d5 and b2, and also has the possibility of Bc4 at some stage.

16.Rh1!?

Preparing an audacious continuation. White’s concept, as shall be seen, is a remarkable one but it is not sound.

16 ... Nxd5?

Seemingly crushing, but there is a flaw. Black could have won by reversing his move order with 16 ... Rxb2!! 17.Qxb2 Nxd5! and the knight on c3 falls, leaving White with a lost game.

17.Nxd5
17 ... Rxb2?

A very plausible combination, which is refuted by a stunning queen sacrifice. Andreev could have drawn the game had he found 17 ... Bxb2+!, with two possibilities.


(c) The most demanding try is 20.Bh6+!, since 20 ... Kxh6? is answered by the rook sacrifice 21.Rxh5+!! Kxh5 (if 21 ... Kg7 22.Qxh7+ Kf6 23.Nd5+ wins the queen) 22.Qxh7+ Kg4 23.Qf5 mate. However, Black survives with 20 ... Kf6! and White has no more than perpetual check with 21.Bg5+ (21.Qf5+? Kxe7 22.Bg5+ f6 or 21.Bxf8 Qa1+ 22.Kd2 Qa5+, etc) 21 ... Kg7 (21 ... Ke6 22.Qf5 mate) 22.Bh6+, etc.

18.Nxe7+ Kh8
19.Qxh7+!!

White gives up the queen to extract the black king from his defences.

19 ... Kxh7 20.Rxh5+ Bh6

What makes this position so interesting is that White’s king is also horribly exposed. Indeed, He cannot play the move he really wishes to – 21.Bxh6 – because of 21 ... Qc3+ 22.Kd1 Bxe2 mate.

21.Rxh6+

Capturing with check and thus giving him time to defend the c3 square.

21 ... Kg7 22.Nf5+! Kg8 23.Bf6!

Rather than force a draw with 23.Ne7+, White plays this strong move, which defends c3 and of course threatens 24.Rh8 mate. Black is now forced to find a desperate defence.
23 ... Rc2+!

The only move to keep the game alive. Can Andreev force perpetual check?

24. Kxc2 Qxa2+

If 24 ... Qa4+ then 25.Kd2 and the king escapes to the king’s side.

25. Bb2 Qc4+

Black seems to have good chances of forcing a draw.

26. Bc3

In this alarming situation there are a number of plausible ways for Black to continue.

(i) 26 ... Qxe2+ 27.Kc1 and the checks have run out so 27 ... f6 is now forced. Then 28.Rg6+! is the right move, when 28 ... Kf7? loses to 29.Rg7+ Ke6 (or 29 ... Ke8 30.Nxd6+ Kd8 31.Ba5 mate) 30.N3d4+! cxd4 31.Nxd4+ Ke5
32. Re7 mate, and 28 ... Kh7 is met by 29. Rg7+ Kh8 30. N3h4! and the threat of 31. Ng6 mate wins the queen. The best defence is 28 ... Kh8 but White wins with 29. Ng5!.

The threat is 30. Rh6+ Kg8 31. Bd5+ Rf7 32. Bxf7+ Kf8 33. Rh8 mate, and the only defence 29 ... Qh5 fails to 30. Ne7! (with the idea of 31. Bxf6+! Rxf6 32. Rg8 mate) 30 ... Bc4 31. Be4! and Black must give up his queen to prevent 32. Nf7+! Bxf7 33. Bxf6+ Kh7 34. Rg7+ Kh6 35. Rh7 mate.

(ii) 26 ... Qa2+!? 27. Kc1 f6 is similar to the lines above, the main difference being that from a2 the queen stops a later Ba5 mate. White might try 28. Ng5!?, hoping for 28 ... fxg5? 29. Bd5+!! Qxd5 30. Ne7+ Kf7 31. Nxd5 and wins. But 28 ... Rf7! gives Black chances to hold (see the analysis in the note to Black’s twenty-seventh move below), so instead White has to play 28. N3h4! Rf7 (else 29. Bd5+ and 30. Ne7+ wins) 29. Ng6! Rd7 30. Bd5+ Qxd5 31. Nge7+ Rxe7 32. Nxe7+ Kg7 33. Nxd5 Kxh6 and White has a winning material advantage.

(iii) Finally, 26 ... Qe4+ 27. Kc1 f6 loses rapidly to 28. N3h4!, since the queen is under attack.
26 ... f6!

He keeps his checking options open and plays the move that is necessary in all lines.

27.Ng5?

The right idea but the wrong move order. This sequence allows Black more defensive chances than 27.Rg6+! Kh8 (27 ... Kf7 28.Nxd6+ or 27 ... Kh7 28.Rg7+ Kh8 29.N3h4!) and only now 28.Ng5!, which wins (for example 28 ... Qxe2+ 29.Kc1 transposes into a variation above).

27 ... Re8?

Black’s best try is 27 ... Qa2+ 28.Kc1 Rf7!. White should win but not without some anguish. For example, after 29.Nxf7 Qb3! 30.Rg6+ Kf8 31.Bb2 Qc4+ 32.Kb1 Qxe2, Black has chances of obtaining a draw by perpetual check.
White has various ways of winning, all of which are pretty nerve-racking. One method in the line above is 31.N7xd6 Qxc3+ 32.Kd1 Qb3+ (or 32 ... Qa1+ 33.Kd2 Qb2+ 34.Ke3 Qxe2+ 35.Kf4 Qxf2+ 36.Bf3 and the checks stop) 33.Kd2 Qb4+ 34.Ke3 Qc3+ 35.Kf4 Qe5+ 36.Kg4 Bxe2+ 37.Kh3 and White has escaped and should be able to convert his material advantage, although the win will be far from easy.

28.Bd5+!!

After the inaccuracies everything is okay again and White finishes off with a beautiful sacrificial mating attack.

28 ... Qxd5 29.Rh8+!

A lovely way to wind up a wild game. This rook sacrifice leads to a three piece mate, but it should be noted that the prosaic 29.Rg6+ also leads to mate after 29 ... Kf8 30.Rxf6+ Kg8 31.Rg6+ Kf8 32.Bg7+ Kg8 33.Nh6 mate.

29 ... Kxh8 30.Bxf6+ Kg8 31.Nh6+ Kf8 32.Nh7 mate.
1990

Lautier, J – Shirov, A
Manila
King’s Indian Defence (E63)

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 0-0 5 0-0 d6

The King’s Indian Defence is a natural choice for Alexei Shirov, a tremendously exciting and energetic player.

6.c4 Nc6 7.Nc3 a6 8.h3 Bd7

All this is standard King’s Indian theory, but Lautier now avoids the main lines (such as 9.Be3 or 9.e4) and develops his dark-squared bishop in an unusual fashion.

9.Bg5!? h6
Shirov immediately attacks the bishop. The pawn on h6 is certainly a potential target for the queen and bishop; on the other hand should Black at a later stage wish to commence a king’s side pawn storm, then having the pawn ready to support ... g5 could prove extremely useful.

10.Be3 Rb8 11.Nd5!?

Lautier’s idea is to mount pressure against f6 thereby causing the h-pawn to be exposed. An alternative continuation is 11.Qd2 Kh7 12.a4 a5 13.d5!? Nb4 14.Nd4, with a potentially powerful king’s side attack.

11 ... b5!?


12.Nxf6+

The bishop cannot recapture since it is required to defend the h-pawn.

12 ... exf6 13.cxb5

The disadvantage of this exchange is that Black’s rook becomes active. Therefore, perhaps 13.b3 would have been more circumspect.

13 ... Rxb5!

This might have surprised Lautier but 13 ... axb5 14.d5 Ne5 15.Nd2! leaves the black knight rather clumsily placed.

14.Qd2 g5!?

This advance is safer than normally would be the case because it is supported by two black pawns. Of course, those of a more sedentary disposition might prefer 14 ... Kh7 since from now on the play becomes intensely complex.

15.d5!?

Lautier is likewise playing aggressively and advances the pawn to the d5
square to prevent its later occupation by the black knight. Instead, 15.Rfc1 Ne7 16.Ne1!? or 15.a4 Rb3!? (or 15 ... Rb8 16.d5 Ne5) lead to interesting positions with chances for both sides.

15 ... Ne7!

Preparing the subsequent enterprising sacrifice.

16.Nd4

Now if the rook retreats Black would be left with a miserable position.

16 ... Rxd5! 17.Bxd5 Nxd5

As a result of the sacrifice, Black has activated his knight and has a potentially dangerous king’s side attack ready to be unleashed. For instance, if now 18.g4?! Shirov would continue 18 ... Qc8!, with ideas such as ... h5, ... f5 or even ... Bxg4 in the air.

18.Nf5!?
An interesting choice from Lautier, who reckons that returning a pawn – to activate his queen – represents the best defence. After 18.Kh2 Black continues 18 ... Qc8!, exerting increased pressure on the white king’s side.

18 ... Bxf5 19.Qxd5 Bxh3 20.Rfd1

Lautier prefers this square for his rook rather than c1, which he has reserved for the other rook. After 20.Rfc1!? Be6 21.Qb7 (if 21.Qc6 then 21 ... f5! hits b2) 21 ... f5 22.Rxc7 Bd5! 23.Qa7 (if 23.Qxd5 Qxc7 Black has a slight edge) 23 ... f4! 24.Bb6 (24.gxf4? gxf4 25.Bxf4 Qh4! wins) 24 ... Qf6 White would have to face a massive king’s side onslaught.

20 ... Re8!

Shirov’s pieces spring to life, and it is clear that White is on the defensive. In addition to the open e-file and two bishops, Black has threats against the b-pawn and has the natural and powerful plan of ... f5 and ... f4.

21.Rac1 f5!
22.Rd2

If 22.Bd4 then simply 22 ... Bxd4 23.Qxd4 Rxe2 gives Black an edge because of his control of the light squares, but 22.Qb3!? is a tougher defence. If 22 ... Qa8 then simply 23.Qd5 maintains the status quo, thus Black must play offensively with 22 ... f4!. Then if 23.gxf4 Qd7! (23 ... gxf4? 24.Bxf4 hits the bishop on h3 and gains a precious tempo) 24.Kh2 Qg4! 25.Qd5 (not 25.Rg1? Qh4! and wins) 25 ... Qh4! 26.Kg1 gxf4! 27.Rxc7 (or 27.Rc4 c6! 28.Qxc6 Rc8! and if 29.Qd5 Rxc4 30.Qxc4? Qg4+ 31.Kh1 Qg2 mate) 27 ... Re6 and the rook joins the attack with decisive affect. White might therefore try to avoid capturing the f-pawn, but he has to be careful otherwise he gets into a terrible mess. For example, if 23.Bd2? then 23 ... Rxe2 24.Qf3 Bd4!! 25.Qxe2 (or 25.Be1 g4!!, forcing 26.Qxe2 with the same result) 25 ... Qa8! and White has to surrender his queen to avoid mate. The best defence is 23.Bd4! although after 23 ... Bxd4 24.Rxd4 Rxe2 Black has a slight advantage (25.gxf4 Qf6; 25.Qf3 Qe7).

22 ... Rxe3!!

A brave sacrifice, because White is now two exchanges to the good. In return, Black has two extra pawns, the two bishops and an enduring initiative.

23.fxe3 Qe7 24.Kf2?!

Lautier refuses to retreat his queen and uses the king to protect the weak pawns. But it would have been safer to play 24.Qf3!, when Black has no immediate way to exploit the disorganized state of the white army. His best plan would be to commence a slow, positional build-up by 24 ... Bg4 25.Qf2 c5!, when White can only sit and wait to see if Black can organize a breakthrough.

24 ... Be5!

Bringing all his forces to bear on the white king.
25.Rh1?!

Lautier fails to see the danger and allows a pretty and very deep winning combination. There are more resolute methods of resisting the black attack, but none is particularly satisfactory in the long run.

(i) 25.Qf3?! is met by 25 ... Bg4! 26.Qd5 f4! 27.exf4 gxf4 28.Kg2 (28.gxf4? Qh4+ is crushing; for example 29.Ke3 Qg3+ 30.Ke4 Bf5+! 31.Kxf5 Qg6 mate) 28 ... fxg3 followed by 29 ... h5 and the advancing king’s side pawns should prove decisive.

(ii) On 25.Rd3 Black must tread carefully, otherwise White can generate troublesome threats against the centre pawns. Thus 25 ... c5! stamps out all counterplay and after 26.Rh1 g4 the advance of the h-pawn will again be very strong.

(iii) After 25.Qd3 h5! 26.Rh1 Black could continue 26 ... g4!? (with the same idea of pushing the h-pawn) since 27.Qxf5 Bxg3+ 28.Kxg3 Qxe3+ is good, or he might prefer 26 ...Bg4 when 27 ... h5 is hard to meet.
25 ... Bxg3+!!

Another brilliant sacrifice from Shirov. On this occasion precise calculation of variations and accurate evaluation of the resulting positions are both necessary.

26.Kxg3

If 26.Kf3 then the most decisive move is 26 ... Be1! (26 ... g4+ also wins) 27.Rxe1 g4+ 28.Kg3 Qxe3+ 29.Kh4 Qf2+ 30.Kh5 Qf4! 31.Kh4 Bg2! and White must give up his queen for a pawn to avoid being mated.

26 ... Qxe3+ 27.Qf3

If 27.Kh2? then 27 ... Qf2+ forces mate next move.

27 ... Qxd2

Now of course 28.Kxh3? would lose instantly to 28 ... g4+, but Shirov had to assess the situation after 28.Rxh3 g4! 29.Qa8+ Kg7 30.Rh1.
In fact, Black wins quite easily by 30 ... Qe3+ 31.Kh2 Qxe2+ 32.Qg2 Qe5+ 33.Kg1 (or 33.Qg3 Qxb2+ 34.Qg2 Qe5+ 35.Qg3 Qe2+ 36.Qf2 Qe3 and Black’s six passed pawns will be more than sufficient to win) 33 ... Kg6 and the pawns will march down the board with telling effect.

28.Qa8+ Kg7 29.Kxh3 Qxe2

Shirov correctly evaluated this position as a clear win for Black. There is nothing that White can do to prevent the pawns.
30.Qd5 Kg6

30 ... Qf2! threatens 31 ... g4 mate and wins on the spot, but the text is also good enough.

31.Qd4 f4 32.Rg1 f5!

Black is not worried about the pinned g-pawn as 33.Qxf4 is answered by 33 ... Qh5+ and 34 ... gxf4. But now there is no defence to 33 ... g4+ 34.Rxg4 fxg4+ 35.Kh4 Qh2+ 36.Kxg4 Qg3 mate.

White resigns.

1991

Mercuri, L – Young
USA
Nimzowitsch Defence (B00)
1.e4 Nc6

This line has never been as popular as Nimzowitsch’s main contribution to opening theory, the Nimzo-Indian Defence (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4!). Nevertheless, it is an interesting if somewhat obscure variation that has sporadic bursts of popularity with adventurous masters and enthusiastic amateurs alike.

2.Nf3

White declines to occupy the centre with 2.d4 and invites Black to transpose to a regular king’s pawn opening by 2 ... e5.

2 ... f5!?  

2 ... d6 has been the choice of players like Tony Miles in this position, with a later ... Bg4
leading to a double-edged game. Black’s choice in this game is not featured in many standard opening manuals, for it is an amazing attempt to randomize things as early as move two.

3.exf5

There is no reason not to accept the gift of the pawn. In addition to the material gained, White also has dangerous possibilities along the now weakened h5–e8 diagonal. So what compensation does Black think he has?

3 ... d5

This is the point of Black’s eccentric opening. He stakes a claim in the centre and threatens 4 ... Bxf5, regaining the pawn with a playable game.

4.Nh4!?

Mercuri is happy to compromise his development in order to defend the gambit pawn. However, safe and good is 4.Bb5! Bxf5 and now 5.0-0, 5.d4 and 5.Ne5 all give White the advantage.

4 ... e5?!

Black is clearly in no mood to be diffident and accordingly lashes out in the centre. The problem with this move is that White can now cause havoc with the check on h5, and thus far more circumspect is 4 ... Nf6 with 5 ... e5 to follow.

5.Qh5+ g6

Curiously, both players enter the following sequence aware of the outcome. White first gives up his queen in order to promote the pawn currently on f5 at h8, thus winning a rook. Black is happy for all this to transpire since he wishes to whip up a powerful attack whilst the new white queen is out of play.

6.fxg6 Nf6 7.g7+!? 

White could try to keep things simple with 7.Qg5!? but 7 ... Bc5 threatens 8

7 ... Nxa5 8.gxa5 Qxa5

Black is the exchange and two pawns down but his queen, bishop and both knights are ready to mount an assault against his opponent’s king.

9.Qxa5

Necessary, otherwise 9 ... Bf5! protects the h-pawn and keeps the queen trapped in the corner.

9 ... Nd4!

Active play is called for to prevent White consolidating his material advantage.

Astonishingly enough, the position reached here has been seen in several games since the early 1980s, many of which resulted in quick victories for
Black. Nevertheless, with accurate play White should have equal chances.

(i) Firstly, if 10.c3? then Black should continue with 10 ... Bf5!! 11.Bb5+! (if 11.Qxc7 then 11 ... Qe4+ leads to mate) 11 ... c6! 12.Qxb7 Qe4+ 13.Kf1 (forced) 13 ... cxb5! 14.Qxa8+ Kf7 15.Qxa7+ Kg8 and White is lost; for instance if 16.cxd4 then 16 ... Nf4! 17.Nc3 Qxg2+ 18.Ke1 Qxh1 is mate.

(ii) If White defends c2 by 10.Qxc7? then 10 ... Qe4+ 11.Kd1 Bg4+ 12.f3 Bxf3+! 13.gxf3 Qxf3+ 14.Ke1 Be7! and 15 ... Bh4+ will be decisive.

(iii) A better method of preventing 10 ... Nxc2+ is 10.Bd3! e4 11.c3! exd3! (White is comfortable after 11 ... Bf5 12.Bb5+! Nxb5 13.Qxf5) 12.cxd4 (not 12.Qg6+? Kd8 13.cxd4 Qe7+! and Black triumphs) 12 ... Qg4 13.Nc3 Nf4 14.Rg1 Bd7 and the situation is unclear; Black will castle and continue his assault on the white defences.

(iv) After 10.Qg6+ Kd8 11.d3 Black should continue 11 ... Nf4!, when 12.Bxf4? Qxf4! gives him the advantage. Better is 12.Qg8! Ke8 13.Bxf4 Qxf4 14.Na3 (the difference is that the bishop on f8 is pinned) 14 ... Be6 15.Qg3 Bxa3 16.Qxf4 exf4 17.bxa3 Nxc2+ 18.Kd2 Nxa1 19.Be2 and after the knight is captured an interesting and approximately level endgame is reached. Alternatively, after 10.Qg6+ Kd8 he might consider 11.g3!? hoping to force the exchange of queens. But with 11 ... Qg4! 12.Qxg4 Bxg4 Black has a strong initiative, despite the absence of queens. For example, if 13.Bd3 e4 14.c3 then 14 ... Nf3+ 15.Kd1 (or 15.Kf1 Bh3+ 16.Ke2 Bg2! 17.Rd1 exd3+ 18.Kxd3 Kd7 19.Kc2 Re8 and Black dominates the board) 15 ... exd3 leaves White with a terribly restricted position.

Because of these lines Mercuri elects to develop a piece.

10.Nc3 Bf5?!

Supporting the d-pawn with 10 ... c6 is more circumspect, but Young prefers to continue with his blitzkrieg and is ready to sacrifice further material.

11.Qxc7!

Another equally chaotic line is 11.Bb5+ c6 (not 11 ... Kd8? 12.Qf7! with
11 ... Bb4!

Courageously continuing with his policy of maximum aggression. A more conservative approach is 11 ... Be7, which offers his king some protection. After 12.Bb5+ Kf7 White has a number of alternatives.

(i) 13.Qxe5?! is answered by 13 ... Nf4! 14.Rg1?! (14.h3! is better since it prevents the next move but Black’s attack remains fierce) 14 ... Nh3!!.
The knight cannot be taken because of the reply 15 ... Nf3+ winning the queen, and after 15.Rf1 Nxc2+ 16.Ke2 (White can get in trouble with 16.Kd1?! Nxf2+ 17.Rxf2 Qxf2) 16 ... Nd4+ White must accede to a draw.


(iii) Better still for White appears to be 13.Ba4!, after which Black could try 13 ... Rc8 14.Qxe5 Bf6 15.Qxd5+ Kg6 when his pieces are actively poised to put pressure on the king. However, after 16.d3 there seems no way of breaking through. Or he might try 13 ... Bxc2?! 14.Qxe5 Bxa4 15.Qxd5+ Kg6 16.Nxa4 Nc2+ 17.Kf1 Nxa1 but he only has a trapped knight in return for his exposed king and four-pawn deficit.

12.Be2

It is understandable that White desires to protect his king, but this is a rather timid move. There are two interesting alternatives that should be examined.

(a) Then 13 ... Rc8!? is one continuation that in some lines gives White serious problems. For example, if 14.Qxe5 Nxc2+?! (trying to deflect the bishop in order to play 15 ... Re8) 15.Kf1? Bd3+ 16.Kg1 Bc5! 17.Nd1 Nd4 18.h3 Nf4! 19.Ne3 Nfe2+ 20.Kh2? Bf5!! 21.Nxf5 Nf3+ 22.gxf3 Qxf2 mate. However, White can improve in a number of ways, one such being 15.Bxc2! Re8 16.Qxe8+ Kxe8 17.Bxf5 and Black has won the queen but at too high a material cost, leaving White with a decisive advantage.

(b) Black does better with 13 ... Nf4! (not 13 ... Bxc3? 14.dxc3 Qe4+ 15.Be3! and wins), which presents White with serious difficulties. If 14.0-0? then 14 ... Nf3+! 15.gxf3 Qg5+ forces mate next move, and on 14.Rg1? Qxh2! 15.Kf1 Bh3! is decisive. Other tries that fail are 14.Kf1? Qg4! 15.Rg1 Bxc3!, and 14.g3? Ng2+ 15.Kf1 Qh3. Furthermore, 14.Qxe5? loses the queen after 14 ... Nxg2+! 15.Kf1 (15.Kd1 Bg4+) 15 ... Nf4! 16.Qxd4 Bh3+ 17.Ke1 Ng2+, etc. The only decent defence is 14.Qxb7, when 14 ... Nxc2+ leads to the following situation.

Now 15.Kf1 is forced in view of 15.Kd1? Bg4+, leading to mate. Black

(ii) Secondly, 12.Qxe5+!? looks extremely hazardous since it opens the e-file to the black rook, but it is probably best. There would follow 12 ... Kf8 and if 13.Qh8+?! then 13 ... Kf7 14.Qxa8 Qe7+! 15.Be2 Bxc3! 16.0-0 Nxe2+ 17.Kh1 Be5 gives Black excellent chances of generating threats against the castled king. Better is 13.Bb5, preventing ... Re8, although 13 ... Nf4! (relying on the tactic 14.Qxd4? Nxe2+ winning the queen) is a vigorous response that keeps the black attack going.

What horrendous complexities for such a brief encounter.
12 ... Nf4!

Having seen the efficacy of this in the notes to the previous move, it is hardly surprising that it is strong here. Now 13.Qxe5+! looks to be the best continuation. Black cannot interpose either knight, as 13 ... Nde6 14.Qxf5 and 13 ... Nfe6 14.Nxd5 are good for White, so he has two viable options.

(i) On 13 ... Kf8?! White himself has two alternatives.

(a) He should avoid 14.g3? since 14 ... Ng2+ 15.Kf1 Qh3! (with the threat of 16 ... Ne3+ 17.Ke1 Ndxc2 mate) 16.Kg1 Ne1! leaves White in serious trouble.
Here he must try to force perpetual check with 17.Qf6+ Kg8 18.Qg5+ Kf7!!
Bxd4+ 24.Be3 Bxe3 mate) 19 ... Ke6! 20.Qe3+ Kd7 21.Qxe1 Qxh5, but if
now 22.Qd1 then 22 ... Nf3+ 23.Kf1 Bh3+ 24.Ke2 Re8+ 25.Kd3 Qf5+ and
Black mates next move. Furthermore, 22.Qe3 fails to 22 ... Nf3+ 23.Kf1 (or
23.Kg2 Bh3 mate) 23 ... d4! trapping the queen.

(b) Therefore White should play 14.Kf1! and he comes out on top after any of
14 ... Nh3 15.g3, 14 ... Nxd5 15.Bg1!, 14 ... Bh3 15.Qxd4 Bxg2+ 16.Ke1, or
14 ... Re8 15.Qxd4.

(ii) Better, therefore, is 13 ... Be7! when 14.Nxd5 Nxe2+ 15.Kf1 Bh3 leads to
a position extremely difficult to assess. It appears that White has the better
chances but he must be careful because his king is still exposed. For example,
one line is 16.Bh5+ Kg7 17.Qxe7+!? (17.Qc7+ Ke6 18.Qxe7+ is similar, and
17.Bg4+!? Qxg4 18.Qxe7+ Kc6 19.Nb4+ allows Black to get at least a draw)
17 ... Qxe7 18.Nxe7 Nh4+! 19.Ke1 (not 19.Kg1 Nde2+ and mate next move)
19 ... Nhx5 20.Nd5 Bg2 21.Ne3 Bxh1 and Black’s active minor pieces are
worth more than the four pawns.
13.g3?

This move order restricts some of White’s options and is thus an inferior choice to 13.Qxe5+.

13 ... Ng2+ 14.Kf1


14 ... Qh3

With the threat of 14 ... Ne3+ 15.Kg1 Qg2 mate.

15.Qxe5+

Two other moves also have to be considered here.

(i) 15.Kg1? loses to 15 ... Nxe2+! 16.Nxe2 Ne1 17.Qxe5+ Be6! and White must give up his queen to avoid mate.

(ii) 15.Bh5+!? Qxh5 16.Qxe5+ Ne6 and now 17.Kxg2? loses to 17 ... Bh3+ 18.Kg1 Qxe5, whilst 17.Qxd5? also fails to 17 ... Bxc3! 18.dxc3 Ne3+ 19.Bxe3 Bh3+, etc. Both 17.d4 and 17.Qe2 would be better and the situation remains complex, with chances for both sides.

15 ... Be7

Here 15 ... Be6? does not work because White checks with 16.Bh5+ and after 16 ... Kd7 17.Qxd4 Ne3+ 18.Ke2 Black has nothing. However 15 ... Kf8!? is extremely interesting; the positions are analogous but not identical to those seen in the notes to the last few moves. After 16.Qf6+ Kg8 (if 16 ... Ke8 then 17.Qe5+ repeats) 17.Qg5+ Black can escape perpetual by 17 ... Kf7!. Then 18.Qh5+ Kf8 19.Qxh3 Bxh3 leaves White in a bind, whilst 18.Bh5+ Ke6 19.Qh6+ (in this line the knight on g2 prevents the check on e3) 19 ... Kd7 20.Qg7+ Kc6 21.Qxd4 Nf4+! 22.Ke1 Ng2+ 23.Ke2 (or 23.Kf1 Nf4+ with a draw) 23 ... Qxh5+ 24.Kf1 Bh3 25.Qxd5+ Qxd5 26.Nxd5 Kxd5 leaves the position unclear, with Black’s very active pieces countering the white pawns.
16.Kg1

White can attempt to deflect the queen with 16.Bh5+ Qxh5 17.Qxd4 but Black simply renews the threats with 17 ... Bh3, giving him a clear advantage.

16 ... Ne1

Black’s chosen move is natural and the mate threat looks strong, but it turns out that White is able to survive because his queen can capture the pawn on d5 – thus defending the g2 square.

Therefore, it is worth trying to defend the d-pawn by 16 ... 0-0-0, when White must avoid 17.Qxd4? or 17.Qxe7? because of the reply 17 ... Ne1!. Moreover, 17.Bd1 fails to 17 ... Bf6! 18.Qxf6 Ne1, but by 17.Nb5! White introduces powerful mating threats of his own and as a result he holds on. For example, if 17 ... Bd6 then 18.Qxd4 Ne1 19.Qxd5 defends against the mate, and 17 ... Nxe2+ 18.Qxe2 Nf4! 19.Nxa7+! Kb8 20.Qf3 hits the knight and gives White a tenable position. Other methods of guarding d5 are also unconvincing; for example 16 ... Rd8 17.Bd1! is fine, whilst 16 ... Be6 is

17.Qxd5 Rd8!


18.Qxb7

18 ... Rd7?

With this move Black sees that he can force a draw by repetition. However, with 18 ... Be6! he would retain excellent winning chances. The intention is 19 ... Bd5! forcing mate on g2, so White is forced to play 19.Bh5+! Qxh5 20.h4. This leaves Black with two bishops against rook and six pawns, but more importantly White is almost completely helpless and Black has good chances of breaking through.

19.Qa8+ Rd8
Again there are possibilities to avoid the draw with 19 ... Kf7 20.d3 Be6, but he has no intention of risking anything.

20.Qb7 Rd7?

Acquiescing to the draw.

21.Qa8+ Rd8 ½–½

1992

Fischer, R – Spassky, B
Sveti Stefan
Sicilian Defence (B31)

The return of Bobby Fischer to the chess arena in 1992 was as exciting as it was unexpected. Nobody really believed that he would play again, but chess enthusiasts everywhere watched in awe and amazement as he briefly relived those glory days of the 1960s and 1970s.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

Fischer steers the game away from a theoretical main line Sicilian. Studying his career it is noticeable that he often seemed to be at home in these sort of lines, despite his reputation for being a Sicilian theoretician par excellence.

3 ... g6

The sensible response to White’s set-up.

4.Bxc6!?

White frequently defers this capture, hoping that Black will waste a move on ...

4 ... bxc6 5.0-0 Bg7 6.Re1
Classical development from Fischer.

6 ... e5 7.b4!?

At the time this was hailed as an example of Fischer’s amazing imagination. With all the eyes of the chess world on you, it takes considerable courage to play such a move rather than the normal 7.c3. The b4 gambit had been used several times before in similar positions, typically before White exchanges on c6, but in this precise position it was unknown.

7 ... cxb4 8.a3!

The concept is akin to that used in the Sicilian Wing Gambit – as seen in our game from 1980. Fischer’s variation has important differences from the Wing Gambit; in particular, the black bishop is already placed on g7 away from the key a3–f8 diagonal.

8 ... c5

Spassky thought for a quarter of an hour before playing this move. If 8 ...
bxa3 then the obvious 9.Bxa3 gives White all the play (for example 9 ... d6
10.d4! exd4 11.e5!), although Fischer might have also considered 9.Nxa3!? with the intention of posting the knight on c4 and the bishop on b2 or a3, depending on Spassky’s response. The main alternative to 8 ... c5 has to be 8 ...
Ne7!?, which returns the pawn. However, after 9.axb4 0-0 10.Bb2 White will be able to play d4 and even c4, with a powerful initiative without a material deficit. Black could also try the rather sad 8 ... b3 but Fischer would have surely continued in sacrificial vein with 9.Bb2! and again 10.d4 follows.

9.axb4 cxb4 10.d4!

Played very much in Fischer’s style, opening the position to exploit his superior development. White is not worried about the black bishop coming to life, because his plan revolves around the weak squares in the enemy camp and the bishop will need to be on the defensive.

10 ... exd4

Spassky would have an inferior ending after 10 ... d6 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.Qxd8+ Kxd8 13.Bd2, regaining the pawn, and on 10 ... d5!? 11.exd5 Ne7!? White would continue 12.Nxe5 Qxd5 13.c4! Qb7 14.Bb2 with a fine game.

11.Bb2 d6

It looks strange to delay the development of the king’s side for another move – this is Spassky’s fifth consecutive pawn move – but the idea is to restrain White’s plan of 12.e5. Possibly he could have tried 11 ... Ne7 but 12.Bxd4 Bxd4 13.Qxd4 looks simple and strong.
12.Nxd4!

Much stronger than 12.Bxd4 for after 12 ... Nf6! 13.e5 dxe5 14.Nxe5 (or 14.Rxe5+ Be6 15.Ng5 0-0 and Black is fine) 14 ... 0-0 Black survives into the middlegame. After the text move White has several nasty threats based on the unprotected position of the bishop on g7. The main one is 13.Nc6! winning instantly, and in all variations White retains a strong attack. For example, if 12 ... Qb6!? then 13.Nd2! Bxd4 14.Nc4! Bxf2+ 15.Kh1 Qc5 16.Nxd6+ Ke7 17.Rf1! (or 17.Qf3 Bxe1 18.Qxf7+ Kd6 with an unclear position) 17 ... Qxd6 18.Qf3! gives White a powerful attack. Other than 12 ... Ne7 13.Nc6! Nxc6 14.Bxg7 Rg8 15.Qd5!, Spassky is left with little choice and so plays the text move.

12 ... Qd7 13.Nd2!

Fischer’s idea is to bring this piece to c4 and then into b6, forking queen and rook.

13 ... Bb7
13 ... Ne7 is answered in the same way by 14.Nc4!; if then 14 ... 0-0 White has 15.Nb6!, whilst 14 ... Rb8 can be met by 15.Ne6! Qxe6 16.Bxg7 followed by 17.Nxd6+.

14.Nc4 Nh6!

If 14 ... Ne7 then White again plays 15.Ne6! Bxb2 16.Nxd6+, and if 14 ... Nf6 then 15.e5! dxe5 16.Nxe5. After the text move, Black is one move away from safety, but Fischer’s timing is beautiful and, with all his pieces now developed and pointing at Black’s position, he strikes.

15.Nf5!!

Despite all his pressure, it requires precise play from Fischer to exploit the initiative.

By way of example, consider 15.Nb5, which lets Black off the hook via 15 ... Bxb2! and there is no clear win. White could also try 15.Nxd6+!? Qxd6 16.Nf5! but Black has 16 ... Qxd1! 17.Nxg7+ Ke7 and the attack peters out.

15 ... Bxb2

Of course, if 15 ... gxf5 then 16.Bxg7 wins easily.


This is the key position in the game.
17 ... f6!?

Spassky’s choice of plan here and on move nineteen overlooks White’s twenty-first move, and as a result he is ultimately left with an endgame disadvantage. Instead, he could have tried 17 ... Bxa1 leading to unfathomable complications after 18.Qxa1 Qxd6!! 19.Qxh8+ Ke7.
In this position the obvious 20.Qxh7 looks very strong because 20 ... Rf8 21.Qg7 Qd2 allows 22.Qa1!!, as pointed out by Fischer after the game; then 22 ... Qxh6 loses to 23.Qxa7! and otherwise White plays 23.Nf5+ gxf5 24.exf5+ Kd8 25.Rd1!, pinning and winning the queen. Black would therefore be forced into a lost endgame after 22 ... Qc3 23.Qxc3 bxc3.

However, it was later pointed out that after 20.Qxh7 Black has the simple 20 ... Qf4!, and if 21.g3 then 21 ... Qf3 gives him counterplay. Thus it is likely that 20.Qxh7 is not best after all, and 20.Ng8+ Kd7 21.Qxh7 might be a better option.

18.Ndf7!

Winning the exchange.

18 ... Qxd1 19.Raxd1 Ke7?

The real error in Spassky’s plan. He completely misses Fischer’s knight check on move twenty-one, which leaves him with a very difficult game. Therefore, he should have tried 19 ... Bc3! 20.Re3 Rg8! 21.Nxg8 Kxf7!, and
now 22.Rd7+ Kxg8 23.Rxb7 is far less convincing than the game continuation.

20.Nxh8 Rxh8

On the face of it Black has emerged from the complications with some chances, in view of his two raking bishops. However, after Fischer’s next move he is jolted back to reality.

21.Nf5+!! gxf5

Or 21 ... Ke6 22.Rd6+! followed by 23.Rd7 with a clear advantage.

22.exf5+ Be5

If 22 ... Kf7 then 23.Rd7+ regains the piece with a winning position.

23.f4 Re8 24.fxe5 Rxe2!

The best chance – Fischer still needs to play accurately to convert his
advantage into a win. Instead, 24 ... fxe5 25.Rxe5+ and 26.Rb5 wins easily.

**25.e6! Bc6!**

To prevent 25 ... Rd7+. The alternative 25 ... Rxg2+? loses quickly to 26.Kf1, menacing 27.Rd7+!.

**26.Rc1 Rxc1!**

Spassky defends extremely well and makes Fischer play with great precision to force the win. If 26 ... b3? then 27.Rxc2 bxc2 28.Rc1 and wins (28 ... Be4 29.g4! and the king will chase away the bishop). More tricky is 26 ... Be4, when White would have to play 27.Ra1! Bxf5 28.Rxa7+ and if 28 ... Ke8 then 29.Rb7! is decisive.

**27.Rxc1 Kd6 28.Rd1+ Ke5**

Still fighting on and avoiding 28 ... Ke7 29.Ra1 and 28 ... Kc5 29.e7 Ba4 30.Rd8 b3 31.g4 Kc4 32.e8Q Bxe8 33.Rxe8 b2 34.Rb8 Kc3 35.g5 a5 36.gxf6 and White triumphs.

**29.e7!**

Well calculated – Fischer plays the whole ending as effortlessly as he would have done twenty years previously.

**29 ... a5!**

The point is that 29 ... Kxf5 loses to 30.Rd8 a5 31.e8Q Bxe8 32.Rxe8 a4 33.Rb8 b3 34.Rb4, etc.
30.Rc1!

Not 30.e8Q+? since 30 ... Bxe8 31.Re1+ Kd4 32.Rxe8 b3 33.Rb8 Kc3 forces White to take the draw by 34.Rc8+.

30 ... Bd7 31.Rc5+

Avoiding 31.Rc7? Kd6!.

31 ... Kd4

31 ... Kd6 32.Rxa5 Kxe7 is also lost.

32.Rxa5 b3

The b-pawn looks menacing but Fischer has everything under control.

33.Ra7 Be8 34.Rb7 Kc3 35.Kf2!

Textbook endgame play. Spassky is extremely close to a draw but with
accurate play the white king will enter the game with decisive effect.

35 ... b2 36.Ke3 Bf7 37.g4!

The correct continuation, whereas he can only draw with 37.Rb8? Kc2 38.Kd4 b1Q 39.Rxb1 Kxb1 40.Kc5 h5 41.Kd6 Kc2 42.Kd7 Kd3 43.e8Q Bxe8 44.Kxe8 Ke4. After the text move the critical difference is that the g-pawn will prevent the black king capturing on f5.

37 ... Kc2 38.Kd4 b1Q

Fischer has seen that although he must give up his rook, the pawns will march up the board, winning easily.

39.Rxb1 Kxb1 40.Kc5 Kc2 41.Kd6

Black cannot prevent the pawns from breaking through.

Black resigns.

1993

Atalik, S – Miles, A
Crete
King’s Indian Defence (E81)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3

The ever-popular Sämisch Variation. White defends the e-pawn and prepares to develop his queen’s bishop on e3 and his queen on d2, with possible intentions of a king’s side attack. Frequently Black counters this with aggression on the king’s side himself; in that case White reverts to the plan of advancing his c and b-pawns, attempting to break through on the other wing.

5 ... 0-0 6.Be3 c5!?
For those who are unfamiliar with the subtleties of the King’s Indian Defence this advance looks ridiculous, for surely White can simply win a pawn by 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.Qxd8 (the immediate 8.Bxc5 is also playable but the logical continuation is to exchange queens) 8 ... Rxd8 9.Bxc5. However, after 9 ... Nc6 Black has a clear lead in development and even with the queens off he is able to generate sufficient activity to give him roughly equal chances. The whole line is extremely complex and has been the subject of reams of opening theory, so it is perhaps not surprising that Atalik here focuses on straightforward deployment of his pieces.

7.Nge2 Nc6 8.Qd2 e6

Still the pawn on c5 is en prise but the same argument applies here as on the sixth move. After 9.dxc5 dxc5 10.Bxc5 Qxd2+ 11.Kxd2 b6 the black pieces spring to life giving him an excellent game.

9.Rd1

An odd-looking move, which although increasing his control of the d-file, does little to safeguard the king or unwind his king’s side. Safer is 9.d5 or, if
White is feeling adventurous, 9.0-0-0 with ideas for an attack against the black king.

9 ... b6

Not only defending – finally – the c-pawn but also preparing for the development of the queen’s bishop.

10.Bg5

The variation used here by Atalik is risky because it leaves the king in the centre for so long. A sound alternative is to fianchetto the king’s bishop by playing 10.g3 Ba6 11.b3 Re8 12.dxc5 (safer than the immediate 12.Bg2 d5!?) 12 ... dxc5 13.Bg2.

10 ... Ba6!?

At the time this was a new move. The previous line, played by Ivanchuk against Belyavsky in 1991, went 10 ... h6 11.Bxh6 Nxe4 12.Nxe4 Qh4+, followed by 13 ... Qxh6 14.Qxh6 Bxh6 15.Nxd6 with an unbalanced position. Miles’ choice looks better and has the significant advantage of forcing his opponent to think for himself.

11.d5!?

To his credit Atalik is not afraid of the challenge, and therefore avoids any simplification.

11 ... Ne5 12.b3

White has to defend the c-pawn, because if 12.dxe6 fxe6 13.Nf4!? Re8! 14.b3 then 14 ... h6! 15.Bxf6 Qxf6! and Black has a superior position. In this line if 14.Qxd6 then 14 ... Qxd6 15.Rxd6 Nf7! gives Black a clear advantage. Alternatively, after 12.dxe6 fxe6 White might try 13.Qxd6, but then 13 ... Qxd6 14.Rxd6 Nf7 15.Bxf6 Nxd6 16.Be7 Nxc4 follows and again Black has a fine game.
12 ... h6

A standard tactic in the King’s Indian. Here 13.Bxh6? is a mistake because Black gets a formidable position after 13 ... Nxe4 14.Nxe4 Qh4+ 15.N2g3 (15.g3? Nxf3+!) 15 ... Bxh6.

13.Be3 exd5

Black retains his slight edge after this move, so there is little point in risking something speculative like 13 ... Bxc4!? 14.bxc4 Nxc4, when the situation is far from clear.

14.Nxd5 Nxd5 15.Qxd5 b5!?

Since the d-pawn is under attack Black must play with vigour to create threats against the white king. The move chosen by Miles achieves this, but the alternative 15 ... Qf6!? is also interesting since 16.Qxd6? loses to 16 ... Nxf3+! 17.gxf3 Qxf3, with a decisive advantage.

16.cxb5!
Not 16.Qxd6? as 16 ... Qa5+! is very annoying. For example, if 17.Bd2 (not 17.Kf2? Rfd8! winning, and certainly not 17.Qd2? Nd3 mate!) then 17 ... b4! with 18 ... Rfd8 or 18 ... Qxa2 to follow and Black will triumph.

16 ... Bxb5 17.Nc1

White has to try to unravel his king’s side. 17.Ng3 is another – more natural – method of doing so but at least from c1 the knight protects the a-pawn.

17 ... Bc6!?

Yet again Miles offers the d-pawn. A safe alternative is 17 ... Bxf1 18.Kxf1 (or 18.Rxf1 Qh4+) 18 ... Qa5 with a slight plus (19.Qxd6? being impossible because of the reply 19 ... Rfd8).

18.Qd2?!

18 ... f5!

Carrying on in the aggressive vein and relying on the tactical idea 19.exf5? Bxf3! 20.gxf3 Nxf3+, etc.

19.Qxd6


19 ... Qe8!

From here the queen is ideally placed, occupying the e-file, protecting the bishop and knight and supporting an impending ... Rd8.

20.Qxc5

White picks up another pawn. If instead he tries to safeguard his king with 20.Be2, then Black plays 20 ... Rf6. Then 21.Qxc5 leads to a variation similar to that in the game whilst if 21.Qd2 then 21 ... fxe4 22.f4 Nd3+ 23.Bxd3 exd3
follows and Black’s pressure along the d, e and f-files (as well as against g2) gives him the advantage.

20 ... fxe4 21.f4

In view of the open lines around his king recapturing the pawn is far too dangerous.

21 ... Nd3+!?

Commendable boldness from Miles, who is prepared to give up another pawn in a bid to get at his adversary’s king. Another course was 21 ... Ng4 22.h3 (if 22.Be2 Rf5 23.Qc4+ then 23 ... Bd5! 24.Rxd5 Nxe3! wins) 22 ... Rf5 23.Qc4+ Bd5 24.Qe2 (24.hxg4!? Bxc4 25.Bxc4+ Rf7 is also possible) and White just about holds.

22.Nxd3!?

The problem with this is that White still does nothing towards castling. Better is 22.Bxd3! exd3 23.0-0 and after 23 ... Rf5 24.Qc4+ Kh7 25.Rfe1 Bb5 the situation is very unclear.

22 ... exd3
23.Kf2

On 23.Bxd3?! Black continues with 23 ... Rxf4! (23 ... Bxg2 is less clear since 24.Bb5 keeps White in the game, but 23 ... Rc8! is also very strong) with the worrying threat of 24 ... Bd4. White is then in difficulties.

(i) He cannot play 24.Bxg6? because of 24 ... Qxg6 25.Bxf4 Qxg2 26.Rf1 Re8+ 27.Be3 Bb5!!.
Here 28.Qxb5? Rxe3 is mate, and after 28.Qd5+ (or 28.Rf2 Qg1+ 29.Kd2 Rd8+ and wins) 28 ... Qxd5 29.Rxd5 Bxf1 30.Kxf1 Rxe3 Black is a piece ahead.


(iii) Therefore White must try 24.Kd2 but Black would have excellent chances to exploit the horribly exposed king.

23 ... Re8

This compels White to do something about the d-pawn.

24.Qc4+ Kh8 25.Qxd3

Now if 25 ... Be4, White continues 26.Qd7! and his intention to exchange
queens reduces Black’s attacking options. For example, if 26 ... Rc2+ 27.Be2 he can win the queen by 27 ... Rxf4+?! 28.Bxf4 Rxe2+ 29.Kxe2 Bd3+ 30.Kxd3 Qxd7+, but the two rooks are here better than the queen.

25 ... g5!

An excellent practical option, exerting additional strain on f4. White is strangely devoid of good moves.

26.Rc1

If he tries the move that he really wants and needs to play – 26.Be2 – then 26 ... Bxg2! is the powerful response. After 27.Kxg2? Rc3! 28.Qd2 Rxe3 Black dominates, and on 27.Rhg1? Black gets a clear advantage by 27 ... Rc3 28.Qd2 Rxe3 29.Qxe3 Rxf4+, winning the queen. Better for White is 27.Rhe1 (since 27 ... Rc3 28.Qd2 Rxe3 29.Qxe3 Rxf4+ fails to 30.Bf3!) but after 27 ... Be4 Black has a far superior position.

26 ... Rd8!

On 26 ... gxf4 White can neutralize the threats with 27.Bd4!.

27.Qe2

If White doubles on the c-file with 27.Qc4 (attacking the bishop) then Black wins with 27 ... Rxf4+! 28.Bxf4 Bd4+ 29.Kg3 gxf4+ 30.Kxf4 Qe5+ 31.Kg4 Bd7+, etc.
27 ... gxf4!

The start of beautiful combination.

28.Bc5 f3!!

Allowing an exchange of queens that Atalik might have hoped would ease his problems.

29.Qxe8

If 29.gxf3 then 29 ... Rxf3+ 30.Ke1 Bc3+ wins.

29 ... fxg2+!

Leading to a most attractive finish, but in fact Black’s position is so good that 29 ... Rfxe8 should also win with little difficulty – on 30.gxf3 (30.Rc2 is a slightly better defence) there follows 31 ... Rd2+ 32.Kg3 (or 32.Kg1 Rg8!) 32 ... Be5+ 33.Kg4 (or 33.Kh3 Bxf3, etc) 33 ... Rg8+ 33.Kf5 Rg5+ and wins.
30. Bxf8

If 30.Qxf8+ then 30 ... Rxf8+ 31.Bxf8 gxh1Q with a decisive material advantage. But now if 30 ... gxh1Q? then 31.Bxg7+, so what has Miles prepared?

30 ... gxh1N+!!

With the lovely idea that 31.Kg1 is answered by 31 ... Bd4+ and mates. And otherwise Black captures next move on e8 with check and wins easily.

White resigns.

1994

Jelen, I – Sutovsky, E
Ljubljana
King’s Indian Defence (E95)
1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. Nf3 0-0 6. Be2 Nbd7

The opening is a very traditional variation of the King’s Indian Defence, which although perfectly playable from Black’s point of view, has now been somewhat superseded by more modern and dynamic methods of handling the defence, such as 6 ... Nc6 and 6 ... Na6!?

7. 0-0 e5 8. Re1 c6 9. Bf1

There are several different plans here for Black. For example, he can prelude the exchange on d4 by playing 9 ... a5, creating an outpost for the knight on c5, or he can play 9 ... a6 to prepare the ... b5 advance. 9 ... Re8 is an interesting and subtle move that increases the pressure on the e-file, whilst 9 ... Qb6, 9 ... Qe7 and 9 ... h6 are also frequently seen.

9 ... exd4

This is the most popular continuation.
10.Nxd4 Re8

Here the surprising 10 ... Ng4!? could be tried, for Black has a fine game after 11.Qxg4 Bxd4. And if 11.h3 then 11 ... Qb6! maintains the tension and gives Black good chances of equalizing.

11.Bf4!

The most accurate line, attacking d6 and avoiding 11.Rb1 when 11 ... Ng4! is again strong. Alternatively, on 11.Nc2 or 11.Nb3 Black has 11 ... Ne5 with a free game.

11 ... Ne5 12.Qd2

White is ready for a typical king’s side attack, commencing with 13.Bh6.

12 ... Nh5 13.Bh6

If 13.Bg5 then 13 ... Qb6 (attacking the knight on d4) 14.Rad1 Bg4! gives Black a slight edge.

13 ... Bxh6 14.Qxh6 Qh4!

A clever but risky idea, threatening 15 ... Qxh2+ (or 15 ... Qxf2+) followed by 16 ... Ng4+ 17.Kg1 Nhx6. The drawback is that putting the queen on h4 self-pins his knight.

15.Be2!

Covering g4, thus preventing Black’s scheme.
15 ... Bg4?!

This is based on the trap 16.Bxg4? Nxg4! 17.Qd2 Qxh2+ 18.Kf1 Nf4! and wins, but White has a simple and strong refutation that gives him the advantage. Therefore, 15 ... Ng4! would have been better and after 16.Bxg4 Bxg4 17.f3 Bd7 the position is roughly even.

16.f3! Be6

Tempting him to play 17.Nxe6?! when 17 ... fxе6! followed by 18 ... Nf7 chases away the queen.

17.g4!

This bold and dangerous advance leads the game into unfathomable complications. White, at the risk of exposing his king, wins a piece due to the pin on the knight.

17 ... Bxg4!
The correct way of breaking open the white defences. 17 ... N\textit{x}g4? 18.f\textit{x}g4 Bx\textit{g}4 19.Qe3! leaves Black with insufficient compensation, and the tricky 17 ... c5?! fails to 18.Nxe6 Rxe6 19.Nd5! (if 19.gxh5? then 19 ... g5! traps the queen) 19 ... Qd8 20.f4! Nd7 21.gxh5! and since 21 ... g5 is not possible White wins.

18.f\textit{x}g4 N\textit{x}g4

The ensuing exchange of pieces is forced, and White must now be careful to avoid perpetual check.

19.Bx\textit{g}4 Qx\textit{g}4+ 20.Kh1 c5

On the immediate 20 ... Qh3 (threatening 21 ... Ng3+), 21.Qe3 extinguishes Black’s attack.

21.Rg1!

If the knight had retreated then 21 ... Qf3+ would have forced a draw. White’s chosen move looks obvious but required very careful calculation – in particular in relation to Black’s ingenious twenty-second move.

21 ... Qh3 22.Nf5

Protecting the queen (22 ... Ng3+ was threatened) by exploiting the fact that the g-pawn is pinned.
22 ... Kh8!

With the subtle king move, which unpins the pawn, Sutovsky renews the threat to the knight. If now 23.Raf1, hoping for 23 ... gxf5 24.Rxf5 attacking the pinned knight, then Black responds with 23 ... Ng3+! 24.Rxg3 (of course not 24.Nxg3? Qxh6) 24 ... Qxf1+ 25.Rg1 Qf3+ with perpetual check. Moreover, the similarly motivated 23.Rg5 is met by 23 ... Rg8! (with the intention of 24 ... Qf3+ 25.Kg1 gxf5) 24.Nxd6 (threatening 25.Nxf7 mate) 24 ... Raf8! (and now once again 25 ... Ng3+ is in the air) 25.Kg1 Nf4! 26.Nf5 (not 26.Qxh3 Nhx3+ 27.Kg2 Nxg5 and wins) 26 ... Qxh6 27.Nxh6 Nh3+ 28.Kg2 Nxc5 29.Nxg8 Kxg8 and Black is a pawn up with a clear edge. All this looks encouraging for Black, but if Sutovsky had hoped to turn the tables on his opponent, he was to be surprised by the brilliant riposte that Jelen had prepared.

23.Nxd6!!

The idea behind this wonderful move is that if 23 ... Ng3+ 24.Rxg3 Qxh6, White has 25.Nxf7+, forking the king and queen and leaving him a piece ahead.
23 ... Qf3+ 24.Rg2 Nf4


25.Nxf7+!!

This and the subsequent move are a lovely complement to the idea behind White’s twenty-third.

25 ... Kg8 26.Qxh7+!

Another knight fork follows 26 ... Kxh7; after 27.Ng5+ Kg7 28.Nxf3 Nxe2 29.Kxe2, White has two more pawns than in the note to Black’s twenty-fourth move and must win.

26 ... Kf8 27.Rag1 Nh3!?


(see next diagram)

28.Qh6+!

Leading to an exciting king-hunt. The other winning method is 28.Nd1! Nxe2 (or 28 ... Rxe4 29.Nxe4 Nxe1 30.Qg7+ Ke8 31.Nd6+ Kd8 32.Nxe4, etc) 29.Ng5! Qf6 (Black has to cover mate on f7) 30.Rf2 winning the queen.
28 ... Kxf7

If 28 ... Ke7 then White forces mate by 29.Nd5+ Kd7 (or 29 ... Ke6 30.Qxg6+ Kd7 31.Qd6+ Kc8 32.Qc7 mate) 30.Ne5+! Rxe5 31.Qg7+ Kd8 32.Qc7+ Ke8 33.Qxe5+ Kf7 34.Qe7+ Kg8 35.Nf6+ Qxf6 36.Rxg6+ and mate in two.

29.Qxg6+ Ke7 30.Nd5+ Kd7

On 30 ... Kd8 31.Qd6+ Kc8 32.Qc7 is mate.

31.Qh7+ Kd6

If 31 ... Ke6 White continues with 32.Qxh3+! Qxh3 33.Nf4+ and yet another fork wins.

32.e5+!

A pleasing finish, since if now 32 ... Rxe5 then 33.Qc7+ Ke6 34.Qe7+ Kf5 35.Qf6+ Ke4 36.Re1+ Kd4 37.Qxe5+ Kxc4 38.Re1+ forces mate in a few
moves.

32 ... Kxe5 33.Qg7+! Ke4

There is no escape, because on 33 ... Kf5 there follows 34.Qf6+ Ke4 35.Re1+ Kd3 36.Qc3 mate, and if 33 ... Kd6 White forces mate by 34.Qc7+ Ke6 35.Re1+ Kf5 36.Qf7.

34.Re1+

Mate follows.

Black resigns.

1995

Shmuter, L – Afek, Y
Israel
Sicilian Defence (B34)


Theory does not consider this to be the most sound move, although a player of Afek’s experience of course knows this, so hopefully enters this variation with his eyes wide open.

6.Nxc6 bxc6

Recapturing with the b-pawn is also seen in this position, though after 7.Qxd8+ Kxd8 8.Bc4 White has a free game.

7.e5

Forces the knight to move and leaves White with a considerable lead in development. Black’s position is not as bad as may first appear, and his strategy will be to put pressure on the centre by occupying the long a1–h8 diagonal with his dragon bishop.
7 ... Ng8

Also possible is the bizarre 7 ... Nh5!?, with the idea of routing the knight to e6 via g7.

8.Bc4 Bg7

Black could also play the immediate 8 ... Qa5 or even the bold thrust 8 ... f5!?, both of which lead to a complex game.

9.Bf4

find himself in considerable difficulties as a result of the weakened dark squares in the centre. For instance, 10.Bf4 Qa5?! 11.0-0! Bxe5 12.b4! forces 12 ... Qc7 and then 13.Nb5! Qb8 (or 13 ... cxb5 14.Bxe5 Bb7! 15.Qg3! Qxc4 16.Bxh8 with a clear advantage) 14.Bxe5 Qxe5 15.Rad1! d5 (what else?) 16.Rfe1 Qb8 17.Bxd5! cxd5 18.Qxd5 gives White a decisive attack. Thus Black has to find 9 ... f5!, which leads to a tense middlegame after 10.Bf4 (10.exf6 Nf6 solves most of Black’s problems) 10 ... e6 11.0-0! (more solid than 11.0-0-0, which is also seen in this position) 11 ... Ne7 and there are chances for both sides.

9 ... Qa5 10.0-0

Here also White might essay 10.Qf3 when Black should avoid 10 ... e6 11.0-0, transposing to the note above, but play instead 10 ... f5!.

10 ... Bxe5

Black accepts the pawn sacrifice. His idea is to grab the pawn and hold on for dear life, which is obviously an extremely hazardous strategy in the light of White’s beautifully developed position.

11.Bxe5 Qxe5 12.Re1

Evidently White has tremendous compensation for his pawn. With only his queen developed Black is clearly going to be faced with a difficult defensive task. Despite this, White must not be complacent because the black king can frequently find a safe haven on f8 or g7.

12 ... Qg7!?

An interesting square for the queen. Fischer once had this position – against Ostojic in 1970 – and his opponent played the sensible looking 12 ... Qc7, but found himself in all sorts of trouble after 13.Qd4 f6 14.Bxg8! Rxg8 15.Qxf6, although 15.Nd5! cxd5 16.Qxd5 is even better. The other option is 12 ... Qf4 (as played by Korchnoi against Timman in 1991) but White secures a clear advantage with 13.Re4! Qf6 14.Re3.

13.Qd6
Another possibility is 13.Ne4!? d5! (13 ... e6 14.Nd6+ Ke7 is also playable)
19.Qe5! Rd8 20.Qxh8 and the position is unclear.

13 ... Qf6

Reinforcing e7 and freeing the g7 square for the king.

14.Qc7!


14 ... Kf8

Sooner or later the king must run to the king’s side, so Afek makes the manoeuvre now. Of course, if 14 ... d5? then 15.Bxd5 cxd5 16.Nxd5! is crushing.

15.Nd5!
Harassing the queen and relying on the fact that 15 ... cxd5? 16.Bxd5 Bb7 (otherwise the rook is lost) 17.Bxb7 Re8 18.Qxd7 leaves White with a dominating position.

15 ... Qd4!


16.Qd8+ Kg7 17.Nc7

The point of White’s play is that on 17 ... Qxc4 18.Nxa8 gives him the edge, whilst 17 ... Rb8 is answered by 18.Ne8+ Kh6 (or 18 ... Kf8 19.Nd6+! Kg7 20.Rad1! Qxb2 21.Qe8! Nh6 22.Qxe7 with a strong attack) 19.Bxf7, with the advantage.

But is it really so straightforward? In fact, the first of these variations
contains subtle nuances that need to be considered. After 17 ... Qxc4 18.Nxa8 Black must avoid 18 ... Ba6 19.Qxd7, and 18 ... Qa6 19.Nc7. Furthermore, he should not fall for 18 ... Bb7?! 19.Nc7! Nf6 20.Qxe7 Qf4 (which seems to embarrass the knight), since unfortunately White has the saving resource 21.Ne6+! dxe6 22.Qxb7 with a superior game. Correct is the immediate 18 ... Nf6! 19.Qxe7? and only now 19 ... Qf4!. On 20.Rad1 Re8! 21.Qc5 Rxe1+ 22.Rxe1 Qb8! traps the knight, and if 20.Qe5 Qxe5 21.Rxe5 Bb7! also wins the piece. Thus on his nineteenth move White has to play the passive 19.Qa5! Bb7 20.Nc7 and he has little more than equality.

17 ... Qb6?

This appears to be even better than the line above, since the knight is placed in an awkward pin.

18.Bxf7!!

This is the refutation. If now 18 ... Kxf7, White wins with 19.Qe8+ Kg7 (or 19 ... Kf6 20.Qf8+ Kg5 21.Re5+ and mate follows) 20.Nxa8 Qb8 21.Re3! Qxa8 22.Rf3! Bb7 23.Qf7+ Kh6 24.Rh3+ Kg5 25.f4+ Kg4 26.Rg3+ Kh4 (or 26 ... Kh5 27.Rg5+ Kh6 28.Qb8! 29.Rxe5 Bb7! also wins the piece. Thus on his nineteenth move White has to play the passive 19.Qa5! Bb7 20.Nc7 and he has little more than equality.

18 ... Nh6?


19.Be8!!
A wonderful move, which produces a picturesque arrangement of the white forces. Both the white minor pieces are pinned, but Black is helpless. The threat is 20.Rxe7+ Kf6 21.Rf7+ Ke5 22.Qe7+ Kd4 23.Rf4 mate, and since 19 ... e6 is met by 20.Qe7+ Kg8 21.Nxa8 Qb7 22.Nc7! Qxc7 23.Rxe6! winning easily, Black’s next move is forced.

19 ... Nf5 20.Rxe7+

An elegant finale, though the brutal 20.g4 also wins.

20 ... Kh6

If 20 ... Nxe7 then 21.Qxe7+ Kh6 22.Nxa8 Qb8 23.Qh4+ Kg7 24.Qd4+ wins easily.

21.Re5!

With the threat of 22.Rxf5 gxf5 23.Qf6 mate.

21 ... Bb7
On 21 ... Qxb2 22.Rae1 follows and White can win as he pleases, whilst 21 ... Qd4 is most effectively dealt with by 22.Rxf5! gxf5 23.Ne6!.

22.Qxd7 Rc8 23.Ne6 Black resigns.

23.Qd2+ is just as good. After the text move Black cannot cope with the threats of 24.Rxf5 and 24.Qd2+; for example 23 ... Rcxe8 24.Qd2+ Ne3 25.Rxe3 Rxe6 26.Rxe6+ Kg7 27.Re7+ forces mate in a few moves.

1996

Wohl, A – Gipslis, A
Biel
English Opening (A30)

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 c5

The Symmetrical English.

3.Nc3 e6 4.g3 b6

Gipslis adopts a Hedgehog formation (see also our game from 1986).

5.Bg2 Bb7 6.0-0 Be7

Here White can continue his flexible set-up by playing 7.b3, but he selects a more direct line involving the advance of the d-pawn.

7.d4 cxd4 8.Qxd4

It is also possible to recapture with the knight; after 8 ... Bxg2 9.Kxg2 the game takes on a totally different character as a result of the absence of light-squared bishops.

8 ... Nc6 9.Qf4

9.Qd2 is perfectly safe but the queen is well-placed on f4 because in some
lines Qh4 can be a useful manoeuvre.

9 ... 0-0 10.Rd1 Qb8

Offering to exchange queens but also preparing a later queen’s side pawn advance.

11.b3

Another plan is 11.e4, staking a further claim in the centre.

11 ... Rd8 12.Bb2

Continuing with his development and reckoning that the doubled pawns created by 12 ... Qxf4 13.gxf4 do not afford Black any advantage.

12 ... d6

Blocking the b8–h2 diagonal means that queens are likely to remain on the board but Black has faith in the resilience of his Hedgehog structure.
13.Rd2!?  
The plan of doubling rooks on the d-file is a courageous one as Black can generate active counterplay on the queen’s side.

13 ... a6 14.Rd1 b5!  
With ideas such as 15 ... Na5 with pressure on c4.

15.Ng5!  
A shrewd move that is the prelude to a fierce attack from Wohl. Black should now focus on his defensive responsibilities with 15 ... h6!, though White retains the initiative after 16.Nge4.

15 ... bxc4?!  
White’s reply demonstrates that this is extremely hazardous.

16.Nce4! d5
Gipslis is ready to defend by running his king to the queen’s side. It is a risky plan and therefore he should have considered 16 ... Ne5 (superior to 16 ... e5?! 17.Qf5! h6 18.Nxf6+ Bxf6 19.Qh7+ Kf8 20.Ne4 with a clear plus) when White has three options.


(iii) More cautious but also good is 17.Nxf6+ gxf6 18.Ne4, with a complex position.

17.Qh4!!

This reveals White’s strategy. If the knight on f6 can be exchanged then the queen can penetrate via h7.

17 ... dxe4

After 17 ... h6!? White can disrupt his opponent’s king’s side pawn structure by exchanging twice on f6.

18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Qxh7+ Kf8
20. Rd7

After 20. Rxd8+!? Black should probably avoid 20 ... Nxd8 21. Rd7! (for example 21 ... Ke8 22. Rxf7 Nxf7 23. Qg8+ Kd7 24. Qxf7+ Be7?! 25. Qxe6+ Kd8 26. Nf7+ Ke8 27. Ne5! Qd6 28. Qg8+ Bf8 29. Qf7+ Kd8 30. Qxb7 and wins; in this line 24 ... Kd6 25. Qxe6+ Kc7 is a better defence but is not without its difficulties), but should try 20 ... Qxd8! 21. Rxd8+ Rxd8 22. Nxe4 c3!, when 23. Nxf6 gxf6 24. Qh6+ (or 24. Qc2 Nd4! using the idea of a knight fork to enable Black to save the c-pawn) 24 ... Ke8! (not 24 ... Ke7 because 25. Qc1! Nd4? 26. Qa3+! and 27. Bxb7 wins) 25. Qc1 Nd4! and Black saves the pawn with good chances.

20 ... Rxd7

The only move.

21. Rxd7 Ke8!

Fleeing to the queen’s side in search of safety is the only way to prevent mate.
22.Rxf7 Ne7

If 22 ... Be7 then 23.Qg6, with the threat of 24.Rf8+! Kxf8 25.Qf7 mate, is very strong. Now Black intends 23 ... Qe5! and the attack is thwarted, so White must act quickly.

23.Rxf6! gxf6


24.Qf7+ Kd8

If 24 ... Kd7 then 25.Qxe6+ Ke8 26.Qf7+ Kd8 (or 26 ... Kd7 27.Bh3+ and the bishop enters the attack) 27.Ne6+ transposes into the game continuation. In this line Black can vary with 25 ... Kd8, but after 26.Nf7+ Ke8 27.Nd6+ Kd8 White can either play the aggressive 28.Qxf6!? (threatening 29.Nf5 Qc7 30.Qf8+ Kd7 31.Qxe7+), or he can simply liquidate into a won endgame by 28.Nxb7+ Qxb7 29.Bxe4 Qe8 30.Qd6+ Ke8 31.Bxa8 Qxa8 32.bxc4.

25.Nxe6+ Kd7

If 25 ... Kc8? then 26.Qe8 is mate.

26.Nc5+! Kd6

On 26 ... Kc6 White has the choice of 27.Qxe7 or 27.Qxc4, in either case with a decisive advantage. Now White can bail out with 27.Qxf6+ Kc5 28.Qxe7+ giving him at least a draw, but he finds the star move that secures victory.
27.b4!! Qe8

Other moves lose in rapid time. If 27 ... Qc8 then 28.Qxf6+ Kc7 (not 28 ... Kd5 29.Bxe4 mate) 29.Qxe7+ Kb8 30.Nxb7 Qxb7 31.Qxb7+ Kxb7 32.Bxe4+ Kb8 33.Bxa8 Kxa8 34.Kf1! and White stops the c-pawn and wins easily. And on 27 ... Nd5 White wins by 28.Nxe4+ Kc6 (if 28 ... Ke5 then 29.e3! and 30.f4+! leads to mate) 29.Nxf6! Kb5 (29 ... Kb6? 30.Nd7+) 30.Nxd5 with a decisive advantage. After the text move, however, the win is not at all obvious.

28.Qxf6+ Kc7 29.Qe5+! Kb6

Has White’s attack run out of steam?

30.Nd7+!!

The start of a brilliant little combination. The knight cannot be captured as 31.Qc5 is mate and if 30 ... Ka7 then White again has 31.Qc5 mate.

30 ... Kc6 31.Qc5+! Kxd7 32.Bh3+
If 32 ... Kd8 then 33.Qb6 is mate and on 32 ... Nf5 White continues 33.Bxf5+, forcing 33 ... Qe6 since 33 ... Kd8 34.Qd6+ leads to mate next move.

Black resigns.

1997

Oll, L – Glek, I
The Netherlands
French Defence (C00)

A reminder of the genius of Lembit Oll, whose tragic suicide in 1999 was a sad loss to the chess world.

1.e4 e6 2.Qe2

Chigorin’s recipe against the redoubtable French Defence. The main idea is that after 2 ... d5!? 3.exd5, Black cannot recapture with the pawn and must therefore expose his queen to attack. For this reason, the most popular replies for Black are 2 ... Be7, 2 ... c5 and 2 ... e5!?.

2 ... d5!?

Glek plays the unusual pawn advance.

3.exd5 Qxd5 4.Nc3 Qd8

The position is now similar to the Scandinavian Defence (1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd8) but with the additional moves Qe2 for White and ... e6 for Black. Since White will find it more troublesome to get in his d4 advance without the support of the queen, he decides to fianchetto his king’s bishop.

5.g3 c5!?

The strategic reasoning behind this move is perfectly sound: control over the d4 square and queen’s side expansion. However, Black is in danger of falling
too far behind in development so must be extremely careful.

6.Bg2 Nc6

With hindsight perhaps the preliminary 6 ... Ne7 is better.

7.Bxc6!+

A brilliant positional decision. Although it looks peculiar to exchange the powerful bishop, the resulting doubled pawn weakness that is created gives White an excellent game.

7 ... bxc6 8.Nf3 Ne7?!

Black can ill-afford to adopt suboptimal development, and this is an unhappy square for the knight. There was nothing wrong with 8 ... Nf6.

9.Ne4!

Immediately attacking the weak pawn on c5.
9 ... Nf5!?

Many would prefer the d5 square, for the knight is awkwardly placed here.

10.c3

A necessary and strong move, preventing the knight from occupying the d4 post.

10 ... f6?!

Glek is having a bad day. This move, although it covers e5 and g5, weakens the king’s side and further delays the deployment of his pieces. Better would have been 10 ... Bd6.

11.g4!

Black’s previous move released control of the h4 square so 11 ... Nh4 is now impossible.

11 ... Ne7 12.d3!?

Oll spurns the capture on c5, because after 12.Nxc5 e5 (12 ... Nd5? 13.Nxe6) 13.g5 (or 13.Rg1 Nd5) 13 ... Ng6 Black has some counter-chances.

12 ... e5 13.Rg1

Defending the pawn but also preparing for its advance.

13 ... Nd5

Finally the knight reaches its best square, taking four moves instead of two. Unfortunately, its absence from the king’s side will be felt after White’s next.

14.g5!

An excellent move. Black’s real problem now is to try to avoid 15.gxf6 gxf6, when his king is stranded in the centre of the board. Accordingly, he decides against 14 ... Be6, 14 ... Qe7 and 14 ... Be7 and instead plays a wild move in
an attempt to confuse matters.

14 ... f5!?

White could now retreat the knight and pile on the pressure against the e-pawn; such a plan should theoretically be good enough for victory. But after 15.Ng3 Bd6! followed by 16 ... 0-0, Black is able to seize the initiative and White will have some uncomfortable moments along the e-file. Hence Oll looks for something else, and engineers a wonderful double-piece sacrifice.

15.Nxe5!!

The idea behind the sacrifice is to exploit the weakened e8–h5 diagonal.

15 ... fxe4 16.dxe4 Nc7

After the obvious 16 ... Ne7 White can win the rook by 17.Qh5+ g6 18.Qf3! Be6 19.Qf6. Black should then consolidate with 19 ... Qd6! 20.Qxh8 0-0-0 and try to generate threats against the uncastled white king, but White should have little difficulty in defending. Alternatively, after 16 ... Ne7 White could
play 17.Qc4, which gives him a powerful attack. For example, if 17 ... Qd6 then 18.Qf7+ Kd8 19.Bf4! forces 19 ... Be6!, but then 20.Qh5! (better than 20.Rd1 Qxd1+ 21.Kxd1 Bxf7 22.Nxf7+ Ke8 23.Nxh8 when White will have problems extricating the knight) 20 ... Kc8 21.Qe2! leaves Black in a complete bind.

17.Qh5+ g6

Forced, as 17 ... Ke7 18.Qf7+ Kd6 19.Nc4 is mate.

18.Nxg6

Now the threat of 19.Ne5+ has to be prevented.

18 ... hxg6

19.Qxg6+!!

Correctly shunning 19.Qxh Qe7!, when Black has bishop and knight for rook and three pawns and, after castling queen’s side, has chances of an
attack along the central files.

19 ... Kd7

Not 19 ... Ke7? 20.Qf6+ Ke8 21.Qxh8 Qe7 22.Qh5+ and the g-pawn will decide.

20.Bf4

With the terrible threat of 20.0-0-0+, which wins at least one piece. Glek now bails out into an ending, but Oll has realized that his advantage is just as marked even without queens on the board.

20 ... Qe8 21.0-0-0+ Nd5

The only move.

22.Qxe8+

The exchange of queens cannot be avoided.

22 ... Kxe8 23.exd5 cxd5 24.g6!

Very accurate chess from Oll, who prevents 24 ... Bg7 on account of 25.Rge1+ Kd7 26.Rxd5+ Kc6 27.c4 Kb6 (else 28.Rd6+ will force mate) 28.Rd6+ Ka5 29.Bd2+ Ka4 30.Re3! and Black has to give up his bishop to avoid mate.

24 ... Rg8

If 24 ... Rh4 then 25.Rde1+ Kd7 26.g7! Bxg7 (otherwise 27.g8Q) 27.Rxg7+ and 28.Bg3 with a decisive endgame advantage.

25.Rge1+ Kd7

Of course if 25 ... Be7 then 26.Bg5 wins.

26.Rxd5+ Ke6 27.Rd8!
Completely tying Black up. Both bishops are pinned against a rook.

27 ... Bb7

![Chess Diagram]

28.Rxa8?!

This wins but it is a pity that Oll did not finish off a fine game with the lovely
28.Re6+ Kb5 29.c4+!! Kxc4 (or 29 ... Ka4 30.b3+ Ka3 31.Rxa8 Bxa8
32.Ra6+ Kb4 33.Bd2 mate) 30.b3+ Kb5 31.Bd2!! Bc6 (or 31 ... Rxd8 32.a4
mate) 32.Rxa8 Bxa8 33.a4 mate.

28 ... Bxa8 29.Re8 Bb7 30.g7!

A simple but elegant method of winning back the piece.

30 ... Rxc7 31.Rxf8

The ending is completely won for White, whose three extra pawns more than
negate the presence of opposite-coloured bishops.
31 ... Rg1+ 32.Kc2 c4

Glek has a vague idea of weaving a mating net but it is futile and he could resign with a clear conscience.

33.Rf7 Kb6 34.Be3+ Ka6 35.b4 Be4+ 36.Kd2 Rb1 37.Rxa7+ Kb5 38.a4+ 

Black is hopelessly lost, as Oll efficiently demonstrates.

38 ... Kc6 39.Bd4 Bd3 40.b5+ Kd5 41.Ke3 Re1+ 42.Kf4 Re4+ 43.Kg3 Re6 44.Rd7+ Ke4 45.f3+ Kf5 46.Rd5+ Kg6 47.b6 Black resigns.
1998

Miles, A – Vaisser, A
Kalmykia
Dutch Defence (A80)

Is chess being smothered by the advances in information technology and opening theory? Maybe, but while there are mavericks like Tony Miles around producing bizarre games like this one, there is still great hope for Caissa’s future.

1.d4 e6

Inviting transposition into the French Defence by 2.e4 d5, but Miles prefers to stick to a queen’s pawn opening.

2.Nf3 f5

The energetic Dutch Defence; see also our game from 1905.

3.d5!?
This extraordinary-looking move has been played before and is not without its merits. Miles, who had essayed the variation on a number of previous occasions, uses it here primarily to prevent Vaisser from creating his favourite Stonewall Defence with pawns on c6, d5, e6 and f5.

3 ... exd5!?

A risky choice, since the light squares around the black king are vulnerable to the queen and knight. Other moves are more prudent. For example, 3 ... Nf6 4.dxe6 dxe6 (the wild gambit 4 ... Bc5!? 5.exd7+ Nbxd7 is also possible and leads to a double-edged position) 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 leaves White with only a small edge, whilst 3 ... Be7, 3 ... d6 and 3 ... Bd6!? are all viable options. Perhaps best, however, is 3 ... Bb4+! 4.c3 and now 4 ... Bd6, when the presence of the pawn on c3 hinders White’s development.

4.Qxd5 d6

To protect the pawn on f5.

5.Ng5
This is one of the ideas behind White’s strange opening. Not only is 6.Qf7 mate threatened, but also 6.Nxh7 Rxh7 7.Qxg8 winning a pawn.

5 ... Qe7

Prevents the mate but White is now able to execute his other threat.

6.Nxh7! c6

A useful intermediary move which gives Black control of the d5 square.

7.Qb3 Rxh7

7 ... Be6 does not save the knight, because after 8.Qg3 the rook cannot capture on h7 due to the reply 9.Qg6+.

8.Qxg8

White is a pawn ahead but, with his wandering queen the only piece developed, he faces some awkward moments.
8 ... Rh4

A highly unusual square for a rook on the eighth move, but there is little choice. In fact it turns out that the rook is well-placed here and operates effectively along the rank.

9.Qb3 Na6

With ... Nc5 to follow. Black’s pieces are able to deploy rapidly and harass the queen. He correctly refrains from 9 ... Be6 since 10.Bg5! Qxg5 11.Qxe6+ is good for White.

10.Qe3!?

Offering the exchange of queens which would ease the pressure. Vaisser is having none of it and blocks with the rook.

10 ... Re4! 11.Qd2

Miles still has no pieces developed other than his queen; surely Black must have more than enough compensation for his pawn?

11 ... Nb4!

An intelligent idea by Vaisser. If Miles continues with the obvious 12.Nc3 then 12 ... Rd4! traps the queen, for if 13.Qxd4 then 13 ... Nxc2+ wins.

12.Qd1!?

The queen’s amazing boomerang journey is complete as she returns to her home square. If instead 12.e3 then Black might continue 12 ... f4!? 13.Bd3 fxe3 14.fxe3 Rf4 and the white king is somewhat exposed. And the direct 12.a3 is also worthy of consideration, though 12 ... Nd5 13.Nc3 Nxc3 14.Qxc3 leaves White far behind in development. After the text move White’s complete absence of pieces in play should be commemorated with a diagram.
12 ... Rd4!

The rook is of course inviolate because of the fork on c2.

13.Nd2!?

13.Bd2 looks more natural but Miles prefers to keep an eye on e4.

13 ... f4

Intending 14 ... Bf5 with 15 ... Nxc2+ to follow. Now 14.c3? is answered by 14 ... Nd3 mate so White’s next move is forced.

14.a3 Nd5

With the mate threat gone Miles can begin the task of forcing back his adversary’s advanced army.

15.c3 Ne3!
Forcing open the e1–h4 diagonal like this is the best move here. Black avoids 15 ... Rd3? because Miles had prepared the cunning trap 16.Qc2! (16.Qa4 is possible but less strong) 16 ... Bf5 17.Kd1!, unpinning the e-pawn and thus winning the rook.

16.fxe3 Qh4+ 17.g3 fxg3

Now the rook cannot be captured in view of 18 ... g2 mate.

18.Bg2

Forced, as 18.Nf3 loses to 18 ... g2+ 19.Nxh4 Rxd1+ 20.Kxd1 gxh1Q, etc.

18 ... gxh2+!

Well played. The enticing 18 ... Bh3 19.cxd4 (19.Bxh3? g2 mate) 19 ... Bxg2 is met by 20.Nf3! Bxf3 (or 20 ... Qh3 21.Kd2 Bxh1 22.Qxh1 g2 23.Qg1 and Black has insufficient play for the piece) 21.exf3 g2+ 22.Ke2 gxh1Q 23.Qxh1 and White is a clear pawn ahead.
19.Kf1 Qf6+ 20.Ke1

The knight is pinned and if 20.Bf3? then 20 ... Bh3+ 21.Ke1 Qh4 is mate.

20 ... Qh4+ 21.Kf1

Black has perpetual check but no more, since if he moves the rook White consolidates with Nf3.

½–½

1999

Kozul, Z – Zvjagintsev, V
Portoroz
Grünefeld Defence (D91)

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 d5 5.Bg5

An interesting line against the Grünefeld Defence.

5 ... dxc4

Other replies include the passive 5 ... c6 or the natural 5 ... Ne4. After the latter, White might retreat the bishop to f4 or h4, or he can try the complex 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nxd5 e6, when both 8.Nf3 and 8.Qd2 lead to a tense middlegame.
6.e3

6.e4 is more dynamic and leads to highly tactical positions. For example, on 6 ... c5 (6 ... 0-0 is a safer option) White might continue 7.d5 (7.Bxc4 is also possible) 7 ... b5 8.d6!?


6 ... Be6

A slightly awkward square for the bishop but the idea of protecting the c-pawn is a sound one and causes White to waste time in recapturing.

7.Nd2

Preparing to regain the pawn, although 7.Ne5!? is perhaps slightly better because 7 ... c5 8.Qa4+! Nbd7 9.Bxc4 leaves him with a decent game.
7 ... c5

Black’s thematic counter-thrust in the Grünfeld.

8.Bxf6?!

It looks wrong to exchange the bishop for the knight in such an open position. Better is 8.dxc5 when Black’s best is 8 ... Nd5!. Here White must avoid 9.Nxc4? since 9 ... Nxc3 10.bxc3 Bxc3+ wins, but 9.Bxc4 (9.Qa4+ is also possible) is playable. After 9 ... Nxc3 10.bxc3 Bxc4, White could safely continue 11.Qa4+ Nc6 12.Qxc4 with an interesting game, or he might try 11.Nxc4! Bxc3+ 12.Kf1.

In this position Black has just played 12 ... Bxa1? but it is a mistake because of the brilliant reply 13.Nd6+! Kf8 (or 13 ... Kd7 14.Nxb7+, etc) 14.Qb3!! and the threat of 15.Qxf7 mate wins the queen. Black should therefore play 12 ... Qxd1+ (12 ... Qc8!? 13.Bxe7!? Kxe7 14.Qd6+ Ke8 15.Qd3 is another fascinating possibility) 13.Rxd1, with a complicated and unbalanced game.

8 ... Bxf6 9.Nde4!?
White understandably wishes to exchange one of Black’s potent bishops, but 9.dxc5 might have been a wiser course of action given the imposing game that Black now obtains.

9 ... cxd4 10.Nxf6+ exf6 11.exd4

Capturing with the queen is probably safer though after the reply 11 ... Nc6 White still has an uncomfortable position.

11 ... Bd5!?

An imaginative placement of the bishop, which not only blockades the d-pawn but also makes it difficult for White to develop his king’s bishop because of the threat to g2.

12.Qa4+

Otherwise White is simply a pawn down with no compensation.

12 ... Nc6 13.Qb5!?

A clever idea but with hindsight 13.0-0-0! was a necessary prelude to middlegame operations.
13 ... Qe7+!!

A brilliant and well-calculated check, since after White’s next Black is faced with the twin threats of 15.Re1 and 15.Nxd5.

14.Kd2 0-0-0!!

The necessary follow-up sacrifice to Black’s previous move. Now White must capture the offered piece otherwise his exposed king will leave him with a horrible position.

15.Nxd5 Rxd5!!

This is the point of Zvjagintsev’s energetic combination; the other rook will occupy the d-file in order to exploit the exposed king and queen.

16.Qxd5 Rd8

Kozul now realizes that he is in deep trouble. If 17.Qb5 then simply 17 ... a6 18.Qb6 Rxd4+ 19.Kc3 (or 19.Kc2 Qe4+ wins) 19 ... Qe5! 20.Bxc4
(otherwise 20 ... Rd3+ wins) 20 ... Rd6+! 21.Kc2 Nd4+, winning the queen with a crushing attack. Moreover, on 17.Qf3 Black plays 17 ... Nxd4 and if 18.Qh3+ then 18 ... Nf5+ 19.Kc3 Qe5+ 20.Kxc4 Qxb2 follows and 21 ... Rd4+ 22.Kc5 Qb6 mate can only be prevented at the cost of great material loss. In view of these lines Kozul correctly elects to give up his queen immediately.

17.Qxc4! Rxd4+ 18.Qxd4 Nxd4

White has two rooks for queen and pawn, but critically his king is exposed to a fierce attack from queen and knight – two pieces which generally combine extremely effectively when hunting down a naked king.

19.Rc1+ Kb8 20.Rc4

Stops 20 ... Qb4+ but the queen can penetrate via another square.

20 ... Qe4!

An excellent move that carries the evil intention of 21 ... Nf3+!! 22.gxf3
Qxf3 23.Rg1 Qxf2+ and wins.

21.h4

So that now 21 ... Nf3+? 22.gxf3 Qxf3 23.Rh3 saves the rook.

21 ... b5!

Zvjagintsev continues in vigorous fashion.

22.Rc3

If 22.Rc1 then 22 ... Qf4+ 23.Kd1 Qxf2 gives Black a decisive advantage.

22 ... Qb1!

Zvjagintsev plays the whole game in very active style and now begins to pick off the white pawns.

23.Ke3 Qxb2

Kozul has defended manfully but his game now rapidly crumbles.

24.Rd3 Nc2+ 25.Kf4 Ne1!

A nice finish.

26.Rd8+ Kc7 27.Re8 Qxf2+ 28.Kg4 Nxg2

White’s position is hopeless.

White resigns.

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were directly used for appraisal and analysis of the one hundred games included in this book, and all of them were used in one way or another during the extensive process of researching and selecting the games.

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**Periodicals, etc.**

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twentieth century, were used in the research, selection and analysis of the games in this book.

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*British Chess Magazine*
*Chess*
*New In Chess*
*Kingpin*
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*Lasker’s Chess Magazine*
*American Chess Bulletin*
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