

2001, Linares

N	PLAYERS		ELO	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	tot	P
1	LEKO	HUN	2745		=	=	=	=	=		=	=	=	=	0	4.5	2-6
2	SHIROV	ESP	2718	=		1	0	=	=	=		0	1	=	0	4.5	2-6
3	GRISCHUK	RUS	2643	=	0		=	=	0	=	1		=	1	0	4.5	2-6
4	POLGAR J.	HUN	2676	=	1	=		=	=	=	0	=		0	=	4.5	2-6
5	KARPOV	RUS	2679	=	=	=	=		0	=	=	0	1		=	4.5	2-6
6	KASPAROV	RUS	2849	=	=	1	=	1		1	1	1	=	=		7.5	1

Round 1: Three wild draws

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Round 1, Feb 23, 2001

Grischuk, Alexander - Polgar, Judit **1/2**

Leko, Peter - Kasparov, Garry **1/2**

Shirov, Alexei - Karpov, Anatoly **1/2**

Leko - Kasparov [B97]

Kasparov: Today I'm not satisfied with my play in the opening. Leko applied an interesting version of a rare line that had not previously been played on the Grandmaster level. It looks like now we have a new topical position in the Najdorf Variation.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6

The Najdorf Variation is Garry's favorite weapon.

6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Qb6 8.Nb3

The variation with the b2-pawn sacrifice requires very extensive knowledge. Besides, Peter does not like this type of position.

8...Be7

This is the most precise move order. Black forces White to place his queen on f3.

9.Qf3

9.Qd2 is met by 9...h6 10.Bh4 Nxe4!

9...Nbd7 10.0-0-0 Qc7 11.Bd3 b5 12.a3 Rb8!

Black is in no hurry to castle, as White is fully prepared to launch an attack on the kingside. First, Garry is going to create counterplay on the queenside by b5-b4. Not so strong was the stereotyped 12...Bb7.

13.Rhe1

As long as the black king stays in the center, White has no other option than to centralize his pieces in order to prepare e4-e5 or Nc3-d5.

13...b4 14.axb4 Rxb4

According to my database, this position has occurred at least twice. The statistics favor Black.

15.Kb1 Bb7

Here we go! Garry has brought the rook into play first, and only after that he develops the bishop on the "natural" b7-square. It looks

like Black has excellent counterplay.

16.Qh3 Nc5 17.Nxc5

This is a novelty. A game of two not particularly strong players saw 17.Na2?

Nxd3 18.Bxf6 Rxb3! and Black wins,

Ellison,D-Collinson,A/Balatonbereny 1992/ (29)

17...dxc5

Apparently, Garry did not dare to capture with his queen in view of 17...Qxc5 18.e5!

with "crazy" complications. For example

18...Nd7 19.Na2 Bxg5 20.Nxb4 Bxf4

21.Nxa6 etc.

18.e5

White's pawn structure is better, but his king does not feel safe.

18...Nd5

Another possible continuation was 18...c4 19.Bf1 Nd5.

Kasparov: First I had in mind 18...c4

19.exf6 cxd3 (*dangerous is 19...gxf6*

20.Bxh7 fxc5 21.Rxe6!?) 20.fxg7 Qxc3

21.gxh8Q+ Qxh8, and I liked Black's

position after 22.Re5 Bxg5 (or 23...dxc2+).

However, then I discovered that White wins

after 22.b3! dxc2+ 23.Kxc2 Bxg5 24.fxg5

Be4+ 25.Rxe4 Rxe4 26.Qd3 + - and I had to

prefer 18...Nd5 so far.

19.Nxd5 Bxd5

On 19...exd5 White prepared 20.Bxe7 (but

not 20.e6 f6! 21.Bxh7 Kd8!) Qxe7 21.e6 a

with clear advantage.

20.c3

The greedy 20.Bxe7 Qxe7 21.Bxa6 was way too risky for White in view of - 21...0-0!

20...Rb3

In my opinion, due to the pressure along the

"b"-file Black is slightly better. The only

snag is how to bring the h8-rook into play.

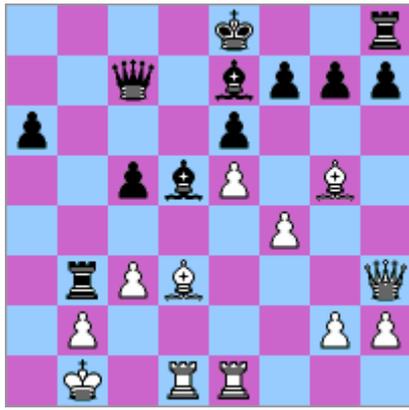
20...Rb6 followed by Qb7 was another

possibility.

Kasparov: This idea is a chance to equalize.

After 20...Rb6 21.c4 and 22.Bc2, Black is

worse; I didn't see any good move here.



21.Bc2 Qb7

Now we can see the idea behind the Rb3-move. Black is going to sacrifice this rook. Inferior is 21...Bxg5 22.Rxd5! (but not 22.Bxb3? Bxb3 23.fxg5 Bxd1 24.Rxd1 Qxe5 -/+) 22...Bxf4 23.Bxb3 exd5 24.Qh4 Bh6 25.e6! or 21...Rb8 22.Ba4+ Bc6 23.Bxc6+ Qxc6 24.Bxe7 Kxe7 25.Qg3. White has the initiative in both variations.

22.Bxb3 Qxb3

Not so strong was 22...Bxb3? 23.Bxe7 Qxe7 (23...Kxe7? 24.Qh4+) 24.Rd6 and Black's attacking chances are very feeble. Black is threatening with a couple of checks. If Black manages to bring his h8-rook into attack, his threats will be much more serious. I think Peter is really afraid right now. Garry looks very redoubtable. However, White's position is OK.

23.Rxd5

Leko is afraid! He could have played for a win (or for a defeat) by 23.Bxe7 Qa2+ 24.Kc1 Qa1+ 25.Kc2 Qa4+ 26.Kd3 with the idea of reaching a safe harbor with his king after 26...Qc4+ 27.Ke3 Qe4+ 28.Kf2 Qxf4+ 29.Kg1. I think though, that Garry was going to capture on e7, activating his rook. For example 26...Kxe7 27.Qh4+ Kd7! and a very unclear position emerges.

Kasparov: Also possible is 23.Bxe7 Kxe7 (23...Be4+ 24.Rd3!) 24.Qe3 Qa2+ 25.Kc1 Rc8, and Black has some compensation for the exchange. After 23.Rxd5 White looks better, but it's not easy to make progress.

23...Qxd5 24.Bxe7 Kxe7 25.Qh4+

It looks like Peter was right when he returned the exchange. Now he has some initiative.

25...Kd7

This courageous move is forced. In case of 25...Ke8 the h8 rook would be very unhappy.

Kasparov: Bad is 25...f6 26.f5!

26.Qg4 Kc6

Kasparov: Black's strategy is to keep control over the d-file; pawns are less essential. In case of 26...Qd3+ 27.Ka1 Kc6 28.Rd1 (28.Qxg7 Rd8 29.Qxf7 Qc4=) 28...h5 29.Qxe6+! White is better.

27.Qe2

27.Qxg7 is met by 27...Rb8!

Kasparov: Not better is 27.Qxg7 Rb8.

27...Rd8

Finally the rook made the first move. However, Black is a pawn down!

28.Qxa6+ Kc7 29.Qa7+ Kc6 30.Qa6+ Kc7

31.Qa5+ Kb7

Upon a closer look, I see Black's compensation for the pawn. He took control over the d-file, whereas White's e1-rook is very passive. A draw is the most likely outcome.

32.Qb5+ Kc7 33.Qa5+ Kb7 34.Qb5+

White is checking to pass through time-trouble.

34...Kc7

Kasparov: Immediately equalizing is 35...Qd2=

35.Qe2!

Obviously, being a pawn up White should play for a win.

35...h5 36.g3 g6 37.c4?!

White is driving the black pieces to better positions. If 37.Kc2, then 37...Rb8 38.Rd1 Qa2, complicating the issue.

Kasparov: Or 37.Kc2 Rb8 38.Ra1 Qb7 39.b4 (39.Ra2? Qb3+ 40.Kb1 Rd8 - +) 39...cxb4 40.Qc4+ Kd8=

37...Qd2 38.Qe3 Rd4

Garry managed to penetrate into his opponent's camp. Black has no problems.

39.Qxd2 Rxd2 40.Re3

Another continuation, 40.h4 Rd3 41.Rg1

Rf3, promises no winning chances, but

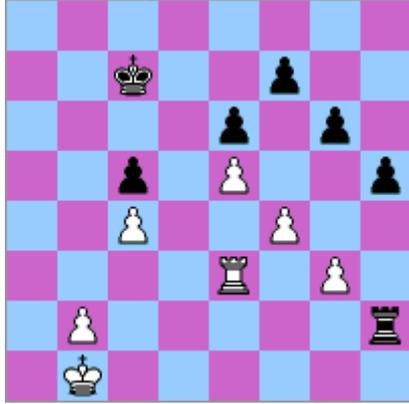
White should not have given away his extra pawn.

Kasparov: Leko definitely missed something before the time control. Black grabs a pawn and still keeps the initiative. In case of 40.h4

Rd3 41.Rg1 Kb6, White is worse in spite of having an extra pawn.

40...Rxb2

Black has regained a pawn. His position is no worse. Actually, Black is slightly better! His rook is more active, whereas White should keep an eye on the h5-h4 breakthrough.



41.Rf3

White has taken on a defensive role. Black was threatening h5-h4 after placing his rook on f2. For example 41.Ra3 Kb6 42.Rb3+ Kc6 43.Ra3 Rf2!

Kasparov: Stopping the idea 41...Rf2 and h5-h4.

41...Kc6 42.Ka2 Rh3 43.Rb3 h4 44.gxh4 Rxb2 45.Rf3 Rh5

Black is playing very resourcefully. By his last move he created the threat of Rh5-f5 followed by g6-g5, winning a pawn.

46.Rg3! Rh2

The rook has changed its itinerary. The best strategy is to attack an opponent's pawn from behind. 46...Rf5 is met with 47.Rg4, whereas in the line 46...Rh4 47.Rf3 g5 48.fxg5 Rxc4 49.Rxf7 Rg4 White can get off the hook with 50.g6! Rxc6 51.Rf6 Rxf6 52.exf6 Kd7 53.Kb3, etc.

47.Rf3 Rc2 48.Kb3 Rc1

White's position is very passive. All he can do is to wait. However, it is hard to believe that Black can win.

49.Rf2 Kb6

Black's king could be transferred in the opposite direction in order to support the f7-f6 breakthrough.

50.Rf3

Kasparov: This passive defense is better than 50.Rd2?! Rf1 51.Rd6+ Kc7 52.Ka4

Rxf4 53.Kb5 Rf5! and the g-pawn is very dangerous.

50...Ka5 51.Rf2 Re1

Black's idea is to check along the third rank.

52.Ka3! Ra1+ 53.Kb3 Rc1 54.Rf3 Kb6

55.Rf2

Well, it is time to switch to the f7-f6 plan.

Kasparov: Black can't make any progress.

Moving the king to e7 is dubious: White puts his rook on the c-file and grabs the c5-pawn. Black grabs all the pawns on the kingside, but this is not sufficient: the opponent's passers are more advanced.

Thus, a draw was agreed.

1/2-1/2

This was a hard battle! Black did a better job in the opening and obtained some initiative, but failed to develop it. Moreover, after White's timely counterblow, Kasparov wound up a pawn down. However, Leko made a mistake in time trouble. He allowed the black rook to gain his rear. Black regained the pawn and tried to outplay his opponent in a better endgame. At the cost of tremendous effort, Peter Leko managed to save the game.

Shirov - Karpov [B17]

1.e4 c6

The Caro-Kann Defense, as expected.

2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Ng5 Nxf6

Nobody falls to the trick 5...h6 6.Ne6! anymore.

6.Bd3 e6 7.N1f3 Bd6!

Avoiding the attempt to "win" a piece with 7...h6 8.Nxe6! as in Kasparov's match with Deep Blue.

8.Qe2 h6 9.Ne4 Nxe4 10.Qxe4 c5

Karpov is trying to create tension in the center as soon as possible.

11.Qg4

One should pay for everything! Now Black's king has no time to castle. However, all these moves are well known.

11...Qf6N

A novelty! The theoretical move is 11...Kf8.

It looks like Karpov thought out a new setup at home. We'll see how it goes.

12.c3

This is a safe continuation. 12.Be3 with the idea of castling long as soon as possible looks more aggressive.

12...cxd4 13.cxd4

Oops! I was wrong about the safety. Alexei is playing for a win. He is going to fight in the position with an isolated pawn. This is risky strategy when facing Karpov. More solid was 13.Qxd4, with drawish equality.

13...b6!

If Black manages to develop his light-squared bishop, he will be fine. Too dangerous was 13...0-0 in view of 14.Qe4.

14.0-0

After 14.Be4 Bb4+ 15.Bd2 Bxd2+ White would have captured with his king on d2, because 16.Nxd2 fails to 16...Qxd4!

14...Bb7

I respect Alexei, but think that he hasn't done a great job in the opening. Black has better prospects.

15.Be3 h5 16.Qh3 Bxf3

Black is trading his strong bishop, but destroying White's pawn structure. Not so strong was 16...Bf4 because of 17.Bb5!

17.gxf3

Anatoly Yevgenievich sank into reflection. The position is not so clear – White's bishops serve as the cement between the pawn-bricks. Black should trade these bishops, but in this case White will redress his pawn structure. It looks like Black should advance his g-pawn to g4, with some interesting attacking possibilities...

17...Rd8

Karpov opted for a solid move, which is typical of him. Probably he still hopes to castle, for example after 18.Qg2.

18.Rac1 g5!

Anyway! Black is launching an attack. I expected the more reserved 18...Bf4 from the ex-champion.

19.Be4 Ke7

After 19...g4 20.Qg2 Rg8 21.Kh1 White holds the position.

20.Rfe1 Bf4

Anatoly Yevgenievich combines the attack with positional maneuvers.

21.Bxf4

This is a risky decision. White has loosened the dark squares. Apparently Alexei bases this on a certain calculation.

21...Qxf4 22.d5

Alexei is trying to expose the black king. The more complicated play is on the board, the more chances Shirov has.

22...Ne5!

A very good move! Karpov is occupying the dark squares which Shirov placed at his disposal. 22.dxe6 is met by 22...f5! I wonder, has Shirov missed this?

23.dxe6 f5

He has. The younger player fell into a trap. White is losing the exchange.

24.Rc7+ Kd6

Black is very consistent. With the last move Karpov has attacked the rook. He could have played more reservedly 24...Kf6 25.Bb7 (25.e7 Rde8 26.Bd5 Rxe7) 25...Nxf3+ 26.Qxf3 Qxc7 27.Bc6 Rh7.

25.Rxa7

25.Rec1 fxe4 26.e7 Rde8 does not change much.

25...fxe4 26.e7 Nxf3+ 27.Kf1 Rde8!

Karpov demonstrates his composure! Black's king is ready to bear a couple of checks.

28.Qd7+ Ke5 29.Rd1 Kf6 30.Qc6+ Kf7

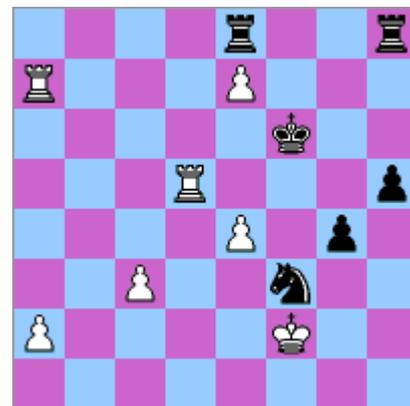
31.Rd8 Nxh2+ 32.Ke1 Ng4 33.Qxb6 e3

34.Qb3+ Kg7 35.Qc3+ Qf6 36.fxe3 Qxc3+

37.bxc3 Ne5 38.Rd5 Kf6 39.e4 Nf3+

40.Kf2 g4

The time trouble gave Shirov some hope. Black traded queens but it is not that easy to convert an extra piece, because the white



rooks (unlike Black's) are very active.

41.Kg3!

Even White's king got active! Black would be glad to capture the e7-pawn, but it is taboo.

41...Rh7

In case of 41...Rxe7? 42.Rf5+ Ke6 43.Ra6+ Kd7 44.Rd5+, White wins the rook.

42.Rf5+ Kg6 43.Ra6+ Kg7 44.Ra7

This is a very interesting setup. It is very difficult for Black to make further progress. His knight looks impressive, but in reality his position is not very efficient. It is time to calculate the advance of the h-pawn.

44...Kg6

In my opinion the breakthrough 44...h4+ 45.Kxg4 h3 works! For example 46.Rf8 Ne5+ 47.Kf4 h2 48.Rxe8 h1Q 49.Rg8+ Kf6 50.e8N+ Ke6+ or 46.Rxf3 h2 47.Ra5 Rh4+!

45.Ra6+ Kg7 46.Ra7 Rh6

Fearing a miscalculation after 46...h4+, Anatoly Yevgenievich opted for a technical way of converting his advantage. He should be careful not to lose his last pawn, though, because in this case a win is out of the question.

47.Rd7

Black's breakthrough is not that dangerous right now, whereas after 47.a4 h4+! 48.Kxg4 h3 49.Rf8 Rxe7! Black would have been winning.

47...Re6

47...h4+ 48.Kxg4 h3 49.Rd1!

48.Rxh5 Rxe4 49.Rf5 Ne5 50.Rc7 Re1

51.a4 Nf7 52.a5

White's second pawn has lunged forward. White is very close to saving the game.

52...Nh6 53.Rf4 R8xe7 54.Rxe7+ Rxe7

55.a6 Re3+ 56.Kg2 Rxc3 57.Ra4 Rc8

58.a7 Ra8 59.Kg3

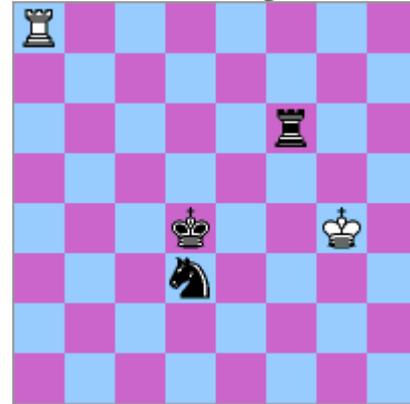
That's it! A draw is inevitable. Black can't untie his pieces without losing his last pawn.

59...Kf6 60.Kf4 Ke7 61.Ra6 Nf7 62.Kxg4 Kd7 63.Kf5 Nd6+ 64.Kf4 Nb5 65.Ke5 Kc7 66.Kd5 Kb7 67.Ra1 Nxa7 68.Rb1+ Kc7 69.Rc1+ Kb6 70.Rb1+ Nb5 71.Kc4 Rc8+ 72.Kd5 Rc5+ 73.Ke4 Kc6 74.Ra1 Nd6+ 75.Kd4 Rd5+ 76.Ke3 Kd7 77.Ra8 Ke6 78.Ra7 Kf5 79.Rc7 Re5+ 80.Kd3 Rd5+ 81.Ke3 Ne4 82.Rc4 Nc5 83.Rc3 Ke5 84.Ra3 Rd4 85.Rc3 Kd5 86.Ra3 Re4+

87.Kf3 Re8 88.Re3 Rf8+ 89.Ke2 Kd4

90.Re7 Rf6 91.Re8 Ne6 92.Ra8 Nf4+

93.Kf3 Nd3+ 94.Kg4 1/2-1/2



The old lion is losing his mortal grip! He did not miss a win in such positions in former days. Karpov introduced an interesting novelty with 11...Qf6!? Alexei's reaction was not particularly good. He opted to play the position with an isolated pawn but with no active plan. Instead of careful maneuvering, Shirov complicated the situation in the center, but overlooked a powerful stroke, 23...f5! Black won a whole piece and was very close to victory. However, right at that point the time scramble arose. Karpov missed an easy win a few times and allowed his younger opponent to put up a stubborn defense. Nevertheless, having reached the time control, Karpov preserved a big advantage. He had the winning continuation (44...h4+!) but did not find it. The ex-champion literally gave Shirov a half point.

Grischuk - Polgar [B47]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Be2 a6 7.0-0 Nf6 8.Kh1 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 Bc5 10.Qd3 b5 11.f4 Bb7 12.Bf3 0-0 13.e5 Ne8 14.a4 b4 15.Bxb7 Qxb7 16.Ne4 Be7 17.Be3 Qc6 18.Ng5

The opponents are following the game Anand – Ribli, 1990.

18...g6

In the above-mentioned game, White obtained the advantage after 18...Bxg5 19.fxg5 Nc7 20.Rf4 Nd5 21.Rc4 Qb7 22.Bc5 and managed to convert. Ftachnik

recommended 18...g6 (the move Judit played) in his comments. I think 18...f5 is possible as well. After 19.exf6 Nxf6 20.Bd4 g6 Black is OK. Who knows, maybe in 10 years someone will follow my advice?

19.Rad1 d6

The variation that Ftachnik recommends stops at this point. Black solved all opening problems. It's Grischuk turn!

20.Bd4!?

This is a very interesting move!

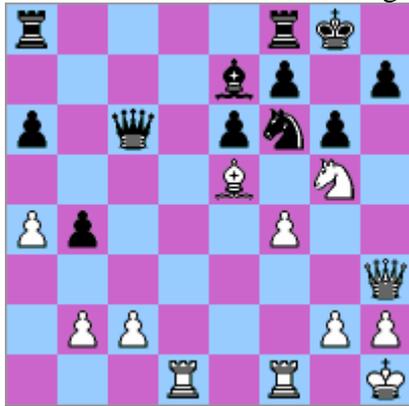
20...dxe5 21.Bxe5 Nf6

Inferior was 21...f6?! in view 22.Qd7 Qxd7 23.Rxd7 and White is clearly better.

22.Qh3

Fritz suggests 22...Nh5?! and evaluates the position in Black's favor. However after 23.Nf3! Qxc2 24.g4 Ng7 25.Rd7! Bd8 26.Qh6! White has a decisive attack:

26...Ne8 27.Rxd8 Rxd8 28.Ng5+-



22...h5!

This is a very important defensive move! White's attack is over and he should take care of his queenside pawns. After all, Judit understands the position much better than a computer does!

23.Nf3!?

Right! After 23.Qb3 Rac8 Black is slightly better. It is better to sacrifice the pawns than protect them!

23...Ng4

It looks like Black could have captured the pawn: 23...Qxc2!. For example: 24.Nd4 Qxa4. Now 25.f5 does not work in view of 25...Ng4! 26.b3 (26.fxg6?? Nf2+!-+; 26.Rde1 Nxe5 27.Rxe5 Bf6 28.fxg6 Bxe5 29.Qxh5 fxg6 30.Qxg6+ Bg7 31.Qxe6+ Kh7 32.Qe4+ Kh8 33.Qh4+ Kg8-+) 26...Qe8 27.Qg3 (27.fxg6 Nxe5 28.Nxe6 fxg6)

27...exf5 28.Nxf5 gxf5 29.Rxf5 f6-+. In all variations Black repels the attack and preserves an extra pawn.

24.Nd4 Qc5

Judit is not grabbing the pawn again (24...Qxa4!)? It looks like Shipov did not teach her that a good player has to be greedy!

25.Qg3 Rad8 26.c3 bxc3 27.bxc3

In the creeping time-trouble Black has the initiative, but the material remains equal.

27...Rd5 28.Rde1 Rc8 29.Rf3 Bf8 30.h3

Nxe5 31.fxe5 Bg7 32.Rfe3 Qa5?

What a dramatic mistake in the mutual time-scramble! Judit was playing very solidly up to this point. She could have preserved her advantage with 32...Qc4, because 33.Nxe6?! fails to 33...h4 34.Qg5 fxe6 35.Qxg6 Qc6-+.

33.Nxe6!

Now this sacrifice is possible. The point is that the black queen can't get to the c6-square

33...fxe6 34.Qxg6 Qb6?!?

After 34...Rxc3 35.Qxe6+ Kh7 36.Qf5+ White has only perpetual check.

35.Rf3! Rf8

Another defense, 35...Rd7, is met by 36.Ref1! followed by the decisive penetration on f7.

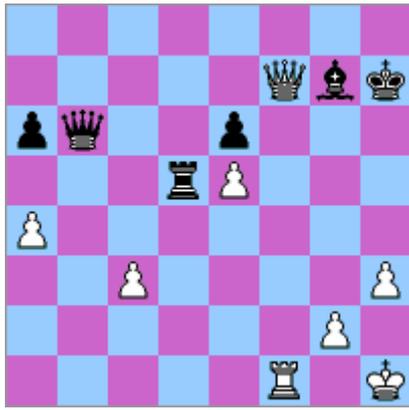
36.Rxf8+ Kxf8 37.Rf1+ Kg8 38.Qf7+?

White could have won this game by 38.Kh2!!, hiding his king from possible checks. Black is tied up and defenseless! Alexander missed this move in the time trouble.

38...Kh7 39.Qxh5+ Kg8 40.Qf7+ Kh7

Now all White has is perpetual check.

1/2-1/2



Right after the opening Grischuk launched a somewhat unsound attack, which was repelled by the precise **22...h5!** Polgar obtained a positional advantage. She could have translated it into extra material on a few occasions. However, with the careless **32...Qa5?** in mutual time trouble Black allowed a simple knight sacrifice. A couple of moves down the road Polgar missed a draw (**34... Qb6?**). Grischuk had an elegant winning continuation at his disposal, but with his hasty 38th move (the time trouble was not over yet) let this opportunity slip. Draw!

Round 2: Three quiet draws

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Round 2, Feb 24, 2001

Karpov, Anatoly - Grischuk, Alexander **1/2**

Kasparov, Garry - Polgar, Judit **1/2**

Leko, Peter - Shirov, Alexei **1/2**

Kasparov – Polgar

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3

This is good! We have published a few articles on this position in KC. We are preparing another one on **6...Ng4**. Let's see what the mighty of this world play today in this position...

6...Ng4

Bravo, Judit! This is a move from our new article. Black has started chasing the white bishop all around the board. The lines that

start with **6...e6** are analyzed on our site in detail.

7.Bg5 h6 8.Bh4 g5 9.Bg3 Bg7 10.h3

As Kasparov proved himself, Black is OK after **10.Be2 h5**.

10...Ne5

Judit tested **10...Nf6** against Kasparov last year in Wijk aan Zee, but lost in a very elegant manner after **11.Bc4**.

11.f3

White is transferring the bishop to f2.

11.Be2 has frequently been played here.

11...Nbc6

The g7-bishop has started exerting some pressure along the big diagonal.

12.Bf2

White's dark-squared bishop neutralizes this pressure.

12...Be6 13.Qd2 Nxd4 14.Bxd4

White held his d4-outpost. This is an achievement.

14...Qa5

However, Black has her plusses, with well-developed pieces.

15.a3

White is getting ready to castle long, whereas the black king is going to stay in the center. This position has been tested in the games of strong players. I am sure that both Garry and Judit have analyzed them.

15...Rg8

Black is untying her e5-knight. Black's plan includes **Ne5-g6** and initiating play on the dark squares.

16.h4

An attack on the kingside is on White's menu! The opponents are following the game Bologan - Xu Jun (which was played in the round robin tournament in China last year) so far.

16...Rc8

If **16...0-0-0**, then **17.hxg5 hxg5 18.Rh7** or even **17.b4 Qc7 18.b5** and White has the initiative.

17.hxg5 hxg5 18.0-0-0 Nc4

Otherwise White will transfer his rook on h7, resuming the pin of the e5-knight.

19.Bxc4 Bxd4

Black would have been losing after **19...Bxc4 20.Bxg7 Rxc7 21.Rh8+ Kd7**

22.Rxc8 Kxc8 23.Qd4 with a double attack on c4 and g7.

20.Qxd4

A novelty! The game Bologan, V - Xu Jun, Beijing 2000, 1-0 (81) saw 20.Bb5+ axb5 21.Qxd4 Rc4 22.Qd2 Kd7 23.Na2 Qxd2+ 24.Rxd2 g4 25.Nb4. Viorel obtained a slight advantage and gradually "tortured" Xu Jun to death.

Kasparov: A novelty. Last year Bologan played vs. Xu Jun 20.Bb5+. Though he managed to win, I don't think that this move would give White any advantage: Black has enough resources to equalize the position.

20...Rxc4 21.Qa7

The white queen decides to wage guerilla



war. The opposing army is going to burn down the house with an exchange sacrifice on c3, whereas the white queen is going to shoot from the woods.

21...Qc7

The sacrifice on c3 is not that dangerous: 21...Rxc3 22.bxc3 Qxc3 23.Qxb7 Qxa3+ 24.Kd2 +/-

22.Kb1

White is slightly better after all. His king feels very safe. It is not that easy to get at the Black king, but with time it might happen.

22...Rc5

The white queen is locked in her forest.

23.Nd5

23.Na4 is met by 23...Rc6! (but not 23...Rxc2?! (23...Rc6) 24.Rc1 Rc6 25.Rxc6 Qxc6 26.Rc1 Qd7 27.Nb6 Qd8 28.Qxb7 with a strong attack by White) and Black is OK.

23...Bxd5 24.exd5

Kasparov: First I had in mind 24.Rxd5 Rxc2 25.Qa8+ Qc8 26.Rxg5 but, as Polgar

correctly noticed after the game, she could play here 26...Rf8! 27.Qa7 f6 28.Rg7 Kd7 and Black is O.K.

24...Kf8

The capture on c2 loses on the spot 24...Rxc2? 25.Rc1 Rc5 26.b4 Rc3 27.Kb2+- Kasparov: Better is 24...Kd7, I think.

25.Rd2

I am under the impression that Garry is thinking about b2-b4 in order to free his queen. The alternative is 25.c3.

Kasparov: A loss of time. White could create serious difficulties for the opponent with 25.Rh7! Rg7 (It is too dangerous to take c2-pawn immediately: 25...Rxc2 26.Qe3 Rxg2 27.Rc1 Qd7 28.Ka1± Qf5? 29.Qe4+-) 26.Rh5 Rxc2 (bad is the passive 26...Rg8 27.g4±) 27.Qe3 Rxg2 28.Rc1 Qd7 29.Ka1 e6!? or 29...e5!? lets Black hold the position, though White is still better. (Other moves lose immediately e.g.: 29...f6? 30.Qe6 Qxe6 31.dxe6 Rg6 32.Rh7+-)

25...Kg7 26.b4!

No sooner had I written my last comment than it came true. It looks like White has a strong initiative. Black's e7-pawn is very weak.

Kasparov: I missed 26...b5! Interesting was 26.Rh5 but the surprising 26...Kf6!? should equalize (26...f6 27.g4±) 27.g4 a5=

26...b5!

A desperate attempt to change the course of the game. Judit is giving up her a6 pawn. The situation is far from clear. Maybe Kasparov should have played 26.Re1 first and b2-b4 only after that? Black would have had serious problems in the lines 26...Rc4 27.Re2; and 26...Rc3 27.Qd4+ Kf8 28.Re2 Rxa3 29.Rhe1.

27.Qxa6 Rc3

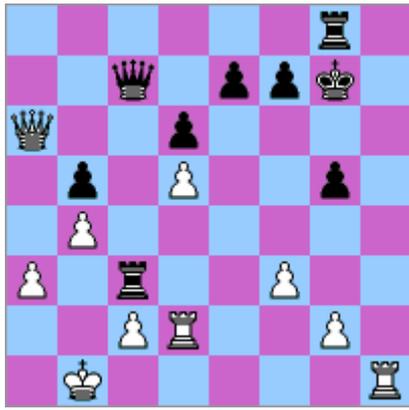
Black has good counterplay. The White queen is still out of play.

Kasparov: Polgar offered a draw and I accepted as I was already short of time.

Actually, the position is equal: 27...Rc3 A) 28.g4 Rc8 29.Qxb5 Rxa3 (29...Rxc2 30.Qd3) 30.Rdh2 Qc3 31.Rh7+ Kg8 32.Rh8+ Kg7=;

B) 28.Re1 28...Rc8 29.Ree2 Qc4 30.Kb2 Rxc2+ 31.Rxc2 Qd4+=

1/2-1/2



A moral victory for Judit! She managed to defend one of the most topical positions in the Sicilian Defense. Garry tried to puzzle his opponent by landing his queen in Black's rear, but the queen failed to return to her camp! Having sacrificed the pawn, Black engineered dangerous counterplay. To avoid the worst the ex-champion had to agree to a draw. Well, the ex-champion has not pleased his fans in Linares so far.

Karpov – Grischuk

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c6 4.Qc2!

Right. The pawns should be guarded. The sharp Notebloom System, with 4.Nc3 dxc4, is not Karpov's cup of tea.

4...dxc4 5.Qxc4 Nf6 6.Bg5 b5 7.Qc2 Bb7

Black is carrying out an extended fianchetto a la the Meran variation. His main task is to carry out c6-c5.

8.e4

A very aggressive move. White is occupying the center. With his pawn on e3 White could hardly hope for an advantage.

8...Nbd7 9.Nbd2

A quite logical continuation. The position on c3 is not so good for the knight in view of b5-b4, followed by c6-c5.

9...a6

Sasha is protecting the b5-pawn. The c6-pawn can advance now. The a2-a4 move, bothering the b5-pawn, suggests itself

10.a4

Here we go. This sequence has been played before. Nothing is new so far.

10...h6

This is the first surprise. The continuation 10...Rc8 11.Be2 c5 12.d5 exd5 13.e5 h6 14.Bh4 g5 15.Bg3 Ne4 16.axb5 Nxc3 17.hxc3 Bg7 18.bxa6 Ba8 results in a very sharp position. The game Kochyev - Rusanov, St. Petersburg 1999, saw this line.

11.Bxf6

On 11.Bh4 White has an interesting option, 11...g5 12.Bg3 Nh5.

11...Qxf6

Black leaves the knight on d7 in order to support the move c6-c5 and e6-e5.

12.e5 Qd8 13.Bd3

Anatoly Yevgenievich is going to place his bishop on e4, to oppose the b7-bishop.

13...Be7

In the line 13...c5 14.axb5 axb5 15.0-0!

White's upper hand in development takes its toll.

14.0-0 0-0

Black has completed his development. His b7-bishop is still passive. The main question remains the same – whether Black can carry out the c6-c5 advance. If Black fails to do so, he will be in trouble. It looks like Black will carry it out, which means Grischuk will equalize.

15.Ne4

Karpov prefers to take control over the e5 square. With the white bishop on e4, Black would gradually “unravel” the tangle of his pieces. For example, 15.Bh7+ Kh8 16.Be4 Rc8 17.Nb3 Qb6 18.Rfc1 c5!.

15...c5

A risky decision. Why not centralize the heavy pieces first?

16.axb5 axb5 17.dxc5

I think White had good prospects after 17.Bxb5 cxd4 18.Rad1!

17...Rxa1

On 17...Qc7, highly unpleasant is 18.b4!

18.Rxa1 Bxe4 19.Bxe4 Nxc5

Grischuk's breakthrough in the center has worked. The opponents have traded a few pieces. A draw is nearing. It's here!

1/2-1/2

The renowned champion did not manage to put the young star to a hard test. Having obtained a slight advantage in the opening, Karpov did not play the best moves and let

his opponent exchange a few pieces. In my opinion, White should have played 17.Bxb5 cxd4 18.Rad1! with the initiative. Well, the 17-year old Grischuk looks very decent so far. Keep it up!

Leko – Shirov

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 5.Nxe4 Nbd7 6.Nf3 h6 7.Nxf6+ Nxf6 8.Bh4 c5 9.Bb5+ Bd7 10.Bxd7+ Qxd7

The opponents opted for a calm variation of the French Defense. It looks like there will be no fight in this game.

11.0-0 cxd4 12.Bxf6

Leko has revealed his claims in this game: he is going to benefit from Black's doubled



pawn in the endgame.

12...gxf6 13.Qxd4 Qxd4 14.Nxd4 0-0-0 15.Rfd1 Bc5

It is hard to believe that one can lose this position (on any side) on such a high level.

16.Ne2 Kc7 17.g3 Kc6 18.Kg2 h5 19.Nf4 h4 20.Rxd8 Rxd8 21.Nd3 Bd6 22.Rd1 Rg8 23.Ne1

All these maneuvers have not changed the evaluation of the position – it's a dead draw.

23...Be5 24.c3 f5 25.Nf3 Bf6 26.Nd4+ Kc7 27.Nb5+ Kc6 28.Nd4+ Kc7 29.Nb5+ Kc6 1/2-1/2

That's it. Frankly speaking, nothing happened in this game.

Round 3: Three quiet draws (Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Grishuk, Alexander - Leko, Peter **1/2**
Polgar, Judit - Karpov, Anatoly **1/2**
Shirov, Alexei - Kasparov, Garry **1/2**

Shirov - Kasparov

This shapes up to be one of the most interesting games in the tournament. Can Shirov overcome his "Kasparov complex"?

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be2

A little success of Kasparov. Shirov did not dare to play sharp lines with 6.Be3.

6...e6

The Scheveningen Variation.

7.f4 Be7 8.Be3 0-0 9.g4!?

Here is an opening surprise! Instead of banal castling, Alexei is launching a pawn attack on the kingside. As far as I understand this position, Black should play d6-d5, with a counterblow at the center!

9...d5!

I can humbly note, that Garry demonstrates good understanding of this position as well... After the passive 9...Nc6 10.g5 Nd7 11.0-0 White has a good plan of attack on the kingside: Bd3, Qh5, Rf3-h3, etc.

10.e5 Ne4 11.Nxe4 dxe4

All these moves are well known. Black should create some play on the queenside, whereas White, screened by his d4-knight, is going to prepare an assault on the black king,

12.g5 Qb6N

A novelty. Black attacks the b2-pawn, but how will he react to White's knight jump?

12...Qc7 was played before. Here are a couple of draws corroborating that Black has good play: 13.Qd2 b5 (13...Rd8 14.0-0-0 Nc6 15.Kb1 b5 16.Qc3 Bb7 17.Nxc6 Bxc6 1/2-1/2 Lanka,Z-Van Wely,L/Pula 1997/) 14.0-0-0 Bb7 15.Kb1 Nc6 16.Rhg1 Rfc8 17.h4 Nxd4 18.Bxd4 Bd5 19.Rc1 Rd8 20.Qe3 Qa5 21.b3 1/2-1/2 Ghinda,M-Sokolov,A,Luzern 1985.

13.Nf5 Qa5+

13...Bc5 is no good in view of 14.Bxc5 Qxc5 15.Qd6! with the idea of 15...Qxc2 16.Ne7+ Kh8 17.Ng6+

14.Bd2 Qc5

Garry is simply trading his dark-squared bishop for the white knight. Apparently this operation was planned in his home laboratory. I would not play this way, though. White preserves a slight advantage in the line 14...Bb4 15.Ne7+ Kh8 16.Nxc8 Rxc8 17.c3 Be7 18.Be3 due to the vulnerability of the e4-pawn.

Kasparov: Unfortunately, Black can't keep the dark-squared bishop: 14...Bb4 15.Ne3 Rd8 16.c3

15.Nxe7+

Kasparov: 15.Ng3!? e3 16.Bc3 is also interesting.

15...Qxe7 16.c3

16.c4, with the idea of transferring the bishop to d6, suggested itself. For example 16...Rd8 17.Qc2 b6 18.0-0-0 Bb7 19.Bb4! However, bearing in mind Garry's temperament, I suppose that he would react with 16...b5!?, with wild complications.

16...b5

Black's setup is taking shape. The bishop will be placed on b7, whereas the knight is heading for d3!

17.Be3 Rd8 18.Qc2 Bb7

I have to admit that Kasparov's experiment in the opening turned out to be a pretty good one. I can't see how White is going to thwart the Nb8-d7-c5-d3 maneuver.

19.Kf2

An interesting way to secure the king. I think Alexei is transferring him to g3.

19.Rd1 fails to the elegant 19...Rd3!

19...Nd7 20.b4!?

This way, at the cost of loosening the c3-pawn, Alexei is restricting Black's nimble knight.

20...Nf8

However, the knight is going to jump to the f5-square via g6 and e7 (or even h4).

21.h4

A logical move. As Black's queen lingered on e7, 21...Ng6 is met by 22.h5.

Kasparov: In case of 21.a4 Ng6 22.axb5 axb5, Black is OK; the idea is h7-h6. White can't play 23.Bxb5 Nxf4! 24.Bxf4 e3+ and the white king is too exposed.

21...Qc7

Right. Now Black is threatening is Nf8-g6-

e7. The opponent's game is easy to read. If the opportunity presents itself, Black is going to place his queen on c6 and post his rook on d3. It looks like White is in big trouble!

22.h5

White has taken control of g6, but how about the d3-square?

22...Nd7

Black's knight got nothing for his pains on the kingside. He is heading in the opposite direction – through b6 on c4 or d5.

Kasparov: I also considered 22...Rd3?!

23.Bxd3 exd3 24.Qxd3 Qc6 25.Rhf1 Qf3+ 26.Ke1 Qxh5 and Black's compensation for the sacrificed exchange is not sufficient.

23.h6

Kasparov: Worse is 23.g6 Nb6 24.gxf7+ Qxf7!

23...g6

The eighth rank in Black's camp is very



weak now. But how to benefit from it?

24.a4

Kasparov: (?) Up to this moment, Shirov played in a very solid manner. 24.a4? is a serious mistake; it gives Black an opportunity to regroup his forces. Necessary was 24.Qc1 Rac8 (24...Nb6 25.Bxb6 Qxb6+ 26.Qe3) 25.Rd1 Nb6 26.Rxd8+ Qxd8 27.Bxb6 Qxb6+ 28.Qe3 Qxe3+ 29.Kxe3 Rxc3+ 30.Kd4 Rc2 31.Bf1 and White has some edge in spite of Black's extra pawn. I really didn't like my position after 24.Qc1.

24...Nb6! 25.axb5 axb5

Kasparov: Avoiding a simple trap:

25...Nd5?! 26.b6! Nxb6 27.Ra5 - White is going to put his rook on c5.

26.Kg3.

Too dangerous is 26.Bxb5 in view of Nd5.

In any case, White's position is no picnic.

**26...Nc4 27.Rxa8 Rxa8 28.Bxc4 Qxc4
29.Rd1 Bd5 30.Rd4 Qf1 31.Qd1 Ra1
32.Qxf1 Rxf1 33.Kg4 Rf3**

Kasparov: Also sufficient was 33...Re1.
34.Bg1 Rxc3 35.Rd2 Kf8 36.Bc5+ Ke8



37.Re2 Rc1

Kasparov: (?) It's a pity. I had played quite well during the entire game and when I obtained some advantage, I missed a good chance: 37...Kd7 38.Re3 Rxc5 39.bxc5 b4+ **38.Kg3 Kd7 39.Kf2 Kc6 40.Be3 Rb1**

41.Bc5

Kasparov: (?)

41...Rc1

Kasparov did a better job in the time trouble. He has serious chances for a win. Black has an interesting idea of sacrificing the exchange in order to create another passer on b5.

Kasparov: Black could point out the last inaccuracy of the opponent with 40...Rc3!?

42.Bd6 Rh1 43.Re3 Rh2+ 44.Kg3 Rc2

45.Bf8 Ra2 46.Bc5 Ra1 47.Kf2 Rc1

48.Bd6

Alexei is defending very accurately. He is not allowing the above-mentioned exchange sacrifice. Black's problem is that he can't advance his king without losing the e4-pawn. Draw!

1/2-1/2

Resume: This was a very interesting and exciting fight! Shirov played very aggressively in the opening, hoping to launch an attack, but after the opponent's precise maneuver found himself in an inferior position full of weaknesses. However, Alexei kept his head! He managed

to put up a stubborn defense and reached a draw. Kasparov helped his opponent a little bit in the time trouble. He could have played 37...Kd7! with the idea of meeting 38.Re3 by the exchange sacrifice on c5. On 38.Bd6, Black had an interesting maneuver at his disposal: 38...Bb3! with the idea of 39.Rxe4 Bc2, followed by Bf5+ and checkmate comes on the h3-square. It turned out after the time trouble that White had built a fortress. Nothing is going right for the ex-champion in this tournament. He missed a couple of good opportunities.

Polgar-Karpov

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5

Karpov is faithful to his main opening.

**3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Ng5 Ngf6 6.Bd3 e6 7.N1f3 Bd6 8.Qe2 h6 9.Ne4 Nxe4
10.Qxe4 Qc7**

A slightly unusual variation. The ex-champion played 10...c5 in his game with Shirov.

11.Qg4 Kf8

11...g5 has been tested many times before. White reacts with 12.Qh3! and has good chances to obtain a better position.

12.0-0 c5

Although the h8-rook is out of play, Black is picking a fight in the center. His first task is to complete the development of the queenside.

13.dxc5

This move is not very obvious. White helps his opponent to complete development. More common is 13.Re1

13...Nxc5

Where is White going to retreat with his bishop?

14.Be3N

A novelty. Judit is OK with trading off her important bishop. Apparently White hopes to make use of her development advantage. White had no success after 14.Re1 e5 15.Bf5 e4 16.Nh4 Bxh2+ 17.Kh1 h5 18.Qh3 Be5, which was played in the game Luther, T-Anastasian, A/Istanbul 2000/0-1 (39)

14...Nxd3 15.cxd3 e5

Black's light-squared bishop is breaking free.

16.Qe4 g6

Black is trying to bring the h8-rook into play. Will he have enough time for that? The alternative was 16...Bd7!?

17.Rac1

A natural reaction. White had an interesting continuation, 17.Rfc1 Qe7 18.Bxa7!?, winning a pawn. The rook stayed on a1 to protect the a2-pawn.

17...Qe7 18.Rfe1 Bf5 19.Qa4

Judit has mobilized all her pieces. It looks like her main idea is to put pressure on the e5-square.

19...Kg7

Courageously played! Black has no fear of ghosts. The e5-pawn can be protected by f7-f6.



20.Nxe5!

Here comes the "ghost", which is very real here, by the way!

20...Bxe5 21.Bf4

White is winning a pawn.

21...Rhc8 22.Rxc8 Rxc8 23.Rxe5 Rc1+ 24.Bxc1 Qxe5

The forced operation resulted in trading all the rooks. Black's king will hardly be checkmated. This means that Black has good chances to save the game, thanks to the opposite-colored bishops.

25.Be3 f6 26.Qb4 b6 27.h3 g5

Karpov demonstrates good technique. He has arranged his pawns on the black squares to restrict his opponent's bishop and to give himself freedom of action.

28.Qa3 Qc7 29.b4 Qd7

Black should save the game.

30.Qc3 Draw!

Resume: We did not see a big fight in this game. Judit introduced an interesting novelty and obtained some advantage, but did not manage to convert it. Maybe she should have captured the a7-pawn with 17.Rfc1 Qe7 18.Bxa7. After the move she opted for the game transposed into an opposite-colored bishop endgame. Karpov neatly "dried up" the position.

1/2-1/2

Grischuk-Leko

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.c3 e6 5.Be3 Qb6 6.Qb3

Surprisingly enough, this plain move (authored by Gurgendize in 1982) brought White many victories. Gelfand, Shirov and Morozevich tested it many times. The simplicity of the position is deceptive – Ponamariov beat Dreev on the white side, Shirov downed Bareev, Gelfand defeated Karpov!

6...Nd7 7.Nd2 f6 8.f4 g5

Leko goes for a position that occurred only twice before, in the games Antonevsky – Skalik 1:0 (Polish championship) and Morozevich – Stol 1:0 (Stambul 2000).

Leko is not intimidated by Black's defeats. Peter can defend this position.

9.Ngf3 gxf4 10.Bxf4 Bh6N



Here comes a novelty! 10...Bg7 was played before. Instead of the direct attack on the e5-

pawn, Leko is eliminating its defender, the f4-bishop.

**11.Bxh6 Nxb6 12.exf6 Nxf6 13.Be2 Rg8
14.Qxb6 axb6 15.0-0 Ne4 16.Nxe4 Bxe4
17.Ne1**

I (Shipov) always like to comment the games of the ex-champions, but I have to tolerate Leko here. Peter fought only with Kasparov. Yesterday and today drawish endgame positions emerged. It is boring.

17...Nf5 18.Bf3

Another option is 18.Rf4 c5 19.Bd3 Nd6 20.a4 c4 21.Bxe4 Nxe4 22.Nf3

18...Ne3 19.Rf2

To avoid a draw, one of the opponents should commit many inaccuracies. I think nobody wants to do so.

19...Bf5 20.Be2 Ke7 21.Bd3 c5

The game could have been more complicated after 22.Re2 Bxd3 23.Nxd3 cxd4 24.Rae1! Rxc2+! 25.Rxc2 Nxc2 26.Kxc2 dxc3 27.bxc3 Rxa2+ with an unclear (possibly drawing) endgame.

However, the complications are hardly in the opponent's agenda.

22.Bxf5

Leko is up to the fight, but this attempt has not met Grischuk's approval.

22...Nxf5 23.Nf3

It is getting boring again.

23...h5

Draw!

Resume:Leko introduced an interesting novelty on the tenth move in a topical variation of the Caro-Kann defense. White failed to obtain any advantage in the opening. The game transposed into a drawing ending.

Round 4: First blood

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Round 4, Feb 27, 2001

Grischuk, Alexander - **Kasparov, Garry 0:1**

Karpov, Anatoly - Leko, Peter **1/2**

Polgar, Judit - Shirov, Alexei **1:0**

Grischuk-Kasparov

This is a historical battle between a present and a future superstar.

Kasparov: Finally I've opened the scoring in Linares! Today I can say that both the result and the quality of the game were satisfactory. I applied a new idea in a topical variation of Sicilian: Black was going to round up his opponent's knight stuck on a4. Grischuk correctly traded queens and we passed to a complicated position with mutual chances. Let's see...

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6
5.Nc3 a6 6.f3**

How about the English Attack?

6...Qb6

No way! Garry has deviated. A pity...

7.Nb3 e6 8.Qe2 Qc7

Black will arrange his pieces as in the English Attack, with the bishop on b7 and the knight on d7. With the queen's maneuver, Black dislodges White's knight from the center.

9.g4

White forces Black either to play h7-h6 or to place the b8-knight on c6, keeping the d7-square for the f6-knight.

9...b5 10.Be3

White continues his development, holding the g4-g5 threat in reserve.

10...b4

A novelty! This position was tested at the last Olympiad: 10...Nc6 11.g5 Nd7 12.Qf2 Nce5 13.0-0-0 b4 14.Nb1 Nc4 15.Bxc4 Qxc4 16.N1d2 Qc7 17.Kb1 Bb7 and Black obtained an excellent position Prasad,D-Ruck,R,Istanbul 2000,1/2-1/2 (41).

However, it is noticeable even with the unaided eye that the play of both opponents in this game was far from being optimal.

11.Na4 Nbd7

Black is stalling the white knight's transfer to b6 and simply threatening to capture it with Qc7-c6xa4. Black already appears to be better. This position rings a bell. Here we go. The same type of position occurred in the game Grischuk – Shirov in New Delhi.

Black captured the a4-knight in that encounter. White won that game...



12.Qc4

To get out of harm's way, White is trading queens. Let me remind you that trading queens in the Sicilian in most cases favors Black. In this particular case, White has loosened his pawn structure with the g2-g4 lunge, which might take its toll. 12.g5 would have been met with 12...Nxe4! 13.fxe4 Qc6 +/-.

Kasparov: Otherwise Black is better:

- 12.g5? Nxe4 13.fxe4 Qc6;

- 12.Qd2 Rb8

12...Qxc4 13.Bxc4 d5

Kasparov: Just in time.

14.exd5 Ne5! 15.Be2 Nxd5

Black skillfully opened the center. It clear now that Garry is slightly better. The white pawn on g4 looks somewhat silly.

16.Bd4 Bd6

Garry is in a hurry to complete his development. If he succeeds, White will be in trouble. On 16...Nc6 White had a good continuation: 17.Bc5.

Kasparov: This is the end of home preparation. I considered this position to be quite promising for Black, so I went for it willingly - but one can hardly affirm that Black has advantage here. White's K-side looks ugly (as they say, g4-g3 is the best move here but, alas, pawns can't go backwards!) but Black is still a bit behind in development.

17.Bc5

Alexander's aspiration for exchanges does not please me. At his age it looks strange. He had two good options, 17.Rd1 and 17.0-

0-0

17...Be7

Another continuation, 17...Bc7!?, which threatens Bd7, also looks very good. How should White proceed? Retreating with the bishop is no joy; on 18.a3 highly unpleasant is 18...bxa3 19.Bxa3 Ne3! It seems that White should play a2-a3 to revive his a4-knight. Besides, the concentration of the white pieces on the queenside suggests that Alexander should play on this wing.

Kasparov: (!) A difficult move. Otherwise White grabs the initiative, e.g. 17...Ke7 18.Bxd6+ Kxd6 19.0-0-0 Ke7 20.Rhe1; or 17...Bc7 18.a3

18.a3!

Right! The youngster is confidently fighting for equality. He might hold this position.

Kasparov: In case of 18.Bxe7 Kxe7 19.Nac5 a5 20.a3 Bd7 White's initiative on the Q-side is going to be over while the weak f4-square is still there.

18...a5

Garry's reaction is excellent from the positional standpoint. The outpost on b4 should hold. However, Black should calculate some concrete variations...

19.Bd4 f6

The exchange on e5 looks good only for a computer. According to machines, doubling pawns is always bad. I believe that the bishop is stronger than the knight. Maybe I am wrong...

20.Nac5

If 20.0-0 then 20...bxa3 21.bxa3 Bd7! with the idea of meeting 22.Nac5 with 22...Nf4!

20...0-0

After 20...a4 21.axb4! Nxb4 22.Kd2 the vulnerability of the a8-rook tells.

Kasparov: I'm not sure whether we can blame the previous 3-4 moves by White, but after this castling, I think, Black has obtained some edge.

21.0-0

Kasparov: Maybe this move is dubious but It's not easy to find a worthy alternative, for instance 21.axb4 Nxb4 22.Kd2 Rd8 and Black is better.



21...bxa3

Kasparov: (!) Another non-trivial move. After 21...Nf4 22.Bb5 bxa3 23.bxa3 Black can't play a5-a4. White will consolidate his b5-bishop with a3-a4, blocking the c8-bishop.

22.Rxa3

Kasparov: Now bad is 22.bxa3 a4

22...Nf4 23.Bb5

White has plenty of pieces on the left side of the board! Grischuk is going to snatch the a5-pawn and advance his pawn.

Kasparov: White loses the exchange after 23.Bxe5 Nxe2+ 24.Kf2 fxe5 25.Kxe2 Ba6+

23...Rb8 24.Bxe5

Kasparov: I considered also 24.Rxa5 Bd8 25.Bxe5 fxe5 26.c4 Bxa5 (during the game I didn't see the idea Nf4-e2-d4 and calculated 26...Bb6) 27.Nxa5 Ne2+ 28.Kg2 Nd4 and White collapses.

24...Nh3+! 25.Kg2 Rxb5

This is the start of big tactical complications. Kasparov is in his element!

26.Bg3

If 26.Kxh3 fxe5 27.c4, then 27...Rb4 28.Rxa5 e4! and Black has the initiative.

Kasparov: (?) More stubborn is 26.Bd4 Nf4+ 27.Kh1 e5 28.Be3 f5! with advantage for Black.

26...Ng5 27.Bf2

Kasparov: (?) In time trouble Grischuk missed 27...Bb7. Relatively better is 27.c4 Rb4! (In case of 27...Rxc5 28.Nxc5 Bxc5 29.Rxa5 White has some compensation)

27...Bb7!

Black has a serious advantage. His bishops are very active.

28.Bg1

Kasparov: Or 28.Be3 Rc8 29.h4 Nxf3 30.Nxb7 Nxh4+ 31.Kg3 Bxa3 32.bxa3 Rxb7 33.Kxh4 Rxc2 34.Nxa5 Rb5-+

28...Rc8 29.h4 Bxf3+

I think even better was 29...Nxf3 30.Rxf3 (30.Nxb7 Nxh4+ 31.Kh3 Bxa3-+) 30...Bxc5 31.Bxc5 Rbxc5 32.Nxc5 Rxc5 33.c3 h5! with a decisive advantage for Black.

30.Rxf3 Nxf3 31.Kxf3 Bxc5 32.Nxc5 Rbxc5 33.Bxc5 Rxc5 34.c3 h5

White is in big trouble anyway.

Kasparov: (!) A precise blow.

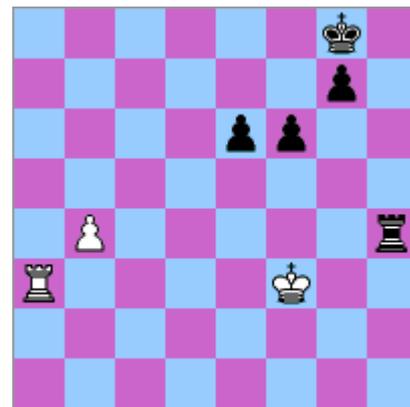
35.gxh5 Rxh5 36.b4

A desperate attempt to create some counterplay.

36...axb4 37.cxb4 Rxh4

Having realized that his passer was no danger for Black, Grischuk resigned.

0-1



Another strong GM failed to equalize vs. Kasparov on the white side in the Sicilian Defense! The ex-champion deviated from the main lines of the English Attack, which the youngster certainly had analyzed in the sleepless winter nights. It turned out that Grischuk was caught unprepared for this particular variation. White did not do a great job in the opening. In order to save his stranded a4-knight Alexander had to exchange queens, which made White's g2-g4 lunge a serious loosening of the pawn structure. Kasparov mercilessly kept building up pressure on White's position. Grischuk might have defended more stubbornly, but his position was so unpleasant that he had very slim chances to save the game. Besides, Garry played very precisely and confidently.

Karpov–Leko

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.g3 Ba6 5.b3 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Be7 7.Bg2 c6 8.Bc3 d5 9.Ne5 Nfd7 10.Nxd7 Nxd7 11.Nd2 0-0 12.0-0

Karpov uses his old opening knowledge in Linares. He has played this particular position of the Nimzo-Indian Defense on both sides for a three-figure number of times!

12...Nf6 13.e4 b5 14.Re1 dxe4 15.Qc2 Rb8

This is a trendy move. 15...Rc8, with the idea of putting the knight under attack with Nf6-d5, used to be a more popular continuation.

16.Rad1 Qc7 17.Nxe4N

A novelty. White is leaving the c4-pawn under attack. The Dutch old-stager ingloriously lost to the FIDE World Champion after 17.Bf1 bxc4 18.bxc4 c5! 19.dxc5 Bb7 20.Nb3?! (20.Bxf6 Bxf6 21.Nxe4=) 20...Nd7! 21.Qb2 g6 22.Bg2 f5, etc. Timman - Anand /Wijk aan Zee/2001/(30).

17...bxc4 18.Nxf6+ Bxf6

18...gxf6 19.Qe2! +=

19.bxc4

Now I can see Karpov's idea. He is ready to meet the capturing of the c4-pawn with Bc3-d2-f4, winning the exchange.

19...c5 20.d5 Bxc3 21.Qxc3 exd5 22.Bxd5

The pieces are vanishing from the board. White preserves a slight advantage thanks to the centralization of his pieces. The continuation 22.cxd5 Rfd8 does not change the evaluation of this position.

22...Bb7

Right! Black has to exchange White's strong bishop. The position is getting boring. This is direct evidence of "chess shrinkage".

23.Qe5

Karpov hopes to obtain the advantage due to the active position of his rooks. I don't believe it! I think White could have kept the most powerful pieces on the board. I am under the impression that course of action was more dangerous for Black.

23...Rbc8

Black has switched to passive defense. After

23...Qxe5 24.Rxe5 Bxd5 25.Rdxd5 Rb2 26.a4 Ra2 27.Rxc5 Rxa4 28.Rc7! White's rook starts plundering along the seventh rank.



24.Qxc7 Rxc7 25.Bxb7 Rxb7 26.Rd5 Rc7 27.Rb1

Karpov obtained the position he likes. It is very hard to lose, whereas his opponent is burdened with some problems. These problems are not very serious, but they are long lasting! White's rook is heading for b5. Black has to defend passively, whereas White is going to advance his pawns on the kingside. By the joint efforts of our site we found the line 27.Ree5 Rfc8 28.h4 g6 29.h5 Kg7 30.Kg2 Rb8! 31.Rxc5 Rxc5 32.Rxc5 Rb4! 33.Ra5 Rxc4 34.Rxa7 gxh5! where Black easily reaches a draw following the well-known patterns.

27...Rc6 28.Rb5 Ra6

Bearing in mind Karpov's skill in such technical positions, Peter has no desire to defend in a passive stance. It is the right strategy. Black should sacrifice a pawn at some point, in order to activate his rooks. The question is, when to do it?

29.Rd2 Rc6

Obviously not 29...Rc8? 30.Rxc5!

30.Rb7 Ra6 31.Rc7 Ra5 32.g4!

As expected, Karpov is opening a second front.

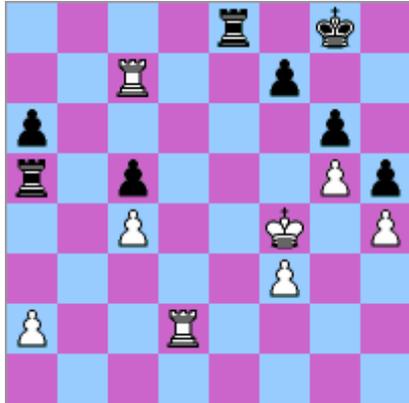
32...g6 33.Kg2 a6 34.h4 Kg7 35.Kg3 h6

36.Kf4 Re8 37.Rdd7 Rf8 38.Rd2 Re8

39.g5 h5 40.f3 Kg8

Karpov gradually drives his opponent into the corner. White has a few good plans at his disposal. One option is to capture the c5-pawn at the cost of the a2-pawn, to advance

White's c-pawn. Another plan is to carry out f3-f4-f5 and advance the king. White has three pieces in play, whereas Black only one and half. It makes me think that Black is in trouble.



41.Rdd7 Rf8 42.a4

This move is not that obvious. The reason behind this continuation is that the a4-square is not as good for the rook as a2.

Apparently, Anatoly Yevgenievich has not managed to find a more useful move.

42...Kg7 43.Rc6

White is biding his time. It looks like Black will have to capture on a4.

43...Rxa4 44.Rxc5 Ra1 45.Ra7 Rh1

It turned out that Peter was absolutely right when he advanced his h-pawn to h5 instead of trading on g5. Now White is hampered by the weakness on h4.

46.Kg3 Rg1+ 47.Kh2 Ra1 48.Re5 Ra4

49.Re4 a5 50.Kg3 Ra1 51.c5 Rc1 52.Rc7

After 52.Rxa5 Rc8 53.Re5 Rc4 there is no way for White to untie himself. White has an extra pawn, but it is impossible to convert.

52...Ra1 53.Rc4 a4 54.Ra7 a3 55.Rc2 Rc8

56.c6 a2 57.Kg2 Rb1

It is a draw after all!

1/2-1/2

Karpov failed to finish off his young opponent one more time. Certainly, the ex-champion's advantage was not as big as in his game with Shirov. Anyway, I think he would win this endgame in his best days. Anatoly Yevgenievich introduced a good novelty, obtained solid advantage, but lacked the energy to convert it. That is a

pity!

Polgar-Shirov

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.f3 Nbd7 9.Qd2 b5 10.a4 b4 11.Nd5 Bxd5 12.exd5 Nb6 13.Bxb6 Qxb6 14.a5 Qb7 15.Bc4

Up to this game Shirov played this position on the white side. He beat Topalov and drew with Kasparov. After

15...g6

White can force a draw.

16.Ra4 Rb8 17.Nc1!N

The exclamation mark is for fighting spirit!

White can force a draw by 17.Qd3 Ra8

18.Qd2 Rb8 19.Qd3 Ra8. The game Shirov

– Kasparov saw this sequence. Winning a

pawn is too dangerous for White: 20.Nc1

Bg7 21.Na2 0-0 22.Nxb4 e4! and White has

problems protecting his king.

17...h5

The black bishop's sortie on h6 looks even

better than 17...Bg7. Here is an example of

Black's crushing attack: 18.Na2 Bh6 19.Qd3

0-0 20.Nxb4 e4! 21.Qd4 exf3 22.gxf3

(22.Qxf6 fxg2 23.Rg1 Rfe8+ 24.Kd1 Qd7-

+) 22...Rfe8+ 23.Kd1 Qd7 24.b3 Ne4!

25.fxe4 Qg4+ 26.Be2 Qf4++ Having decided

upon playing for win, Polgar is running

risks, because her king is somewhat

exposed.

18...Bh6

After taking White's central pawn 18...Nxd5

19.Bxd5 Qxd5 20.Nxb4 Qb5 21.b3 h4 22.c4

Qb7 23.0-0 Black is slightly worse. By

sacrificing the pawn, Shirov is getting a

dangerous initiative.

19.Qxb4 Qc7 20.Qa3 0-0

It was tempting for Black to set up a trap:

20...h4?! 21.0-0?! Be3+ 22.Kh1 Nh5 with

the mortal threat of Ng3+; however, after a

solid 21.Nf2! Bc1 (21...e4 22.fxe4) 22.Bb3

Be3 23.Rc4 Bc5 24.Nd3, there is nothing in

sight. Another option for Black is to break

through in the center straight away by

20...e4.

There are lots of variations for those who

like to analyze. I had no time to sift out the

truth, because Shirov opted for another

continuation:

21.fxe4 0-0 (21...Nxe4 22.Bxa6 Nc3 23.0-0 Nxa4 24.Qxa4+ Kf8 25.Qc6 Qe7)
A) 22.Nf2 Rfe8 23.Bxa6 Nxd5 24.0-0;
B) 22.e5 dxe5 23.0-0 Ng4 24.d6
B1) 24...Qa7+ 25.Kh1 Ne3 26.Rf6 Kg7
(26...Bg7 27.Rxg6 Nxc4 28.Rxg7+ Kxg7
29.Rxc4) 27.Qc3;
B2) 24...Qd8 25.Bxa6 Qh4 26.Rxg4 Qxg4
27.Qc5;
C) 22.0-0 Nxe4 23.Bxa6 Qa7+ 24.Kh1 Nd2.
21.Nf2

This is the necessary defensive move. How is Black going to break through?

21...Bc1 22.Nd3

Does Polgar want a draw, or is she just checking Shirov? No fun for White is 22.Bb3 Be3 23.0-0 (23.Rc4 Qa7) 23...Bc5 24.Qa2 e4.

The following sequence is a matter of principle for Black:

22...Be3 23.Kd1

After 23.Ke2 Black can proceed with 23...Ba7 24.Re1 Nxd5 [or 24...Rfe8 25.Kd1 e4 26.fxe4 Rxe4 27.Rxe4 Nxe4 28.Bxa6 Rxb2 29.Qxb2 (29.Nxb2 Nc3+ 30.Ke1 Qe7+) 29...Nc3+ 30.Kd2 Nxa4] 25.Bxd5 Qxc2+ 26.Kf1 Rxb2! 27.Qxb2 Qxd3+ 28.Qe2 Qxd5 emerging with two pawns for an exchange, whereas the white king still does not feel safe.

23...Rfc8 24.Re1

24.Bb3? Nxd5! 25.Rc4 Bc5! 26.Rxc5 Ne3+ 27.Kd2 dxc5+-

24...Bh6

Not so good is 24...Nxd5 25.Re2! Bc5 26.Nxc5 Qxc5 27.Bxa6 Qxa3 28.Rxa3 Rc6 29.Bd3 Nf4 30.b3 Nxe2 31.Kxe2 d5 and Black does not have sufficient compensation.

25.c3!

Judit is defending very well. She has already “missed” many chances to lose. For example 25.Bb3 is met by 25...Rxb3! (25...Nxd5? 26.Rc4 Qb7 27.Rxc8+ Rxc8 28.Qxd6+-) 26.Qxb3 Nxd5.

Shirov has good compensation for a pawn, but there are no decisive continuations in sight.

25...Rb5?!

It is very interesting to watch Shirov play. He found a way (which had not even occurred to me) to continue his attack.

26.Bxb5

I wonder what Black had prepared for a cool 26.Qa2!? The point is that on 26...Qb7 27.Bxb5 axb5 White has a very strong move 28.a6!±.

26...axb5 27.Rb4 Nxd5 28.Rxb5 Qc4

29.Rxd5 Qxd5 30.Kc2

White has an extra pawn.

30...Ra8 31.a6 Qc6! 32.Ra1

After 32.Qa5 Rxa6 33.Qd8+ Kg7 34.Nb4 Qa4+ 35.b3 Qb5 36.Nxa6 Qxa6 White wins an exchange, but finds himself on the brink of defeat: 37.Kb2 Qd3!

32...e4 33.Nb4 Qc4 34.Qa5 exf3 35.gxf3 Re8 36.Qd5! Re2+ 37.Kd1 Rd2+ 38.Qxd2 Bxd2 39.Kxd2 Qf4+ 40.Kc2 Qf5+!

One may think that after 40...Qxf3 41.a7

Qe2+ 42.Kb3 Qe6+ Black can secure a

draw, but White has a very strong continuation at his disposal, namely 43.Ka3!, and his king escapes from perpetual check. For example 43...Qe4 44.b3 Qa8 45.Kb2 and White wins.

41.Nd3 Qxf3

Shirov found his best chance on move 40.

Black delivers the perpetual in the line 42.a7 Qg2+ 43.Kd1 Qf3+ 44.Kd2 Qg2+.

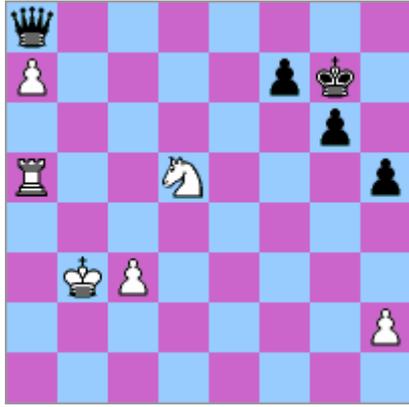
However, after 42.Ra5! Qe2+ 43.Kb3 Qxd3 44.a7 White is winning.

42.Ra5! Qa8

42...Qe2+ 43.Kb3 Qxd3 44.a7+-

43.a7 d5 44.Nb4 d4 45.Nd5 dxc3 46.bxc3

Kg7 47.Kb3 1-0



Judit decided not to force the draw (as did Shirov in his game with Kasparov last year) and boldly snatched the pawn sacrificed by Black. At first glance her audacity verged on recklessness (especially against Shirov, known for his impressive attacks), but Judit's defense proved to be stronger. I would like to draw your attention to White's 23th and 25th moves. The position that emerged by move 30 was clearly in White's favor. Polgar had an extra pawn, whereas Shirov's attack was repelled. However, the win was not that easy. Judit managed to evade all the pitfalls set up by her resourceful opponent. Her excellent plan was crowned with an elegant blow, 42.Ra5! After this well-deserved victory, Judit is the only person to contend for the lead with Kasparov.

Round 5: Two impressive attacks by white

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Round 5, Feb 28, 2001

Kasparov, Garry - Karpov, Anatoly **1:0**

Leko, Peter - Polgar, Judit **1/2**

Shirov, Alexei - Grischuk, Alexander **1:0**

Kasparov-Karpov

Kasparov: Neither I nor my old rival were stressed by another encounter – we concentrated on chess, and after the game we analysed it together.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3

Yesterday GM Khenkin came by and told us an interesting story. After the game Shirov – Khenkin, in which White had a lot of problems, Shirov (who is probably the foremost expert in this line) said that the knight should be developed on c3 on the third move! (He just wanted to say that White's third move was simply bad). Will Kasparov be able to disprove this pessimistic evaluation?

4...e6 5.g4 Bg6 6.Nge2 Ne7 7.Nf4 c5 8.dxc5

8.h4 cxd4 9.Nb5 Nec6 10.h5 Be4 11.f3 a6 12.Nd6+ Bxd6 13.exd6 g5 14.Nh3 h6 15.fxe4 dxe4 16.Bg2 f5 17.0-0 0-0 18.c3 Qxd6 19.gxf5 exf5 20.Qb3+ Kh8 21.Bxe4 fxe4 22.Rxf8+ Qxf8 Topalov, V-Anand, V/Linares 1999/CBM 70/[Anand]/0-1 (43)

8...Nd7

A rare move. More common is 8...Nec6

9.h4

This relatively new (and very sharp) variation of the Caro-Kann Defense became popular at the end of the millennium. It has been played mostly in blitz and rapid games. For this reason, there are not many games in the main chess databases. Even I have played more games in this line than I managed to find in ChessBase. Shirov plays this line on the white side quite often. Karpov is one of the progenitors of this line, defending Black's position. Kasparov has not previously played this variation.

9...Nxe5 10.Bg2N

This move is not in the base. After 10.Bb5+, Black does not have many problems.

10...h5

A cautious (as far as possible) move. It would be much more interesting to see Kasparov's reaction after a 10...d4!?

11.Nce2 N7c6 12.h5 Bxc2! 13.Qxc2 d3

11.Qe2 N7c6 12.Nxg6 Nxg6

I venture to suggest that White has an edge...

13.Bg5!

Other continuations are not as dangerous: 13.gxh5? Nxh4 14.Bxd5 Nd4; 13.Nxd5 hxg4 14.Bg5 Qb8; 13.Bxd5 hxg4 14.Bg5 Qc8 15.0-0-0 Bxc5

Kasparov: A new idea in a topical variation. Shirov played 13.Nxd5 here, when Black would complete his development after 13...Bxc5.

13...Be7

If 13...Qa5 then 14.gxh5 Nge5 15.0-0-0 Bxc5 16.h6! gxh6 17.Bf6 Rg8 18.Bxd5! and White has a dangerous attack.

14.gxh5 Nf8

Bad is 14...Nxb4? 15.Bxb4 Bxb4 16.Nxd5±; However Black had a good continuation in store 14...Nge5 15.Bxe7 Qxe7 16.Nb5 Kf8. Black's center is very strong. White's pawns are weak. If White can't launch an attack on the black king in the center, he will find himself in trouble. Now, after

Kasparov: (!)This is probably not the best decision, and neither would be 14...Nge5 15.f4, but Black might try 14...Nxb4 15.Bxb4 Bxb4 16.Bxd5 0-0 17.Bxc6 bxc6 18.Rd1 or even 14...Bxg5 15.hxg5 Nd4 16.Qd3 Nf4 17.Qxd4 Nxb2+ 18.Kf1 Qxg5 19.Ne2

15.Nb5!

White has a menacing initiative.

Kasparov: There was also a move "a la Shirov" - 15.f4 f6 16.h6. However, after the game Karpov stated that Black could hold the position with 16...Kf7 – it is unclear whether White's initiative is sufficient compensation for a sacrificed piece.

15...Nd7

Other possibilities also favor White: 15...f6 16.Bf4 Qa5+ 17.Bd2 Qd8 18.h6 g6 19.Bxd5!±; 15...Qa5+ 16.Bd2 Qd8 17.Bxd5 Nd4! 18.Qc4 exd5 (18...Nxc2+ 19.Qxc2 exd5 20.c6±) 19.Qxd4 Ne6 20.Qe5 Bxc5 21.h6±

Kasparov: Bad is 15...f6 16.Bf4



16.h6!

I am afraid that Karpov will not get through the time trouble safe and sound...

16...Nxc5!

An excellent chance! If 16...gxh6 17.Nd6+ Kf8 18.Qh5+-; if 16...g6 17.Bxe7 Kxe7 (17...Nxe7 18.0-0-0 Kf8 19.h5 g5 20.Qd2 Nc6 21.c4!) 18.0-0-0 Kf8 19.c4! tearing Black's center apart.

Kasparov: Other continuations lose:

16...gxh6 17.Nd6+ Kf8 18.Qh5+-; 16...g6 17.Bxe7 Nxe7 18.0-0-0 0-0 (18...Nxc5 19.Qe5) 19.h5 g5 20.f4, with a decisive attack.

17.Bf4

17.hxg7 Rg8

A) Not so dangerous for Black is 18.Bxe7 Nxe7 (18...Qxe7 19.Bxd5!) 19.h5 (19.0-0-0 Rxc7 20.Rhg1 Kf8) 19...Rxc7 20.h6 Rxc7 21.h7 Kd7!;

B) 18.Bf4! 18...Rc8 19.0-0-0±

Kasparov: After 17.hxg7 Rg8 18.Bxe7 Qxe7 19.Bxd5 exd5 20.Nc7+ Kd7 21.Qxe7+ Nxe7 22.Nxa8 Rxc7! (22...Rxa8 23.h5) Black has good chances to draw.

17...Kf8

Kasparov: (!)The following exchange sac is interesting: 17...Qa5+ 18.c3 0-0-0 19.hxg7 Rhg8 20.Bc7 Qa4 21.Bxd8 Kxd8 22.Rd1



Rxc7 with some compensation.

After

18.hxg7+ Kxc7 19.0-0-0

It is hard to believe that Black can save this game

19...Kf8?

More interesting was 19...Qa5!? 20.a3

Rag8! evacuating the king to f8. This position is not clear. I have not yet managed to find a convincing continuation for White. 21.Bc7 (21.b4 Qa4) 21...Qa4 22.b3 Qa6 23.b4 Kf8 24.Bxd5 exd5 25.bxc5 Bxc5 26.Rxd5 Bxa3+ 27.Kb1 Rxd4!
 Kasparov: 19...Rc8 can be parried by 20.c4 Na5 21.cxd5!? Nd3+ 22.Kb1 Nxf4 23.Qe5+ Bf6 24.Qxf4, and White has both a material advantage and an attack. Maybe more stubborn is 19...Qa5, but White is still much better after 20.a3 Rag8 21.Bd2 followed by Bc3.

20.Kb1

Also very strong was 20.c4!
 Kasparov: 20.c4!?

20...a6

I see an elegant win for White:

21.Nc7! Rc8 22.Bxd5!

Kasparov: First I calculated 22.Nxd5 exd5 23.Bxd5 Qb6 24.Qg4 Rd8 25.Rhg1 Bf6 26.Bh6+ Rxd6 27.Qg8+ Ke7 28.Qxf7+ Kd6 – here I couldn't figure out how to mate the black king. Then I discovered the idea of 25.Rf5 (see the game) and all my doubts disappeared.



22...exd5 23.Rxd5 Qxc7

The only move. If 23...Rxc7 24.Rxd8+ Bxd8 then 25.Bd6+++; 23...Nd7 is met by 24.Rh5!!+- (24.Qd2 Rxc7 25.Bxc7 Qxc7 26.Rxd7) 24...Rxd5 25.Qxd5 Bf6 26.Bd6+ Ne7 27.Nd5+
 Kasparov: 23...Nd7 24.Rh5!

24.Bxc7 Rxc7 25.Rf5

Maybe even better was 25.h5 Rd7 (25...Rh6 26.Qe3 Re6 27.Qc3+-) 26.c4
25...Rd7 26.c3

The following line illustrates the importance of this luft: 26.Qc4 Nd8 27.Rxc5 Rxd4!
 Kasparov: Avoiding the last trap: 26.Qc4 Rh7 27.Rxc5? Rxd4!

26...f6?

After 26...Rh6! Black has some chances to escape.

Kasparov: Or 26...Rh6 27.Rg1.

27.Rg1 Nd8 28.Qg4 Ke8 29.Rh5 Rf8 30.Rxc5 Bxc5 31.Qh5+ 1-0

Kasparov's opening erudition is really impressive. Having gone for the sharpest line (that his opponent played for years) for the first time, Garry closed out the game right in the opening! On move 13 Kasparov launched a dangerous attack, which brought him an elegant and convincing victory. I would like to commend Karpov for his brilliant defense on 16th move. Had not Anatoly Yevgenievich made a mistake on move 19 (already being in terrible time-trouble) and move 26, he might have done the impossible... It is a pity that the brilliant line 23...Nd7 24.Rh5!! remained off-screen.

Shirov-Grischuk

Strange as it may seem, two heroes of the last FIDE championship occupy the two last places in the tournament crosstable. Today one of them (at the expense of the other) has a chance to get back to 50%.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Ndb5 Bb4 7.a3 Bxc3+ 8.Nxc3 d5

This line has experienced its second youth lately. Kramnik, as well as other great players, made it part of his arsenal. It is very hard for White to get anything substantial in this variation.

9.Bd3

A creative move. The sequence 9.exd5 exd5 10.Bd3 was considered to be mandatory up to this game.

9...d4 10.Ne2 e5

Black has occupied the center and closed the position. This is the right strategy, since his opponent has two bishops.

11.0-0 0-0

Judging by the pawn structure, White is going to launch an attack on the kingside. The first item on White's agenda is the advancement of the e2-knight.

12.h3

This is the sure sign of Alexei's intention of playing f2-f4.

12...Re8

Attacking the e4-pawn, Black stalls the advancement of the f-pawn. By the way, Korchnoi and Ponomarev reached the same position in the fifth game of their match. The course of the game proved the chances to be equal.

13.Ng3 Be6N

A novelty. Victor Lvovich immediately started transferring his knight: 13...Nd7 14.f4 exf4 15.Bxf4 Nde5 16.Qh5 f6 17.b4 Be6 18.b5 Bf7 19.Qe2 Na5 20.Nf5 Bg6 21.Nh4 Rc8 and obtained a good position.

14.f4 exf4 15.Bxf4 Nd7

Now we can see Grischuk's idea. He developed his bishop on e6 first. It looks good. Black should be OK here.

16.Qh5

The white queen has taken advantage of the Black's knight retreat. White still controls the e5-square.

16...g6

This is a questionable decision. Black does not have the dark-squared bishop, but is loosening the dark squares! 16...Nf6 would have cleared up the intentions of the white queen. 17.Qf3 would have been met with 17...Nd7 with the idea of returning the knight to e5.

17.Qh6

White is within a stone's throw of delivering checkmate: let's advance the pawn to e5, jump with the knight on h5, and that's it! It looks like Black should place his pawn on f6...

17...Qf6

Wow! Grischuk's moves are hard to guess correctly! He is very creative in this game. It seems though, that he will suffer from it in here.

18.Bg5 Qg7 19.Qh4 Nce5

Finally Black managed to place his knight on the e5-square.

20.Bh6

The tactical blow 20.Nf5 gxf5 21.exf5 fails to 21...Bd5 22.f6 Nxf6! 23.Rxf6 Nxd3 24.cxd3 Re5! And White perishes due to the weakness of the g2-square.

20...Qh8 21.Nf5!



Now it works! The black queen is in a ridiculous situation. White is threatening Bh6-g7. No doubt, White is clearly better.

21...Bxf5 22.exf5 Nxd3 23.cxd3

The black king is in a mating net.

23...Qe5 24.Rf4 Nc5 25.Raf1

The white rook is ready to jump to f8.

25...Nxd3

This courage is forced.

26.fxf6! fxf6

Black can't win the exchange: 26...Nxf4 27.gxf7+ Kxf7 28.Bxf4+-

27.Rf7!

Alexei opted for the most "cruel" tactical decision. A positional player (like me) would play 27.Rxd4, also winning.

27...Nc5 28.Rg7+

White had another elegant move at his disposal: 28.Bf8 +-

28...Kh8 29.Rff7

White's pieces are swarming around the black king. It is time to resign.

29...Ne6 30.Rxg6 d3 31.Rg4 Rg8 32.Rxh7+ 1-0

A terrible rout!

The young Muscovite had no time to recover after yesterday's defeat from Kasparov, and failed to show strong resistance facing another super-GM. Sasha did not manage to improve Korchnoi's play in the opening. For some reason Grischuk

loosened the dark squares and found himself under a crushing attack. Alexei skillfully carried out this attack, but to tell you the truth, all the moves were easy to find. Such easy victories are rare birds in super-tournaments. As we know, Alexei stood up for Sasha's invitation in Linares. No doubt, Grishuk is a man with a brilliant future before him. However, he is having a hard time. He has to adjust to the top opponents. The most important thing right now is not to despair. Stand firm, compatriot!

Leko-Polgar

This is a contest for the title of best Hungarian player!

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6

The Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian Defense.

6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Qb6 8.Nb3 Be7 9.Qf3

Peter is faithful to the system that nearly brought him success in the game with Kasparov.

9...Nbd7 10.0-0-0 Qc7 11.Bd3 b5 12.a3 Rb8 13.Rhe1 h6

Judit has taken her own path. Garry played 13...b4 14.axb4 Rxb4

14.Qh3

The white queen is eyeing the e6-square.

14...e5

In response, the black bishop decided to cast a stern glance on the white queen! This position has occurred in tournament practice just once, in the game I. Zaitsev – Mitenkov (Moscow, 1996). Black won that encounter.

15.f5N

This is a novelty, and at the same time a very important decision! White has closed the center. As a result, White's rooks on the center files look somewhat absurd. The Moscow game saw 15.g4 Nb6 16.fxe5 dxe5 17.Bxf6 Bxf6 18.Nd5 Nxd5 19.exd5 0-0 20.Nd2 Rd8 21.Ne4 Be7 22.d6 Bxd6 23.Nxd6 Rxd6 24.Rxe5 Bxg4! and youth prevailed over experience.

15...b4

Right. It is time to attack the white king. As far as the black king is concerned, he is

going to stay in the center. It is the safest place for him right now.

16.axb4 Rxb4

I like Black's position, as well as the player. Go Judit!

17.Bd2 Nb6 18.g4

There is no other plan. White should attack on the kingside despite the fact that the black king is not there!

18...Rg8

Black is preventing g4-g5. Interestingly enough, Black could even have placed her rook on h7, in order to benefit from the opening of the h-file.

19.Kb1 Nc4 20.Bxc4

It is hard to bear this knight. On 20.Bc1 Black could have either continued her attack with 20...a5 or simply developed her light-squared bishop on b7.

20...Rxc4

However, White's e4-pawn became weak. It might fall victim to the b7-bishop's attack.

21.g5!

Right! White should trade the f6-knight.

21...hgx5

Black wishes her rook were on h7!

22.Bxg5 Bb7

Judit has not ventured upon an exchange sacrifice. She is right! The consequences were unclear: 22...Rxc3 23.Qxc3! (23.bxc3 Nxe4! 24.Rxe4 Bxg5 -/+) 23...Qxc3 24.bxc3 Nxe4 25.Rxe4 Bxg5 26.Rxd6 Bf4 27.Rc4! and the white rooks are way too active.

23.Bxf6 Bxf6

White has taken control over the d5-square, but he has no bishops. The position is about equal.



24.Nd5! Bxd5 25.Rxd5 Ke7

Necessary caution. After 25...Rxc2 26.Qd3 Rxb2 (26...Rc6 27.Na5) 27.Rc1 White has a dangerous initiative.

26.Qd3

Black should demonstrate some accuracy, otherwise White will grab the initiative. Judit's f6-bishop is very passive. If White manages to transfer his knight to a better position, he will have a positional advantage. I hope this won't happen.

26...Rc8 27.Re2 Qb6!

This is an excellent square for the queen. She is eyeing the b2-square, protecting the d6-pawn and might jump to g1. Hold tight, Judit!

Draw!

Leko is a strong player, but way too peaceful. Even the sharp Sicilian Defense in his hands is a mere tool for stamping draws. Today he played a bit with the queen of chess, imitated some activity and agreed to a draw. It is time for organizers to invite more aggressive and combative players like Morozevich (for example).

Round 6: Ruy Lopez would be glad...

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Round 6, Mar 1, 2001

Karpov, Anatoly - Shirov, Alexei 1/2

Kasparov, Garry - Leko, Peter 1:0

Polgar, Judit - Grischuk, Alexander 1/2

Kasparov - Leko

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.a4

It is well known that Kasparov does not allow the Marshall Attack. His match with Short gave a boost to the development of the 8.a4 variation (which has no better name than the anti-Marshall).

8...Bb7 9.d3 d6 10.Nbd2 Na5 11.Ba2 c5 12.Nf1 Re8

Surprisingly enough, this typical "Lopez" move has not been played very often. I

managed to find only one game in which this position occurred, Balashov–Frolov (Moscow, 1996). Much more popular is 12...b4. Here is a fresh example: 13.Ne3 Bc8 14.Nd2 Rb8 15.Ndc4 Nc6 16.Bd2 Be6 with complicated maneuvering play (Milos – Adams, Istanbul 2000).

13.Ne3

Balashov opted for 13.Ng3 and won in a very elegant manner. However, this does not necessarily mean that 13.Ng3 leads to a decisive attack. At this stage of the game different moves quite often are simply a matter of taste. I doubt that Peter expected that Garry would play 13.Ng5 Rf8 14.Nf3 Re8 with a draw.

13...h6 14.Bd2 c4

In case of 14...b4 15.Nf5 the position from the above-mentioned game Balashov – Frolov would arise. The game has taken an unbeaten path from this point.

15.Bc3

The prospects of the c3-bishop are getting much brighter. Kasparov wants to play Qd2, undermining the defense of the impenitent c4-pawn. In some lines the white bishop is ready to support the d3-d4 advance.

15...Qb6



16.Nd2

The forcing line 16.Qd2 Nc6 17.Nd5 Nxd5 18.exd5 b4 19.dxc6 bxc3 20.Qxc3 Bxc6 21.Qxc4 (in case of 21.dxc4 Bf6 the a2-bishop is not happy; after 21.Bxc4 Bxf3 22.gxf3 Bg5 Black's pieces might be very active on the kingside) 21...d5 22.Qc3 f6 leads to a position in which the two bishops and a strong center compensate for the pawn. Kasparov's move is much better. The

d2-knight is performing two important duties: the protection of the e4 pawn and the attack on the c4-pawn.

16...Nc6

The sequence 16...cxd3 17.cxd3 b4 18.Ndc4 Nxc4 19.Nxc4 Qc5 20.Bd2 would mean the failure of Black's plan with 14...c4, aimed at the restriction of White's light-squared bishop.

17.Nd5 Nxd5 18.exd5 Na5

This knight is provokingly jumping from c5 to a5 and back. Will Garry condone it?

19.Bxa5

Also very interesting was 19.dxc4 b4 20.c5 Qxc5 21.Ne4 Qb6 22.Bd2 with some prospects of creating an attack on the kingside.

19...Qxa5 20.dxc4 Qxa4

Leko should have foreseen this courageous move when playing 16...Nc6. A more cautious continuation was 20...b4, although the compensation for the pawn might be insufficient, because Black's b7-bishop is no better than White's light-squared one.

21.c5 Qb4

It is obvious that 21...dxc5? fails to 22.d6 Bxd6 23.Bxf7+

22.Ne4

This excellent move clears up the situation. Inferior was 22.c6 Bc8 and Black can defend this position.

22...Qxb2

We have already seen what was going to happen after 22...dxc5 23.c3 Qxb2 24.Re2 Qa3 25.d6

23.cxd6 Bf8

The black queen is in a critical situation.

24.c3 f5 25.d7

White's pawns are advancing, gaining tempos, and clearing the way for other attacking pieces. Black is on his last gasp.

25...Red8 26.d6+ Kh8

Bad is 26...Kh7 27.Ng5+

27.Nc5 Bc6 28.Nd3 Qxc3 29.Nxe5

On 29.Rc1 Black prepared 29...Qa3

29...Be4 30.Nf7+ Kh7 31.Ng5+

A final blow! After 31...Kh8 White closes out the game by 32.Nxe4 fxe4 33.Qd5 winning the f8-bishop. Having calculated this variation, Leko resigned.

1-0

Karpov-Shirov

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Bxc4 c5 6.0-0 a6 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 9.Nbd2 Nc6 10.Be2 Ke7

The opponents are following the game Kramnik – Lautier (Monaco 1996), which was drawn. In rapid or blindfold chess one can expect a different outcome in this position, but in classical chess any other result than a draw is very unlikely.

11.a3N

Kramnik opted for a more reserved move, 11.b3. Karpov also plans the fianchetto of his bishop, but he is going to take some space on the queenside.

11...a5

Shirov has no desire to give up even a single inch.

12.b3 b6 13.Bb2 Rd8

Anatoly Yevgenievich is a great expert in converting minimal advantages, but I think he decided to have some rest after yesterday's battle. I think this game will be drawn.

14.Rfc1 Bb7 15.Bxf6+ gxf6 16.Ne4 Bd6 17.Nxd6 Rxd6

Karpov has managed to double Shirov's pawns (as in his game with Leko). However, this is not enough to beat Shirov.

18.Rc3 f5 19.Rac1 Kf6 20.Ne1 Ne7 21.Kf1 Rad8 22.Rc7 Bd5 23.b4 axb4 24.axb4

The evaluation of the position has not changed – it's a draw.



24...e5 25.b5

White has fixed the "weakness" on e6, but it is not clear how Karpov is going to attack it. By 25.f4 he could have destroyed the opponent's pawn structure, but it was impossible to get to the weak pawns anyway. Black's pieces are very well placed. 25...exf4 26.exf4 Be4=

25...Be6 26.Nf3 Nd5 27.R7c6 Rxc6 28.bxc6

After 28.Rxc6 Black does not fight with the white rook, but outflanks it - 28...Ra8=

28...Rc8 29.Ke1?

Age is taking its toll – Karpov is losing the c6-pawn! It is getting hot! White could have kept the balance after 29.Bb5 Nc7 30.Bc4

29...Nb4! 30.Bb5 Rc7?

Black has returned the favor, whereas after 30...Bd5! 31.c7 Be6 followed by Nd5, White is on the verge of defeat. Karpov would have had to seek a way out a pawn down in the endgame.

31.Nd2

Mutual time trouble! What were they thinking about for all the game? It is hard for us weak players to understand the great ones of this world... There was an easy way to regain the pawn: 31.Rb1 Nxc6 (31...Nc2+ 32.Kd1 Na3 33.Rb4 Bd5 34.Ba4) 32.Ba4!

31...Bd5 32.f3 Ke6 33.Kd1 Kd6

After 33...Bxc6 34.Rc4 Bxb5 35.Rxc7 (35.Rxb4) 35...Nd5 36.Rb7 Bc6 37.Rb8 Nxe3+ 38.Ke2 Nxc2 39.Rxb6 White is OK.

34.Nc4+ Kc5

34...Bxc4 35.Rxc4 Nxc6 36.Rh4 f6 37.Bd3=

35.Na3+ Kd6 36.Nc4+ Bxc4 37.Rxc4 Nd5

38.Kd2 Ra7 39.Rc2 Ra3 40.c7

The easiest way to force a draw.

40...Nxc7 41.Rc6+ Kd7 42.Rxb6+ Nxb5

43.Rxb5 Ra2+ 44.Ke1

The game was heading to this outcome all the way. Shutting one's eyes to the mutual mistakes on moves 29 and 30, this result can be called logical.

1/2-1/2

Polgar-Grischuk

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 Na5

This is the favorite system (one of the oldest in the Ruy Lopez, authored by Chigorin) of the Dutch GM Picket. As far as I know, Grischuk previously preferred 9...Nd7.

10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Bb7 12.Nbd2 cxd4

13.cxd4 exd4

Another option is 13...Nc6.

14.Nxd4 Re8 15.b4

In her game with Milos (Najdorf Memorial 2000) Judit played 15.b3 Bf8 16.Bb2 g6 17.Qf3 Bg7 18.Rad1 Rc8 19.Bb1 Nc6 but failed to obtain an advantage and won only after the Brazilian's blunder.

15...Nc6 16.Nxc6 Bxc6 17.Bb2 Nd7

More common is 17...Rc8, and Nd7 on the next move. 17...Nd7 was introduced into tournament practice by the well-known expert in this system, Oleg Romanishin.

18.Bb3

The primary source game Popovic – Romanishin (Stary Smokovec, 1992) saw 18.Nb3 Bf6 19.Bxf6 Qxf6 20.Nd4 Ne5 21.Nxc6 Nxc6 22.Qd2 Rac8 23.Bb3 Nd4=

18...Bf6

It is very hard to invent something new in the Ruy Lopez. This position occurred in the game Qin Kanying – Voiska (Djakarta, 1993)

19.Bxf6 Nxf6

This is the first "deviation from the norm". The Bulgarian player captured with the queen, which also looks good. The Ruy Lopez is an opening with a large margin of safety. It is easy to play, provided that one does not commit obvious tactical and strategic mistakes. The problem is that wide choice feeds mental pabulum, and consequently might cause time trouble, which is fraught with blunders.

20.Rc1 Rc8

Obviously bad is 20...Bxe4? 21.Nxe4 Nxe4 22.Bd5

21.Qf3 Bb7 22.Rxc8 Qxc8

The weakness of the d6-pawn is counterpoised by the pressure on the e4-pawn.

23.Qf4 Qc7 24.f3

The advantages and drawbacks of this move are obvious: White has defended the e4-pawn, but loosened her dark-squares. White is better from the strategic standpoint. Black

should carry out d6-d5 at some point.

24...Qb6+ 25.Qe3

25.Kh2 was met by 25...Qd4

25...Qxe3+ 26.Rxe3 d5

The most natural reaction for this advance would be 27.e5. However, 27...Nh5 accentuates the disharmonious position of the white pawns.

27.e5

After 27.Rc3 dxe4 28.fxe4 (28.Rc7 e3!)

28...Kf8 29.Rc7 Re7 would have led to a fight for a draw.

27...Nh5

I am not going to say that 27...Nd7 28.f4 Nb6 29.Nf3 Nc4 was bad, but the move Grischuk opted for posed some problems for White. Judit should consider how to protect the e5-pawn, because Black is threatening 28...f6.

28.Bc2

Polgar is going to transfer her knight to c5 via b3 at the cost of the e5-pawn.

28...Rc8

Suddenly Grischuk has changed his plan. He is occupying the open file with his rook.

After 28...f6 29.Nb3 fxe5 30.Nc5 Bc8

31.Bb3 White activates his pieces.

29.Bf5 Rc1+ 30.Kf2 g6 31.Nb3

The bishop's retreat would have been met by Nf4.

31...Rc4 32.Bd3

Another continuation, 32.Bd7 Rxb4 33.Nc5 restricting the b7-bishop, deserves a closer look.

32...Rxb4

As a result Black won a different pawn.

33.g3 Ng7 34.Re2 Bc8 35.Rc2 Bxh3

As long as Black was busy winning a second pawn, White managed to activate her pieces. However, it is Judit's turn to capture pawns. Grischuk will use this time to consolidate his position.

36.Rc6

This is a mistake. White had more chances for saving the game after 36.Nc5 a5 37.Na6 Rd4 (37...Rb1 fails to 38.g4) 38.Bxb5

36...Ra4 37.g4 h5

Black could have finished the game with 37...Rxa2+ 38.Kg3 Ne6, because after 39.Rxe6 (39.Kxh3 Nf4+ 40.Kg3 Nxd3; 39.Nc5 Rg2+ 40.Kxh3 Nf4+ 41.Kh4 h6)

39...fxe6 40.Kxh3 b4 White's pieces can't fight with the Black pawns.

38.Nc5 Rxa2+

Also interesting was 38...Ra3, with the idea of meeting 39.Kg3 hxg4 40.fxg4 with 40...Bf1

39.Kg3 hxg4 40.fxg4

Judit has found very interesting counterplay. She is going to launch an attack on the black king with Rc8+ and Nd7.

40...Ne6

After 40...Ra3 41.Kxh3 Ne6 42.Nxe6

Rxd3+ 43.Kh4 fxe6 44.Rxa6 an interesting endgame emerges, where White has good drawing chances thank to the active position of her king.

41.Nxe6

This is better than 41.Rxa6 Rxa6 42.Nxa6 Bg2

41...fxe6 42.Bxg6

The line 42.Kxh3 Ra3 43.Kh4 Rxd3

44.Rxa6 results in the endgame that I

evaluated in my comment to the 40th move.

Now, Judit has an additional option.

42...Kg7 43.Bh5 Bf1 44.Rxe6



The situation has drastically changed. Black should play carefully, because White's coordinated pieces are ready for action.

44...b4 45.Rg6+ Kh8 46.Rb6 Bb5 47.g5

The line 47.Rb8+ Kg7 48.Rb7+ Kf8 49.e6 Re2 50.Rf7+ Kg8 51.e7 b3 52.Rf8+ Kg7 53.Rf7+ Kh6 54.Rf6+ leads to a draw, but Judit is looking for something better than a half point.

47...Ra1 48.g6 Rg1+ 49.Kf4 b3 50.Rb8+ Kg7 51.Rb7+ Kh8

The black king's trip to another side is way too dangerous: 51...Kf8 52.Rb8+ Ke7

53.Rb7+ Kd8 54.g7 b2 55.Bg4, and White is winning.

52.Rb8+ Kg7 53.Rb7+ Kh8 54.Rb8+
Finally both opponents admitted that there was nothing to squeeze out of this position. The start of this game was rather dull, but the end turned out to be eventful and fascinating. Alexander let Judit get off the hook for the second time in this tournament. To her credit, Judit found a fantastic resource to save the game.
1/2-1/2

Round 7: Crazy round

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Grischuk, Alexander - Karpov, Anatoly **1:0**
Polgar, Judit - Kasparov, Garry **1/2**
Shirov, Alexei - Leko, Peter **1/2**

Polgar-Kasparov

This is the encounter of the leaders. A beautiful couple...

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3

Judit offers Garry the opportunity of fighting over the same variation that was played in their first game in Linares, but with colors reversed.

6...e6 7.f3

The English Attack!

7...b5 8.Qd2

As I mentioned on many occasions, 8.g4 is a more precise move.

8...Nbd7 9.0-0-0 Bb7 10.g4 Nb6

Now we can see what is wrong with the move order Judit opted for – Black can omit the move h7-h6. One of Black's knights has enough time to get to b6, whereas the other one has a good d7-square for retreat.

Although, what retreat am I talking about? The knight is taking up the itinerary d7-e5-c4 with an attack!

11.Qf2 Nfd7

White was threatening Nd4xe6.

12.Bd3 Rc8

I am ready to capture on c3!

13.Nce2 Be7 14.h4 0-0

Not an obvious decision! Generally, in such positions Black tries to create some play on the queenside. Apparently Garry calculated that White's attack was not that dangerous. Maybe he knew it already! By the way, this position occurred in the game Kovacevic – Ilinic (Yugoslavia, 1994).

15.Kb1 Na4

This position (by transposition) emerged in the game Nevednichy – Badea (Romania, 1994). It is hard to break loose from the grip of theory!

16.g5 Ndc5

A novelty! Black is methodically transferring his cavalry closer to the white king, ignoring the standard c4-square. The Romanian players proceeded 16...d5 17.exd5 Bxd5 18.Nf4 Ndc5 19.Nb3 Nxd3 20.Rxd3 Qd7 21.Rhd1 Rfd8 22.h5 and White obtained a better position.

17.Ng3

Both parties use the cavalry. White is stalking the black king as well.

17...Qc7

The immediate breakthrough 17...d5!? also deserved attention.

18.Nb3

Kasparov: After 18.h5 Nxb2 19.Kxb2 Na4+ 20.Kc1 d5, Black has a strong initiative.

18...d5!

The b7-bishop aims at the e4-pawn. It is time to get into action.

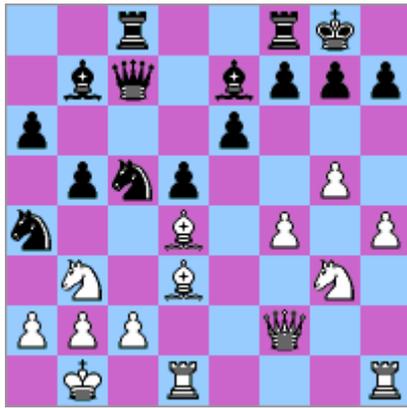
19.e5!?

Bravo, Judit! This e5-pawn sacrifice is aimed at blocking the center. Viorel Bologan (one of the apologists of this system on the white side) has played this way in his recent games.

Kasparov: Correct: otherwise White is slightly worse.

19...Qxe5 20.Bd4 Qc7 21.f4

Here we go. The b7-bishop is having a tedious time, whereas the e5-square is under White's control. It is time to launch an attack on the black king.



21...Ne4! 22.Bxe4

Kasparov: (?) A serious mistake. After 22.Qe3 Bd6 23.Nh5 e5 24.fxe5 Bxe5 25.Rhf1 White has sufficient compensation for the pawn, though there is nothing really dangerous for Black.

22...dxe4

Black has managed to extend the diagonal by one square. However, this square is extremely important. Taking up the d5-square, Black's light-squared bishop will be ideally placed.

23.Rhe1

In case of 23.Nh5 e3! White has no good capture on e3: the c2-pawn is under attack, on the other hand White wants to keep the g7-square under control.

23...Bd6!

The position is getting clearer. Black has a big advantage. In the line 23...f5 24.Be5!? Qb6 25.Bd4 the black queen would have had to go to c6. A possible sequence after that move 25...Qc6 26.Nh5 Rf7 27.Na5 Qc7 28.Nxb7 Qxb7 29.Rg1 and White has a dangerous initiative.

Kasparov: The best move! I spent 20 minutes calculating 23...Rfd8, but after 24.Nxe4 Bxe4 25.Rxe4 Ba3 26.Qe2 Rxd4 27.Rexd4 Bxb2 28.Rxa4 bxa4 29.Kxb2 Qc3+ 30.Ka3 (30.Kb1?? a3) 30...axb3 31.cxb3 the draw is inevitable.

24.Nh5

24.Bxg7 did not work, because after 24...Kxg7 25.Qd4+ Kg8 White could not capture on d6 in view of the checkmate on b2.

24...e5

This is it. Black has obtained the advantage

at the center, preserving his extra pawn. White is in deep trouble.

Kasparov: Now Black's advantage is obvious.

25.c3

A resourceful move. White is offering her d4-bishop...

25...f6

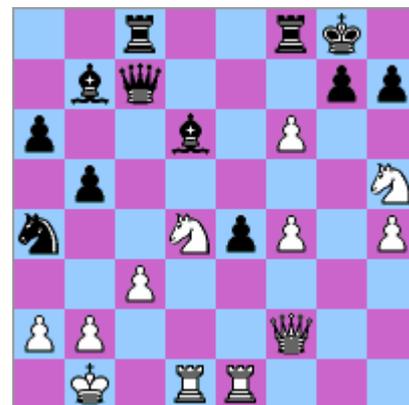
This is a reply of principle. Black has resumed his threat to capture on d4. Obviously not 25...exd4? 26.Qxd4 f6 27.Qxd6 with a roughly equal game. I think the line 25...b4!? 26.fxe5 Bxe5 (but not 26...bxc3 27.exd6 c2+ 28.Ka1 cxd1Q+ 29.Rxd1 with an unclear position) 27.cxb4 Rfd8! also leads to Black's advantage. Kasparov: Judit overlooked this move. 25...Rfd8 was also possible, but after 25...f6 Black gets an extra piece!

26.gxf6

The blow 26.Nxg7 leads nowhere after 26...Qxg7 27.gxf6 Qxf6 28.Qg3+ Qg6-+ 26...exd4 27.Nxd4!

After 27.Qxd4 g6! Black preserves his extra piece.

Kasparov: The best move. After 27.Qxd4, there were two equal possibilities: 27...g6 28.f7+ Qxf7 29.Qxd6 Rc6 and 27...Rfd8 28.Rg1 g6 29.f7+ Qxf7 30.Nf6+ Kf8 31.f5 Bh2!? 32.Qb4+ Qe7 33.Nxh7+ Ke8. Black is winning in both cases.



27...g6

This looks like an inaccuracy. Black could have closed out the game with 27...Nc5 28.Rg1 g6 29.f5 Kh8! 30.fxg6 hxg6 31.Qe3

(31.Rxg6 Qh7) 31...Qh7, etc. Another attractive option is 27...Ba3!?. For example, 28.fxg7 (28.Ne6 Qf7 29.Nxf8 Bxb2-+) 28...Rf7 29.Rd2 Nxb2 30.Rxb2 Qxc3! 31.Rc2 Qb4+ 32.Nb3 Rxc2 33.Kxc2 Rf5 and Black has a decisive attack.

Kasparov: (?)Strangely enough this move loses winning chances.

After 27...Ba3! Black had a win. For example, 28.Rg1 (28.Ne6 Nxc3+ 29.bxc3 Qxc3 30.Nxf8 Rc4-+; 28.fxg7 Rf7-+) 28...g6 (maybe 28...Rf7 is also possible) 29.f5 Bxb2 30.fxg6 Nxc3+ 31.Kxb2 Nxd1+ 32.Rxd1 Qc3+ 33.Kb1 hxg6 34.Qg1 Kh7 35.Ne6 Qc2+ 36.Ka1 Qc6 37.Nxf8+ Rxf8 and Black is close to victory.

28.f5!

This is an attack out of desperation. White hardly has compensation for the material. 28.Ne6 is met by the strong in-between move 28...Bc5!

Kasparov: I overlooked this strong move. I calculated only the line 28.Ne6 Nxc3+ 29.bxc3 Qxc3 30.Re3 Qb4+ 31.Rb3 e3 32.Qxe3 Qe4+ 33.Qxe4 Bxe4+ 34.Kb2 gxh5 35.Rxd6 Rxf6 36.Rg3+ Kh8 and Black has the upper hand in the endgame.

28...gxh5

If 28...Nxc3+ 29.bxc3 Qxc3, then 30.fxg6 hxg6 31.Rg1 with an unclear position.

Kasparov: After 28...Bd5 29.fxg6 hxg6 30.Rg1 Qc4 31.Rxg6+ Kf7 32.Rg7+ Ke8 33.Nb3 or 28...Be5 29.fxg6 hxg6 30.Rg1 White's attack is really dangerous.

29.Ne6 Nxc3+

The fight has flared up. Both kings are exposed. The most important thing right now is the amount of time both opponents have up to the time control.

30.bxc3 Qxc3 31.Rxd6

Kasparov: (!) The last subtlety. After 31.Qg1+ there is no draw: 31...Kf7 32.Rxd6 (or 32.Qg7+ Ke8) 32...Rg8 33.Ng5+ Rxg5 34.Rd7+ Ke8 35.Re7+ Kf8 36.hxg5 Qc2+ 37.Ka1 Bd5, mating on a2.

31...Qb4+

31...Kh8 32.Nxf8

32.Ka1 Qc3+ 33.Kb1 Qb4+ 34.Ka1 Qc3+ 35.Kb1

Draw!

Kasparov: Of course I was winning after 27...Ba3. I missed a victory in the Najdorf Variation again: against Shirov in the third round, now against Polgar. What a pity!

1/2-1/2

An incredible outcome! The time trouble coupled with Polgar's amazing play caused Garry to miss the win in SUCH a position. Certainly, Garry feels and knows this variation of the Sicilian position much better than Polgar. He skillfully took advantage of his opponent's inaccuracies and obtained an advantage.

However, Judit kept her head! First, she sacrificed a pawn, then tossed a piece in the looming time trouble and managed to confuse the great.

I think that instead of the natural 27...g6, Garry should have chosen between 27...Nc5 and 27...Ba3, winning in both cases (see my comment in the game). Judit managed to find the brilliant resource 28.f5!! and launched a dangerous counterattack on the Black king. To avoid the worst, Garry took the perpetual check. Thanks to both opponents (especially Judit) for an interesting game.

Grischuk-Karpov

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3 Qb6

After a crushing defeat from Kasparov in the 4...e6 line, Karpov is taking the off-road route.

5.Nf3 e6 6.Be2 Ne7 7.0-0 Bg4

Grischuk is following in Sutovsky's footsteps. The latter beat Magem and drew with Dreev in this position.

8.Na4 Qc7 9.b3 b5!?

It is hard to invent something new in chess. The Scotsman Thompson successfully made good use of this move in 1988.

10.Nb2 Nd7N

Formally speaking, only this move is a novelty. Thompson played 10...b4.

11.c4 bxc4 12.bxc4 dxc4 13.Ng5

I think Sasha should not have rejected the simple 13.Nxc4 Nd5 14.Bd2 with a slight but long-lasting advantage for White.

13...Bxe2 14.Qxe2 Nb6

I see no problem for Black after 14...Nf5=.

15.Nxc4 Nf5 16.Rd1 Be7

I am not going to say that Black has absolute equality, but Karpov is very close to it.

17.Nf3 Nxc4 18.Qxc4 Qd7 19.g4!?

This somewhat jerky move contains an interesting idea.

19...Nh4 20.Nxh4 Bxh4 21.g5 h6?

Black has fallen into White's trap. The right continuation was 21...Qd5! 22.Qxd5 cxd5 23.Rb1 f6! with an equal position after castling.

22.d5! hxg5

22...Bxg5 23.Bxg5 hxg5 (23...cxd5 24.Qh4+-) 24.dxc6±

23.Qxc6±

I don't think that Anatoly Yevgenievich missed White's breakthrough, but I am under the impression that he failed to evaluate the emerging position correctly. Actually, White is much better.

23...Rc8

23...Rd8 24.Qxd7+ Rxd7 25.d6 g4 26.Rb1 Rh5 27.Rb8+ Bd8 28.Bb2±

24.Qxd7+ Kxd7

Black has problems bringing his h4-bishop and the h8-rook into play (by the way, that's half of the pieces that are left on the board!

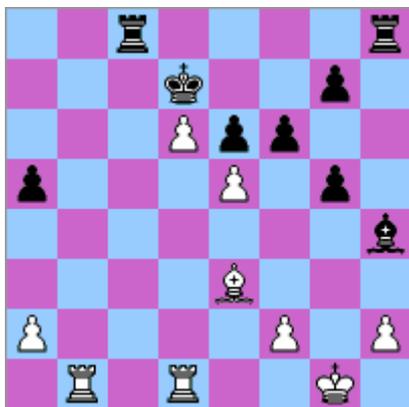
25.d6 f6 26.Be3 a5

In addition to the natural

27.Rab1

interesting was 27.Ba7, taking away the b8 square from the black rook.

Careful defense is required by Black.



27...Rb8 28.Bb6?!

I think Black would have faced more

problems after 28.Bd4.

28...fxe5 29.Rdc1 e4 30.Rc7+ Kxd6

There is not much left of White's dangerous pawns. Black has no problems.

31.Rxg7 Rhc8 32.Rd1+

White can win an exchange, but not the game. After 32.Bc7+ Rxc7 33.Rd1+ Ke5 34.Rxc7 Rb2 it is White who has serious problems.

32...Ke5 33.Be3

33.Bc7+ Rxc7 34.Rxc7 Rb2 35.Rc5+ Kf4 36.Rxa5 Bxf2+-+]

33...Kf6

It is the ex-champion's turn to commit an inaccuracy. Better was 33...Rc2 34.Rf7 Rb5 35.Bd4+ Kd6 and Black is better.

34.Rdd7 Rd8 35.Bxg5+ Bxg5 36.Rdf7+ Ke5 37.Rxg5+ Kd4 38.Ra7 Rb1+ 39.Kg2 Rb2 40.Raxa5 Rf8??

A fatal 40th move! Black could have kept the balance with 40...Rd5.

41.Ra4+ Kd3 42.Rg3+

The white rooks are driving the black king away from the pawns. Grishuk is winning! Sasha is not going to miss this chance today.

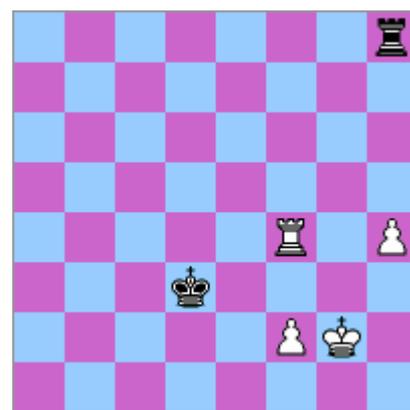
42...Kd2 43.Rxe4 Rxa2 44.Rxe6 Ra4

45.Rd6+ Kc2 46.Rdd3 Raf4 47.Rdf3 Rxf3

48.Rxf3 Rh8 49.Rf4 Kd3 50.h4

Black's position is absolutely hopeless, because his king is cut off from his pawns.

1-0



What can I say about this game? The youth emerged with a slight advantage after the opening. Then Grischuk set up an original positional trap into which Karpov purposely fell. The four-rook endgame with bishops and White's dangerous central pawns arose.

Grischuk's evaluation was correct – he had an advantage, but the youth handled this endgame, as often happens, badly. Sasha gave up his central pawn for a couple of checks and found himself in an inferior position. However, it appears that the veteran did not realize this and let his advantage slide. After a terrible mistake on move 40 (Anatoly Yevgenievich's fatigue took its toll) Karpov's position became hopeless. The day before yesterday Sasha missed an obvious win in time trouble, but today he had already passed the time control. One may call Grischuk's victory accidental, but bear in mind that he managed to wear the ex-champion down. So he deserved this triumph. Grischuk left last place in the crosstable and caught up to Leko. Karpov is trailing.

Shirov-Leko

It will not be very easy for Peter to dry up the position and reach the desired draw. The "white Shirov" is dreadful!

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.h3

White is very inventive while trying to avoid the Marshall Attack! Frank would be glad. What is White afraid of? Garry avoids this variation with 8.a4.

8...Bb7 9.d3

White's temporary discretion misleads no one. It is too early to talk about Black's reaching equality.

9...h6 10.Nc3

The development of this knight on d2 was common in the last, twentieth, century: 10.Nbd2 Re8 11.c3 Bf8 12.a3 d6 13.Ba2 Nb8 14.Nh4 d5 15.Qf3 c6 16.b4 Nbd7 with complicated position, Topalov, V-Adams, M/Linares 1999/1/2-1/2 (41). Shirov has returned to the traditions of the nineteenth century!

10...Bc5

A novelty. Peter is developing his bishop on c5 before placing his pawn on d6. Here is an example from the past 10...d6 11.a3 Re8 12.Ba2 Qd7 13.Nh2 Nd4 14.f4 a5 15.Nf3 Nxf3+ 16.Qxf3 b4 17.Ne2 d5! and Black

obtained excellent counterplay Lanka, Z-Djuric, S/Adelaide 1990/0-1 (81)

11.a4 b4 12.Ne2

As often happens in Shirov's games, his pieces are moving toward the opponent's king. This knight took a fancy to the f5-square.

12...Na5 13.Ba2

After 13.Nxe5 Nxb3 14.cxb3 d5 Black has good compensation for the pawn.

13...d5!?

Leko is in a hurry to strike up some play in the center, because the e2-knight hampers other White pieces.

14.Nxe5

If 14.exd5 Bxd5 15.Nxe5, then 15...Bxa2 16.Rxa2 Qd5! with the double attack on e5 and a2.

14...dxe4 15.d4 Ba7

Black appears to be OK.

16.Be3 Bd5?!

I think 16...Nd5 was a better continuation.

17.c4! bxc3 18.b4!

An excellent reply! Such moves are overlooked in calculation the most often. White is grabbing the initiative.

18...Nc6 19.Nxc6 Bxc6 20.Nxc3

The white pawns are ready to advance. It looks like Black should set up a blockade on the d5 square. Otherwise he will be in trouble.



20...Nd5

Another good option was 20...Bd5. For example: 21.Bxd5 Nxd5 22.Nxe4 Nxb4 with a roughly equal position.

21.Bxd5

This is a prelude to a tempting attack. In my

opinion White could have played for a win using positional means: 21.Qb3! Nxe3 22.fxe3 Qe7 23.Rf1 Rab8 24.Qc4, etc. The black bishops are very passive and the pawns are weak.

21...Bxd5 22.Bxh6!

Hurray! White is rushing to the attack.

22...gxh6 23.Qg4+ Kh8 24.Qh5

This is a double attack on the h6 and d5-squares. How to escape?

24...f5!

Black is OK with the perpetual. On 24...Be6 highly unpleasant is 25.d5 Bd7 26.Qxh6+ Kg8 27.Rxe4.

25.Qxh6+ Kg8 26.Qg6+ Kh8 27.Qh6+ Kg8 28.Re3

Alexei is ready to lose to avoid a draw! He is a real fighter!

28...f4

Leko is persistently aiming for a draw. He has swept aside all the sharp lines like 28...Bxd4 29.Rd1 Bxc3 30.Rxc3 Rf6; or 28...Rf6 29.Rg3+ Kf7 30.Qh7+ Ke6 31.Rg7. He is a natural-born defender.

29.Qg6+ Kh8 30.Qh6+ Kg8 31.Qg6+ Kh8

It looks like White should force the perpetual.

32.Nxd5 fxe3 33.Qh6+ Kg8 34.Qg6+ Kh8 35.Rc1?

This is unbelievable! Shirov does go for defeat, in order to avoid a draw! Fighting spirit is a good thing, but being in time trouble Alexei should have shown some common sense.



35...Qh4

Leko is way too prudent! Why not 35...exf2+ 36.Kf1 Qh4! 37.Rxc7 Bxd4,

depriving White of all the attacking ideas? Obviously Black would have won the game, had he opted for this line

36.fxe3

Now the black bishop is out of play.

36...Rg8

More natural was 36...c6! 37.Rxc6 Rac8.

White can reach a draw by 38.Rxc8 Rxc8 39.g3! Qxh3 40.Qf6+ Kh7 41.Qf7+, though this line is not easy to find in the time trouble.

37.Nf4!

An interesting move. Despite his extra rook, Black has some problems. The e4-pawn is going to fall...

37...Bxd4?

Black should have played 37...Raf8.

38.Qxe4 Bf6 39.Qxa8! Rxa8 40.Ng6+ Kg8 41.Nxh4 Bxh4 42.Rxc7

After the devastating time-trouble the game has transposed into an endgame which is slightly in White's favor. He has many pawns.

42...Be1 43.b5

Draw!

1/2-1/2

What is going on? No matter how one plays and runs risks with Leko, a draw is inevitable. Alexei fought like a lion and rejected a perpetual to continue the attack a rook down, but Peter proved one more time, that he had nerves of steel and excellent defensive technique. I think Shirov should have opted for the positional approach on move 21 (see my comments), because his elegant attack yielded nothing real.

I want to reprove Leko a little bit for his excessive caution. Had Peter captured on f2 on 35th move, he could have refuted White's attack, emerging with an extra rook. One way or another, both opponents missed their chances and got a half point each.

Round 8:

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Karpov, Anatoly - Polgar, Judit **1:0**
Kasparov, Garry - Shirov, Alexei **1:0**

Leko, Peter - Grischuk, Alexander 1/2

Round 9: Kasparov at the top, Shirov at the bottom

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Round 9, Mar 5, 2001

Grischuk, Alexander - Shirov, Alexei 1:0
Karpov, Anatoly - Kasparov, Garry 1/2
Polgar, Judit - Leko, Peter 1/2

Karpov-Kasparov

The twelfth World Champion restored his combative spirit after yesterday's victory. Will he take revenge on the thirteenth Champion for the old defeats?

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3

White is using a very cautious move order to avoid the Volga Gambit. However, White's options in all the main openings are reduced (for example White can't play the Saemish in the King's Indian, etc.)

2...g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 d5 5.c4

The Grunfeld Defense, as expected.

5...dxc4 6.Na3 c3

The line 6...0-0 7.0-0 Nc6 8.Nxc4 Be6 9.b3 leads to calm maneuvering play that Karpov likes. For this reason Garry avoids this variation. He should complicate the game!

7.bxc3 0-0 8.0-0 c5 9.e3 Nc6 10.Qe2 Bf5
Svidler's variation, 10...Qa5 11.Bb2 Nd5 12.Rfc1 Bg4 13.h3 Bxf3 14.Bxf3 Nb6, was questioned by Kasparov himself on the white side - 15.Rab1! cxd4 16.cxd4 e5 17.Qb5! and White obtained a serious advantage.

11.Rd1 Qb6N

A novelty. Black previously placed the queen on b6 only after the insertion of 11...Be4 12.Bb2. For example, 12...Qb6 13.Nc4 Qa6 14.Bf1 cxd4 15.cxd4 Rac8 16.Nfd2 Na5 17.Na3 Qxe2 18.Bxe2 Bd5 19.Bd3 Nd7 and Black has excellent play Kurajica, B - Palac, M/Vinkovci 1995/0-1 (33). The a5-square is not as good for the queen, because she might come under attack by the b3-knight: 11...Qa5 12.Bb2 Be4 13.Nd2 Bxg2 14.Nb3! Qb6 15.Kxg2 cxd4

16.cxd4 Na5 17.Nc5 Qc6+ 18.Qf3 b6 19.Qxc6 Nxc6 20.Na6 with a small but steady advantage for White. Georgiev, K-Svidler, P/Las Vegas 1999/1-0 (47)
Kasparov: A good novelty. Black catalyzes complications.



12.Bb2

Kasparov: White has a wide range of opportunities here. 12.Nh4!? is interesting, there are various plans related to d4-d5 advancement, finally 12.Bb2 followed by c3-c4 looks very sharp. Yesterday, when we were discussing this position with Yuri Dokhoian, he said that Karpov would prefer more secure Nc4 and a4 (preventing Qa6-a4). Yuri was right!

12...Rfd8 13.Nc4 Qa6

Here we go! A well-known position has emerged on the board after the move transposition. We are going to see a second novelty in this game. The position of the black queen on a6 is not as bad as it may look. The black queen does not hamper her rooks and at the same time is exerting pressure on the c4-knight.

14.a4

Previously White played 14.Bf1 cxd4 15.cxd4 Rac8 16.Qe1 Qa4 17.Nce5 Ne4 18.Nxc6 Rxc6 19.Bd3 Rb6 20.Qe2 Nd6 and Black obtained a good position (Jirovsky - Froenlich/Praha/1991).

14...Na5 15.Bf1

White had to protect his queen with the bishop anyway.

15...Ne4

Garry found an interesting square for his knight. In most cases this square is reserved for the bishop. However, in this particular case the white bishop has already left the g2-square, so the Bf5-e5 does not make sense. The e4-knight is pressuring the c3-pawn and letting the g7-bishop live.

16.Nfd2

Trading pieces favors White. To put it more precisely, it is in Karpov's favor! However, impartially speaking the position is about equal.

Kasparov: This is the only move, otherwise Black grabs the initiative, e.g.: 16.Nce5 Qxe2 17.Bxe2 Be6 and White has too many weak points.

16...Nxd2

Kasparov: It took me quite a bit of time to choose this move. The alternative was 16...Nxc4 17.Qxc4 Qxc4 (there was a funny line here: 17...Nxd2 18.Qxa6 Nf3+ 19.Kg2 Be4 and, alas, White has 20.Qb5+- - otherwise Black regains the queen.) 18.Nxc4 - this is less promising for Black than the game line.

17.Nxa5

Kasparov: Of course, White has to trade this active knight. Black is better after 17.Nxd2 Qxe2 18.Bxe2 Rac8

17...Qxa5

Kasparov: I had an interesting chance here: 17...Nxf1 18.Qxa6 bxa6 19.Kxf1 Bg4 20.Re1 Bf3 21.Ba3 cxd4 22.exd4 e6 unclear.

18.Rxd2

Kasparov: Black is OK after 18.Qxd2 Be4

18...cxd4 19.cxd4

Kasparov: (!) An inaccuracy. White could keep the dynamic balance with 19.exd4 e5 20.Qb5

19...Rac8

The position has "dried up" a little bit. I suppose the game will be drawn. Black had a good option, 19...Be4, to keep the white bishop out of g2.

20.h3

I think better was 20.Bg2 with the idea of meeting 20...Bg4 21.Qd3 e5 by the cool 22.Bxb7!

Kasparov: Maybe better is 20.Bg2 b6 21.d5 (21.h3!?) 21...Bc3 (or 21...Bxb2 22.Rxb2

Qc3) 22.Bxc3 Qxc3 23.Rdd1 Rc4 and Black has some edge.

20...Be4!

Kasparov: Now White must find a series of the only moves.

21.Bg2 Bxg2 22.Kxg2 e5

Black managed to grab the initiative!

23.Kg1 h5 24.h4 b6

A temporizing move. What should White do?

Kasparov: Drawn is 24...exd4 25.Bxd4 Bxd4 26.Rxd4 (26.exd4 Rc4) 26...Rxd4 27.exd4 Qc3 28.Rd1 Qc4 29.Qxc4 Rxc4 30.a5=

25.Rdd1

Inferior was 25.Qd1 in view of 25...exd4 26.Bxd4 Rc4!

25...exd4

The sequence 25...e4 26.Qb5 Rd5 does not promise much because of 27.Qb3!

26.Bxd4 Bxd4 27.exd4

White's pawns are weak, but that hardly outweighs the drawing tendencies of this position.

Kasparov: Worse is 27.Rxd4 Rxd4 28.exd4 Qc3 29.Rd1 Qc4 (not 29...Qb3 30.d5 Qxa4 31.d6 with compensation) 30.Qxc4 Rxc4 31.d5 Kf8 32.d6 Ke8 33.Re1+ Kd8 34.a5 (34.Re7 Rxa4 35.Rxf7 a5) 34...bxa5 35.Re7 a6 36.Rxf7 a4 If White can obtain a draw here, it would cost him a lot of effort.

27...Qd5

After 27...Rd5 28.Rac1! Rcd8 29.Rc4 and White takes up a safe drawing stance.

Kasparov: 27...Qc3 28.Qe3=

28.Qa6



28...Rc7

If 28...Rc2, then 29.Qxa7 Qf3 30.Rf1 Rb2 31.a5 and Black has no real attack.

Kasparov: I spent a lot of time looking for a win after 28...Rc2! It looks like White can take the a7-pawn and parry the attack.

29.Qxa7 Rdc8 (29...Qf3 30.Rf1 Re8 (30...Rxd4 31.Qxb6 Rxf2? 32.Qb8+-) 31.Qxb6 Ree2 32.Qb8+ Kh7 33.Qf4) 30.Rf1!= (30.Qxb6 Rxf2! 31.Kxf2 Rc2+ 32.Ke3 Qg2-+ I give this evaluation without a machine check - but I'm almost sure that Black should mate here. Junior 6 calls it a draw: 33.Qd8+ Kg7 34.Re1 Rf2 35.Kd3 Qf3+ 36.Re3 Qc6 37.Ree1 0.00/16)

29.Rac1

The continuation 29.a5 b5! 30.Rab1 Rb7 31.Qf6 Rd6! Did not solve all White's problems. However, 29.Rd2, covering the second rank, looks safe enough.

29...Qxd4

Black is trading his queen for two rooks.

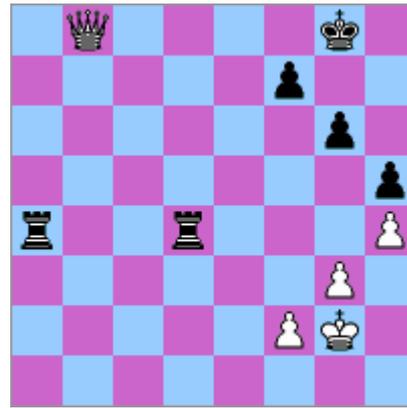
30.Rxd4 Rxc1+ 31.Kg2 Rxd4 32.Qxa7 Rcc4

Black can't preserve his b6-pawn: 32...Rb4 33.Qb8+ Kg7 34.Qe5+ and 34...Kh7? fails to 35.Qe7 with a double attack on f5 and b4. The attempt to cover the eight rank does not work either: 32...Rc8? 33.a5. The sequence 32...Rd8 33.Qxb6 Ra8 34.Qb7 Rxa4 35.Qb8+ Kh7 36.Qb7! also leads to a draw.

33.Qxb6 Rxa4

Kasparov: In 1973 Karpov defended a similar endgame versus Tal.

34.Qb8+ Kh7 35.Qc7 Kg8 36.Qb8+



White got off the hook. Karpov does not allow Black to consolidate his position. Had the black rook taken up the f5-square, White would have been in trouble.

1/2-1/2

A fighting draw. Kasparov did his best. He build up some pressure and posed problems to his opponent, but did not manage to extract his predecessor on the champion's throne from a drawing shell. Anatoly Yevgenievich is a very solid player after all.

Grischuk-Shirov

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f3

Sasha does not play 6.Be3. Apparently he is not prepared for the 6...Ng4 line.

6...Qb6!

This move has become very popular lately. Black dislodges the white knight from the center.

7.Nb3 e6 8.g4

A little transposition. Grischuk played 8.Qe2 first in his game with Kasparov.

8...Nc6

This is an important deviation. Garry prefers to develop his knight on d7, but in this particular case this is out of question in view of g4-g5.

9.Qe2

As usual, White is developing his bishop on e3 and castling long. The game will see big complications.

9...d5

A novelty! This is an unbelievable move. Black has not completed development yet,

but opens the center, sacrificing a pawn!
 This line should be analyzed in depth...
 Here is an example of standard play in this position: 9...Qc7 10.Be3 b5 11.0-0-0 Be7 12.Kb1 Nd7 13.Qf2 Bb7 14.g5 Rc8 15.Rg1 0-0 16.h4 b4 17.Na4 Nce5 18.Nb6 Nxb6 19.Bxb6 Qb8 20.Bh3 and White grabbed the initiative, Leko,P - Topalov,V/Batumi 1999/1-0 (51). Black has also tested the continuations 9...Be7 and 9...h6.

10.Be3

White has not captured the pawn! After 10.exd5 Nb4 11.dxe6 Bxe6 Black has some initiative. Black castles long, whereas White's pieces are poorly placed. 10.g5 is met by 10...d4!

10...d4

All of a sudden the black pawn has raced forward. White's advantage in the center has melted within two moves!

11.Bf2 Bc5

An ingenious maneuver. Black is ready to meet White's long castling with a pawn thrust, d4-d3! After 11...e5 12.g5 Qc7 13.gxf6 dxc3 14.fxg7 Bxg7 15.bxc3 White is slightly better because of an outside passer.

12.a3!

Ruse for ruse! White has prepared Nc3-a4, because Black is deprived of the check on b4.

12...Qc7

Safer was 12...dxc3 13.Bxc5 Qc7 with a roughly equal game. However, White might snatch the pawn. A possible sequence is 14.bxc3 (14.0-0-0 cxb2+ 15.Kxb2 e5!)= 14...Nd7! 15.Be3 0-0 with a very complicated game.

13.0-0-0?!

Development is a good thing, but... In my opinion the best continuation is 13.Nxc5 dxc3 14.b4! cutting off the c3-pawn from the main forces. Not so convincing is 13.Nb5 axb5 14.Nxc5 b4!

13...Bxa3 14.bxa3 dxc3 15.Bc5

White sacrificed a pawn hoping to launch an attack on the dark squares.

15...e5

Making way for the c8-bishop.

16.Qe3 Nd4

Black is ready to return the pawn in order to

exchange White's dangerous dark-squared bishop.

17.g5 Nh5 18.Qxc3

White regained the pawn, but the bishops are still on the board!

18...Nxb3+ 19.cxb3 Be6 20.Kb2

The youngster is gradually outplaying the experienced fighter! The h8 rook is out of play. White's h1-rook has nothing to boast of either, though. I prefer White's position anyway. His dark-squared bishop is very strong.



20...Rc8 21.Bb4 Qxc3+ 22.Bxc3 f6 23.gxf6 gxf6 24.Rd6 Nf4

24...Ke7 25.Bb4!

25.Bd2!

Well played! White is slightly better in this endgame.

25...Kf7 26.Bxf4

Otherwise, it is not clear how to develop the kingside. If 26.Rb6 Rc7 27.Bxf4 exf4 28.Bc4, then 28...Bxc4 29.bxc4 Rd8! with an approximately equal position.

26...exf4 27.Bc4

Surprise! I expected the line 27.Rxe6 Kxe6 (27...Rhd8 28.b4!) 28.Bh3+ Ke5 29.Bxc8 Rxc8 30.Rd1 Rg8! and Black holds the position.

27...Bxc4 28.bxc4 Rxc4 29.Rd7+ Ke6 30.Rhd1 Rc6?!

After 30...Rhc8! I can't see anything better for White than a perpetual check.

31.Rxb7

White is slightly better again.

31...Rg8 32.Rdd7

White had another good move at his disposal: 32.Kb3!?, with the idea of meeting 32...Rg2 with the brash 33.Rxh7!

32...Rg2+ 33.Kb3 Rxb2

The same position could have emerged after 33...Rf2 34.Re7+ (34.Kb4 Rb2+ 35.Ka5 Rxb7 36.Rxb7 Rc3!) 34...Kd6 35.Rbd7+ Kc5 36.Rd3 Rxb2 37.Rd5+.

34.Re7+ Kd6 35.Rbd7+ Kc5 36.Rd5+ Kb6 37.a4! a5 38.Rb5+ Ka6 39.Re8!

A precise move, that accentuates Black's problems.

39...Rb6 40.Ra8+ Kb7 41.Rb8+ Kxb8 42.Rxb6+ Kc7 43.Rxf6

Shirov's combative spirit served him badly today. Instead of making a draw (on move 30), he maintained the tension in the center, which had fatal consequences for his king. In order to escape from the mating net Black had to trade the rook at an unsuitable moment. The f4-pawn is going to fall. I think two of White's connected passers will decide the game.

43...h5

This passer is Black's only hope. Black could not play 43...Rh4 because in such endgames the active position of the rook is much more important than a pawn. White wins easily by advancing his king to e5.

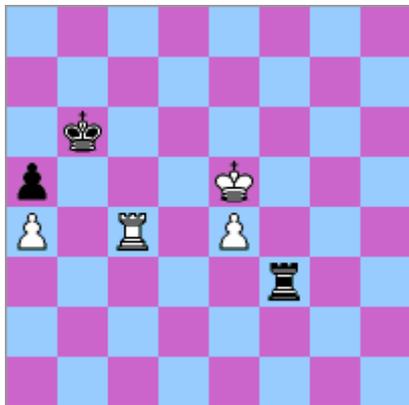
44.Rxf4 h4

A futile attempt to frighten the youngster. He could scare anybody to death himself!

45.Kc4 h3 46.Rh4 Rh1 47.Kd5 h2 48.Ke5 Rf1 49.Rxb2 Rxf3 50.Rc2+ Kb6 51.Rc4

This position is technically winning for White. The black king is cutting off the white pawn. Even an expert would win this position versus Shirov.

1-0



The encounter between the semifinalists of New Delhi, Grischuk and Shirov, did not disappoint us. It is a real pleasure to watch the game of these fighters. Their creative play in the opening was very hard to annotate. The rest of the game, on the other hand was easy to comment. White had a slight advantage in the opening, whereas Black was trying to equalize. The critical moment occurred on move 30. Shirov could have played 30...Rac8 forcing a draw on the spot. He opted for a very passive move instead, and the white rooks became very active. Defending against nearing checkmate, Black had to transpose into a bad endgame. Grischuk's technique was up to the challenge. Anatoly Bykhovsky (Sasha's coach) can be glad. His pupil is tied for second place in Linares!

Polgar-Leko

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.0-0 Bc5 5.c3 0-0 6.d4 Bb6 7.dxe5 Nxe4 8.Qd5 Nc5 9.Re1 Ne7 10.Qd1 Ne6N

10...h6 Solak,D-Kogan,A/Sabac 1998/0-1 (34)

11.Na3 Ng6

Polgar decided not to compete with Leko in the endgame of the Berlin variation, which came into fashion after the match Kasparov – Kramnik. This is the right choice! Judit feels much more comfortable in the positions with the queens on the board!

12.Bc4

Black's position is very solid (built by Leko!), but he has some problems with development of his queenside.

12...Bc5 13.Nc2 c6 14.Ncd4 d5 15.Bd3 Nef4 16.Bc2 f6!?

Leko feels that he has the right to intercept the initiative! The white bishop spent too much time strolling around the board.

17.e6!

The only attempt to fight for advantage. This courageous pawn hampers Black's c8-bishop and f8-rook. Will White be able to support this pawn?

17...Re8 18.Bf5

White appears to have better chances. For

example 18...Qd6 19.Qc2! Kh8 20.Bxf4 Nxf4 21.Bxh7 Bxe6 22.Nxe6 Rxe6 23.Bf5 Ree8 24.g3 Ne6 25.Qe2! Nc7 26.Qf1± and the black king is in danger.



18...Qd6 19.Qc2! Bxd4 20.Nxd4 Bxe6 21.Nxe6?!

White could have posed more serious problems to her opponent by 21.Bxf4 Nxf4 22.Nxe6 Nxe6 23.Bxh7+ Kf8 24.Bg6 Re7 25.Qf5 with a better position. The continuation 25...Ng5 does not solve all the problems: 26.h4 Nf7 27.Qh5 Rae8 28.Rxe7 Qxe7 (28...Rxe7 29.Bxf7) 29.Rd1 Qd7 30.c4 Re5 31.Qf3 Qe7 32.cxd5 Re1+ 33.Rxe1 Qxe1+ 34.Kh2 Qe5+ 35.Kh3 cxd5 36.Qa3+ Nd6 37.Qxa7±.

21...Nxe6 22.Bxg6 hxg6 23.Qxg6 Re7 24.Bd2 Nf8 25.Qg4 Rae8 26.Rxe7 Rxe7 27.Re1 Rxe1+ 1/2-1/2

Judit played very well in the opening and had good chances to grab the initiative. Unfortunately she lacked energy after yesterday's seven-hour fight. After White's inaccuracy on move 21 (the light squared bishop was much more dangerous than the dark squared one. Judit should have preserved the former) Leko easily reached another draw.

Round 10: A brilliant final chord by Kasparov

(Sergei Shipov & Nikolai Vlasov)

Mar 6, 2001

Kasparov, Garry - Grischuk, Alexander **1-0**
Leko, Peter - Karpov, Anatoly **1/2**
Shirov, Alexei - Polgar, Judit **1-0**

Kasparov - Grischuk

Kasparov has played brilliantly in Linares so far. He needs to play a final chord.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6

The bishop is ready to jump to b4.

6.Nxc6

Garry has deviated!

6...bxc6 7.e5 Nd5 8.Ne4 Bb7

The main line is 8...Qc7 9.f4 Qb6

9.Be2

If 9.c4 Nb4 10.a3, then 10...Qa5!

9...c5 10.0-0 Qc7 11.Nd6+

On 11.f4 Black had prepared 11...c4!

11...Bxd6 12.exd6 Qc6

Garry is following his game with Leko from Linares 1999. That game was drawn. In most cases, drawing tendencies have prevailed in this position.

13.f3 c4

Otherwise White plays c2-c4, dislodging the black knight from d5.

14.Qd4 0-0 15.Bxc4

The opponents are still on the theoretical path...



15...Rfc8N

This is a novelty! Black suggests transposing into an opposite-colored bishop endgame. Previously Black invariably captured on d6: 15...Qxd6 16.Rd1 (the game Kasparov-Leko saw 16.Bb3 Qb6 17.Rd1

Rfc8 18.Qxb6 Nxb6 and Peter managed to hold this endgame) 16...Rfc8 17.Bd3 Qb6 18.Qxb6 Nxb6 19.b3 d5 20.Bb2 a5 21.Bd4 Nd7 22.c4 f6 23.f4 Kf7 24.Rac1 dxc4 25.Bxc4 Ba6! White has a slight advantage, but it was not enough to win the game in Anand,V-Leko,P/Dortmund 1999/1/2-1/2 (29)

16.Bxd5

When Kasparov was thinking over his move I was analyzing the line 16.b3 Qxd6 17.Bb2 17...e5!/? but managed to find the refutation 18.Qd3! (but neither 18.Qe4 Nb6! 19.Qxb7 Nxc4 20.bxc4 Rab8; nor 18.Qxe5 Qxe5 19.Bxe5 Ne3 and Black is fine.) 18...Qb6+ 19.Kh1 Ne3 20.Bxe5 with the idea 20...Nxf1 21.Bxf7+! Kxf7 22.Qxd7+ and White has a decisive attack. However, Black can play better. For example, 20...Nxc4 21.bxc4 Qe6.

16...Qxd5

On 16...Qxd6 White delivers the blow 17.Bh6! gxh6 18.Qg4+ Kh8 19.Bxb7 Qb6+ 20.Rf2 Qxb7 21.c3 and emerges with a winning position thanks to better pawn structure.

17.Qxd5 Bxd5 18.Rf2

White is a pawn up. His primary task is to arrange the queenside pawns in the best way, with b2-b3 and c2-c4.

18...Rc6 19.Bf4 Rac8

If 19...f6, with the threat of e6-e5, then 20.Rd2!; whereas 19...a5 is met by 20.b3!

20.Rc1!

But not 20.c3 a5! After the black pawn takes the a4-square a draw is inevitable.

20...Ra6

Black should force his opponent to arrange the pawns on the dark squares at any cost! After 20...f6 21.b3 e5 22.Be3 Rc3 23.Re2! a6 (23...Kf7 24.Bf2) 24.Bb6 Kf7 25.Ba5 White would have reached the b3-c4 setup; 20...Bxa2 fails to 21.Ra1

21.a3

It is not worth carrying out c2-c4 at the cost of a pawn: 21.b3 Rxa2 22.c4 Rxf2 23.Kxf2 Bb7 24.b4 a6 and Black is OK.

21...f6 22.Be3

Garry is OK with the exchange of his d6 pawn for Black's pawn at a7.

22...Ra4

I am sure that on 22...e5 Garry was going to

play 23.f4; Another option for Black was 22...Kf7

23.Ra1!

Garry takes advantage of the black rook's position. He is threatening b2-b3 (gaining a tempo) followed by c2-c4.

23...e5

If 23...Ra6 then 24.b3!

24.b3 Ra6 25.c4

White has achieved his goal. Black's problems are escalating.

25...Be6 26.Rd2 Rb8!

Black should keep the white pawns under attack.

27.Rd3 Rb7

Black has created the threat Be6-f5. Inferior was 27...Bf5 28.Rc3 Rxd6 29.Bxa7

28.g4!

White has repelled the above-mentioned threat. Garry is going to open a second front on the kingside if an opportunity presents itself.

28...h5 29.h3 hxg4 30.hxg4 f5?!

This is a questionable decision. Sasha is opening the position. However, it looks like the white rooks will make use of it first! I think that better was 30...Rc6 followed by a7-a5.

31.Bc5!

A precise reply!

31...Rc6 32.b4!

This way White has completely untied his rooks. White appears to be much better. On 32.Bb4 Black had prepared 32...Rcb6 with the idea a7-a5.

32...fxg4 33.fxg4 Rc8

It is very important for Black to return his rook from exile. 33...Bxc4 34.Re3 Be6 35.Rxe5 Rc8! was another option.

34.Re1 Bxc4 35.Rc3 Bb5?!

Where is this bishop going? Why? Sasha should have returned it to e6.

36.Rxe5 Rf8 37.Bxa7!

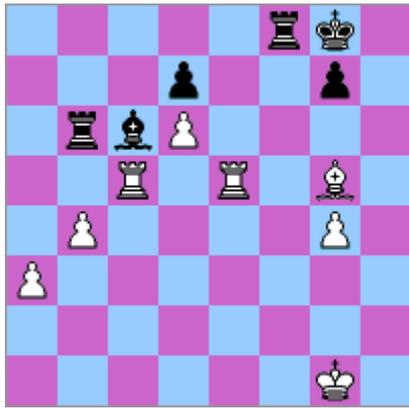
Greed is not a sin, but the virtue of a strong chess player.

37...Bc6 38.Be3 Rbb8 39.Bg5

White is threatening to capture on c6.

39...Rb5 40.Rcc5 Rb6

The time trouble is over. Black's position is hopeless.



41.b5 Bf3 42.Be7 Ra8 43.Rg5 Rxa3 44.Bf6 Kf7 45.Bb2

Black can postpone checkmate only at the cost of further losses. Black resigned. Kasparov plays the brilliant final flourish! Grischuk introduced a dubious novelty in the opening and transposed into an endgame with opposite colored bishops down a pawn. He had some drawing chances, but in order to save the game Sasha should have demonstrated good technique and tenacity. Black's 30th move showed that the young Muscovite still lacked these important components of the game. He opened the position for his opponent. Garry skillfully delivered a coup de grace. Our congratulations to the winner of the tournament.

1-0

Shirov-Polgar

Today Shirov has his last chance to avoid downright failure in this tournament.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be2

Shirov has opted for a more solid continuation than usual. When Alexei feels confident he proceeds with 6.Be3!

6...e5 7.Nb3 Be7 8.Be3

The setup Be3,Qd2 and 0-0-0 is not dangerous for Black, because he spent a tempo on the unnecessary move Be2.

8...Be6 9.Nd5 Nbd7

Obviously not 9...Nxe4? in view of 10.Bb6

10.Qd3

The exchange of the dark-squared bishop favors Black, because after 10.Nxe7 Qxe7

11.f3 she can break through in the center with 11...d5!

10...Bxd5 11.exd5 Rc8

A rare move. Judit just wants to see White's next move. More common is 11...0-0, which is met by the sharp 12.g4! Alexei likes such positions.

12.c4 0-0

Now Black can play this way. The white king can't castle long in view of b7-b5. So, the black king is out of danger on the kingside.

13.0-0 a5

Judit is playing on the dark squares. It is not so easy for White to carry out the plan b2-b4, c4-c5. However, Black is deprived of the option b7-b5, which might be very useful in some cases.

14.Rad1N

Alexei pretends that he is going to play on the queenside. Four years earlier a game in Israel saw 14.Qd2 b6 15.f3 Ne8 16.Rac1 h6 17.Bd3 Bg5 18.Bf5 Bxe3+ 19.Qxe3 Nef6 and Black obtained a solid position, but lost anyway (Tseitlin,M-Slutzky,L/Israel 1997/1-0 (40)

14...b6

Black is building firm fortifications. A thrust a la the King's Indian Defense, 14...a4 15.Nd2 Qa5, is met by 16.Qa3! with the highly unpleasant threat of b2-b4.

15.Nd2!

White is transferring the worst placed piece to a better position. White would be glad to move this knight one square to the right, to c3. Unfortunately this is against the rules.

15...Nc5 16.Qc2

This move looks somewhat provoking. The white queen might find herself under the c8-rook's attack. The b6-pawn is eager to advance.

16...Nfd7

No way! Judit is playing explicitly solidly. Black is threatening with exchanging the dark-squared bishops on g5-square. Why did she reject 16...b5? Apparently she disliked the fact that after 17.cxb5 Nxd5 18.Nc4 the d1-rook is very well placed.

17.f3

A little burrow for the bishop.

17...Bg5 18.Bf2 f5!

Right! Black is initiating play on the wing where she feels stronger.

19.Kh1 Qf6

I am under the impression that Black's strategy is fruitful. Her position looks slightly better.

20.Nb1

Consistently played. The knight is close to the coveted c3-square.

20...Qh6

Chess classics! Judit is playing on the dark squares in compliance with well-known patterns. The black bishop is ready to leap to f4 or e3.

21.Nc3

Every party has his or her advantages. The white knight might continue his trip by heading to b5. Another possible plan of White is to carry out a2-a3 and b2-b4.

21...Rce8

Objectively speaking, the position is equal. However, I prefer Black's position.

22.a3!

Both opponents are playing very logically. Let's see whose logic prevails.

22...e4

Judit is going for complications. In my opinion, more logical and solid was 22...Be3 - the exchange of the dark-squared bishops is very important. For example 23.b4 Bxf2 24.Rxf2 Qe3 25.Rff1 Na6 with mutual opportunities.

23.b4 e3 24.Be1

Inferior is 24.bxc5 exf2 25.c6 if view of 25...Bf4 26.h3 Qh4 followed by Qg3.

24...Nb7?!

This is a somewhat ugly square for the knight. 24...Na6 looks more natural.

25.Nb5

White can't place his pawn on f4 - 25.g3 f4!

25...f4

Black has implemented her plan. What is next?

26.Nc7

The knight continues his amazing trip. He is heading for the e6-square! If Black's knight had been on a6, this would have been out of the question.

26...Re5

Why not 26...Re7?

27.Bc3

I see no "contra-indication" to the line 27.Ne6! Rf6 28.Bc3. White is winning the exchange and taking Black's rear with his queen.

27...Re7 28.Ne6 Ra8!

This way Judit is preventing the white queen's sortie to a4.

29.Qf5 Bh4!

After 29...Bf6 30.Bxf6 Qxf6 31.Qxf6 Nxf6 32.Nxf4 axb4 33.axb4 Ra2 34.Rfe1 Black has no real counterplay, because her b7-knight is terribly misplaced.

30.Qg4

The tempting continuation 30.Bxg7 Rxg7 31.Nxg7 Qxg7 32.Qxf4 fails to 32...Bf2 and White can't break the setup e3 + Bf2. The f4-pawn is taboo - 30.Qxf4? Rxe6; 30.Nxf4? Rf8

30...Bf6

After 30...Bg3 Black should reckon with 31.Qh3 Qxh3 32.gxh3 and after the bishop's retreat the f4-pawn falls.

31.Bxf6 Qxf6 32.Nxf4 Qb2

The black queen is in White's rear guard!

33.Qh4 Rf7

33...Nf6!?

34.Bd3 Nf8?!

Too passive. Much better was 34...h6! with the idea of transferring the knight to e5.

35.Rfe1 Qxa3

35...axb4 36.axb4 Ra2 37.Re2 Ra1 38.Qe1 Rxd1 39.Qxd1 Qxb4 40.Ne6 +/-

36.Ne6!

Black is in deep trouble!

36...g6 37.Ng5 Rg7 38.Qd4 Qxb4 39.Ne4 Nc5 40.Rb1 Qa3 41.Nf6+



The complications are in full swing. White has good winning chances. The center is

under Shirov's control. Black's f8-knight is misplaced. Judit should not have transferred it to this square.

41...Kh8 42.Rxe3 Nxd3 43.Ne8!

With this petite combination White is winning the exchange.

43...Rxe8 44.Rxe8 Kg8 45.Re3 Nf2+ 46.Kg1 Qa4

The knight is doomed anyway 46...Qa2 47.Rxb6!

47.Re2 Rc7

Maybe Black should have exposed the white king a bit by 47...Nh3+ 48.gxh3

48.Kxf2 Rxc4 49.Qxb6 Rc5 50.Qxd6 Qd4+ 51.Kg3 Rxd5 52.Qf4

All the rest is smooth sailing for Shirov.

52...Qc5 53.Rc1! Rg5+ 54.Kh4 Rh5+ 55.Kg4!

Such a stroll under fire is a piece of cake for Alexei. I would be scared to death...

55...Qd5 56.Rd2

The immediate exchange of the queens would have resulted in White's losing his h2-pawn.

56...Qe6+ 57.Kg3 a4 58.Qc4 Ra5 59.Re2 1-0

Leko-Karpov

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Ng5 Ngf6 6.Bd3 e6 7.N1f3 Bd6 8.Qe2 h6 9.Ne4 Nxe4 10.Qxe4 Qc7 11.Qg4

By precise (and well-known) moves, White stops Black from castling.

11...Kf8 12.0-0 c5 13.b3 cxd4!N

Karpov is an expert in this line. He defends this position on the black side for the third time in this tournament. I think the whole course of the event might have been different if Karpov hadn't missed an easy win in his first round game vs. Shirov (I think Alexei would have done better as well). Black's last move is a novelty. It looks like a good one. One of the early games in this line saw 13...e5 14.dxc5 Nxc5 15.Bf5 h5 16.Qh3 Ne6 17.Qh4 Be7 18.Qg3 Nf4 19.Bxf4 exf4 20.Qh3 g6 21.Bxc8 Rxc8 22.c4 Kg7 23.Nd4 Bf6 24.Nb5 Qc5 25.Rad1 Rcd8 26.Qf3 Rhe8 27.Rxd8 Rxd8 28.Qxb7 Rd2 29.Qf3 a5 30.Nc3 ½-½ Gelfand,B-Speelman,J/Munich 1992/CBM 30 (30)

14.Qxd4 Ne5!

Black is winning a pawn in all lines. The question is whether White will have compensation.

15.Bb2

15.Nxe5 Bxe5 16.Ba3+ Kg8 17.Qb4 (17...Qh4 Bxa1 18.Rxa1 Bd7) 17...Bd7 18.Rad1 Bxh2+ 19.Kh1 Bc6

15...Nxf3+ 16.gxf3 f6

A cautious move. The risky continuation (which I would hardly refrain from)

16...Bxh2+ 17.Kh1 f6 18.Bg6 Ke7 (18...Be5? 19.Ba3+ Kg8 20.Qb4+-) 19.Rad1 Bd6 20.Rfe1 Qc5 21.Qe4 Rd8 is not something Karpov likes. However, it is not very easy for White to prove that he has sufficient compensation for the pawn.

17. Qh4 Be5

Two more moves deserve a closer look in this position: 17...Bd7 18.Bxf6 Bxh2+ 19.Kh1 Bc6 (19...Be5 20.Bxe5 Qxe5 Both kings are exposed, so the most probable outcome is ... perpetual check!) 20.Bxg7+ Kxg7 21.Rg1+ Bxg1 22.Rxg1+ Kf7 23.Bg6+ Kg7 24.Be4+ Kf7 25.Bg6+= White is a rook down but still has a perpetual; another possibility, 17...Ke7 18.Rad1 h5 19.c4 g5 20.Qh3 Bd7, leads to a very sharp position. Both kings are under attack.

18.Ba3+

The a3-bishop is not as important for White's attack as the e5-bishop is for Black's defense. White should have traded these bishops: 18.Bxe5 Qxe5 19.f4 +/- 19...Qc5 (19...Qc7 20.Rfe1 Bd7 21.Rad1) 20.Rad1

18...Kg8 19.Rad1 Bd7

Another option is 19...f5 with the idea of evacuating the king to h7.

20.Rfe1

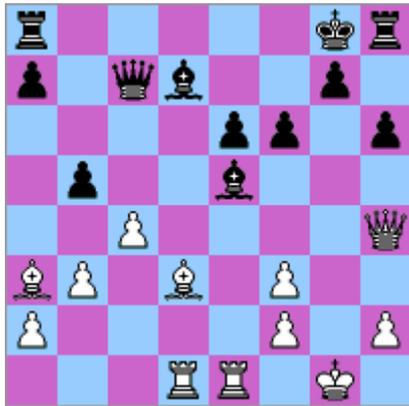
It is time for Karpov's favorite move 20...g5, but it does not work in this particular situation: 21.Qh5 Be8 22. Bg6! Kg7 23.Bxe8 Rhxe8 24.Rxe5!! (Sutovsky) (In the line 21.Qc4!? Bxh2+ 22.Kg2 Kg7 23.Bf5! Black can hold the position with a fantastic retreat 23...Bc8!! 24.Bxe6 Qxc4 25.Bxc4 Be5 26.Bd6 Re8=)

20...b5

Anatoly Yevgenievich is taking control over

the c4-square.

21.c4



21...g5

Anyway!

22.Qh5 Be8 23.Qh3 Bf7 24.cxb5 Kg7

Black has managed to consolidate his position at the cost of a pawn.

25.Rc1 Qa5 26.Bc5?!

After 26.Rxe5! Qxa3 (26...fxe5? 27.Bd6+-)

27.Ree1 (27.Rc7?? fxe5 28.Qxe6 Qc1+!

29.Rxc1 Bxe6-+) 27...Rac8 28.Bc4 Rhd8

29.f4! White has a dangerous initiative.

26...Qxa2!

No fear! "A good player should be greedy!"

27.Re2 Qa5 28.Rxe5 Qd2! 29.Qf1!!

An excellent move (highly unpleasant for the opponent in time trouble)! The main idea

behind it is to preserve the strong d3-bishop

even at the cost of the rook. I added the

second exclamation mark, because nobody

expected such an aggressive continuation

from Leko! In the line 29.Be3 Qxd3

30.Rec5 Rhd8 31.Rc7 Rd7 32.f4 Qxb5

33.fxg5 hxg5 34.Rxd7 Qxd7 35.f4 the

maximum White had was a draw.

29...fxe5 30.Be4 Rac8 31.Rd1 Qa2 32.b4

Rhd8 33.Ra1 Qb3 34.Qe2

34.h4!?

34...Rc7?

Time trouble! 34...Rd7

35.b6 axb6 36.Bxb6 Qc3! 37.Qe1! Rb8!

38.Bxc7 Qxc7 39.Ra5 Kf6

40.Bc6 Be8!

All these exclamation marks are a tribute to

the emotions. It was very hard to make all

these moves in a few seconds! I added the

last mark because Karpov made it in time!

41.Bxe8

41.Be4

41...Rxe8

After a very tense game in the middle game (which was hardly expected from these opponents, especially in the last round) the encounter transposed into an ending which is slightly better for White

42.Rc5 Qd6 43.Qe4 Re7 44.Kg2 Ra7

45.Ra5 Rc7 46.Ra1

The rook endgame that could have emerged after 46.Ra8 Qd5 47.Rh8 Qxe4 48.fxe4 does not promise much.

46...Qd5 47.Rb1 Rc4 48.Qxd5

White agrees to a draw. This outcome was expected by many, but nobody could have anticipated the fight, that had preceded this result. Both opponents showed themselves at their best. Karpov's fans could take it for granted, but nobody expected such creative play from Leko! If only all his draws were like this one.....

1/2-1/2