



Chaos on Board

Most grandmasters, especially experienced ones, are loath to give up control of events on the board. They grow uncomfortable as the outcome of the game becomes completely unpredictable, and neither assessments nor calculation are of much help in choosing one move over another. (Of course, we are not talking about those cases in which we are defending a bad position, and any confusion counts as a blessing.)

There are chessplayers, however, who will stir up irrational complications at the first favorable opportunity. Either a taste for the unknowable is rooted in their character (“I hear the song of battle / And of the bottomless darkness at the edge”), or else they understand or instinctively sense that it is just such circumstances that offer them a better chance to show the best features of their talent, and to outplay a stronger, but perhaps not so pugnacious and resourceful opponent.

One of the first gifted masters of “fighting in the shadows” was of course Mikhail Tal. Alexei Shirov is his worthy heir; and it is with one of his games that I should like to acquaint you.

It was annotated in his collection, *Fire on Board*. And, while the analysis was plentiful, it was astonishingly weak. Of course, it would be easy to blame this on the fact that the book was published in 1997, when computer analysis was not as advanced, whereas nowadays programs quickly find the strongest moves. For the same reason, no doubt, in a few years somebody will find mistakes in my annotations as well (or even today, by using better technology or by taking more time to analyze).

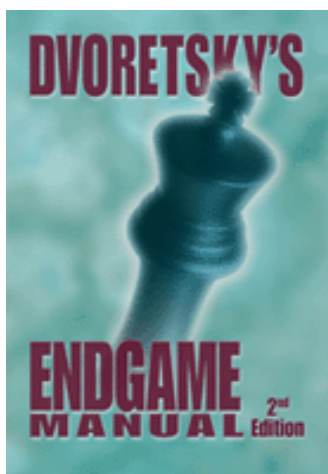
But here’s the paradox: although many things were missed in Shirov’s annotations, over-the-board he was practically flawless. I could only cast doubt upon one of his moves, which for a hugely complex and confusing game is almost negligible. And this leads us to conclude that the tension of the struggle in a tournament game can sharply increase a chessplayer’s ability to concentrate, along with his ability to grasp intuitively what is happening on the board – allowing him, at times, to resolve the problems that arise better than any computer.

This game may be used for training purposes in various ways. For example, one could play it out, beginning with Black’s 16th move, either by oneself (discovering White’s replies from the game text), or against a strong friend. Another way would be to search for the strongest continuations from the

COLUMNISTS

The Instructor

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positions in those diagrams where a question mark appears.

You will face widely differing tasks in this game, sometimes there is a clear solution that has to be accurately calculated, and sometimes over-the-board calculation is either impossible or so difficult that you will be forced to rely on instinct.

To paraphrase a well-known aphorism of Albert Einstein: you have to calculate only the minimum number of variations needed – but not less than the number needed. Such extremely complex games not only provide material for training in fantasy and calculation, but are also very good for the development of intuition and the understanding of how to optimally combine evaluative considerations and calculation.

Shirov – Eingorn

Stockholm 1989

1.d2-d4 e7-e6 2.c2-c4 Bf8-b4+ 3.Nb1-c3 Ng8-f6 4.f2-f3 d7-d5 5.a2-a3 Bb4-e7 6.e2-e4 c7-c5

The main line is 6...de!? 7.fe e5.

7.c4xd5

7.dc Bxc5 8.b4 Bxg1 9.Rxg1 Qc7=/+ was Shirov – Yudasin, Lvov 1990.

7...e6xd5 8.d4xc5

8.e5 Nfd7 9.Nxd5 was more commonly played.

8...Be7xc5

On 8...d4, Shirov gives 9.Na4 b6



W?

10.cb ab 11.b4, but, after 11...0-0 12.Bb2 Nh5!?, Black has serious counterplay.

Instead of 10.cb, stronger is 10.e5! Nd5 11.Qxd4 0-0, and now, not 12.Bd3 f5! (Black takes the valuable e4-square away from the enemy queen), but 12.Bc4! Be6 13.Ne2 bc (13...Nc6 runs into the same reply) 14.Qe4+/-.

9.e4-e5!? Nf6-d7

9...Nh5 10.Qxd5+/- would be inferior.

10.Qd1xd5



B?

10...0-0?!

10...Bxg1? 11.Rxg1 Qb6 would not work (or 11...Qh4+? 12.g3 Qxh2 13.Rg2 Qh5 14.e6+!), because of 12.Qd6! Qxd6 (12...Qxg1? 13.Nd5 Qc5 14.Nc7+ Kd8 15.Bg5+ f6 16.Ne6+) 13.ed+/-.

And 10...Qb6?! is also dubious: after 11.Ne4! 0-0 (11...Bxg1? 12.Nd6+ Kd8 13.Rxg1+-;

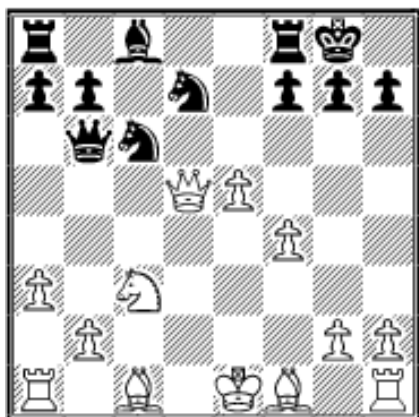
11...Be7 12.Nd6+/-) 12.Nxc5 Qxc5 (12...Nxc5 13.Be3 Qxb2 14.Bd4+-) 13.Qxc5 Nxc5 14.Be3 Nb3 15.Rd1+/- Black's compensation for the pawn is clearly insufficient.

However, 10...Nc6! was stronger than the game continuation. As sometimes happens, castling in a sharp position slows the tempo of the attack – it's more important to bring the pieces into play immediately.

The main line is: 11.f4 Qb6 12.Nf3 Bf2+ 13.Ke2 Nc5!? 14.b4 Be6 15.bc Bxc5! (Black also has 15...Qa5!? – Dvoretsky), and now either 16.Qe4 0-0-0! (Shirov) 17.Na4 Qb5+ 18.Ke1 Qa5+ 19.Bd2 Rxd2 20.Nxd2 Rd8 21.Rd1 Bxa3 with compensation, or 16.Qd3!? Rd8 17.Qc2 (Shirov) 17...Nd4+ 18.Nxd4 Bxd4 19.Ke1 0-0, and White's position looks dubious.

11.f3-f4 Qd8-b6

11...Bxg1?! 12.Rxg1 Qb6 (12...Qh4+ 13.g3 Qxh2 14.Qg2! Qxg2 15.Rxg2+/- Khenkin-Barle, Voskresensk 1990) is considerably worse: 13.Rh1 Nc6! (Gelfand-Spassky, Linares 1990, continued: 13...Nc5?! 14.b4 Ne6 15.Na4 Qc7 16.Be3+/-):



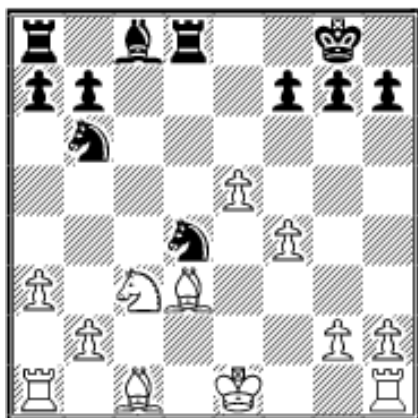
W?

Shirov continued poorly against Rausis (Daugavpils 1990): 14.Bc4? Ndx5! 15.fe Be6 16.Qb5 Bxc4 17.Qxc4 (17.Qxb6 ab-/+ 17...Nxe5, when Black whipped up a dangerous attack (and 17...Rfe8!-/+ was probably even more dangerous – Dvoretsky).

Black would get an outstanding position after 14.Na4?! Qc7 (14...Qd4? 15.Bc4! +/-) 15.Qd6 (15.Bc4 Ndx5; 15.Be3 Re8!)

15...Qxd6 16.ed Nf6!

White's play could be improved by 14.Qb5! Qd4 (14...Nd4 15.Qxb6, and 15...ab? is bad, owing to 16.Kf2!) 15.Qc4! Nb6 (15...Nc5 16.Nb5! Qxc4 17.Bxc4+/-) 16.Qxd4 Nxd4 (this is the same position that would have occurred after 14...Nd4 15.Qxb6 Nxb6) 17.Bd3 (with a sizable advantage – Shirov) 17...Rd8.



W?

Yes, 18.Be4 Bf5! 19.Bxf5 Nxf5 20.Kf2 Rd3 is unconvincing (Shirov's variation in *Informant*); but White can play 18.Be3! Bf5 (18...Nb3 19.Rd1+/- Yakovich-Piza, Cordoba 1991) 19.Bxd4 Bxd3 20.Bxb6 ab 21.Kf2+/- (Dvoretsky).

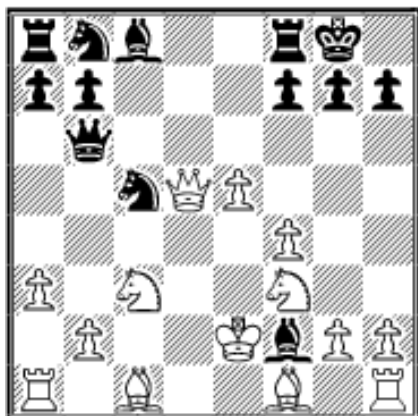
12.Ng1-f3



12...Bc5-f2+

Vadim Zvjaginsev's clever suggestion 12...Nf6?! 13.ef Bf2+ 14.Ke2 Re8+ (with the idea 15.Ne4 Be6) is put in doubt by 15.Ne5! Bg4+ (15...Be6 16.Qb5+-) 16.Kd2! Rd8 17.Nxg4+/-, when the black queen is weaker than White's rook and two minor pieces.

13.Ke1-e2 Nd7-c5!



14.b2-b4

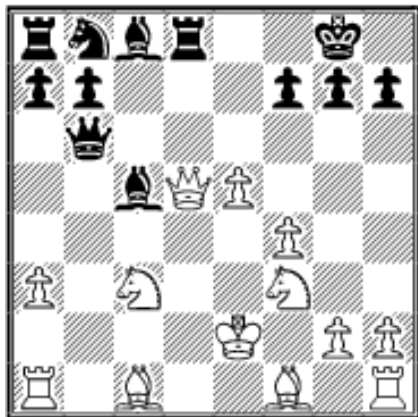
Shirov thinks that 14.Kxf2 Rd8 would have been bad. But, in fact, in the position after 15.Qxd8+ Qxd8 16.Be3, White retains the initiative, thanks to his palpable lead in development – his rook, bishop and pawn are no weaker than Black's queen. Black should win the queen a different way, giving up a bit more material, but retaining active prospects: 14...Nd3+!? 15.Ke2 Rd8 16.Qxd3 Rxd3

17.Kxd3 Nc6, with chances for both sides.

14...Rf8-d8!

On 14...Ne6?, White wins by 15.Na4! – but of course not 15.Ne4? (Shirov) 15...Bd4, with the opposite result.

15.b4xc5 Be7xc5



W?

16.Qd5-e4?

With this move, White returns material, bringing about a completely irrational position. In any event, passive defense, such as 16.Qa2..., where the Black attack continues, is not my style.

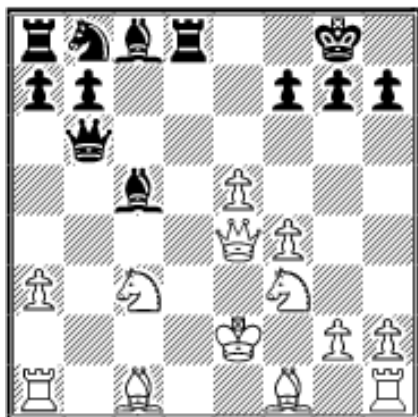
What we are seeing here is an example of how the peculiarities of a chessplayer's style prevent him from choosing the strongest continuation. The text gives Black excellent play, whereas White could have achieved a significant advantage by other means.

The 16.Qa2!? Nc6 variation was improperly analyzed by Shirov. For instance, he did not examine the sharp 17.Ne4!? Nd4+ 18.Kf2! Nc2+ 19.Kg3 Nxa1 20.Nxc5 Qxc5 21.Bc4+/- . That same tempting move, Ne4!, was also later ignored by the grandmaster.

17.Rb1 Qa5 18.Bd2 (18.Ne4!?) 18...Bg4 (Shirov wrongly awards this move an exclamation point: 18...Be6 was objectively better, although here too, after 19.Qb2 Bb6!? 20.Ke1!, White retains his advantage) 19.Ke1 (19.Ne4! Nd4+ 20.Ke1+-) 19...Bxf3 20.gf Nd4 21.Be2 (21.Bg2? Qa6!-/+) 21...Nxe2 22.Kxe2 (22.Nxe2? is a mistake: 22...Rxd2 23.Qxd2 Bf2+ 24.Kd1 Rd8-+, according to Shirov; but either 22.Ne4 or 22.Rxb7! wins) 22...Qa6+. Here, the book ends the variation, although *Informant* continues with 23.Rb5, instead of the considerably stronger 23.Ke1! +/-.

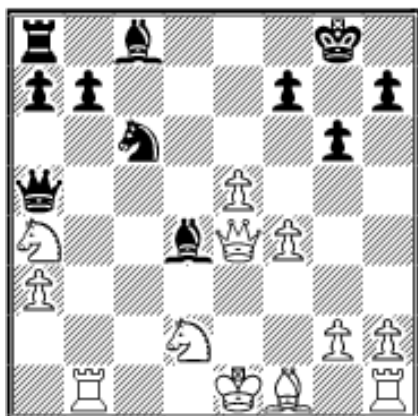
Another way to a decisive advantage for White was suggested by Zvjaginsev: 16.Rb1! Qa5 (16...Qa6+ 17.Ke1 Qa5 18.Qc4 Be6 19.Rb5!+-; 16...Qc7 17.Qe4 Nc6 18.Be3+-) 17.Rb5! Qxb5+ 18.Nxb5 Rxd5 19.Nc7 Rd8 20.Nxa8 b6 (20...Na6 21.Be3 or 21.Ke1, with the idea 22.Bxa6) 21.Nc7+- (21.Be3 Ba6+ 22.Kf2 isn't bad, either).

The text move (16.Qd5-e4) sets up the position from which you may begin training play.



B?

Black must worry, not so much about 17.Ng5, as about 17.Na4!. For this reason **16...Nc6?!** would be unprofitable: **17.Na4! Qa6+ 18.Ke1 Qa5+ 19.Bd2 Rxd2 (forced) 20.Nxd2 Bd4! 21.Rb1! g6 (21...Qxa4 22.Bb5+-)**



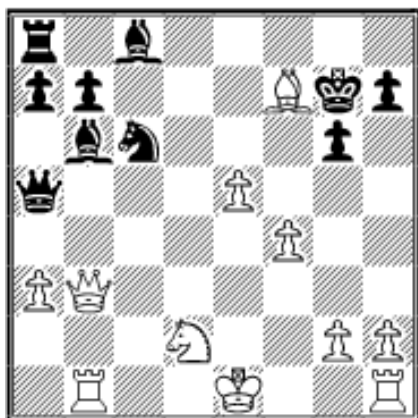
W?

Shirov considers 22.Qc2 Bf5 23.Bd3 Bxd3 24.Qxd3 strongest, with the following continuation: 24...Qxa4 25.Rxb7 Rd8 26.Qb3! Bf2+ 27.Kxf2 Qxf4+ (27...Rxd2+ 28.Kg3!+-) 28.Nf3 Rd2+ 29.Kf1 Nd4 30.Qb4 Rd1+ 31.Kf2+-.

The defense can be improved with the *zwischenzug* 24...Rd8! (instead of 24...Qxa4?)

25.Qe2! (Black gets dangerous counterplay after 25.Qb5 Bf2+ 26.Kxf2 Qxd2+ 27.Qe2 Qxf4+) 25...Qxa4 26.Ne4; and now, either 26...Ne7, intending 27...Nd5, or else 26...Qxa3 27.Kf1 Bb6, with a double-edged position.

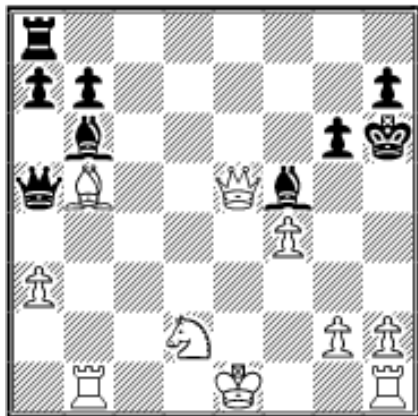
On the other hand, White's play can be improved too, by **22.Bc4! Qxa4 23.Qf3!** (intending 24.Qb3; White gets nothing out of 24.Bb5 Qxa3 25.Bxc6 (25.Qd3 Bc3) 25...Qc3! 26.Bxb7 Be3 27.Qd5 Rb8) **23...Bb6** (23...Qa5 24.Qd5 Qc7 25.Qd6+/-) **24.Qb3 Qa5 25.Bxf7+ Kg7** (25...Kh8!? 26.Qd5 Qc3 27.e6+/-).



W?

Now, if 26.Bg8, then 26...Nxe5! 27.fe Qxe5+ 28.Kf1 Qf6+ 29.Nf3 Bf5 30.Bc4 Re8, and the extra rook is meaningless, as Black has enough counterplay.

The bishop has to go to a different square: **26.Be8! Nxe5 27.Qb2!** (on 26.Bg8, the king would just take the bishop here) **27...Bf5 28.Bb5 Kh6!? 29.Qxe5**



After **29...Bxb1 30.g4! Bf5** (forced), White must not play **31.g5+? Kh5 32.Be2+ Kh4 33.Qe7 Rh8 34.Qg7 Bf2+! 35.Kxf2 Qc5+** with a draw, but **31.h4!! Bf2+** (**31...Bxg4 32.h5+—**) **32.Kxf2 Qxd2+ 33.Kg3**, and Black is helpless.

29...Bc7 changes nothing: **30.Qe3! Bb6 31.Qe7 Bxb1 32.Qg5+ Kg7 33.Qe5+ Kh6 34.g4! Bf5 35.h4!!**; and, if **30...Bxb1** (instead of **30...Bb6**), then **31.f5+ Kg7 32.Qe7+ Kh6 33.Qh4+ Kg7 34.f6+ Kh8 35.f7 Kg7 36.Qd4+ Kxf7 37.Bc4+! Ke7 38.Kd1**, and the threat of **39.Re1+** decides the game.

16...Qb6-b3!

Vyacheslav Eingorn parries the threatened **17.Na4** with tempo.

17.Bc1-d2 Rd8xd2+!

The only way to keep his opponent from consolidating. On **17...Nc6?**, there follows **18.Rb1 (18.Qb1!? +/-) 18...Qxa3 19.Qa4+—**.

18.Ke2xd2

Of course not **18.Nxd2? Qxc3 19.Rb1 Nc6 20.Qd3 Qa5—/+**.

18...Qb3-b2+ 19.Kd2-d3

19.Qc2? Be3+! would be a mistake.



B?

19...Qb2xa1

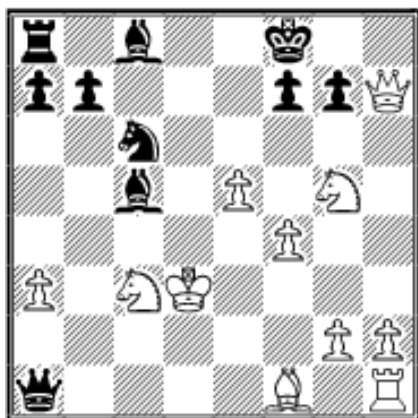
The grandmaster gives no comment on the rook capture, but Black did have a strong alternative, allowing him to force an immediate draw: **19...b6!? 20.Qxa8 (20.Nd4 Ba6+ 21.Ndb5 Nc6! 22.Qxc6 Rd8+ 23.Ke4 Qxa1—/+ would be dangerous) 20...Ba6+ 21.Ke4 Qc2+ 22.Kd5 Qb3+ 23.Ke4 Qc2+ —** perpetual check.

20.e5-e6!?

Although this move is, objectively, no better than the obvious knight sortie to **g5**,

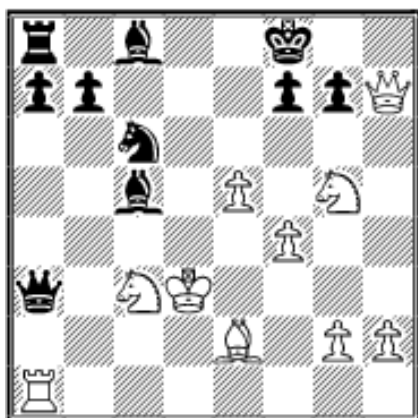
it does set Black more complex problems.

20.Ng5 is met by 20...Nc6! (20...g6? would be a mistake: 21.Qd5! Bf5+ 22.Kc4 b5+ 23.Kxb5+-) 21.Qxh7+ (but not 21.e6? g6 22.ef+ Kg7-- or 22.Qd5 Qxa3! 23.ef+ Kf8 24.Nxh7+ Kg7--) 21...Kf8



Here, too, White should content himself with 22.Qh8+ Ke7 23.Nd5+ (or 23.Nge4 Qxa3! 24.Qxg7 Be6= (Dvoretsky)) 23...Kd7 24.Qh3+ Ke8 25.Qh8+, with a repetition (Shirov).

The daring 22.Be2? Qxa3 23.Ra1 meets a pretty refutation:



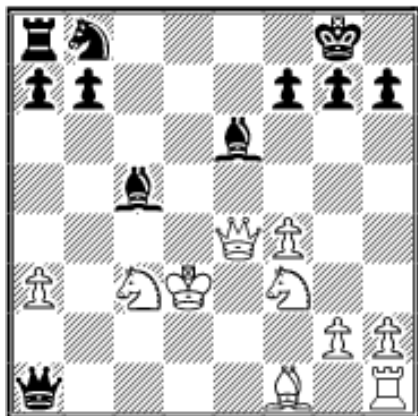
B?

Shirov gives the line 23...Nb4+ 24.Kc4 Qxa1 25.Qh8+ Ke7 26.Qxg7 Be6+ 27.Nxe6 Qa6+, which wins for Black. But 25.Qh5! (instead of 25.Qh8+?) saves White.

The problem is solved by the spectacular 23...Bf5+!! 24.Qxf5 Rd8+ 25.Ke4 Qb4+ 26.Kf3 Nd4+ 27.Kg4 Nxf5--.

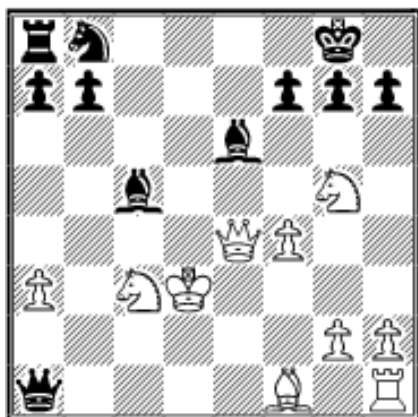
After the text, Black faces a difficult dilemma: how should he capture the pawn?

Both captures are possible in principle; but the safest, perhaps, is **20...Bxe6!**



The line 21.Qxb7 Bf5+ 22.Kd2 Be3+! 23.Kxe3 Qxc3+ 24.Kf2 Qc5+ 25.Kg3 Qc6 (Shirov) leads to an equal endgame. I note that Black may also play 24...Qc2+!? 25.Be2 Be4 26.Qb5 Nc6=. Additionally, instead of 22...Be3+, there is also the surprising idea 22...Bd7!? 23.Ne5 (23.Qxa8? Qb2+ 24.Kd3 Bc6--+) 23...Bd4 24.Nd1 (best) 24...Bxe5 25.fe Qxa3, with an unclear position.

21.Ng5!



B?

21...Qxa3 (Shirov thinks this move is forced)
 22.Qxh7+ (22.Nxe6? Bb4-/+ is a mistake
 (Shirov) – or 22...Na6!-+ (Dvoretsky))
 22...Kf8 23.Qh8+ Ke7 24.Nxe6.



B?

Shirov thinks Black's strongest choice here is
 24...Qa6+?, with the continuation 25.Kc2
 Qxe6 26.Bb5!! Qg6+ 27.Kb3 Qe6+



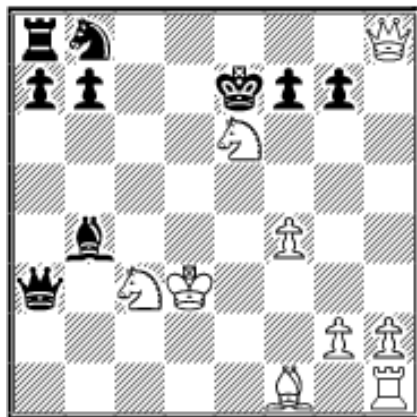
W?

Unfortunately, here he walks right past the
 simple winning line 28.Kb2!.

He also improperly analyzes his own line,
 28.Bc4 Qb6+ 29.Nb5. According to him,
 Black must play 29...Qa5 30.Qh4+ Kf8
 31.Qh8+ Ke7, and I don't see how White can
 improve his position. The check on h8 isn't
 necessary – the winning line is 31.Kc2! Qa4+

32.Kd3 Nc6 33.Qh8+ Ke7 34.Re1+ Kd7 35.Qh3+ Kd8 36.Qf5 Nb4+ 37.Kd2 +-.
 But in the variation 29...a6! 30.Re1+ Be3 31.Qh3! ab 32.Rxe3+, Black does not
 continue 32...Kd8? 33.Bxf7+ (Shirov), but 32...Kd6! 33.Bxf7 Nc6 – here, in fact,
 there seems to be no way for White to achieve his goal.

The natural move here, 24...Bb4!, turns out to be correct as well.



White gets nothing out of 25.Qd8+ Kxe6 26.Qd5+ Ke7 (26...Kf6 also appears to be possible) 27.Qxb7+ Kd6! (27...Nd7? 28.Qxb4+!) 28.Qxa8 Qxc3+. And now White gets a draw either by 29.Ke4 Nc6 30.Qf8+ Ke6 31.Qc8+ Kd6, or by 29.Ke2 Nc6 30.Qf8+ Ke6 31.Qe8+ Ne7 32.Qb8! (intending 33.Qe5+) 32...Qc2+ 33.Kf3.

25.Ke4!! Nd7! (25...Qxc3? 26.Qd8+ Kxe6 27.f5 mate; 25...f5+? 2.Kxf5+-) is more dangerous for Black.

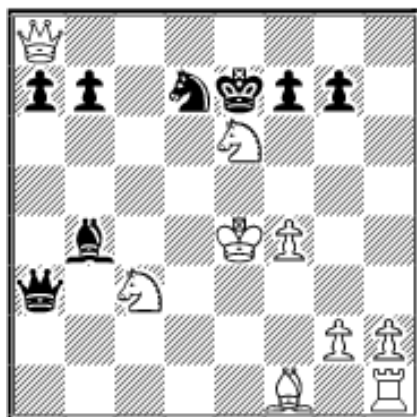
Before analyzing the rook capture, we should pay some attention to the try 26.Nd5+!? Kxe6 (26...Kd6? is much worse: 27.Qxg7! Re8 28.Ndc7 Rxe6+ 29.Nxe6 fe 30.Qd4+ Kc7 31.Qe3+/-).



White loses after 27.Qxa8? Nc5+ 28.Kd4 Qb2+ 29.Ke3 Qd2+. It's a draw after 27.f5+ Kd6 28.Qxa8 Bc5! 29.Bc4 (29.Qd8 Qa4+) 29...Qb2! 30.Qd8 Qd4(or c2)+ 31.Kf3 Qf2+! 32.Kg4 Qxg2+ 33.Kf4. And finally, 27.Nc7+ allows Black to repeat moves: 27...Ke7 28.Nd5+ Ke6; or he can go in for complications after 27...Kd6!? 28.Nb5+ Ke7 29.Qxa8 Nc5+, which is still drawn after 30.Kf5 Qe3 31.Qc8 g6+ (31...Qe4+ 32.Kg4 Qg6+) 32.Kg4 Ne4 33.g3! f5+ 34.Kh3 Qf3! 35.Qe6+! Kf8 36.Be2! Qxh1 (36...Qxe2

37.Nd4! =>) 37.Qc8+ Kg7 38.Qd7+ Kh6 39.Qd4! Kh7 =.

Shirov examined 26.Qxa8.



B?

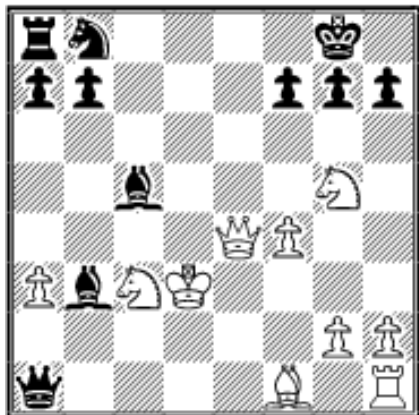
After 26...Nf6+ 27.Kf5! fe 28.Kg5 Qxc3 29.Qxb7+, Black does not play 29...Nd7?! (where Shirov demonstrated White's advantage), but 26...Kf8! (Dvoretsky), with fully satisfactory counterplay. So instead of 28.Kg5?!, White must continue 28.Kg6! Qxc3 29.Qxb7+ Nd7 30.Kh5, where Black's resources do not appear sufficient. Here's a rough idea: 30...Bd6!? 31.Bb5! (31.g3 Qc2) 31...Bc7 32.Qc6! (32.Bxd7 Qc5+ 33.Kh4

Qf5!?) => 32...g6+ 33.Kg4 Nf6+ 34.Kg5 Bxf4+ 35.Kxg6 Qxc6 36.Bxc6, with a won endgame (Dvoretsky).

Instead of the knight check, Black's correct choice is the grubby 26...Qxc3!. Continuing à la Shirov: 27.Qxb7 Kxe6 28.Qd5+ Ke7 29.Qc4! Nc5+ 30.Kf5!

(30.Kd5? Qd2+ 31.Qd4 Qa2+ 32.Kc6 Qe6+ 33.Kb5 Qb6+ 34.Kc4 a5!, with the attack) 30...Qf6+ 31.Kg4 Qg6+ 32.Kf3 Qc6+ 33.Ke3 a5! 34.h4!. In the concluding position of this variation, Shirov believes that Black will still have some difficulties, although a drawn outcome is most likely.

But now, let's return to the very beginning of the variation, to the position after 21.Ng5!. Let's forego Shirov's capture of the a3-pawn, in favor of **21...Bb3!**

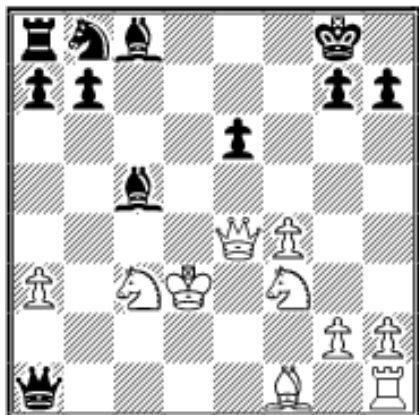


22.Qe8+? Bf8 doesn't work, so White must continue **22.Qxh7+ Kf8 23.Qh8+ Ke7 24.Qxg7 Qe1!?** (24...Qxa3 is also possible) **25.Qe5+** (forced, as 25.Be2? Qxh1 26.Qe5+ Kd8 27.Qxc5 Nd7 doesn't work) **25...Qxe5 26.fe Nc6**, and Black may even have the preferable position in the endgame.

Here's an example of how, by finding just one accurate move, one can sometimes avoid massively complex calculations, as well as the dangers lurking in irrational complications that are unnecessary to enter. One must only have more frequent and more attentive recourse to the study of candidate-moves.

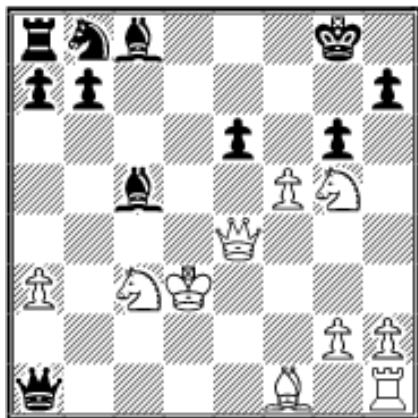
Now it's time to return to our game. Black captured on e6, not with the bishop, but with the pawn.

20...f7xe6?!



21.Nf3-g5 g7-g6 22.Qe4-e5!

Black would have an interesting task to resolve after 22.f5?!



B?

The pawn is untouchable: 22...ef?? 23.Qe8+, or 22...gf?? 23.Qh4. And 22...Nc6? 23.fg+- is no better.

Shirov offers 22...Be7? (except that he appends an exclamation mark) 23.fg Bxg5 24.gh+ Kg7 25.Qe5+ Kxh7 26.Qxg5 Nc6, when Black holds the balance. But, again, the capture is not forced. The intermediate move

26.Kc4!! is much stronger, creating the threat of 27.Bd3+, and forcing the reply 26...Kg8. Here, White delivers mate: 27.Qxg5+ Kf7 28.Be2! b5+ 29.Kb3 Qxh1 30.Bh5+ Kf8 31.Qf6+, etc.

Black's only defense is 22...Qc1!! (the knight on g5 is *en prise*) 23.Nxe6 (23.Qh4 h5) 23...Nc6 24.fg (24.Qd5 Bxe6) 24...Bd6! (intending 25...Ne5+), and even after White's best reply, 25.Be2!, the advantage is now with Black.

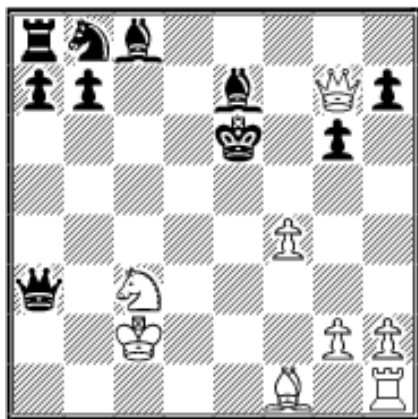
22...Bc5-e7 23.Ng5xe6



B?

Eingorn could not withstand the tension, and lost quickly after **23...Kf7? 24.Qg7+! Ke8 25.Nc7+** (25.Kc2!?, threatening 26.Bb5+, is also good – Dvoretsky) **25...Kd8 26.Qh8+! Kd7** (26...Kxc7 27.Nd5+) **27.Nxa8 Qxa3 28.Kc2** Black resigned.

24...Kxe6 (instead of 24...Ke8) would not have helped: 25.Kc2! Qxa3



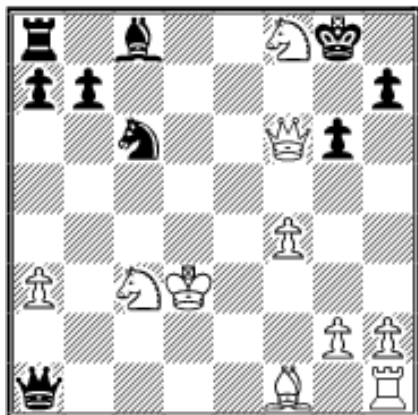
Shirov gives the winning line 26.Bb5! Nc6 27.Bc4+ Kd7 28.Rd1+ Qd6 29.Rxd6+ Kxd6 30.Ne4+ Kc7 31.Bb5+-, or 27...Kf5 28.Qf7+ Bf6 29.Qd5+ Be5 30.Qd3+ (White has a quick mate after 30.g4+! Kxf4 31.Qd2+, or 30...Kxg4 31.Qg2+ Kxf4 32.Rf1+ – Dvoretsky) 30...Kf6 31.Nd5+.

Less clear, in his opinion, is 26.Bc4+ Kd6 27.Rd1+ Kc6. But, here too, White wins: 28.Bd5+ Kb6 29.Rb1+ Bb4 (29...Ka5

30.Rb5+ Ka6 31.Bc4) 30.Qf6+ Nc6 31.Bxc6 bc 32.Rxb4+ Qxb4 33.Nd5+ Ka5
34.Nxb4.

Let's try a better defense:

23...Be7-f8! 24.Ne6xf8 Nb8-c6 25.Qe5-f6



B?

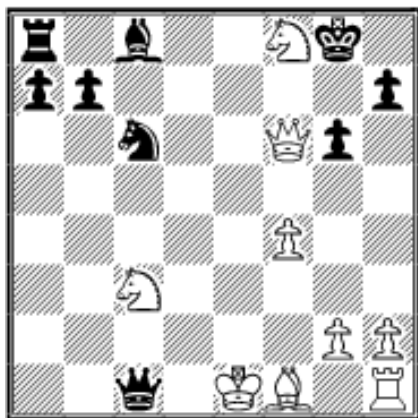
25...Bg4?! leads to a difficult position for Black after 26.Ne6 Bxe6 27.Qxe6+ Kg7 28.Ne2! (White prepares to retreat his king to f2) 28...Qxa3+ 29.Kd2 Rd8+ 30.Ke1.

Shirov awards 25...Qxa3? two exclamation marks – and he's wrong.

On 26.Nxg6? he gives 26...Bf5+! 27.Qxf5 Rd8+ 28.Ke4 (28.Ke3!? – Dvoretsky)

28...Qb4+, believing that Black wins, although after 29.Ke3 Qxc3+ 30.Bd3 Qd4+ 31.Ke2 Qb2+ 32.Ke3, he has only a draw.

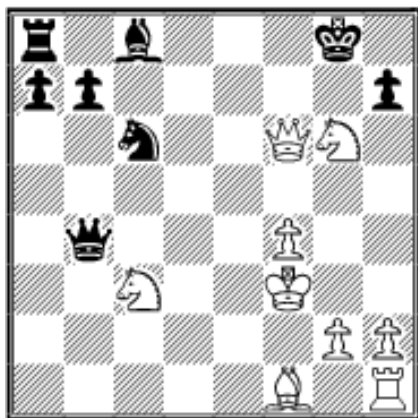
But White can get more with 26.Kd2! Qb2+ 27.Ke1 Qc1+



W?

In his comments in *Informant*, the grandmaster said it would result in an approximately even endgame after 28.Kf2 Qd2+ 29.Ne2 (29.Be2 Qd4+) 29...Qd8! 30.Qxd8 Nxd8 31.Nxg6! hg 32.Nd4 Kg7 =.

But then he found an improvement for White: 28.Ke2! Qb2+ (28...Bg4+ 29.Kf2 Qd2+ 30.Kg3+-) 29.Kf3 Qb4! 30.Nxg6! (30.Ne6 Bxe6 31.Qxe6+ Kg7 32.Qe3!? is also good)



And now we have these variations:

30...Nd4+ 31.Kf2 hg 32.Qxg6+ Kf8 33.Qf6+ Kg8 34.Nd5! Qd2+ 35.Kg1 Nf3+ 36.gf Qxd5 37.Kf2! Qc5+ 38.Kg3 (perhaps 38.Kg2!? Qc2+ 39.Kg3+- is more exact – Dvoretsky) 38...Bf5 39.Qg5+ (39.Bc4+!! Qxc4 40.Rg1! Qc5 41.Rg2 or 40...Qf7 41.Kf2+ decides more quickly and spectacularly – Dvoretsky) 39...Kh8 40.Qh5+ Kg7 41.Bd3 Rf8 42.Re1! Rf6 43.Bxf5 Rxf5 44.Qg4+ Kh7 45.Qh4+ Kg6 46.Re6+ Kf7 47.Rh6, with a winning

attack (Shirov).

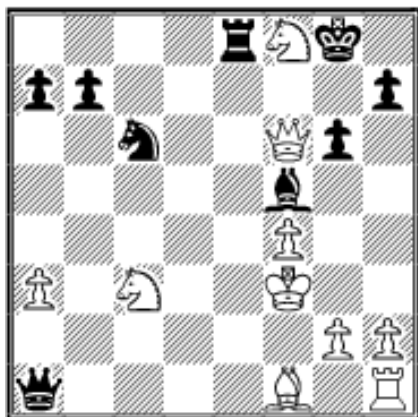
30...gh!? 31.Qxg6+ Kf8 32.Nb5! a6!? (Shirov only examined 32...Nd4+ 33.Nxd4 Qxd4 34.Be2+/-) 33.Qd6+ (the consequences of 33.Nd6 Qc3+ 34.Bd3 Be6 are not clear) 33...Kg7 34.Qxb4 Nxb4+/-, and White must try to convert his extra pawn in a rather sharp endgame.

Black has a much safer method at his disposal:

25...Bc8-f5+! 26.Kd3-e3 Ra8-e8+

But not 26...Na5? 27.Kf3! Rxf8 28.Bc4+ Nxc4 29.Qxf8+ Kxf8 30.Rxa1 (Dvoretsky).

27.Ke3-f3



B?

Here Shirov breaks off his analysis, believing that White wins.

**27...Nc6-e5+! 28.Qf6xe5 (forced)
28...Re8xe5 29.Bf1-c4+ Kg8xf8 30.Rh1xa1
Re5-c5**

Black recovers the piece and equalizes.

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