Karpov’s Strategic Wins 1

The Making of a Champion

By

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Contents

Key to Symbols used 4
Preface 5
Bibliography 6
  1961 7
  1962 13
  1963 21
  1964 25
  1965 29
  1966 33
  1967 45
  1968 61
  1969 77
  1970 97
  1971 111
  1972 125
  1973 143
  1974 159
  1975 195
  1976 213
  1977 235
  1978 255
  1979 269
  1980 289
  1981 309
  1982 327
  1983 353
  1984 379
  1985 417
Epilogue 439
Classification 440
Game Index by Page Number 442
Game Index by Karpov's Opponents 447
Alphabetical Game Index – Non-Karpov Games 449
Name Index 451
Statistics 456
Scores against Individual Opponents 457
Tournament Record 458
Key to symbols used

* White is slightly better
*+ Black is slightly better
*± White is better
*+ Black is better
*+ White has a decisive advantage
*++ Black has a decisive advantage
= equality
= with compensation
= with counterplay
= unclear

? a weak move
?? a blunder
! a good move
!! an excellent move
!? a move worth considering
?! a move of doubtful value
# mate
Anatoly Karpov, the twelfth World Chess Champion, is one of the greatest players of all time and the holder of a number of records. No other player in history has won so many high-level individual tournaments. Karpov also achieved the best ever tournament performance in winning the 1994 Linares tournament with an incredible 11/13, two and a half points ahead of the second and third placed Kasparov and Shirov.

These records are the most impressive but they are not the only ones. Of all the World Champions, Karpov is the one who participated in the largest number of World Championship finals. He is also the only player to have won the title of World Champion in three different ways. The most significant is of course when he reigned between 1975 and 1985. He also won the 1997-98 FIDE World Championship. What is less well known is that he was the winner of the only World Rapid Chess Championship in Mazatlan 1988. Karpov may well be the player who earned the most money through chess, although it is impossible to establish this with any certainty.

Together with Nick Aplin I wrote a book entitled *Endgame Virtuoso: Anatoly Karpov*, published by *New in Chess* in 2007. During the selection of games for that book came the realization that Karpov's games are so rich as to be worthy of deep investigation from just one particular angle. The primary aim of the present two-volume work is to show the reader, in chronological order, how Karpov outplayed his opponents by strategic means. Karpov's strategic genius has been well documented by many chess writers, but according to my best knowledge not a single book has been written on the subject in such depth as can be found in these pages.

The twelfth World Champion is best known as a “python” who could slowly squeeze the life out of his opponent, but over the course of the two volumes we will see plenty of examples of his tactical sharpness as well. Games involving a quick attack on the opponent's king have been omitted, as they do not fit in with the overall theme of the book, but let me quash any misconceptions about Karpov being a one-dimensional player. When the situation on the board demanded it, he could attack with as much ferocity as almost anyone else.

A number of Karpov's games which culminated in interesting endgames have been omitted from this project, as they have already been discussed in the *Endgame Virtuoso* book. My conclusion from the work on both the present project and the aforementioned endgame book is that Karpov's little-known games often contain at least as much instructive and artistic value as his more famous wins. In this book I have tried to give priority to the beauty and educational value of his strategic masterpieces. Over the coming pages I will identify the tools he uses and highlight the features that characterize his play.

Many have called Karpov the greatest strategic player of all time. I invite the readers to become acquainted with his masterpieces and decide for themselves whether this view is justified.
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Anatoly Evgenievich Karpov, the twelfth world chess champion, was born on 23 May 1951 in the city of Zlatoust, located in the Urals region of Russia. He learned to play chess at the age of four with his father Evgeny Stepanovich, a chief engineer. It may or may not be a coincidence that many of the world champions came from single parent families. Karpov was an exception; he grew up in a normal family environment with his parents and one sister.

Karpov's exceptional chess talent shone almost from the start. He became a second and then a first category player at the age of just nine. His first recorded games for the public are from 1961.

We will take the year 1961 as the starting point for our study of Karpov's career, as his first games in the database are from that year. The biggest event in the broader chess world was the Tal - Botvinnik rematch, in which the fifty year old Botvinnik regained the highest title for the last time. Most of Karpov's games from 1961 were played in his home city, although he also competed in several other Russian cities including Borovichi, Magnitogorsk and Chelyabinsk. This exposure shows that he and his supporters were already taking chess seriously at that time.

It is not possible to work out from the database whether the Zlatoust games were played in one tournament or whether these are selected games from that particular year. He did not handle openings in a well educated way, although with Black he played one main Ruy Lopez Chigorin variation with ...\texttt{d\textsubscript{d}8} and a ...d\textsubscript{5} pawn sacrifice. His generally slow handling of the opening caused his games to last longer on average than they did in the later part of his career. He already followed reasonable plans, although of course opponents' blunders played a more significant role than in later years.

Here is our first game. A database search reveals no further games on the part of his opponent.

**Game 1**

Anatoly Karpov – Gaimaletdinov

Zlatoust 1961

1.e4 e5 2.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{c6} 3.\texttt{b}5 d6 4.d4 \texttt{g}4 5.d5 a6 6.\texttt{x}c6\textsubscript{c}6

White could have given up the bishop under better circumstances: 6.\texttt{a}4 b5 7.dxc6 bxa4 8.c4 f5 9.h3 \texttt{h}5 (or 9...\texttt{xf}3 10.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{fxe}4 11.\texttt{xe}4 \texttt{e}6 12.\texttt{c}2 and White is better) 10.exf5 e4 11.g4 \texttt{f}7 12.\texttt{e}2 d5 13.\texttt{e}5 White got a clear advantage in Dvoretsky – Biriukov, USSR 1973.
It is also promising to keep the bishop: 6...e2?! \textit{?x}f3 (6...\textit{?}ce7 7.h3 \textit{?}d7 8.c4 is also better for \textit{White}) 7.gxf3! \textit{?}d4 (7...\textit{?}ce7 8.f4) 8.\textit{?}f1 And \textit{White} will carry out f3-f4 with better prospects.

6...bxc6 7.dxc6

7...h6?
This move is obviously too slow, just like the whole plan with which \textit{Black} intends to capture the c6-pawn. Instead he should play 7...\textit{?}e7, regaining the pawn with a good game.

8.0-0
On 8.\textit{?}d3 \textit{?}e7 comes.

8...\textit{?}f6 9.\textit{?}d3 \textit{?}e7 10.\textit{?}c3 0-0

11.\textit{?}d2!
A subtle move; the young Anatoly wants to defend the c6-pawn without allowing his opponent to double his pawns on the kingside.

11...\textit{?}e8
So \textit{Black} wants to take the c6-pawn with the queen.

12.\textit{?}c4! \textit{?}b8 13.\textit{?}b3 \textit{?}b6

14.\textit{?}a5!
The position is closed, so \textit{White} can afford to spend a fourth tempo with the knight to defend it. Besides, the black rook is misplaced on b6.

14...\textit{?}h7?!
This is too slow. \textit{Black} should have preferred 14...\textit{?}e6 15.\textit{?}d3 \textit{?}h5 16.f3 \textit{?}d8 17.b3 \textit{?}g5 when \textit{White} only has a small edge.

15.b3 \textit{?}e6 16.\textit{?}d3 \textit{?}h5 17.\textit{?}d1?!
It is difficult to understand why Karpov moved his rook to this square. He may have wanted to vacate the f1-square for the queen in the event of 17...\textit{?}f4.

17...\textit{?}f 18.\textit{?}b3!
It is remarkable that he refrains from winning a tempo with the natural 18.\textit{?}e3. He probably
had a different plan in mind to hurt the rook on b6.

18...f4?
Black closes the kingside, hoping for a pawn storm that will never happen. Both of the following alternatives would have kept the game more interesting:

18...\text{\textit{g6}} 19.d5! 
19.e3 d4 20.g2 (20.xf4 exf4 21.d5 fxe4 22.xe7 exd3 23.xg6 xg6 24.xd3 f5 Black is very active) 20...fxe4 21.xe4 xbb8 22.xf1 It is not easy to for White to make his extra pawn count.
19.xd5 20.exd5 e4 21.e2 \text{\textit{b5}}

22.a4!!
It is a lovely way to showcase the theme of the misplaced rook.

22.b7 \text{\textit{f5}} 23.b1 c3 is not so convincing.
22...\text{\textit{bb8}}
22...\text{\textit{xax5?!} is possible, although after 23.b4 
\text{\textit{f6}} 24.a3 b2 25.xb2 f4 26.xf1 \text{\textit{xd5}} 27.bxd5 e3! 28.xe3 \text{\textit{xd5}} 29.e1 \text{\textit{xb4}} 30.c4 a5 31.e7 White keeps a nice edge.
23.c4
23.f4?! also looks promising.
23...\text{\textit{f6}} 24.a1 ef3 25.xf3
Black does not have enough for the pawn.

18...\text{\textit{fxe4}} Opening the position at once was probably Black’s best chance. 19.xe4 (19.xe4 \text{\textit{g6}}) 19...\text{\textit{g8}} (After 19...\text{\textit{g6}} 20.xg6+ xg6 21.e3 bbb8 22.d5 Black has little to show for the pawn.) 20.d5 (20.e3 is also good) 20...\text{\textit{f6}} 21.xf6+ xf6 22.c4 White extra pawn should be worth more than Black’s activity.
26.e4!
Karpov completes his plan and the rook perishes. The rest should be simple.

26...\textit{xb}7 27.\textit{xb}7 \textit{b}8 28.b4 \textit{xb}7 29.b5 \textit{xb}5 30.bx\textit{b}5 \textit{a}8 31.c4 \textit{a}8 32.c6 \textit{a}7† 33.b6 \textit{xb}6 34.\textit{xb}6 \textit{a}6 35.d2?

Missing an opportunity to end the game with 35.\textit{e}8†!, winning the knight on h5.

35...\textit{f}6

36.\textit{xd}6
36.\textit{e}1† e4 (36...\textit{g}8 37.\textit{f}2) 37.h4 wins without giving any counterchances. Karpov has such an overwhelming advantage that he can win in any way he chooses. In the game he certainly did not finish off his opponent in the most efficient way, but he always maintained a winning advantage.

36...e4 37.\textit{xf}4?!
37.fxe4 was simpler, as 37...\textit{d}e4? loses to 38.\textit{f}8† \textit{h}7 39.\textit{f}5†.

37...\textit{xf}4 38.\textit{xf}4 \textit{xf}3 39.\textit{xf}3
39.d6†? was also possible.

39...\textit{xb}6 40.\textit{xb}6 \textit{xb}6† 41.\textit{h}1 \textit{d}6 42.h3
42.\textit{g}3 was also fine.

42...\textit{h}7 43.\textit{e}2 \textit{g}8 44.\textit{e}6 \textit{e}6 45.\textit{d}xe6 \textit{e}6 46.e7?
46.\textit{d}8! \textit{g}6 47.\textit{f}8 wins very simply.

46...\textit{g}8 47.\textit{e}1 \textit{f}7 48.\textit{h}2 \textit{e}8

49.\textit{e}5

It is worth mentioning the line 49.\textit{e}6 \textit{f}7 (49...\textit{g}8 50.\textit{f}6 wins easily) 50.\textit{xf}6†! \textit{g}x\textit{f}6 51.\textit{g}3 \textit{x}e7 52.\textit{g}4 \textit{f}7 53.h4! White wins here but there was no practical value in playing like this.

49...\textit{g}8 50.\textit{g}3 \textit{d}e7

Winning the e7-pawn enables Black to resist for a while, but he is lost anyway. If Black had
a light-squared bishop instead of the knight, the win would require skilful technique.

51.\textit{\textcolor{red}{g}4} \textit{\textcolor{red}{f}7} 52.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h}4} \textit{\textcolor{red}{g}8} 53.\textit{\textcolor{red}{f}6} \textit{\textcolor{red}{f}6} 54.\textit{\textcolor{red}{g}4} \textit{\textcolor{red}{e}7}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.7\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

55.\textit{\textcolor{red}{h}5} \textit{\textcolor{red}{g}5}^+ 55...\textit{\textcolor{red}{g}8} 56.\textit{\textcolor{red}{a}a}5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{e}7} 57.\textit{\textcolor{red}{a}a}7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{f}7} 58.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e}e}5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{f}8} 59.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e}e}6 wins.

56.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e}e}4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{f}7} 57.\textit{\textcolor{red}{a}a}5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{g}8} 58.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e}e}5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{g}7} 59.\textit{\textcolor{red}{a}a}7^+ \textit{\textcolor{red}{h}8} 60.\textit{\textcolor{red}{e}e}6 1-0

This was a remarkable performance for a ten year old. He made the win a bit harder than it should have been, but overall he played the whole game impressively.
1961 Summary

The database contains eighteen games from this year, of which Karpov won twelve, drew five and lost only one. It is likely that his overall results were lower and Karpov publicized only his best games from the early period of his life. Even so, his play was undoubtedly at a high level for a ten year old.
Interestingly there are only twelve games documented from this year, most of which took place in Zlatoust. His games were of a shorter duration and his opening play had visibly improved. Blunders played a smaller role in his games than in the previous year. Some of the games are already endgame pearls. The database shows that he achieved a draw with Black against Korchnoi, which must have been at a simul.

Karpov's opponent in the next game was not a well-known player. The game is selected because of its crystal clear technique.

**Game 2**

**Anatoly Karpov – Dmitri Piskunov**

Zlatoust 1962

1.e4 e5 2.e5 d5 3.c4 d6 4.d4 d6 5.exd6

It is interesting that Karpov chose this exchanging line long before it became fashionable.

5...exd6 6.Qc3 Qc6 7.a3 Qf5 8.Qe3 g6

It was worth considering 8...d5!? 9.c5 Qc4.

9.Qd3 Qd7 10.Qe2 Qg7 11.0-0 0-0 12.b3

By eliminating the possibility of ...d5 and ...Qc4, Karpov reduces his opponent's options.
12...\textit{\texttt{Ead8}} 13.\textit{\texttt{Wc2}} \textit{\texttt{xd3}} 14.\textit{\texttt{Wxd3}} \textit{\texttt{Qc7}} 15.\textit{\texttt{Qg3!}}

Karpov refuses to allow the exchange of the e7-knight, which would have eased the congestion in Black’s position.

15...\textit{\texttt{c6}} 16.\textit{\texttt{Bf1}}

Black is worse as White has more space and most of the pieces are still on the board. In addition Black’s knights have hardly any purposeful squares available.

Sometimes one must visualize the second move of a knight rather than just the first. It would have cost a tempo to put the knight on c7 with 17...\textit{\texttt{Qa8!}} but it was worth the investment as the position is closed and the knight would have enjoyed much better prospects there.

16...\textit{\texttt{d5?!}}

16...\textit{\texttt{Dc8}} looks slightly awkward but may nevertheless have provided better hopes of survival as Black can at least double his rooks on the e-file.

Another idea was 18...\textit{\texttt{f6!}}, giving the option of bringing the king to f7, as in the game, but without relinquishing control of the e5-square.

17.\textit{\texttt{c5}}

Karpov increases his space advantage.

17...\textit{\texttt{Bbc8}}

20...\textit{\texttt{h6!}} was recommended by Ashot Nadanian, who suggests Black now has a pleasant game. His plan involves ...\textit{\texttt{f5}}, gaining space without giving up important squares. Nevertheless after 17.\textit{\texttt{Be2}} \textit{\texttt{f5}} 18.\textit{\texttt{Wd2}} \textit{\texttt{h7}} 19.\textit{\texttt{Ba1}} White’s position is preferable and he could also exert pressure with 19.a4. Still, Black would have had better chances than in the game.

18.\textit{\texttt{Bf4}} \textit{\texttt{f7}} 20.\textit{\texttt{Ba1}} \textit{\texttt{Bf8}}

Black wants to ease the pressure on his position by exchanging the rooks on the e-file.

21.\textit{\texttt{Bc5}} \textit{\texttt{Bg8}}

Keeping the rooks on the board is White’s most effective strategy. Note that the black
knights are both a long way from e6. 23...\textit{g7} 24...d2 The white knight has an easy route to \textit{d4}, and if 24...d4 then 25...a4 leaves the d-pawn weak.

23...d2 e4 24...xg7!

Karpov believes that manoeuvring the knight to e5 is more important than keeping a pair of pieces on the board.

24...xg7 25...f3 \textit{e7} 26...b4 rideS

27...f3 e5

Finally the knight can occupy the soft point in Black's position.

27...d8 28.f3 \textit{x}c3

If 28...g5 29.b5 \textit{f7} 30.f4 White has a great advantage as well.

29...x c3 \textit{e}6

Black has a joyless position. He would like to improve the c8-knight but there is no easy way of doing it. Instead he must wait passively and react to White's threats.

30...f3 \textit{c7}

30...f4 offers more resistance, although 31.g4 leaves White clearly on top.

31...d2

31...\textit{e7}?

Black has no luck with knight moves in this game.

31...b5??

This was a much better attempt to resist, although White keeps a big plus and should have enough resources to grind his opponent down.

32...g4!!

Singaporean 1M Chan Peng Kong recommended this witty move. It threatens an invasion.

Alternatives include preparing a pawn break, such as \textit{a4} on the queenside or \textit{h4} followed by \textit{g4} on the kingside.

32...\textit{f7}!

Black can resist the onslaught with this cold blooded move.

After 32...\textit{x}e2? 33...\textit{x}e2 White invades
33...\textdaggerdbl}d8 (33...\textxctxe2 34.\textgch6+ \textgch8 35.\textgch6+ \textgch8 36.\textgce6 \textgch7 37.\textwe3 With a winning advantage.

33.\textwe6 \textgch8

34.\textwe5

White has to return to the positional approach in order to convert his advantage.

34...\textxe2 35.\textwe2 \textgch8 36.\textgce6 \textgch7 37.\textwe3 With a winning advantage.

33.\textgch6+ \textgch8

34.\textwe5

This shows the remarkable alertness of the eleven year old Anatoly. He notices that he can transfix his opponent with a lethal pin on the e-file.

32.\textwe3 \textxctxe2 33.\textwe2 \texth5?

Black goes down without any resistance. 33...\textwe7 was better, although even then White can win with 34.\textwe5+ (34.\textwe3 is also good enough) 34...\textgch7 35.\textwe2 \textgch8 (35...\textgch8 36.\textwe8+-) 36.\textweb8 \textxctxe1 37.\textxctxe1 \textgch8 38.\textwe5+-.

34.\textwe6

34.\textwe4 also wins.

34...\texth4

35.\textwe6!

1–0

Black resigned as he cannot avoid the loss of a piece. This game is a remarkable example of chess understanding, even at the age of eleven. Karpov identified the soft point, manoeuvred to gain control and retreated at the right time to open the floodgates.

When I wrote the book \textit{Endgame Virtuoso: Anatoly Karpov} with Nick Aplin, I was curious as to the identity of Karpov’s junior trainer, but I was unable to find out. In a conversation Vladimir Smirnov told me that Kasparov mentions the name in the Russian edition of the relevant volume of \textit{My Great Predecessors}. I checked the English version but the name was not given, but with Vladimir’s help I managed to find out that Karpov’s trainer in this extremely formative period was Leonid Gravol. I know in Hungary what a strong and often underestimated effect junior trainers had
on the development of the Polgars and Leko, for instance, and once these players retire or drop their level how heavily Hungarian chess will pay for it and reduce the status of my country in world chess. It took some investigation to reach Mr. Gratvol and send him a few questions. I was told his health was not good, and I was especially happy when his answers arrived. Here is the interview.

When and where were you born?
"I was born on the 16th of April 1932 in the city of Chelyabinsk."

Could you please say a few words about your family?
"My father, Aaron Gratvol (1900-1943), was Jewish; he died at the front during World War II. My mother, Antonina Gratvol (1912-2004), was Russian. My father worked as an accountant in a factory. My mother was a kindergarten teacher."

When did you learn to play chess?
"I learned to set up the board at the age of five, and I started to participate in tournaments in 1947 at the Chelyabinsk chess club."

Who or were your trainer(s) in your youth?
"I did not have one; after visiting the chess club I still played chess and I mainly worked on my chess from books and magazines."

Have you graduated from a university?
"I obtained a diploma. I left the history faculty of the Chelyabinsk Pedagogical Institute in 1959."

Have you ever been a professional player?
"Apart from training juniors in the Pioneers' Palace, I gave lectures on history in an evening school."

What do you consider your best achievement?
"I won three times, in 1960, 1962 and 1968, the regional championship. In 1968 I finished second and in 1975 I won the championship of Chelyabinsk."

When did you start working with Karpov and for how long did you work with him?
"I started to work with him in 1961 when he was nine years old and trained him for three and a half years. Our involvement stopped when the family moved from the Chelyabinsk area to Tula."

When did you discover his enormous talent?
"I immediately noticed that he was a very talented boy."

How did you train him?
"Because he lived in Zlatoust, which is three and a half hours away on the train from Chelyabinsk, we did not train very often. We mainly worked on middlegame positions and choosing plans. Apart from that he participated in many tournaments when he stayed at my place."

How did his style evolve, compared with his game in his junior years?
"Karpov's style never changed sharply, but strengthened tremendously."

What kind of relationship did you have with his parents?
"Karpov's father worked in a metallurgic factory as a first engineer. I had virtually no contact with his mother."

Are there any of Karpov's games of this period which is memorable for you?
"Nowadays it is very hard for me to select a game from Karpov's early period."

Do you think there is any Karpov game or games from the time he dominated the world in which the work you did with him can be directly seen?
"I do not think there is such a game."

Do you still have contact with him? If not, for how long were you in contact with him?

"Now there is no contact between us. Last time I met him was in 1975 in Leningrad."

Who is your favourite player?

"I respect all the great players a lot, but I do not have a single favourite."

How did you judge his chances against Fischer?

"I thought he had good chances, but I never believed the match would take place."

Were you happy when he won the title of World Champion without play?

"I was not happy about Karpov obtaining the title of World Champion without playing. I considered that it was a big loss for the whole chess community that the match did not take place."

When did you move to Israel? Could you speak a bit about your present family?

"I came to Israel with my wife and my mother in 1994. My daughter has raised my grandson on her own since 1996. My mother died in 2004."

How much time do you have for chess?

"When I arrived in Israel I participated in many tournaments. Nowadays I seldom play because of the deterioration of my health."

On behalf of the readers I wish you the best of health and many happy years. Thank you very much for the interview.

Mr Gratvol also sent me a scanned page of an old Soviet chess magazine, in which Karpov talks about his junior years. The section on Gratvol is translated below:

I managed to find out that Gratvol had a total of eight future grandmaster pupils, a few of whom wrote about him in public. Unfortunately I was unable to find out where and when the following comments were published.

GM Evgeny Sveshnikov

Renowned Grandmaster and theoretician, and inventor of the Sveshnikov variation of the Sicilian.

"In my development as a chess player the trainer who took care of me for the longest period had the biggest role. He was not only my trainer but also a close person to me: Leonid Aronovich Gratvol. He was a candidate master, but several times he won the championship of the region. Through his hands, apart from me, went a row of grandmasters: Gennady Timoscenko, Alexander Panchenko, Semen Dvoirys, Tatiana Shumiakina and even Anatoly Karpov. All the players from Chelyabinsk who achieved something at chess worked with him. When the Chelyabinsk team won the all Soviet school team championship, Timoscenko played on the first board, Karpov second and myself on the third.
Gratvol was awarded the “Honoured Trainer” title of the Russian Republic. Without this success he would not have been ranked on the appropriate level – he was such a modest person.”

GM Alexander Panchenko

You have become a well-known coach quickly enough despite the lack of pedagogical and life teaching experience. Please tell us in detail how you managed to do it!

“I’ve been lucky. My coach in Chelyabinsk was the honoured coach of Russia, Leonid Aronovich Gratvol, a natural born teacher. I could have talked about him endlessly. It would be enough to say that he had brought up Gennady Timoscenko, Evgeny Sveshnikov, Semen Dvoirys, Tariana Shumiakina, many other well-known masters, and worked with the young Tolya Karpov. I just had to recall how he had been working with us, and tried to follow his advice.”

I checked the database for Gratvol, and was only able to find a few games. I noticed he had a very positional style. It is difficult to measure exactly how much a trainer’s influence can be seen in a pupil’s career, although in the previous Karpov – Piskunov game, which I rate very highly, one can sense Gratvol’s direct effect. His games on the database are not from the times when he was at his peak in Chelyabinsk, but only from the period after he passed his sixtieth birthday. Before returning to our main subject of Karpov’s career, as a farewell I present one of Gratvol’s wins. Decide for yourself how much Karpov’s style resembles that of his junior trainer.
1962 Summary

Out of the twelve games Karpov has in the database from 1962, he won nine of them and drew three without a loss.
1963

This was the year in which Botvinnik lost his crown for the last time, with Petrosian becoming the new champion. As the number of games by Karpov in the database decreased to three, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about his level of improvement. It seems that he dared to enter more complicated positions than before. He won all three games, each of which lasted more than forty moves.

The following is Karpov's last game in the section devoted to Zlatoust. Interestingly, I found only one more game featuring Karpov's present opponent, which took place in 1998!

**Game 3**

A. Korotaev – Anatoly Karpov

Zlatoust 1963

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 d5 4.e3

To close the bishop's diagonal is a harmless plan. White's position is safe, but it is not easy to breathe life into it.

4...b6

Intending to undertake the 'hanging pawns' centre.

5.♗b3 ♖b7 6.cxd5 exd5 7.♗d3 ♕d6 8.0–0 0–0

The alternative was 8...a6.

9.♗b5 ♕e8?
Karpov gives up the two bishops for fluent play. 9...\(\text{e7}\) was possible as well.

10.\(\text{xd6}\) \(\text{xd6}\) 11.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{bd7}\) 12.\(\text{f4}\)!!

White intends to attack Black's king, but the plan is a faulty one. Instead he should just catch up with his development.

12...\(\text{e4}\) 13.\(\text{d3}\)

13.\(\text{d2}\) is more natural.

13...\(\text{f6}\) 14.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{c5}\)!

Karpov keeps playing fluently.

15.\(\text{h3}\)!!

The rook does little here and will find itself sidelined as the game progresses.

15...\(\text{f8}\) 16.\(\text{f2}\)

16...\(\text{f5}\)

This move is well timed, as White's knight is a long way from the e5-square. Nevertheless Black could have played more strongly with 16...\(\text{cxd4}\)!! 17.\(\text{exd4}\) \(\text{e6}\)+ when he wins a pawn for no compensation.

17.\(\text{b3}\)!!

White should have opened the long diagonal for his dark-squared bishop with 17.\(\text{dxc5}\)!, and after 17...\(\text{xc5}\) the position is close to equal.

17...\(\text{cxd4}\)!! 18.\(\text{exd4}\) \(\text{ac8}\)

Black is somewhat better because of the strong knight on e4.

19.\(\text{a4}\)!!

This wastes a tempo. 19.\(\text{e3}\) would at least have improved White's development.

19...\(\text{f6}\)

19...\(\text{e6}\) was also strong.

20.\(\text{b5}\)

20...\(\text{e7}\)!!

Karpov improves his position. He could have won a pawn with 20...\(\text{xf2}\)!! 21.\(\text{xf2}\) \(\text{e4}\), but White's pieces would come to life: 22.\(\text{b2}\)!! (22.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{e6}\) 22...\(\text{xf4}\)+ 23.\(\text{g1}\) \(\text{e6}\) 24.\(\text{d2}\) Black is better, but converting his extra pawn will not be easy.
21.\textit{b}2 \textit{c}c7
Taking over the c-file.

22.\textit{d}3?!  
Exchanging one of the rooks gave more chances to hold: 22.\textit{x}c1 \textit{e}c6 (22...\textit{x}c1 23.\textit{x}c1 \textit{e}c6 24.\textit{e}3) 23.\textit{b}x\textit{c}7 \textit{b}x\textit{c}7 24.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}c6 (24...a5 can be met by 25.\textit{d}3; perhaps Black should just keep his opponent guessing with 24...\textit{f}8!!) 25.\textit{x}c6 (25.\textit{e}2 \textit{e}8) 25.\textit{b}x\textit{c}6 26.\textit{d}d3 White is facing a passive defence, but he is not beaten yet.

22...\textit{e}6 23.\textit{h}5?  
This puts the queen out of play as well.

23.g6  
Karpov simply parries White's threat, although he could safely have gone ahead with 23...\textit{x}f2!, when 24.\textit{x}h7+ \textit{f}7 25.\textit{h}5+ \textit{g}6 26.\textit{x}g6+ \textit{x}g6 27.\textit{x}f2 \textit{c}c2+ simplifies to a won endgame.

24.\textit{h}6

24...\textit{d}4!  
Black has such domination in the centre that he can afford to open the long diagonal.

25.\textit{d}1  
White keeps his dark-squared bishop, but Black has so much force in the centre that White cannot even create a threat on the long diagonal. If 25.\textit{d}1 \textit{e}2\textit{+} or 25.\textit{d}b1 \textit{d}d2 wins.

25...\textit{c}5 26.\textit{c}2  
26.\textit{f}1 would have offered more resistance.

26...\textit{e}6?!  
Karpov wants to simplify into an endgame. It should be good enough, but Black could have won instantly with 26...\textit{e}8!. At this early age he had not yet acquired the ability to seize upon almost any chance to go after the opponent's king.

27.\textit{d}3 \textit{f}8 28.\textit{h}4  
Avoiding the somewhat slower death that would have occurred after exchanging queens.

28...\textit{b}3  
Aside from Black's material advantage, he has several good pieces while White has only one.

29.\textit{b}1 \textit{d}2 30.\textit{c}1 \textit{f}7 31.\textit{a}1 \textit{e}4 32.\textit{b}1 \textit{c}5 33.\textit{f}1 \textit{a}6  
With two extra pawns, Karpov naturally exchanges pieces.

34.\textit{e}5 \textit{d}7 35.\textit{a}6 \textit{a}6 36.\textit{f}2 \textit{c}5
37.\texttt{\textbf{d}1}
White has failed to develop any counterplay, and now he loses a third pawn.

37...\texttt{\textbf{xa}4} 38.\texttt{\textbf{a}3} \texttt{\textbf{ac}5} 39.\texttt{\textbf{e}1} \texttt{d4} 40.\texttt{\textbf{ba}1} \texttt{\textbf{b}3} 41.\texttt{\textbf{e}1} \texttt{e2} \texttt{\textbf{c}1}
Karpov liked to pin his opponents' pieces.

42.\texttt{\textbf{b}2} \texttt{\textbf{c}3}
\textbf{0}–\textbf{1}

White played poorly in this game, but from Karpov's perspective it was an impressive performance. He purposefully improved his position. He positioned his knight on the e4-outpost, isolated the enemy d-pawn and took control over the c-file before winning material. Despite a few missed opportunities to win more quickly, he never let his opponent back into the game.

\textbf{1963 Summary}

With only three games from this year on the database, it is hard to make generalizations about Karpov's play. It is clear that the above game was a mature and skilful performance for a twelve year old. Karpov was on his way up, and according to the database he never played another significant game in Zlatoust. The future World Champion has outgrown his home city, but he still has a long way to go.
Once again there are minimal games in the database – four this time. Karpov won them all, which suggests that these were specially selected games. They all took place in the city of Vladimir. His opening play did not improve in any discernable way, and all his wins were slow and long games. He preferred the Closed Sicilian to the Open. In 1964 he played in Moscow, drawing in a clock simul against Borvinnik. Karpov dropped a pawn, but then Mikhail Moiseevich blundered his queen. Luckily for the latter he still had enough activity and managed to survive.

Borvinnik later trained Karpov. The Patriarch did not realize what talent Karpov possessed and famously remarked that “he doesn’t have a clue about chess” (Of course he did not tell it to Karpov!) Karpov wrote that the lessons and homework that he received at Borvinnik’s home were especially useful for him, as they required him to work hard, by reading books and studying independently.

**Game 4**

**Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Fedin**

Vladimir 1964

1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{c3}\)

Karpov played mainly the Closed Sicilian in the sixties, but stopped playing it regularly in 1971. In later years he tried it only three more times. Altogether he played twenty six Closed Sicilian games, winning seventeen, drawing eight and losing only once.

2...\(\text{\textit{d}}\)c6 3.g3 g6 4.\(\text{\textit{g2}}\) \(\text{\textit{g7}}\) 5.\(\text{\textit{ge2}}\) d6 6.0–0 e5

The modern reaction to this setup involves putting the knight on h3, but it is too late for White to do that here.

7.d3 \(\text{\textit{ge7}}\) 8.f4 0–0 9.h3 f5

9...\(\text{\textit{e6}}\) deserves consideration, continuing Black’s development.

10.\(\text{\textit{e3}}\) \(\text{\textit{d4}}\) 11.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\) \(\text{\textit{c7}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{d1}}\)

Karpov follows a well-known regrouping plan.

12...\(\text{\textit{d7}}\) 13.c3 \(\text{\textit{c6}}\) 14.\(\text{\textit{f2}}\) \(\text{\textit{ab8}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{ac1}}\) \(\text{\textit{c6}}\) 16.b4

Having found good places for his minor pieces, Karpov starts gaining space.

16...\(\text{\textit{b6}}\) 17.e4 \(\text{\textit{d4}}\)

Black has equalized from the opening.
18.\textit{exd4 exd4}  
18...\textit{cxd4} may have been better.

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19.\textit{b5 Bb7} 20.g4 Bf7  
20...\textit{fxe4} 21.dxe4 \textit{h6} was stronger, as Black's pieces work better than in the game.

21.a4  
Karpov keeps gaining space.

21...\textit{Bb8} 22.Bc2 \textit{h8}  
After 22...\textit{fxe4} 23.dxe4 White has a mobile kingside majority.

23.Ba2 Bg8  
23...\textit{c5}?! deserved consideration.

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24.g5!  
Karpov blocks the f6-square from the knight and gains more space.

24...\textit{Be8}  
After 24...\textit{fxe4} 25.dxe4 \textit{a5} 26.h4 \textit{d7} 27.h5 the position is double-edged.

25.a5! \textit{Be7}  
Black's rooks are strong but the g8-knight is out of play.

26.Bg3 d5??  
Black can stir up complications in a different way too: 26...\textit{fxe4} 27.Bxe4 \textit{d5} 28.Bxd5 Bxd5 29.cxd5 \textit{Be3} 30.Bge4 \textit{c4} With a highly complex position.

27.axb6 axb6  

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28.exf5  
Karpov elects to open the kingside, where both sides have their trumps. Black has the two rooks on the e-file, while White has three pieces and the strong g5-pawn.

A good alternative was 28.cxd5 \textit{fxe4} 29.dxe4 \textit{Bd7} 30.Bg4 \textit{c4}, when White's extra pawn should count for something, although the position remains wildly complicated.
28...\textit{e}3 29.\textit{\textdollar}h1 dxc4 30.dxc4

30.f6?! \textit{\textdollar}xf6 (after 30...\textit{\textdollar}xf6 31.\textit{\textdollar}a7 \textit{\textdollar}b8
32.\textit{\textdollar}xf6 \textit{\textdollar}xd3 33.\textit{\textdollar}e2 \textit{\textdollar}e3 34.\textit{\textdollar}xc4 \textit{\textdollar}xf6
35.\textit{\textdollar}c6 White should have better chances with
his extra piece) 31.\textit{\textdollar}xf6 \textit{\textdollar}xf6 32.\textit{\textdollar}a7 (32.dxc4
\textit{\textdollar}c8) 32...\textit{\textdollar}xd3 33.\textit{\textdollar}c2 \textit{\textdollar}b8 34.\textit{\textdollar}xc4 \textit{\textdollar}e3
35.\textit{\textdollar}c6 d3 Black has counterplay at the end of
this sharp line.

30...\textit{\textdollar}gxf5?

Black falters at a critical moment. He
should have preferred one of the following
alternatives:

30...\textit{\textdollar}xg2 31.\textit{\textdollar}xg2 (31.\textit{\textdollar}xf2 d3) 31...d3!
32.f6 \textit{\textdollar}xf6 33.\textit{\textdollar}xf6 \textit{\textdollar}xf6 White is a piece up
but Black is not worse at all as White's knights
have few active prospects.

30...\textit{\textdollar}c8?! also leads to an unclear position.

31.\textit{\textdollar}a7!

I have already remarked that Karpov liked
to pin his opponents' pieces. The idea works
perfectly here.

31...\textit{\textdollar}b8 32.\textit{\textdollar}xf5

Black is a piece up compared with the
variations analysed two moves ago, but on the
other hand the white knight works superbly
and he still has the g5-pawn.
40...gxf5 41.\textit{Be}e2 \textit{Be}7 42.\textit{Bh}5\textup{t} \textit{Bg}8 43.\textit{Be}8\textup{t} \textit{Bh}7 44.g6\textup{t} \textit{Bh}6 45.\textit{Bx}e7 \textit{f}4 46.\textit{Ag}5\textup{t}
1-0

\textbf{1964 Summary}

Once again the small number of games prevents us from drawing any detailed conclusions, apart from remarking that his play in the above game was at a high level for one so young.
Karpov was the youngest player at the All Union Schoolboys event at Kharkov, where he scored a respectable 4½/8. The games do not appear in the database, although the Russian chess magazine *Shakhmatniy Bulletin* published his first game. He also participated in the Spartakiad USSR junior event in Kharkov, where he played nine games, only four of which found their way to the database.

The only other game available from 1965 was a draw against Spassky in a simultaneous event. At the time Spassky was arguably the strongest player in the world, and would go on to challenge Petrosian for the World Championship the following year. It all goes to show that in those days promising juniors such as Karpov had excellent opportunities to sharpen their skills against the very best in the world. Karpov's game against Spassky was rather boring, as he went for safety first. They soon found themselves in a double rook ending. Spassky played on for a while but later agreed a draw.

His opponent in the following encounter has no other games on the database (and also lacks a first name!).

---

**Game 5**

**Hampyuk – Anatoly Karpov**

_Tula 1965_

1.e4 e5

Over the course of his career Karpov answered 1.e4 with 1...e5 a total of 233 times. He won sixty two games, drew 14 and lost twenty six.

2...b5 3.b5 a6 4.a4 d6 5.0–0 c7 6.e1 b5 7.b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.h3 a5 10.a4?

This is a clear mistake, as in the long run Black will open the position for his two bishops. Let's see how Karpov carries out this strategy.

10...cxb3 11.xb3 c6 12.d1 c5 13.axb5

White could have considered 13.d4??, as the opening of the queenside does not help him in the present position.

13...axb5 14.xa8 xxa8 15.d3 c4
Karpov wants to exchange pawns to clear some space for his bishops. Black can also exert pressure with 15...\(\text{b7}\), intending ...\(\text{b4}\) and using his heavy pieces on the queenside.

16.\(\text{g5}\)
16.\(\text{a3}\)? would have given Black less freedom to build his position.

16...\(\text{d8}\)
Preparing to open the position further.

17.\(\text{xf6}\)!
Giving up the second bishop was a mistake – it was not worth doing it to achieve d3-d4. Better was 17.\(\text{a3}\)? \(\text{b7}\) 18.\(\text{c2}\) when it is not so easy for Black to open the position.

17...\(\text{xf6}\) 18.\(\text{d4}\)

18...\(\text{d5}\)?
Karpov shows a very important and striking quality, which he will retain throughout his career: once he picks up a plan he sees it through, rather than changing his mind and reverting to another idea.

Nevertheless it was just as promising to play on the queenside with 18...\(\text{a2}\) 19.\(\text{d2}\) (or 19.\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{b8}\)) 19...\(\text{a8}\) when it is not easy to meet Black's ongoing initiative on the flank.

19.\(\text{c2}\)?
White could have stirred up some fascinating complications with the more resolute reply: 19.\(\text{bd2}\)!
Thanks to various tactical nuances this keeps White in the game. One can only speculate as to how Karpov planned to respond.

19...\(\text{exd4}\)
19...\(\text{b4}\)? is interesting, but White should be able to keep a playable game: 20.\(\text{dx e5}\) (20.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 21.\(\text{dx e5}\) \(\text{bxc3}\) 22.\(\text{bxc3}\) \(\text{dx e4}\) 23.\(\text{e2}\) is equal) 20...\(\text{dx e4}\) 21.\(\text{exf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 22.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{xf3}\) 23.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{bxc3}\) 24.\(\text{bxc3}\) \(\text{And}\) White is not worse.

19...\(\text{g6}\)? 20.\(\text{dx e5}\) \(\text{g7}\) 21.\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{b7}\) Black has sufficient compensation for the pawn, but no advantage.

Knowing the mature Karpov who likes to have a pawn chain for a piece, maybe he would have opted for the main continuation examined here. However, Black must also take into consideration his opponent's attacking chances.

20.\(\text{e5}\)

20...\(\text{dx e5}\)!
This move leads to fascinating complications, in which a single inaccuracy could prove fatal for either side. White has chances to catch Black's king, while of course Black's pawns could decide the game as well.

20...\(\text{e7}\) is met by 21.\(\text{dx e5}\) \(\text{a6}\) 22.\(\text{b4}\) when White is safe.
In this position Black has two interesting moves.

a) 21...d4
   After 21...cxd2 22.\textit{xf}x2 \textit{gx}x6 23.\textit{xf}f4 White has enough at least for a perpetual.
   22.\textit{e}x4 \textit{cxb}2
   22...\textit{d}5 23.\textit{bxc}3 \textit{xe}4 (23...\textit{dxc}3 24.\textit{b}1 \textit{xe}4 25.\textit{xe}4 \textit{g}6 is rather risky for Black.)
   24.\textit{xd}4 \textit{b}4 25.\textit{g}4 \textit{g}6 26.\textit{f}5 The position is equal.
   23.\textit{gx}x7

b) 21...cxb2
   It looks better not to allow the knight to occupy the e4-square just yet.
   22.\textit{c}2

   22...\textit{a}5!
   Others lose, for instance:
   23...\textit{a}1? 24.\textit{d}2+--
   23...\textit{g}7 24.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}8 (24...\textit{d}5
   25.\textit{xe}6+) 25.\textit{f}3+-
   23...\textit{c}3 24.\textit{d}3! \textit{c}8 25.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}2 26.\textit{g}3 and once again White wins.

24.\textit{bl} c3
   After 24...\textit{b}4 25.\textit{f}6\textit{g}7 26.\textit{h}5\textit{g}8 27.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}8 28.\textit{h}x7 Black is in trouble.
   25.\textit{f}6\textit{g}7 26.\textit{h}5\textit{g}8 27.\textit{d}3!?
   After 27.\textit{e}4 \textit{b}4 28.\textit{e}5 \textit{a}1 29.\textit{f}6\textit{g}7 White probably has to be content with a draw.
   27...\textit{b}1=\textit{a}?
   27...\textit{b}4 28.\textit{e}5 \textit{a}1 29.\textit{f}6\textit{g}7
   30.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5
   32.\textit{d}4 \textit{f}6 36.\textit{d}xd3 \textit{c}8 White can press with the extra exchange.
   28.\textit{b}1 \textit{b}4 29.\textit{d}6\textit{g}7 30.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5
   31.\textit{d}4 \textit{g}6 32.\textit{d}3 Black faces an uphill struggle to survive.

b) 21...\textit{cxb}2
   It looks better not to allow the knight to occupy the e4-square just yet.
   22.\textit{c}2

   22...\textit{a}2!
   This is more accurate than: 22...\textit{a}1 23.\textit{fg}7 \textit{d}4 24.\textit{e}4 \textit{a}8 (after 24...\textit{d}3 25.\textit{d}2 Black's king is in trouble) 25.\textit{h}2 \textit{g}7 26.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}4 27.\textit{d}2 And once again White's attack is dangerous.
   23.\textit{fg}7
   23...\textit{g}5? allows 23...\textit{b}1=\textit{a}! 24.\textit{xb}1 \textit{xb}1 25.\textit{xb}1 \textit{a}8 when Black's pawns should be the deciding factor in the endgame.
   23...\textit{c}3? is interesting though.
23...d4 24...e4
Once again 24...g5?! runs into b1=\.
24...d5 25...xd4 c3 26...b3 \a6
The position remains highly unclear. The whole line seems to be no less dangerous for Black than for White.

The game continuation is nowhere near as challenging, and Karpov takes full advantage of his initiative.

19...dxe4 20...xe4?! 
The lesser evil was 20...xe5, although after 20...xe5 21.dxe5 d3 Black is still better.

20...d5 21...e3
No better is 21...f5 exd4.

21...xf3 22.dxe5 d3! 23...f4 e7?!
Black could have won more easily with 23...xg2 24.exf6 xh3 25.f3 xf3.

24.gxf3 xf3 25...g4 \c5
25...d5?! would have prevented the rook from getting to the \e2-square.

26...f1? 
More resilient would have been 26.e2 d3 (After 26...h5 27...g2 h4 28.f1 White survives as this escape square is now available.) 27...d2 \d5 Black is better here, but White has chances to survive. (Alternatively after 27...h5 28.b4 \c8 29.e6 fxe6 30.f3 White has compensation for the pawn.)

26...h5!
The addition of a final attacking unit crushes White's resistance.

27...g2 h4 28...h1
28...h2 \e4 wins.

28...xh3†
0–1

With this game we can begin to see the features of the future great champion. His opponent was naive in gifting him the two bishop advantage, and as soon as this happened Karpov based his strategy around opening the position to exploit their potential. His play was not flawless, but the consistency with which he executed his plan is to be admired.

1965 Summary

This was the year in which Karpov began to take part in more prestigious Soviet junior events. He held his own and the overall quality of his play was higher than the previous year.
Karpov achieved some remarkable results in the year that Petrosian successfully defended his title against Spassky. Playing through his games, it is clear that he had reached a newer, higher level. With a total of forty three games in the database, this is the first year in which his results were truly well documented.

The following game is Karpov’s first against a future grandmaster. The location of the event is significant, as the game was played in the Soviet capital. Karpov started the Soviet Under 18 Championship with a loss in twenty moves with White against Dydyshko, but he made his way back with some wins. He drew the penultimate round against Shakarov, who would go on to become a trainer of Karpov and Nadanian (see Chapter 4 of my previous book for Quality Chess, Genius in the Background). The following game was played in the last round.

### Game 6

Gennady Timoscenko – Anatoly Karpov
USSR Under 18 Championship, Moscow 1966

I was surprised to learn that, according to the database at least, these two players only met over the board on one subsequent occasion. That game was decided in the opening when Timoscenko executed a small combination to win a pawn, which he eventually converted in the endgame.

1.e4 e5 2.\(\text{d}f3\) 3.\(\text{c}c6\) 4.\(\text{a}a4\) 5.0–0 \(\text{e}7\) 6.\(\text{e}e1\) 7.\(\text{a}a3\) 8.\(d3\) 9.d4 \(\text{g}4\) 10.\(\text{e}3\)
This is the only time anyone played this move against Karpov. The other main move is 10.d5, against which he scored one win and one draw.

10...a5 11.c2 c4 12.c1 exd4 13.cxd4 c5

14.bd2?!

The usual continuation is 14.b3 b6. It would be interesting to know whether the future grandmaster did not know the theory, or simply made a slip. In any event, the game continuation had not been seen before and has never been repeated.

14...xd2 15.xd2

White can sacrifice a pawn with 15.xd2, but it presents no problems for Black: 15...cxd4 16.h3 (16.f4 e8 17.e1 h5 is nice for Black) 16...xf3 17.xf3 b6 Though it is not simple to convert the extra pawn, Black certainly has a nice position.

15...xf3

Even as a young player, Karpov always liked to create weaknesses in the enemy camp.

16.gxf3 b6 17.dxc5?!

Opening the d-file is useful for Black. Better was 17.b3 d7 18.b2, when White is okay.

17...dxc5 18.h1?!

This is too slow, and White will never get enough play on the g-file.

He could still have maintained equality with: 18.e5! ad8 19.exf6 xd2 20.fxe7 xc2 21.e8=wg6+ 22.xf1 xd3+ 23.xg2=

18...fd8

White is worse as his pawn structure has been damaged. With his last move Black mobilizes another piece, seizing the open file with gain of tempo.

19.e2 c4 20.ge1?!

White is playing too optimistically. 20.e5 d5 21.e4 was more appropriate, while 20.a4?! also deserved attention.

20...d7!

Improving the knight.

21.ge2 de5 22.e3 c5 23.ea1 g6 24.f4 od3 25.e5 ed8 26.h4

By now White has burned his bridges, and has no real choice but to keep playing on the g-file.

26...b7!

Even though this game was played early in Karpov's career, his tools are the same as the ones
he uses later. Here he seizes the opportunity to set up a pin along the diagonal.

27...\text{xc}5
27...\text{h}5 \text{e}4

27...\text{xc}5 28...\text{e}3 \text{d}5
28...\text{c}d5! was even stronger.

29...\text{b}4!

In a difficult position, Timoschenko gambles with a pawn sacrifice. Objectively 29...h5 looks preferable, but after 29...\text{d}4 Black remains in full control.

29...\text{c}6

Perhaps Karpov was taken in by his opponent’s bluff. In fact it was quite safe to accept the pawn with 29...\text{x}b4 30...\text{e}4 \text{d}4 31...\text{f}3 \text{d}3 32...h5 \text{f}8! when White’s attack is going nowhere.

30...\text{d}4 31...\text{f}3 \text{b}6

Missing a chance to end the game in style with 31...\text{x}f4! 32...\text{c}6 \text{h}4 33...\text{h}2 \text{f}2+ 34...\text{g}2 \text{g}5 35...\text{f}3 (35...\text{x}f2 \text{f}4! wins [but not 35...\text{d}2?? when 36...\text{f}3 wins for White]); 35...\text{f}1 \text{c}1+ 36...\text{g}2 \text{xc}2\rightarrow) 35...\text{x}g1 36...\text{x}f2 (36...\text{g}2 \text{d}3!\rightarrow) 36...\text{h}1\rightarrow 37...\text{g}2 \text{h}5\rightarrow Black will soon have four pawns for the piece plus an ongoing attack.

32...\text{f}5?

White is attacking relentlessly along the g-file, but he is unable to break through. He would have done better to abandon that plan altogether in favour of 32...\text{d}1, when his position is not drastically worse.

32...\text{e}5 33...\text{h}3 \text{dd}6

Black safely defends the g6-pawn.

34...\text{h}2 \text{d}5

Forcing White back into the pin.

35...\text{gg}2

35...\text{f}3?

Threatening mate in three. White must shed an exchange, and his position quickly falls apart.

36...\text{g}4 \text{hxh}2 37...\text{x}h2 \text{d}2

The final invasion occurs on the d-file, which was occupied nineteen moves previously.

38...\text{h}xg6 \text{h}xg6 39...\text{g}6 \text{g}6 40...\text{e}4 \text{f}2+ 41...\text{h}1 \text{f}7 42...\text{h}4 \text{f}6 43...\text{g}4 \text{h}8 44...\text{h}4 \text{a}1 45...\text{g}2 \text{d}2

0–1

This game did not contain any single spectacular move, but Karpov’s play was skillful, consistent and instructive.
Later in the year Karpov participated in a Masters versus Candidate Masters tournament in Leningrad, where he exceeded the master norm by two points. He became the youngest Master in the Soviet Union – quite an achievement. His short but lively draw with Igor Zaitsev was the first of his games to be published in *Chess Informant*.

This was followed by further success in a USSR junior team event in Vladimir. Karpov shared the board prize with Kudishevich, scoring 6½/8. Only two games from this event are listed in the database. One is the game he won against Kudishevich, while the other is presented here. His opponent went on to become a decent grandmaster and an exceptional rapid and blitz player.

**Game 7**

Anatoly Karpov – Valentin Arbakov.

Vladimir 1966

1.e4 e5 2.�B

Karpov never played any other move in this position. Out of 134 games in the database he won more than half, with seventy wins, fifty eight draws and just six losses.

2...c6 3.b5 a6 4.a4

Karpov rarely took on c6 and he was not particularly successful with it.

4...c6 5.0–0 e7 6.Re1 b5 7.b3 0–0 8.a4

Avoiding the Marshall, although he often played 8.c3 inviting the gambit. Interestingly, only Short took up that particular challenge against him, at Tilburg 1991. That game ended in a draw.

8...b8 9.c3 d6 10.b3 g6 11.d4 f6

Black has bolstered the e5-pawn, so Karpov homes in on another target.

12.d5 e7

13.ea3! g6!!

Better was 13...c5, although after 14.axb5 axb5 15.c2 b4 16.cxb4 gxb4 17.d2 Black will be left with a weak pawn on either c7 or d6.

14.c2 bxa4

Black hopes to create enough play to offset the weakness of the a6-pawn by preparing ...f5.

15.xa4 g7

16.c2!

This is not an easy move to appreciate fully. Karpov believes that the position is so closed
that he can afford to devote a lot of time to laying siege to the weak a6-pawn. It is a risky strategy, as Black will have time to develop kingside counterplay.

16...h6
16...f5 is inadvisable due to 17.Qg5.

17.Qd2 f5 18.Qa4 Qf6 19.Qe3 Qe8
19...f4 20.Qec4 is good for White.

20.Qd3 Qh5
20...Qf7 21.f3 fxe4 22.fxe4 Qg4 is a nice idea, but it does not stop White from claiming a slight advantage after 23.Qe2.

21.Qxa6
Reaping the fruit of the plan that began five moves ago.

21...Qd7
Black avoids exchanges, hoping to utilize his bishop for attacking purposes. Black may be a pawn down, but he is not without chances on the kingside.

22.Qf1
Karpov brings back the bishop to defend the king.

22.Qf4 23.g3
23.Qa7? was also strong.

23.Qh5 24.Qg2 f4 25.Qe1 Qg3
Black opens the f-file, although there is not much he can do with it. Alternatives were also unappealing, for instance 25...Qf7 26.g4 Qf6 27.Qa7 when White's kingside looks firm enough to withstand the pressure.

26.Qg3 Qf7

27.Qe3!
Reinforcing g3 while preparing to switch the rook to the f-file. Karpov correctly evaluates the check on f2 as harmless.

27...g5
27...Qf2+ 28.Qh2 Qb5 is safely met by 29.Qe1.

28.Qf3 Qg6 29.Qa7 g4 30.Qxf8+ Qxf8
31.h4
Keeping the kingside closed.

31...Qf7 32.Qe1
The queen defends not only g3, but h4 as well.

32.Qg6 33.Bx7 Qh4!
Black is doing his best to create problems. Now White must make a decision.
The Making of a Champion

34...exf4

Up to this point Karpov played strongly, but by taking the piece he unnecessarily gives Black counterchances.

Amongst other possibilities, the computer's main line is 34.\textit{b}c4! \textit{d}d3 35.\textit{e}e3 \textit{xc}1 36.\textit{b}b6! \textit{f}f4 37.\textit{g}x\textit{f}4 \textit{exf}4 38.\textit{xc}1 \textit{f}f3 39.\textit{d}d7 \textit{f}xg2 40.\textit{xf}8 \textit{xf}1 =\textit{w}t 41.\textit{xf}1 \textit{xc}7 42.\textit{e}e6 And White should win the ending without too many problems.

34...exf4 35.\textit{h}h2 \textit{e}e5

36.\textit{d}d3?

There was no reason to return the piece so soon. After the superior 36.\textit{f}f1! White is clearly better.

36...\textit{g}x\textit{f}3 37.\textit{d}d3 \textit{g}g6 38.\textit{h}h1?

White should have preferred 38.\textit{h}h1! when the position is messy.

38...\textit{g}g4

After 38...\textit{b}b5\textit{f} 39.\textit{c}c4 \textit{xc}4 40.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4 the extra exchange should be enough for Black.

39.\textit{f}f2 \textit{d}d3 40.\textit{d}d2 \textit{xc}1?

40...\textit{xe}4! would have won for Black. Given the frequency of mistakes on both sides, it seems reasonable to assume that both players were short of time.

41.\textit{xc}1 \textit{xe}4 42.\textit{e}e1

42...\textit{xe}4?

The final error. Correct was 42...\textit{xd}5 43.\textit{e}e2 when Black is still somewhat better.

43.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4

1–0

Presumably the game was adjourned here, after which Black resigned. White's extra pawn should be sufficient to win, and Karpov was already good enough to receive significant help at adjournments. During this game he played very well for a long time, but later lost control in the complications and in the end he was lucky to win.
Karpov's next event was the Scandinavia - USSR match in Stockholm, where he defeated the Norwegian player Hatlebakk by a score of $1\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$. His opponent rarely played tournament chess after his junior years, although he must have been a promising young player as he was selected for this match and later represented his country in the World Under 26 Championships. This game was the first in their mini-match.

Game 8

Hatilebakk – Anatoly Karpov

Stockholm (1) 1966

1.e4 e5 2.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}6 3.\textit{b}5 a6

In 1966 Karpov won a game easily with 3...f5, but he never dared to repeat it.

4.\textit{e}4 \textit{d}6 5.0-0 \textit{d}7 6.\textit{e}e1 \textit{b}5 7.\textit{b}3 d6
8.c3 0-0 9.h3 \textit{a}5

In the sixties Karpov only played the Chigorin Variation of the Closed Spanish. In the early seventies he continued using it but also incorporated the Breyer System into his repertoire. He scored well with both of them. Remarkably, he never lost a game in the Breyer. From 1978 onwards he mainly played the Zaitsev variation.

10.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}7

In most games he preferred the main line of 10...c5.

11.d4 \textit{c}4

According to the database Gligoric was the first to play this line against Keres in Zurich 1959.

12.b3

This natural move is the main line.

12...\textit{b}6 13.\textit{bd}2

White is unable to win a pawn with 13.dxe5?! dxe5 14.\textit{xd}8 \textit{xd}8 15.\textit{xe}5 in view of 15...\textit{xe}4 when Black is a bit better.

13...\textit{fd}7!?

According to the database this is Karpov's move, so it could reasonably be called the Karpov Variation.

14.\textit{f}1 c5 15.\textit{e}3!

This is the main line. Karpov won another two games in this variation without a draw or loss, but on both occasions White released the central tension prematurely:

15.d5 f5 16.exf5 \textit{xd}5 17.a4 \textit{c}6 18.\textit{e}3 e4 19.\textit{d}2 d5 20.a5 \textit{c}8 (in the later part of Karpov's career he might have sacrificed a piece with 20...\textit{f}6??) 21.c4 d4 22.\textit{d}5 (22.\textit{xe}4?? \textit{xe}3 23.\textit{xc}6 exd2 24.\textit{xd}2) 22...\textit{xd}5 23.\textit{xd}5 d3 24.\textit{a}1 \textit{e}5 25.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xd}5 Black went on to win this complicated position in Kudishevich – Karpov, Vladimir 1966.

In a subsequent game White chose to simplify the centre: 15.dxe5 \textit{xe}5 16.\textit{xe}5 dxe5 17.\textit{g}3 g6 18.\textit{e}3 \textit{c}7 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}8d8 20.\textit{ed}1 \textit{d}7 21.a4 \textit{c}6 22.axb5 axb5 23.\textit{d}3 \textit{b}7 24.f3
24...\( \text{f8} \) Karpov nicely improves his pieces.
25.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{xal} \) 26.\( \text{xal} \) \( \text{e6} \) 27.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{c7} \)
28.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{a8} \) 29.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{g5!} \) 30.\( \text{xg5} \) \( \text{xg5} \)
Black eventually managed to convert his small advantage into a win in Alt - Karpov, Riga 1970.

15...\( g6 \) 16.\( \text{b2} \)
Both 16.a4!? and 16.g4!? look more testing.

16...\( \text{f6} \)
Karpov improves his bishop and puts pressure on White's centre.

17.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{c7} \)

18.\( \text{dxe5} \)!!
Instead 18.d5 is the principled move, which limits the b7-bishop. If Black plays 18...c4 then 19.d2 gives White a small edge.

18...\( \text{dxe5} \)
In this opening Black usually recaptures on e5 with the knight first.

19.\( \text{dxe5} \) \( \text{dxe5} \)!
Karpov is looking for a fight. He avoids a symmetrical pawn structure in order to develop pressure against the e4-pawn, as well as keeping the long diagonal open for his bishop.

20.\( \text{d3} \)!!
Perhaps surprised by Karpov's last move, White immediately falters. He should have preferred either 20.\( \text{d2} \) or 20.a4 bxa4 21.bxa4 a5, with approximate equality in both cases.

20...\( \text{c4} \)!
Karpov sacrifices a pawn in return for long term compensation on the queenside. The passivity of the b2-bishop is a particular problem for White.

21.bxc4
If 21.\( \text{c2} \) b4! 22.bxc4 bxc3 23.a3 a5 and Black takes the upper hand.

21...\( \text{a4} \)!! 22.\( \text{bcl} \)!!
Eliminating all the queenside pawns with 22.cxb5 would have eased White's suffering: 22...\( \text{xb5} \) (22...\( \text{xb2} \) 23.\( \text{xb2} \) \( \text{c3} \) [23...\( \text{xb5} \) 24.\( \text{xb5} \) 24.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xb5} \) transposes}
to 22...axb5.) 23...xb5 Qxb2 24.Qxb2 Qxc3
25.Qe2 Qb4 26.Qab1 Qxe4 27.Qd3 Qc6
(27...Qf4 28.Qg4) 28.Qec1 Qd7 29.Qc4
White manages to eliminate the dark-squared
bishop and thus equalizes.

22...b4!
A wonderful idea! Karpov paralyses his
opponent on the queenside.

23.Qd1 a5 24.Qa1 Qd8??
Here is an early example of Karpov’s famed
prophylactic thinking. He rejects the more
natural 24...Qfc8, presumably in anticipation
of White shifting his queen to d2, followed by
exchanging on b4 and later exerting pressure
against the d6-pawn.

25.Qc2??
White’s position is not easy to handle. There
is no direct threat, and being a pawn up he
may not have appreciated the dangers.

If 25.cxb4 axb4 26.Qb1 Black can maintain
the pressure with 26...Qb6; but not 26...Qc5!!
27.Qxe5 dxe5 28.a3 when White gets rid of
the b-pawn.

Best was 25.Qd2! Qc5 (Or 25...Qc5 26.Qc2
Qe7 [26...Qb6 27.Qb1] 27.cxb4 axb4 28.Qxb4
and White is safe.) 26.Qc2 Qb6 27.Qe3 when
Black has nice compensation for the pawn, but
White should be all right.

25...Qc6
Obviously Black should maintain the
position of his strong knight.

26.Qb1
White cannot release the pressure completely
with 26.cxb4 axb4 27.Qxe5 dxe5 28.c5, as
after 28...Qd4 29.Qf1 Qa5 he remains rather
passive.

26...Qc5!
Karpov gives up the pressure on the c3-pawn
in order to change his objective.

27.Qe3
After 27.cxb4? axb4 White cannot take the
b4-pawn and is largely paralysed.

27...Qa4! 28.Qd2 b3!
Karpov creates a passed pawn on the
queenside, an idea that was not easy to see in
advance. The a1-bishop has become even more
passive than before.

29.Qd5 Qa7 30.Qf1
White can do little except wait.

30...Qdb8
Improving the rook before commencing the next phase of the plan.

31. \( \text{b}1 \text{bxa2} \)
Karpov can find no more general improving moves, so he launches his queenside play.

32. \( \text{xa2} \)
Exchanging a pair of rooks with 32. \( \text{xb8} \) \( \text{xb8} \) 33. \( \text{xa2} \) would also have led to a difficult and passive position after 33... \( \text{a3} \) 34. \( \text{d2 a4} \).

32... \( \text{b3} \)
Black is a pawn down but his compensation is tremendous. The \( a1 \)-bishop is virtually dead, and its partner on \( f1 \) is only slightly better. White's rooks have no open files, and only the \( d5 \)-knight stands well. Black has a dangerous passed pawn and a wonderful knight on \( c5 \).

33. \( \text{e2} \)
33. \( \text{a3} \) was possible, but blocking the a-pawn would be a menial task for the queen.

33... \( \text{a4} \) 34. \( \text{f4} \)?
White's desire for counterplay is understandable, but objectively this move accelerates his demise as it weakens the e4-pawn.

34... \( \text{g7} \) 35. \( \text{f5} \) \( \text{e8} \)!
Karpov immediately targets the new weakness and White's position soon collapses.

36. \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{c2} \) 37. \( \text{b2} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 38. \( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 39. \( \text{fxg6} \) \( \text{hxg6} \) 40. \( \text{d2} \)

41... \( \text{b3} \)!
Karpov demonstrates a forced win by luring his opponent into a fatal pin.

41. \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c2} \) 42. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{f2}! \) 43. \( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xe2} \) 44. \( \text{xe2} \)

44... \( \text{e8} \)!
This pin is simple to find and it wins in short order.
45.\textit{b2} \textit{d3}! 46.\textit{f4} \textit{xc4} 47.\textit{g1} g5
48.\textit{f2} \textit{d2} 49.\textit{d3} \textit{b8}
0-1

Apart from the fine overall performance, this game was also significant in being Karpov's first ever in western Europe.

His last tournament of the year (which actually ran into January 1967) was also his international tournament debut. Due to an oversight the Soviets sent two juniors to an adult tournament in Trinec, close to the eastern border of what is now the Czech Republic. Karpov won the event by scoring a most impressive 11/13. Kupka and Kupreichik shared second place with 9\frac{1}{2}, and another strong future grandmaster Smejkal finished fourth with 8\frac{1}{2} points.
1966 Summary

Over the course of the year Karpov won more than half of his forty seven games and lost just one. It is interesting to note that fourteen of his games ended in less than twenty five moves, and only a small number of those were decisive. It was notable throughout his career that he made some quick draws and did not try to win all his games. When a draw was useful for his tournament result, he was happy enough. His attitude in this regard was in sharp contrast to players such as Fischer and Kasparov, both of whom tried to win almost all of their games.

Compared with the period up to 1965, we can also observe that Karpov played in more prestigious tournaments and faced stronger opposition. Competing in Europe would have been a rare experience for a fifteen year old boy from the Soviet Union. It is possible that 1966 was the year in which it was decided that Karpov should become a chess player by profession.

This was the first year in which Karpov played a sufficient number of games to justify a numerical breakdown of his results:

USSR U18 Championship, Moscow: 6/9 (+4 =4 -1)
Spartakiad USSR Juniors (Board one in lower age group): 6½/8 (+5 =3 -0)
Master versus Candidates, Leningrad: 10/15 (+5 =10 -0)
USSR - Scandinavia, Stockholm (Board six): 1½/2 (+1 =1 -0)
Trinec 1966-67 (1st place): 11/13 (+9 =4 -0)

Total 74.4% (+24 =22 -1)
Karpov played in four significant events in 1967, beginning at the Spartakiad of the Russian Republic, which was a team event. He played on board two, winning four games, drawing one and losing two. Here is his game from round four. No other game from his opponent is available on the database.

**Game 9**

Vladimir Avetisian – Anatoly Karpov

Leningrad 1967

1.e4 f6 2.d4 e6

It is remarkable how Karpov almost always played this move here and never once tried 2...g6.

3.Nf3

Interestingly Karpov did not do well against 3.Ng5, losing three games out of fourteen, which was a lot by his standards.

3...d5

Almost twenty years later, when he was the reigning World Champion he employed another plan: 3...e7 4.h3 b6 5.Bbd2 c5 6.c3 d6 7.b3 Bxf1 8.Qxf1 Qc8 9.e1d2 0-0 10.Bc2 Bb7 11.0-0 Bc8 12.Bf4 Qc6 13.Bc4 Qe8 14.Qc5 Qa5 15.Bad1 d6 16.Qg4 Qe4 17.Qd2?! 

17...Qc2! This sets up a wicked threat. 18.Bb1? h5! 19.Qh2
4.e3 a6!?
Preparing to steer the game towards a Queen's Gambit Accepted in the event that White plays c4. It is a good decision, as in that opening the white bishop rarely goes to f4.

5.Bbd2 Bd7 6.c3 c5 7.bd3

7...b5!? 
Gaining space on the queenside.

8.0-0 Bb7 9.b3 
White should have played for an attack on the kingside with 9.Be5 Be7 10.Bb3.

9...Be7 10.Be5 0-0 11.Bxd7?! Bxd7 12.Bf3 
White is not doing much to counter his opponent's space advantage on the queenside. Black already has a pleasant position, but he still needs to find a suitable way to exploit it.

12...Bc8 13.Be5

13...Be8!
By keeping the b5-pawn defended, Black facilitates a further queenside expansion.

14.Bc1 a5 15.Bg5 b4 16.Be2 c4! 
Karpov continues gaining space.

17.Bb1 
17.Bc2?! would have discouraged Black's next move.
17...\( \text{Qd7}! \)
Karpov looks to exchange some kingside pieces in anticipation of a possible attack from his opponent.

18.\( \text{Qxd7} \)
18.\( \text{Qf4} \) looks better, as White keeps another potential attacker for the kingside.

18...\( \text{Qxd7} \) 19.\( \text{Qxe7} \) \( \text{Qxe7} \) 20.e4?! 
20.\( \text{Qd2} \) would have halted Black's queenside advance, at least for a few more moves.

20...a4 21.e5

21...a3!
This is a thematic undermining of the enemy queenside. So far Karpov has made eight pawn moves on that flank; rather a lot, but the position is closed enough to justify it.

22.f4 g6!
Black mainly focuses on the queenside, but he still pays attention to the other wing.

23.\( \text{Bf3} \) b3!
An instructive moment. Karpov abandons the undermining of the enemy pawn chain and instead pushes his queenside pawns as far as possible.

24.\( \text{Qf2} \) \( \text{Qc6} \)
Now Black opens the b-file.

25.g4 \( \text{Qcb8}! \)
Karpov has brought tremendous power into his queenside play, and White has no good answer.

26.bxa3 
26.axb3 a2 wins.

26...\( \text{Qxa3} \) 27.\( \text{Qf1} \) bxa2
Winning the bishop.

28.\( \text{Qxa2} \) \( \text{Qxa2} \) 29.\( \text{Qg3} \)

29...\( \text{Bb1}! \)
Black eliminates one of the attacking rooks, thus ensuring that White will not have enough firepower to hurt him.

30.\( \text{Qxf1} \)† 31.\( \text{Qxf1} \) \( \text{Qd7} \) 32.\( \text{fxg6} \) \( \text{hxg6} \)
33.\( \text{Bf3} \) \( \text{e8} \) 34.\( \text{Qe2} \) \( \text{Qb1}† \)
Finally Karpov goes after the king; by now his task has become very easy.

35.\( \text{Qh2} \) \( \text{e1} \) 36.\( \text{Qg2} \) \( \text{Qd3} \) 37.\( \text{Qf6} \) \( \text{Qf1} \)
0–1
The manner in which Karpov carried out his queenside expansion was exemplary.
Next Karpov participated in the qualification tournament for the World Junior Championship. He finished in fifth place after winning three, drawing one, losing three and thus scoring 3\(\frac{1}{2}\)/7. His next event was the USSR Schools’ Spartakiad, where he won five games and drew four.

At the end of 1967 and start of 1968 Karpov participated in the European Junior championship, where he demonstrated his ability to perform under pressure and duly won the event. In the preliminary rounds he won the first two games and drew the remaining five to qualify. In the final he drew the first game, before winning the following encounter.

**Game 10**

*Anatoly Karpov – John Moles*

European U18 Championship, Groningen 1967-68

Moles hailed from Ireland. He represented his country in several world junior events in the sixties as well as two Olympiads in the early seventies. It looks like he gave up chess after 1972.

1.e4 e5 2.d3 c6 3.b5 a6 4.a4 d6 5.e2

Karpov played this sideline three times in the sixties, winning on each occasion. He may have used it to avoid the Open Variation against certain opponents.

5...e7 6.c3 b5 7.b3 d6 8.a4 b7 9.0–0 0–0 10.d3

Karpov is not doing anything special in the opening, and settles for a quiet position with the hope of outplaying his opponent later.

10...h6 11.e1 h7

**12.d4?!**

Karpov shows his flexibility, occupying the centre later than usual in reaction to his opponent’s last decentralizing move. In other openings such as the Philidor, the move ...h7 is often met by h3 in order to vacate the h2-square for the knight. In this position the idea is harmless, as after 12.h3 g5 13.h2 d6 Black’s knights are strong in the centre.

12...g5

**13.xg5?!**

A remarkable decision – White gives up an important bishop in order to gain time to weaken the b5-pawn. Obviously the loss of the bishop pair entails some risk for White, and we can only guess how much Karpov
...in advance. All world champions, even the positional players, played riskily and ambitiously when they were juniors — it is probably a requirement if one is to excel.

13...hxg5 14.d5
Isolating the b5-pawn.

14...Qa7?!
A strange choice. I remember seeing one game in which 1...e5 expert Hebden played ...Qa7 against Arakhamia in a Ruy Lopez, but it was under very different conditions. Instead the knight should have moved in the conventional way with:

14...Qc2

From here the play might have developed in several ways, with both sides potentially sacrificing material.

15.Qd2
Two other moves are possible:

15...Qe2 (15...Qb2?? g4→) 15...Qxb3 16.Qxb3 c6 17.Qd2 (17.c4!? bx4 18.Qxc6 Qxc6 19.Qxc4 Qb6 Black is somewhat better) 17...cxd5 18.axb5 Qb6 Black is quite active.

15.Qa2 bxa4 (15...c5 16.axb5 Qxb5 17.Qa3) 16.h3 Qc8 17.Qbd2 Qd7 18.Qb1 Qb7 (18...Qb8 19.Qe4 Qf5 20.Qxb4 Qd8 Black has reasonable counterplay. 18.Qxc4 Qxc4 19.Qd1 Qf5 19...Qf5 20.Qd2 g4 Black has fair compensation.

15.Qd1
Anticipating ...c6.

15...c6
This looks natural, although once again there are two worthy alternatives.

15...Qc4 16.b3 Qb6 17.axb5 axb5 18.Qxa8 (18.Qa3??) 18...Qxa8 19.Qxb5 Black has some play for the pawn, although it is hard to evaluate whether it is truly enough.

15...c5?! Maybe this is the simplest way to sacrifice the pawn. 16.axb5 c4 17.Qb6 Qa6 Black has a good grip on the position; I think it is worth a pawn.

16.Qfd2 cxd5 17.exd5
It is hard to tell how Black should sacrifice the pawn from here.

17...Qc4
Also after 17...Qb6 18.axb5 axb5 19.Qa3 b4 20.Qc4 Qf5 21.Qxb4 Qd8 Black has reasonable counterplay. 18.Qxc4 Qxc4 19.Qd1 Qf5 19...Qf5 20.Qd2 g4 Black has fair compensation.

15...Qe4?! It is tempting to drive back the knight, but it gives White a tempo to organize his queenside attack. Black is also worse after 15...c5 16.Qxc6 Qxc6 17.Qd5.
Perhaps the best chance would have been 15...\text{d}7!? 16.axb5 axb5 (16...g4 17.e1 axb5 18.c2 White is in control.) 17.e3 Black loses a pawn, but is not completely without counterplay.

16.e1 e8 17.axb5 \text{xb}5

17...axb5 was also not ideal, as after a few further preparatory moves White will obtain strong play on the a-file: 18.c2 d7 (After 18...g6 19.e3 f5 20.d2 White double his rooks on the a-file with an advantage, for instance 20...g5 21.a2, or 20...d7 21.exf5 gxf5 22.a5.) 19.e3 e8 20.a3 (or 20.d2 g5 21.a5) 20...g6 21.ac2 f5 22.exf5 gxf5 23.b4 g7 24.ac2 g5 25.a6 Black has problems.

18.c4 d7

19.c2

Highlighting the drawback of Black's 15th move.

19...e8

After 19...g6 20.e3 White will exert strong pressure on the queenside: 20...e8 21.a3 b8 22.ac2 f5 23.exf5 gxf5 24.b4 b6 25.d3 f6 26.c4 Black is strong on the kingside, but White's attack on the other wing comes first.

20.d2 g6 21.b4

White can afford to mass his pieces on the queenside, as Black's kingside play is rather slow, especially with the queen so far away.

21...g5

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

22.a5!

Less accurate would have been:

22.b3 b7 23.a2

In the ensuing critical position, the placement of the rook on a2 instead of a5 makes a real difference.

23...f5 24.da1 g7

Black is not helped by 24...f4? 25.d3 or 24...fxe4 25.ea6.

25.xa6

25.a5 b6 26.ac6 fxe4 is not so bad for Black.

25...Bb6

There is also 25...fxe4 26.Qac5 dxc5 27.Qxc5 Bxa2 28.Bxa2 Qxc3 29.bxc3 Qb1† 30.Qf1 Qxf1† 31.Qxf1 Qf5 32.Qa7 Qh6 33.Qxc7 e3 and Black is still kicking.

26.Qb4 Bxa2 27.Bxa2 Qd4 28.Qxd4 exd4 29.Qa6 Qb7 30.e5 dxe5 31.Qxe5† f6

Black is very much in the game.

22...Bb7 23.Qb3 Qg7

23...f5 24.Ba1 f4 25.Qa6 f3 26.Qe1 (26.Qd3 fxg2 27.Qac5 is also strong.) 26...Qb6 27.Qac5! Bxa5 28.Qxd7 wins.

24.Ba1 f5

After 24...Qd4?! 25.cxd4 Qxb4 26.dxe5 dxe5 27.Qc5 Rc8 28.Ba6 Black has severe problems.

25.Qxa6

Karpov's fine play on the queenside has resulted in the win of a pawn, but Black is not without chances on the opposite flank.

25...Bb6!

Aiming at f2.

26.Qxb5

Black's initiative is not easy to tame, as illustrated by the following variations.

26.Qh1?! fxe4 27.Qxb5? This backfires badly. (The lesser evil is 27.Qxe4 Qxf2 28.Qe2 c6 when Black is somewhat better.) 27...Qxf2 28.Qc4 g3!! 29.Qxc7 Qxc7 30.Qxc7 Qh8 And Black wins.

26.exf5 Bxf5 27.Qbc5 This time White covers the diagonal before taking on b5. (27.Qac5 Bxa5 28.Bxa5 dxc5 29.Qxb5 c4!! 30.Qxd7 Qxf2 31.Qxe5† f6 and Black stays in the game.) 27...Qxc3 28.bxc3 dxc5 With a highly unclear position.

26...fxe4!

Black ignores the bishop and instead threatens to take on f2.

27.c4?

At the most critical moment of the game Karpov commits a tactical error. At the time of the present game he already possessed a subtle positional understanding and great skill in endgames, but he had not yet developed the calculating ability of a champion. There were two superior alternatives, both of which lead to fascinating complications.

27.Qxd7
With this move White wins an awful lot of material for the queen, but his vulnerable king enables Black to obtain dangerous counterplay.

27...\text{x}xf2! 28.\text{x}xf2

White cannot gain a tempo by offering a queen exchange: 28.\text{b}5?? \text{\textsf{e}1}†!! This beautiful move leads to a forced mate:

29.\text{x}xf1 \text{\textsf{f}8}† 30.\text{c}e2 \text{\textsf{e}3}† 31.\text{d}1 \text{\textsf{f}2} 32.\text{x}g4 \text{\textsf{d}2}† 33.\text{c}1 \text{\textsf{e}1}† 34.\text{d}1 \text{\textsf{x}d}1#!

28...\text{e}3 29.\text{e}3

29.\text{a}c5 \text{\textsf{x}f2}† 30.\text{xf}2 \text{\textsf{x}a}5 31.\text{\textsf{x}a}5 \text{\textsf{d}c}5 32.\text{b}5 \text{\textsf{f}6}† 33.\text{c}e2 \text{c}3 34.\text{\textsf{x}e}3 \text{\textsf{f}4}† Black has a perpetual.

29...\text{\textsf{x}e}3† 30.\text{\textsf{x}h}1

White has far too much material for the queen, but once again his vulnerable king is a problem.

28...\text{c}4!!

Black renews his attack by reopening the a7-g1 diagonal.

29.\text{\textsf{c}5}

This looks best although it is worth checking the alternatives.

29.\text{\textsf{h}1} \text{\textsf{x}f}2 30.\text{\textsf{e}1} (30.\text{\textsf{x}g}4 \text{\textsf{x}a}5! In the closed Ruy Lopez the back rank is seldom a problem for White. Chess is a marvellous game!) 30...\text{g}3 31.\text{\textsf{g}1} \text{c}3 White is in considerable danger.
29...\text{\textit{\textbf{x}g}4} \ \textit{\textbf{xf}2} 30.\textit{\textbf{xf}2} \ (30.\textit{\textbf{b}5} \ \textit{\textbf{xb}5} 31.\textit{\textbf{xf}2} \ \textit{\textbf{xa}6} \text{is equal}) 30...\textit{\textbf{xe}3} 31.\textit{\textbf{xe}3} \ \textit{\textbf{xe}3} \text{+} 32.\textit{\textbf{h}1} \ \textit{\textbf{wd}2} \text{and Black has a nice position because of the e-pawn.}
29...\textit{\textbf{exa}5} 30.\textit{\textbf{xa}5} \ \textit{\textbf{xa}5} 31.\textit{\textbf{de}6} \text{+} \text{g}8!

32.\textit{\textbf{xf}8}
If 32.\textit{\textbf{gx}g}5 \text{e}3! 33.\textit{\textbf{xe}6} \text{+} (33.\textit{\textbf{gx}g}4? \textit{\textbf{a}1} \text{+} 34.\textit{\textbf{d}1} \ \textit{\textbf{xb}2} \text{wins.}) 33...\textit{\textbf{g}7} 34.\textit{\textbf{gx}g}4 \textit{\textbf{a}1} \text{+} 35.\textit{\textbf{d}1} \ \textit{\textbf{xd}1} \text{+} 36.\textit{\textbf{xd}1} \ \textit{\textbf{a}8}! \text{Black is not worse.}
32...\textit{\textbf{a}1} \text{+} 33.\textit{\textbf{f}1} \ \textit{\textbf{xf}1} \text{+} 34.\textit{\textbf{xf}1} \ \textit{\textbf{xf}8}
Black has good chances to hold this opposite-coloured bishop endgame.

27...\textit{\textbf{xf}2}! 28.\textit{\textbf{c}5} \ \textit{\textbf{xe}2} 29.\textit{\textbf{xb}6} \ \textit{\textbf{e}3} \text{+} 30.\textit{\textbf{h}1}

30...\textit{\textbf{xb}5}
This move was not difficult to anticipate, although Karpov may have missed or underestimated Black’s tactical resources as seen in the following variations.

31.\textit{\textbf{b}7}
After 31.\textit{\textbf{xc}7} \textbf{\textit{xa}5} 32.\textbf{\textit{xa}5} \textbf{\textit{xb}6} 33.\textbf{\textit{xb}5} \textit{\textbf{xa}5} 34.\textit{\textbf{xd}6} \textit{\textbf{b}6} Black can press.

31...\textit{\textbf{h}8}! 32.\textbf{\textit{b}8} \textbf{\textit{h}2}!
32...\textit{\textbf{xb}5}? leads to a disaster after 32...\textit{\textbf{g}3} 33.\textit{\textbf{h}3} \ \textit{\textbf{xb}3} \text{f} 34.\textit{\textbf{gxh}3} \textit{\textbf{h}2}!

32...\textit{\textbf{xb}8} 33.\textbf{\textit{xb}8} \textbf{\textit{c}4}
White is a rook up, but Black has two extra pawns and his two bishops are vastly superior to White’s two knights.

34.\textit{\textbf{a}3}?\textbf{\textit{a}6}?
After the superior 34.\textbf{\textit{a}6}? \textbf{\textit{b}6} 35.\textit{\textbf{xc}7} 36.\textit{\textbf{a}7} \textbf{\textit{xb}3} \text{f} 37.\textit{\textbf{xc}7} \textbf{\textit{h}6} White probably gets a draw.

34...\textit{\textbf{xb}2}?
Now it is Black’s turn to err. After 34...\textit{\textbf{xd}5}! he has excellent winning chances despite the missing rook, for instance: 35.\textit{\textbf{b}1} (35.\textbf{\textit{a}5}? \textbf{\textit{b}6}; 35.\textbf{\textit{d}1} \textbf{\textit{xb}2} 36.\textbf{\textit{c}1} \textbf{\textit{xc}1} [36...\textit{\textbf{d}4} also wins] 37.\textit{\textbf{xc}1} \textbf{\textit{xb}8} 38.\textit{\textbf{xc}7} \textbf{\textit{h}6} 39.\textbf{\textit{c}1} \textbf{\textit{c}4} and Black wins) 35...\textbf{\textit{b}6}! 36.\textbf{\textit{d}7} \textbf{\textit{e}3} 37.\textbf{\textit{xb}6} \textbf{\textit{g}2} \textbf{\textit{f}1}
38...d3! White is a rook and a piece up, yet he is completely lost due to the mating threats.

35.Qa5! Qxb8
After 35...xd5? 36.Bxe3 Qxb8 37.Qc3 c5 38.Qc4 Qxc4 39.Qxc4 White should win with the extra rook.
Correct was 35...d3! 36.Qa6 (36.Qbc6 Qb5) 36...Qb6 37.Qc6 Qf2 when Black still has enough counterplay to maintain the balance.

36.Qxc4 Qd4

37.Bd1!
Karpov makes sure he keeps the d5-pawn and thus wins comfortably.

37...Bb4 38.Qe3 Bb5 39.g3 Bc5 40.Qg2 Bb5 41.Qc1
1-0

This fascinating game shows that Karpov was not averse to taking risks. He played on the queenside with great force. He did not control the fight all the way, but emerged triumphant in the end.

After winning again in round three Karpov next faced Jan Timman, with whom he had already drawn in the preliminary qualifier. Timman went on to become Karpov's most frequent opponent in tournaments; actually they may well be the all-time record holders in that regard (not including encounters in match play). According to my database they met across the board in sixty five games, not including matches. If I wanted to be ironic I could mention that they played each other virtually everywhere except the Soviet and Dutch championships. They played two matches, including one for the FIDE World Championship in 1993. Karpov's all time score against Timman, including matches, was twenty nine wins, with fifty eight draws and eight losses. Timman faced a string of World Champions, from Smyslov all the way through to the present Champion Anand, with the exception of Fischer. The Dutchman scored twenty two victories against the world champions, with 156 draws and seventy eight losses.
Timman took part in the European Junior Championship a year earlier, so Karpov was probably familiar with his games. According to the database Timman mainly played the French around that time, so perhaps Karpov's first move was designed to avoid that opening. Note that he avoided the critical 3.e4 here, although he later tested it in two games, both of which ended in draws.

3...b4 4.b3 c5 5.a3 A5 6.e3

It looks like Karpov wanted to avoid an open position against Timman. It is more common to fianchetto the light-squared bishop in this line.

6...0-0?! 

The more closed the position is, the less one should hurry to castle. One gets the feeling that Black was playing too automatically, whereas he would have been better off focusing on the centre with 6...d6?, intending to meet 7.e2 with 7.d5.

7.e2 d5 8.0-0 Ac6

9.e4!

Karpov takes advantage of the unconventional placement of the a5-bishop to play against the c5-pawn. Perhaps his experiences in the Closed Sicilian helped him, as the c5-pawn can sometimes be attacked there too.

9...Ac7

9...b6? was worth considering. The bishop would be uncomfortable, but it is not easy for White to exploit this concretely.

10.Ac2! Ad7

This is not a nice move to have to make, but Black already faced some tricky problems. There are a lot of unusual tactics here. The best chance may have been: 10...d4?! 

After 10...d4? 11.cxd5 Axd5 12.b4 Black is in big trouble. 10...dxc4 is the only other move to have been tested in practice, White won both games, but the line is not completely unplayable with Black. Best play looks to be 11.Ac4 Ad7 12.d4 cxd4 13.b4, with some initiative for White.

11.exd4

After 11.Ac5 dxe3 12.fxe3 Ac5 13.b4 Axh4 14.bxa4 Axb4 15.d4 White has some play for the pawn, but Black should be okay. Karpov usually refrained from sacrificing pawns speculatively.

11...Axd4 12.Axd4 cxd4 13.b4 Ac7

After a natural sequence we reach a double-edged position with chances for both sides.

11.d4!

Black is rather awkwardly placed in the centre, and he has problems developing his queenside. He would like to play ...b6, but the x-ray attack along the c-file makes this move difficult to carry out.

11...dxc4

With 11...cxd4 Black could have steered the game towards an IQP position: 12.cxd4 (there is also 12.exd4 dxc4 13.Ac4 Ab6 14.Axb6 Axb6 15.d1 when White is better developed) 12...cxd5 13.b4 Ac6 14.b5 Aec5 15.Axd4 White is a bit better.
12.dxc5!
This capture virtually wins a pawn.

12...e5
12...dxc5? 13.dxc5 wxc5 14.b4 wins.

The best chance may have been: 12...b5!? Thanks to some unusual tactics Black stays in the game, but fails to equalize. 13.cxb6 axb6 14.b4 dxb4 15.axb4 b5 16.d2 exa4 17.gxa4 bxa4 18.b5 White keeps some initiative on the queenside.

13.e4!
The young Karpov demonstrates his maturity, refraining from grabbing the pawn at once, in order to prevent his opponent from gaining ground in the centre. After the hasty 13.wxc4 e4 14.d4 f6 Black has some chances to create play against White's king.

13...d4 14.dxe4 exd4 15.wxc4 de5
16.b4
This is a useful move, although the drawback is that it drives the black bishop into a prime attacking position. The attempt to do without this move would have led to its own problems: 16.d5 d3! 17.wd1 e6 (17...d4??) 18.wb1 (18.wf4 wad8 19.wb3 wc7 20.wxb7 wd7; 18.f4 wg4 19.wb3 wc2 20.wb5 wb6 21.wxa5 dc6 22.wc6 wxg2 23.wxg2 bxc6 White's king is rather open, which should provide enough play for Black.) 18...b5! (18...wad8 19.b4 wb7 20.f4 and the d3-pawn falls) 19.wxa8 bxh8 20.b4 bxa4 21.bxa5 wb3 The d3-pawn is very strong.

16wc7
After 16...dxc4 17.wxc4 wc7 18.wb2 White remains in control.

17.wd5!
Karpov's strategy is risky, ambitious, and most importantly, correct! With his last move he practically surrounds the d4-pawn, and prepares to advance his f-pawn and possibly his e-pawn as well. Nevertheless, we should not forget that Black has a lot of pieces within striking distance of White's king.

The alternative was 17.wc2. This move keeps an eye on the kingside, but allows Black to generate counterplay with his d-pawn by means of: 17...wd8 18.wb2 d3! 19.wxd3 (After 19.wxd3? wxc4 20.wxh3 wc5 21.g3 wxa1 22.wb2 wxh2 23.wxb2 wxc3 Black has too many pieces for the queen.) 19.wxd3 20.wxd3 wxe4 At this point White has to find only moves to stay in the game. He can do so with 21.wc1! wg6 22.wc3, although Black remains quite active.
17...d3?

Black's best chance was to go for the king directly with:
17...\f6†! 18.\+xf3 \h4 19.\+d1!

After 19.e5 \+xe5 20.f4 d3 21.\+a2 \+xal 22.\+xal \h3 White has trouble getting coordinated.
19.\h3

19...\h3 gets nowhere after 20.f4.

20.e5!

20.\+d3 \+ae8 is very dangerous for White.
20...\+xe5 21.\+e4

After 21.\+d3 \+xh2† 22.\+xh2 \+f1† 23.\+g1 \+h3 24.f4 \+xd3 25.\+d1 \+ae8 Black has a dangerous attack.
21...\+h5 22.\+f4 \+xf4 23.\+xf4 \+xd5 24.\+c3 \+c6 25.\+xd4

White keeps some advantage with his extra pawn, although his fractured kingside gives Black some counterplay.

18.\+d1

26.\+f3 \+e8 27.\+h1
Or 27.\+g1 \+b8.
27...\+xg3†! 28.\+xg3 \+e2†
And Black wins.
19.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{\textit{b}}5

This is objectively wrong, as it virtually sacrifices the bishop. On the other hand, from a practical perspective at least it led to some complications.

The alternative was 19...\textit{e}6, hoping to eliminate the bishop on d5 and basing his play on the d3-pawn. However, White should be able to maintain control after: 20.\textit{c}3! (20.\textit{b}1 \textit{f}5; 20.f4 \textit{g}4 21.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}2) 20...\textit{f}5 (20...\textit{h}5 21.f4! With the knight on c3 this move contains a lot of power.) 21.\textit{b}5 (21.\textit{b}3??) 21...\textit{b}8 22.\textit{g}5 \textit{d}7 23.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{xe}6 24.\textit{d}4 And White wins.

20.\textbf{\textit{b}}a2!

Such a move is typical for Karpov. He improves another piece while removing the rook from its tactically vulnerable location.

20...\textit{h}8

Black hopes to follow up with ...\textit{f}5. If 20...\textit{h}4 21.g3 defends easily.

21.g4! \textit{g}6 22.f4!

Having sown the seeds, Karpov chooses the right moment to reap the harvest.

22...\textbf{\textit{x}}g4

The best chance.

23.\textbf{\textit{x}}g4 \textit{f}5 24.exf5 \textbf{\textit{xf}}5

25.\textbf{\textit{f}}3

White is a piece up and completely winning. Had the game taken place ten years later, Timman may even have resigned here.

25...\textit{ad}8 26.\textit{c}3 \textit{f}6 27.\textit{g}2

27.\textit{b}5 was a slight improvement, but the text move should be fine.

27...\textit{d}4\textup{t} 28.\textit{\textbf{h}}1 \textit{f}6 29.\textit{d}2

Here Karpov was already in time trouble.

29...\textit{h}6

This is a bluff, which works in the game.
30. $f2??

This is a dreadful mistake. This game, along with the previous one, suggests that Karpov was a long way from developing his almost computer-like calculating skills. Almost any sensible move wins, including 30. $f1! $h3 31. $xg7, or 30. $e1! $h3 and now either 31. $g3 or 31. $b5 win.

30... $xh5

After this simple capture Black is back.

31. $e1

Another possibility was 31. $d5 $xd5 32. $e3 $g6 33. $g1 $g8 34. $xg6 (after 34. $g3! White is still better) 34...hxg6 35. $d4 $xd4† 36. $xd4 $xf4 and Black is alive.

31... $e6

Objectively better was: 31... $g8! 32. $d5 ($xd4 $xd4 33. $e7 $xh4) 32... $xd5 33. $g1 White should be still somewhat better here, but his king is airy and Karpov was short of time.

32. $xd5

Karpov misses another opportunity to secure victory: 32. $xe6! $xe6 33. $e1 $f7 34. $b5 $f6 35. $xc7 $d7 36. $c3 And White wins.

32... $xd5

33. $xe6!

A good move, exchanging a strong attacking piece.

33... $xh6 34. $g1!

It is sensible to step aside out of the pin.

34... $b3??

Black is searching for counterplay, but the text move leaves his king fatally exposed. 34... $d7 was better, although White has a good answer in 35. $g5!.

Black’s best continuation was to play 34... $g8!, improving the king’s position, and after 35. $c3 g6 36. $e3 $f7 it would still require a great deal of skill and effort for White to win.

35. $e1!

This move combines attack and defence perfectly, stopping any checks along the back rank while preparing to attack the g7-pawn. Black has no good defence.

35... $g8

35...g6 was no better as 36. $f5 wins.

36. $f5! $f7 37. $h6 $g6 38. $a1 $e5 39. $xe5 $d1† 40. $f2 $c2† 41. $g3

1–0
This game was far from flawless; both of these future stars were a long way from reaching their full potential, but they still produced a very interesting game. It was a pity the mistakes crept in, but the strength of Karpov's positional understanding was very much evident throughout. Later in the event Karpov scored two more wins and became the European Junior Champion.

1967 Summary

In 1967 (including the 1968 part of the aforementioned competition) Karpov played a total of thirty seven games. Of the games in the database, eight were quick draws, finishing in twenty moves and under. Compared with Fischer and Kasparov, the relatively high number of quick draws may have been due to a busier tournament schedule, although it is hard to talk about this with certainty as not every tournament would have been documented on the database.

- Russian Federation Spartakiad (Board two): 4½/7 (+4 =1 -2)
- World Junior Qualifier (5th place): 3½/7 (+3 =1 -3)
- USSR Schools' Spartakiad (Board two): 7/9 (+5 =4 -0)
- European U18, Groningen (1st place): 10/14 (+6 =8 -0)

Total 67.6% (+18 =14 -5)
In this year Karpov had twenty seven games in the database, slightly fewer than before. His first two events were matches. The Soviet Union used to play a national team match against Yugoslavia every year, including junior boards as well. Karpov played in the latter, winning his own four-game match against Vujakovic by the impressive score of 3½—½. His next event was a USSR – Scandinavia junior match in Tallinn, in which he lost to Bo Jacobsen by the score of 1½—½ on board two.

Later in 1968 Karpov won a tournament, the Moscow University Championship, by winning seven games and drawing six (although three of the draws cannot be found in the database). We will look at one of his wins.

His opponent only has one other game in the database. His name means “the one who is chosen”, although the game itself has been selected for completely unrelated reasons! It provides a nice example of the young Karpov’s skill in handling opposite-coloured bishop middlegames.

### Game 12

Sergey Vyborev – Anatoly Karpov

Moscow 1968

1.e4 c5 2.∈f3 a6

Maybe Karpov was hoping for 3.d4, which is well known to be ineffective against Black's chosen move order.

3.∈c3

The main options are 3.c3 and 3.c4.

3...b5?*

A logical reaction. The same idea is sometimes seen in the Closed Sicilian lines with 2.∈c3 and 3.g3. Maybe Karpov did not like to face ...a6 and ...b5 when he played that way with White.

4.a4?*

Black is already toying with the idea of playing ...b4, so why spend a tempo to force it? 4.d4 was more consistent, when it looks interesting for Black to try: 4...e6? With the knight on c3 Black can consider eschewing the pawn exchange on d4. 5.d5 (5.∈f4 ∈b7) 5...∈b7 With a double-edged and almost uncharted position.
This move is trickier than it looks.

White defends the e4-pawn, as ...e6 was a threat.

Once again Karpov embarks on a risky and ambitious strategy. He is willing to give up a valuable bishop, which was also his only developed piece, in order to compromise the enemy structure.

Hunting down the d5-pawn.

Black is behind in development and must therefore exercise great caution. For example, 9...Qb6? allows a winning raid: 10.Qxf7+! Qxf7 11.Qe5+ Qg8 (11...Qe8 12.Qh5+ wins.) 12.Qf3 Qe8 13.dxc5 And Black is lost.

With this move White regains his pawn, but his light-squared bishop will have no function in the long run.

This strong move gains space and restricts the enemy pieces, while preparing to develop pressure along the e-file. It is an instructive exception to the rule that the side with better development should strive to open the position. 10...g6 11.0-0 Qg7 12.Be1 0-0 13.Qg5 White has lovely compensation for the pawn, and risks nothing.

Black has to get rid of the c5-pawn as it is currently fixing the weakness on d7 as well as restricting his pieces.

White wins back the pawn, and one may even think that he is doing well as he has a
passed a-pawn. However, a closer inspection reveals that it cannot be pushed.

In the event of 14.\textit{d}d1 \textit{d}xe3 15.\textit{w}xe3 \textit{w}a7 White is unable to safeguard the c-pawn.

14...\textit{d}xe3 15.\textit{f}xe3 \textit{f}xc5

Opposite-coloured bishop middlegames can be hard to judge – or perhaps it would be more accurate to say easy to misjudge. At his peak Karpov created masterpieces from positions of this type.

16.\textit{f}b5
If 16.0-0-0 \textit{f}xe3† picks up a pawn.

16...0-0 17.0-0
17.\textit{e}xc6?! was worth considering.

17...\textit{d}5
The immediate 17...\textit{e}c5?! would have avoided the idea in the following note.

18.\textit{h}1
18.\textit{f}xc6?! Exchanging the bishop was the lesser evil, despite the fact that the a-pawn will require careful defence. 18...\textit{f}xc6 19.a5 \textit{a}6 20.\textit{d}d4 \textit{b}7 21.\textit{b}b3 \textit{d}6 Black remains comfortable, but it is not easy to formulate a plan that will really hurt White.

18...\textit{d}e5!
This renders White’s bishop useless.

19.\textit{e}2 \textit{f}5!
Fixing the e3-pawn as a permanent target for the black bishop.

20.\textit{a}e1 \textit{g}4!
Karpov starts building his attack against the king, as well as the e3-pawn. White can do nothing to counteract his opponent’s domination on the dark squares.

21.\textit{d}d2 \textit{f}6?!
Karpov goes after the king rather than playing 21...\textit{b}6, even though this wins material by force after 22.c4 \textit{d}xe3 or 22.\textit{d}d4 \textit{f}4.

22.g3 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{g}2
23...\textbf{b6}!

Only now does Karpov decide to win the e3-pawn, after White has put himself in position for a knight fork on e3. The game is practically over.

24.\textbf{Wh4} \textbf{e3}t 25.\textbf{x}e3 \textbf{e3} 26.\textbf{xb}xb4 \textbf{f}4 27.\textbf{d}e7 \textbf{e}6 28.\textbf{f}d3 \textbf{e}5 29.\textbf{d}d7 \textbf{d}d6 30.\textbf{c}c3 \textbf{d}d8 31.\textbf{c}c6 \textbf{e}3

0–1

Karpov's next event was the junior section of the Soviet Team Championship, where he played on the top board. He scored two wins and one draw. According to the database, his opponent in the following game played one major tournament in the sixties and defeated Romanishin in one game. He went on to become an international master.

\begin{game}{13}
\textbf{Boris Nisman – Anatoly Karpov}

\textit{Soviet Team Championship (juniors), Riga 1968}

1.\textbf{c}c4 \textbf{d}d6 2.\textbf{d}c3 \textbf{e}6 3.\textbf{d}d4

The aggressive Mikenas variation with 3.e4 was only played against Karpov three times. After drawing with Miles and Timman in 1977, Karpov suffered a defeat in this line against Korchnoi at the Baguio World Championship final in 1978, after which he almost never allowed it again.

3...\textbf{b}b4

The Nimzo-Indian was a mainstay of Karpov's repertoire throughout his career.

4.a3

Statistically speaking 4.\textbf{d}f3 was the most problematic move for Karpov, but this is explained by the fact that Kasparov employed it against him regularly. He only faced the text move four times, and triumphed on each occasion.

4...\textbf{xc}c3t 5.\textbf{xc}c3 \textbf{c}c5 6.\textbf{e}e3

Zakharov played 6.f3 here at the 1976 USSR Championship, and Karpov went on to win a remarkable endgame.

6...\textbf{c}c6 7.\textbf{e}e2?! 7.\textbf{d}d3 is more common.

7...\textbf{b}6 8.\textbf{g}g3 \textbf{h}a6

According to the database this move was only ever played in the present game. The usual course is 8...0–0 9.\textbf{e}e4 \textbf{d}d8.

9.\textbf{d}d3

9.e4! is the critical test, now that the thematic ...\textbf{d}d8 is unavailable.

9...\textbf{a}a5 10.\textbf{e}e2

10...\textbf{d}d6

Karpov gives up the plan of bringing the f6-knight to d6, instead embarking on a somewhat surprising strategy.

11.\textbf{b}b2?!

The bishop has a bleak future here.

11...\textbf{d}d7
This looks a bit mysterious but is all part of the plan. Karpov leaves the c4-pawn alone, at least for a while.

12.e4

12...0-0-0!

Karpov solves the problem of his king in an original way.

13.a4 h5!?

Now he starts pushing White back on the other wing.

14.0-0?!  

White should have prevented the further advance of the h-pawn.

14...h4 15.Qh1 e5!  

Gaining space, while facilitating the transfer of the knight to f4.

16.f4  

Waiting passively with 16.d5 was probably the better choice. Black would still have had a nice position, although at least 16...Qh5 can safely be met by 17.g3.

16...Qh5! 17.fxe5

17.f5!? Sacrificing the exchange in a more closed position is more in keeping with chess principles as White has better chances to build a fortress. Play might continue 17...Qf4 (17...Qc7?) 18.Qxf4 exf4 19.Qf2 with reasonable compensation.

17...dxe5 18.d5 Qf4!

Karpov takes some risk by winning the exchange as his pieces are not well centralized. Nevertheless the decision is justified.

19.Qxf4 exf4 20.e5

Objectively 20.Qf2 was better, although Black's advantage is clear after 20...f6. The text move looks very natural, and indeed if White can find time to get coordinated then his central pawns could become a mighty force. Fortunately Karpov has assessed the position correctly and prepared a strong counter.

20...h3!

Opening up White's kingside.

21.g4

In the event of 21.g3 Black has the nice idea of 21...Qxc4? (21...g5 should be enough for an advantage, but it is hard to argue with the text move) 22.Qxc4 Qxc4 23.Qxc4 Qxd5 24.Qxd5 Qxd5 25.gxf4 Qd2 and White is in huge trouble.

21...Qb8

21...Qxc4? looks strong here too.
There is no time for this. The best chance was 22...f5! (22...hde8 23.e1 g5 24.e4) 23.e4 g5 Black soon attacks the e5-pawn.

22...xc4!

After this clever tactic White’s position falls apart.

23.xc4 xc4 24.xc4 xg4+ 25.g3 h4 26.xf4 xxf4 27.xf4 xf4

Black is winning easily, and Karpov has no trouble converting his advantage.

22...xc4!

After this clever tactic White’s position falls apart.

23.xc4 xc4 24.xc4 xg4+ 25.g3 h4 26.xf4 xxf4 27.xf4 xf4

Black is winning easily, and Karpov has no trouble converting his advantage.

Karpov’s strategy worked to perfection – he sheltered his king on the queenside and outplayed his somewhat naive opponent on the kingside in an impressive and instructive manner.

After this win Karpov continued his fine form, and amassed a superb nine points from his first ten games. His victims included Romanishin and Piesina, and one of his draws was against Vaganian. In the last round Karpov’s team (the armed forces) had to play their main rivals Burevestnik, with the latter needing to win by a score of 6–4 to secure overall victory.

Karpov’s opponent in this tense situation was a talented junior player named Ilya Mikliaev who, according to the database, had also achieved the remarkable score of nine points from ten games. Amongst others he won impressively against Vaganian with the black pieces, and drew with Romanishin. Prior to this event in a USSR – Scandinavia match Mikliaev also defeated Ulf Andersson 1½–½, after winning a fine attacking game.

According to the database, Mikliaev gave up chess after the following game. This is sad for chess, as he most probably would have become a world class player. I asked several Russian players what happened to Mikliaev. I was surprised to find that hardly anyone even knew his name! Finally Grandmaster Razuvaev provided the answer. Mikliaev went to university and became a very successful cardiologist. He excelled in this field, and at a remarkably early age became a director of a major hospital in Kharkov. Such a demanding job left him with no time for chess. I managed to get in contact with Mikliaev and I hope to devote a chapter to him in one of my future books.
Game 14

Anatoly Karpov – Ilya Mikliaev

Soviet Team Championship, Riga 1968

1.e4 e5 2.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 3.\( \text{b}5 \) a6 4.\( \text{a}4 \) d6

Karpov may have anticipated this variation, as Mikliaev had already used it to draw with Romanishin.

5.c3 d7 6.0–0 g6 7.d4 g7 8.h3

Eighteen years later Karpov spared this move and won a nice game against Spassky:

8...\( \text{d}e5 \) 9.\( \text{e}3 \) 0–0 10.\( \text{bd}2 \)

Around that time the tenth world champion had some success with developing the knight on e7, but Karpov prepared well for it.

10...\( \text{e}8 \) 11.\( \text{b}3 \) b6

11...\( \text{h}8 \)? may have been more useful.

12.dxe5 dxe5

12...\( \text{xe}5 \)? was worth considering.

13.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{h}8 \) 14.\( \text{c}1 \)

Also after 14.\( \text{xe}6 \)? \( \text{xe}6 \) 15.\( \text{d}d6 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 16.\( \text{xf}7 \) \( \text{xf}7 \) 17.\( \text{xf}7 \) White is somewhat better.

14...\( \text{g}4 \) 15.\( \text{g}5 \) h6 16.\( \text{h}3 \) \( \text{d}7 \)

16...\( \text{h}5 \)? 17.\( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{hxg}5 \) 18.\( \text{g}xh5 \) f6 19.\( \text{hxg}6 \) looks better than the game.

17.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{h}7 \) 18.a4 f5? 19.\( \text{exf}5 \) \( \text{gx}f5 \)

20.\( \text{ex}e5 \)!

Now Black’s king becomes vulnerable.

21.\( \text{xe}5 \) 22.\( \text{xe}5 \) \( \text{xe}5 \) 23.\( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 24.\( \text{xe}7 \) 25.\( \text{xe}7 \) 26.\( \text{xd}7 \)

The two pawns for the exchange and Black’s open king gave White a clear advantage, Karpov – Spassky, Bugojno 1986.

8...\( \text{d}6 \) 9.\( \text{bd}2 \) 0–0 10.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{e}8 \)

Black more often starts playing on the kingside with 10...\( \text{h}5 \) or 10...\( \text{e}8 \).

11.\( \text{c}2 \)

Karpov defends the e4-pawn in order to prepare \( \text{f}1 \).

11...\( \text{h}6 \)

12.a3!?

This subtle move is directed against the following pawn sacrifice: 12.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{exd}4 \)!

13.\( \text{xd}4 \) d5! 14.e5 \( \text{d}e4 \) 15.\( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{dxe}4 \) 16.\( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 17.\( \text{e}1 \) (17.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{xe}5 \)) 17...\( \text{b}4 \) Black has reasonable compensation.

12...\( \text{h}7 \)

Black plays a useful waiting move, defending the h6-pawn. Later he may think of freeing his position with ...d5.

13.\( \text{d}1 \)

If 13.b4 then 13...d5! exploits the weakening
of the c3-pawn and the long diagonal in general.

13...b5!
Usually Black searches for counterplay on the kingside in this variation, but Mikhaev instead chooses to play on the queenside.

14.Qg3
Also possible was 14.d5!? Qa5 15.Qe3 Qb7 16.b4 and White has a small advantage.

14...Qa5 15.b3 c5

Black has obtained a playable position which resembles the Chigorin Variation of the main line.

16.d5 c4
Black could have regrouped the knight with 16...Qb7!!, keeping the queenside more fluid.

17.b4 Qb7
One of Black's main challenges in the ensuing middlegame will be to find a useful role for this knight.

18.Qe3 Qc7
The hasty 18...a5 gives White the option of opening the queenside: 19.a4! Qc7 20.axb5

\[ \textcolor{red}{Qxb5} 21.a4 Qxa4 22.Qxa4 axb4 23.Qxb4 \]
White has the initiative on the b-file, and the c4-pawn is a target.

19.Qh2
Karpov prepares to gain space on the kingside with the thematic f2-f4. It was also possible to focus on the other flank for a while with 19.a4 Qeb8 20.Qe2, with a typical slight plus.

19...a5 20.Qd2 Qa6
Mikhaev takes control over the a-file, although in the game he is unable to do much with it. Another idea was 20...Qd8 in order to improve the misplaced knight without delay. A logical continuation would be: 21.f4 exf4 22.Qxf4 Qg8 Black has to choose which knight he improves. Now one of them defends the king, 23.Qf1 Qf6 24.Qe3 Qf7 25.Qf3 Qe5 26.Qd4 White keeps some advantage.

21.Qf1 Qea8 22.Qac1!
Karpov does not mind giving up the a-file, as Black will not be able to hurt him there. The rook moves into a defensive position where it protects the light-squared bishop as well as the c3-pawn.

22.axb4 23.axb4
Black decides to improve the b7-knight by means of ...f6 ...\text{d}d8 and ...\text{f}f7. The other main plan was to vacate the d7-square for his other knight, in order to occupy the e5-square after White's intended f2-f4. There were three different ways of going about this.

One idea was to begin with the flexible 23...\text{a}a2!? and only later decide where to retreat the d7-bishop.

There was also 23...\text{e}e8, for instance: 24.f4 exf4 25.\text{x}x\text{f}4 (25.\text{x}x\text{f}4 \text{d}d7) 25...\text{d}d7 26.\text{g}g4 h5 27.\text{e}e3 \text{e}e5 Black is doing all right here.

Finally, Black could also have freed the d7-square with:

23...\text{c}c8 24.f4 exf4

After 24...\text{e}e7 25.f5 Black remains passive.

25.\text{f}f4

25.\text{x}x\text{f}4 \text{a}a2! (25...\text{d}d7 26.\text{x}x\text{h}6! 26.\text{f}f3 \text{d}d7 (or 26...\text{a}a6 27.\text{d}d4 \text{d}d7 28.\text{c}c\text{e}1 \text{a}a8 and Black is in the game) 27.\text{d}d4 \text{e}e5 28.\text{x}x\text{b}5 \text{d}d7 29.\text{d}d4 \text{d}d3 30.\text{b}b1 \text{e}e8 Black has compensation for the pawn.)

25...\text{e}e7 26.\text{f}f3 \text{d}d7

There is also 26...\text{a}a2 27.\text{d}d4 \text{d}d7 28.\text{c}c\text{f}1 \text{d}d8 when it is not easy to advance White's position.

27.\text{d}d4 \text{e}e5 28.\text{x}x\text{b}5 \text{a}a2 29.\text{c}c\text{f}1 \text{d}d7

30.\text{d}d4 \text{a}a4

White has an extra pawn but his pieces are tied up.

24.f4 \text{f}6 25.h4

Karpov wants to weaken Black's kingside. In the event of the immediate 25.f5 g5, White would only be able to attack along a single file, which may not be enough. Play might continue: 26.\text{h}h5 (or 26.\text{d}d1 \text{e}e8 27.\text{h}h5 \text{a}a2) 26...\text{e}e8 27.\text{x}x\text{g}7 (27.\text{d}d1!? \text{a}a2 28.\text{c}c2) 27...\text{x}x\text{g}7 28.h4 \text{d}d8 White is somewhat better, but a tough fight lies ahead.

25...\text{e}e8

Karpov provokes ...h5, hoping that it will loosen Black's kingside.

The other main idea was 26.h5. This move gains space, fixes Black's kingside and virtually buries the g8-knight and the g7-bishop. Nevertheless it has one major drawback - it make the position so closed that White may be left without a convincing way to penetrate. A logical continuation would be: 26...\text{g}5 27.\text{x}x\text{g}5 \text{x}x\text{g}5 28.\text{g}g4 \text{a}a2! 29.\text{f}f2 \text{h}h8 30.\text{b}b6 \text{d}d7 (30...\text{e}e7?! 31.\text{f}f5 \text{d}d7) 31.\text{f}f4 \text{b}b8 32.\text{c}c3 \text{d}d2 Black gets some counterplay, but more importantly it is hard to see how White can invade along the f-file.
The Making of a Champion

26...h5!
Black decides to gain some time and aim for counterplay, but in doing so he weakens his kingside. It was also possible to focus on the opposite flank with:

26...a2!? 27.f5
27.h5 g5 28.fxg5 fxg5 transposes to the previous note.

27...h5
After 27...g5? 28.hxg5 hxg5 29.dxf2 White has a decisive attack on the h-file.

28.dxf2
28.dh2 a8a3 is okay for Black.

28...hxh6
Another possibility is 28..f7 29.e2 e7 (29...a8a3?! 30.dxf4 dxf4 31.dxf4 dxf4 32.dxf4 dxf4 when Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.

29.d1 g7 30.f5 e7 31.d5

31...d8f8!
This is a weird looking move, but it may well be a good one as it prepares to eliminate the strong f5-knight by means of ...e7.

The alternative was: 31.dxe3 32.dxe3 h8 (32...d7 33.d3) 33.d3 e7 34.g3 g6 Black is passive, but has reasonable chances to hold.

32.g3 d7
The immediate 32...e7? runs into 33.g3 e7 34.dh6.

33.g3 e7 34.d2
34.e2 can also be met by 34...e7.

34...e7
There are no direct threats, so Black could also consider 34...a2!? first.

35.dh6 dhd6
35...e8? is also possible.

36.dhxh6 d7g6 37.dh2 d8g8
Black is not worse, and he may be able to target the h4-pawn.

27.dh2

27...exf4
This is another important and double-edged decision. Black gives up his control over the d4-square in order to create his own knight outpost on e5.

If Black intends to exchange on f4, he should do so immediately. If he tries to prepare it with 27...d8? then White plays 28.f5.

Another idea is 27...a2, allowing 28.f5 dh6 29.e2. In the resulting position White has a slight edge thanks to his kingside pressure after 29...dxf4 30.exf4 e7f7 or 29...e7 30.f5 g6.

Finally, Black can improve his bishop with:

27...d6d6 28.dxe2 (After 28.dxe2 a2 29.dxe2 d8 30.dh1 f7 Black has managed to improve his knight, and remains in the game.)
Now the natural 28...d8 allows White to launch a dangerous attack with 29.g4!, but after the safer 28...d7 it is not easy for White to increase the pressure against Black's kingside.

28...xf4 d8 29.d1!!

Objectively this may not hurt Black, but who would enjoy being threatened by a possible e5 and w.xh5†?

Another possibility was 29.e3 f7 30.e5 xex5 31.xh5 b2 32.xg7 xg7 with a balanced position.

29...h8

Mikliaev wants to keep the h-pawn. It was also possible to improve the knight at once with 29...d7†, not fearing 30.e5 xex5 31.xh5† (or 31.xh5 h8) 31...h6 when Black remains quite solid on the kingside.

Finally the knight achieved his goal and reached the desired e5-square. A more straightforward alternative was 31...hxg4! White's heavy pieces are far away, therefore Black can withstand the attack on the kingside. 32.xg4 c8 (32...e5 33.d4 d7 34.e3) 33.d4 e5 Black has enough pieces around his king to defend himself.

32.g5 xh5 33.g3

Karpov immediately homes in on the new target on h5.

33...f7

It looks interesting to sacrifice a pawn as White's king is a bit exposed: 33...h6? 34.xh5 c7 35.g3 xg4 36.xf4 h6 37.d2 d7 Black has compensation.

34.f3 g4!?

Black wishes to preserve his strong knight, but the idea is too slow. He should have preferred the immediate 34...h6! 35.xe5 (after 35.d2 g6 36.h2 d3 Black is becoming active) 35...xex5 36.d2 (or 36.xh6 xh6 37.xg2 g4 and Black is all right) 36...g6 37.h2xd2 38.xd2 xh6 Black has enough of a grip on the position.

30.e2

Karpov prepares to open the kingside.

30...f7

If 30...h6 31.d4 h7 32.g4 hxg4 33.xg4 e5 34.f2 White's position is slightly preferable.

31.g4 e5f?

35.d4
From here the knight controls a lot of important squares.

35...\texttt{h6}! 
Black exchanges his bad bishop. This is positionally desirable, but the bishop was also an important defender of the black kingside.

A better idea was 35...\texttt{e7}, intending to attack the weak h4-pawn. 36.\texttt{e6} \texttt{g6} 37.\texttt{f5} \texttt{f8} 38.\texttt{d2} \texttt{d7} Despite the menacing appearance of the white knights, Black is holding his position together.

Black can also begin by taking away the e6-square with 35...\texttt{d7} and only then switch his attention to the h4-pawn: 36.\texttt{d2} \texttt{e7} 37.\texttt{d1} \texttt{g6} 38.\texttt{xg4} (after 38.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{xf4} 39.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{h6} 40.\texttt{h1} \texttt{g8} 41.\texttt{g1} \texttt{h7} Black has lovely counterplay for the pawn) 38...\texttt{xg4} 39.\texttt{xb5} \texttt{d7} 40.\texttt{d4} \texttt{h3} 41.\texttt{f2} \texttt{g4} Black is very much alive.

36.\texttt{d2} \texttt{xf4} 37.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{h6}!!

37...\texttt{e7}! It was more effective to attack the h4-pawn to tie White up for a few moves. 38.\texttt{gf5} (38.\texttt{d5} \texttt{g6} 39.\texttt{d2} \texttt{e5}) 38...\texttt{g6} 39.\texttt{g3} \texttt{e5} 40.\texttt{e6} \texttt{d7} Black's knights succeed in holding the position together.

40.\texttt{d1}!
Karpov expels the knight and vacates the c2-square for his rook.

40...\texttt{e5} 41.\texttt{c2} \texttt{a2}!
Black exchanges the rook before it can join in the attack.

42.\texttt{xa2} \texttt{xa2} 43.\texttt{g3}
This double attack wins a pawn.

43...\texttt{a3}!!
Mikliaev is looking for counterplay on the wrong side. It turns out that Black could have kept himself in the game with:

43...\texttt{d7}!
Aiming for counterplay against White's king.

44.\texttt{e2}!
The best response. After 44.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{h3} 45.\texttt{f2} \texttt{d3} Black wins material.
44.\(\text{cxc2}\)
Now Black attacks the pawn under more favourable conditions.
45.\(\text{x}f6\) 46.\(\text{xc3}\) 47.\(\text{h5}\) 48.\text{f2}
After 48.\(\text{h6}\)? \(\text{g8}\) 49.\text{xd6} \(c3\) 50.\text{b3} 51.\text{b4} \(\text{b}2\) 52.\text{f6} \(\text{f}7\)
Black is barely able to defend himself against the mating threats, but on the opposite flank his c-pawn is a monster.
53.\(\text{h5}\) \(c2\) 54.\(\text{xf7}\)

44.\(\text{xf6}\)
Karpov enters an endgame. In practice it turns to be a good decision as he outplays his opponent, although objectively Black should still be all right.
44.\(\text{d2}\) deserved consideration, for instance:
44.\(\text{g7}\) 45.\text{h2} 46.\text{f5} \(\text{h8}\) 47.\text{b2}
(after 47.\text{g1} \(\text{g6}\) 48.\text{f4} \(\text{h7}\) Black manages to keep his position together) 47...\(\text{a6}\) 48.\text{d4} \(\text{g6}\) 49.\text{g2} \(\text{e}8\) 50.\text{g1} And White is a bit better.

44.\(\text{xf6}\) 45.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{a1}\)?
Despite some imperfections, the overall quality of Black's play up to this point has been quite high. The text move is his first really serious mistake. This was the last game of the Armed Forces – Burevestnik match and Mikliaev's team was already leading 7-2, so they achieved their objective. Perhaps this even contributed to a loss of concentration from Mikliaev.

The correct continuation was 45...\(\text{xc3}\) 46.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{d3}\) 47.\text{e2} \(\text{g7}\) (47...\(\text{xb4}\)?) 48.\text{xd6} \(\text{f4}\) 49.\text{f2} \(\text{h3}\) 50.\text{g2} \(\text{f4}\) and White should settle for the perpetual, as the attempt
to play on with 51.\textit{\texttt{h2}}? only leads to trouble for White after 51...\textit{\texttt{g6}}.

46.\textit{\texttt{f1}} \textit{\texttt{e1}}

47.\textit{\texttt{e2}}?

Throughout his career Karpov rarely made mistakes in endgames, but here he misses a simple win: 47.\textit{\texttt{xh5}}! \textit{\texttt{xc3}} 48.\textit{\texttt{e2}}! \textit{\texttt{e3}} 49.\textit{\texttt{f8}}\texttt{t} And White wins a piece.

In those days players were used to adjournments, and it may well be that the last round took place in one session. The present game has been full of challenges for both players, so it would be perfectly understandable if they were fatigued.

47...\textit{\texttt{a1}} 48.\textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{g8}} 49.\textit{\texttt{f5}} \textit{\texttt{a6}} 50.\textit{\texttt{f2}}!

Karpov starts improving his king, which will decide the outcome of the game.

50...\textit{\texttt{g6}} 51.\textit{\texttt{e3}}?

This time the centralization of the king is less important than keeping the knight on the board. The correct route to victory was: 51.\textit{\texttt{d4}}! \textit{\texttt{xe4}} (51...\textit{\texttt{b6}} 52.\textit{\texttt{e3}}) 52.\textit{\texttt{e3}} \textit{\texttt{xd5}} 53.\textit{\texttt{xb5}} \textit{\texttt{b6}} (53...\textit{\texttt{f7}} 54.\textit{\texttt{f6}}) 54.\textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{e7}} 55.\textit{\texttt{f5}} White restores his one-pawn advantage and wins easily as his king is also much better than Black's.

51.\textit{\texttt{xf5}} 52.\textit{\texttt{xf5}}

After 52.\textit{\texttt{xf5}} \textit{\texttt{a3}} 53.\textit{\texttt{d2}} \textit{\texttt{a2}}\texttt{t} 54.\textit{\texttt{c2}} \textit{\texttt{a3}} 55.\textit{\texttt{f6}} (55.\textit{\texttt{hx5}} \textit{\texttt{f3}}\texttt{t}) 55...\textit{\texttt{g7}} 56.\textit{\texttt{xd6}} \textit{\texttt{f3}}\texttt{t} 57.\textit{\texttt{d1}} \textit{\texttt{xc3}} 58.\textit{\texttt{d7}}\texttt{t} \textit{\texttt{f6}} Black is rather active.

52...\textit{\texttt{a2}}?

This is too slow. Black should waste no time in playing 52...\textit{\texttt{a3}}! to attack the c3-pawn. Play may then continue 53.\textit{\texttt{d4}} (or 53.\textit{\texttt{hx5}} \textit{\texttt{xc3}}\texttt{t} 54.\textit{\texttt{f4}} \textit{\texttt{g7}}! and Black's king is safe) 53...\textit{\texttt{a1}} 54.\textit{\texttt{e2}} transposing to the game while avoiding the improvement mentioned in the next note. (It should be mentioned that 54.\textit{\texttt{f6}} is not an improvement due to 54...\textit{\texttt{f3}}\texttt{t}.)

53.\textit{\texttt{d4}}?

It is hard to guess the motivation for this poor move. I would guess that with the time control approaching (the classical time control in those days was two and a half hours for forty moves and an extra hour for each sixteen moves thereafter) the players were both in time trouble.

53.\textit{\texttt{f2}} This simple move ensures a two pawn advantage as the h5-pawn will drop. Nevertheless Black has some chances to resist thanks to his superior minor piece. 53...\textit{\texttt{a3}} 54.\textit{\texttt{c2}} \textit{\texttt{g7}} 55.\textit{\texttt{hx5}} At this point the best chance looks to be 55...\textit{\texttt{a8}}?!. (Instead after
55...\=a1 56.\=e8 \=h1 57.\=e2 \=f6 58.\=xb5 \=h4 or 58...\=xf5 59.\=c6 White has excellent winning chances.) In the resulting position White will have a hard time converting his two-pawn advantage.

The strongest move of all was: 53.\=xh5! White not only takes the second pawn, but more importantly he can begin weaving a mating net. 53...\=c2 (53...\=h2 54.\=g1t \=f8 55.\=f4!! \=xh4t 56.\=g5 \=h2 57.\=a1 wins) 54.f6 \=xc3t

55.\=f4! (55.\=e4 is weaker because of 55...\=h3.) Karpov probably missed the key concept of utilizing the king in a mating attack. In later years Karpov would demonstrate a remarkable, yet not widely recognized ability to organize incredibly effective checkmating attacks against the enemy king, especially in positions with few pieces remaining. It seems that at the tender age of seventeen he had not fully developed that particular skill. 55...\=h3 56.\=g1t \=f8 57.\=a1 And White catches the enemy king.

53...\=a1?

Black could have turned the tables with 53...\=h2! 54.\=g1t \=f8! 55.\=e3 \=xh4 56.\=e2 \=f7 when he stands better.

54.\=e2 \=a2 55.\=xb5

This wins a second pawn, but thanks to the strong knight on e5 Black still can resist.

56...\=d2t?

Black wants to take the c3-pawn, but in doing so he improves White's king.

56...\=f8! would have given good drawing chances, for instance: 57.\=f6 \=h3 58.\=e2 \=d3 59.\=e4 \=c1 (also after 59...\=e5!? 60.\=h5 \=f7 61.\=f4 \=d7 Black probably gets away with it) 60.\=e6 \=xh4t 61.\=e3 \=f7 62.\=f3 (after 62.\=xd6 \=h3t 63.\=d2 \=xe2 64.\=xe2 \=xc3 65.\=b6 \=b3 Black holds) 62...\=a2 63.\=xd6 \=xc3 64.\=b6 \=a2 65.\=xb5 \=c3 66.\=e4 c2 67.\=xc2 \=xb4 68.\=e4 \=xd5t Black succeeds in reaching a rook and bishop versus rook ending, which should be a draw.

57.\=e4 \=d3
58.f6!
The pawn not only takes a step closer to promotion, but also controls some key squares around the enemy king while opening the door for the white king to invade.

58...Bxc3 59.Bf5 Be3
The rook stops the king, but White has other pieces as well.

60.Bf1! Bd7
60...c3 61.Bg1+ Bf8 62.Ba1 wins.

61.Bg1+ Bf8

62.Ba1!
Now Black's king is caught.

62...Be5+ 63.Bg6 Be8 64.Ba7 Bd8 65.Bc7 Bg8 66.Bg5!
Karpov prepares to advance his h-pawn, which will be the final straw for the defence. The king has ended up being the star performer - this was its seventh move since castling to g1.

66...Bh8 67.Bg6 Bg8 68.h5 Bh8 69.h6 c3 70.Bxc3 Bf8 71.f7
1-0
This was a hard fought victory. Though it was far from flawless, Karpov's performance showcased a lot of important qualities required by a professional player: the desire to beat a strong rival; being able to withstand great tension; the ability to strive for a win without fear of losing; and most importantly, the ability to dig deep when tired and find a way to win.

1968 Summary

USSR - Yugoslavia (junior match): 3½/4 (+3 =1 -0)
USSR - Scandinavia (junior match): ½/2 (+0 =1 -1)
Moscow University Championship (1st place): 10/13 (+7 =6 -0)
USSR Team Championship (junior section): 10/11 (+9 =2 -0)

Total 80 % (+19 =10 -1)
This was the year in which Spassky succeeded in wresting the World Championship crown from Petrosian at the second attempt. It was also a highly successful year for the young Karpov. He started the year with a three-player qualification tournament for the World Junior Championship. The three contestants played six-game matches against each other. Karpov’s rivals were Rafael Vaganian, who went on to become a famous grandmaster, and the less well known Mikhail Steinberg, who features in the following game.

Steinberg’s last game on the database was from 1972, but his last year as a fully active player was 1971. It was reported that he became seriously ill. He defeated many strong Soviet players, and had he been able to pursue a chess career he would probably have become a strong grandmaster.

### Game 15

**Anatoly Karpov – Mikhail Steinberg**

Leningrad (6) 1969

1.e4 e5 2.©f3 ©c6 3.©b5 a6 4.©a4 ©f6 5.©e2

Interestingly this was Karpov’s final flirtation with this variation, which brought him a perfect three wins from three games.

5...b5 6.©b3 ©e7 7.c3 0–0 8.d4

Karpov occupies the centre before castling.

8...d6

With 8...exd4?! Black could try to exploit the presence of White’s queen and king on the e-file: 9.e5 (9.cxd4 d5 10.e5 ©e4 is nice for Black) 9...©e8?! 10.0–0 dxc3 (10...f8??) 11.©g5 d5 12.exd6 ©d4 With tremendous complications.

9.0–0 exd4 10.cxd4 ©g4

10...d5?! 11.e5 ©e4 is interesting.

11.©e3?!

It is more usual to defend the d-pawn with the rook in this variation.

11...©a5

11...d5?! looks natural, but does not appear to have been tested here.
The Making of a Champion

12.\textbf{c2} \textbf{c4} 13.\textbf{c1} e5 14.b3 \textbf{b6} 15.\textbf{b2} \textbf{d7}

15...\textbf{h}5 and 15...\textbf{c}8 are both possible.

16.\textbf{a4}!?

Despite being a bit behind in development, Karpov decides to spend a tempo softening Black's pawn structure.

16...\textbf{bxa4}

Black has a few alternatives of roughly equal merit:

16...\textbf{x}f3 17.\textbf{x}f3 \textbf{bxa4} 18.\textbf{bxa4} \textbf{c4} 19.\textbf{c3} \textbf{cxd4} 20.\textbf{xd4} \textbf{f6} 21.\textbf{xf6} \textbf{xf6} with reasonable play on the dark squares.

16...\textbf{cxd4} 17.\textbf{axb5} axb5 18.\textbf{xd4} In this case too, Black's pawn weaknesses are balanced by his active piece play.

17.\textbf{bxa4} a5 18.\textbf{d1}

Karpov continues to delay the development of the b1-knight, keeping his opponent guessing for as long as possible.

18.\textbf{c8}

19.\textbf{a3}!

The knight took a long time to move, but it was worth the wait, as the b5-square is an inviting home for it.

19...\textbf{c}4?

In the resulting position White's dominant central pawns will be of far greater significance than Black's passed c-pawn. After the superior 19...\textbf{cxd4} 20.\textbf{xd4} (20.\textbf{b5} \textbf{d}5) 20...\textbf{f}6 21.h3 White only has a small edge.

20.\textbf{c3}

Blocking the c-pawn.

20...\textbf{d}5

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}
\draw[lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

21.e5!

We have already seen some games in which Karpov allowed his pieces to be drawn away from the centre for the sake of winning a pawn on the flank. On this occasion he was wise to resist the temptation, as after 21.\textbf{xa5}?! \textbf{b}8 Black gets decent counterplay on the queenside.

21...\textbf{b4} 22.\textbf{b5}!

Karpov superbly brings Black's attempted counterplay to a near standstill. Soon he can turn his attention to the kingside where he has the upper hand.

22...\textbf{b8} 23.h3 \textbf{h}5 24.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{c}6 25.\textbf{d}2

With last two moves Karpov made his f3-knight mobile.

25...\textbf{x}f3
Stopping $\text{g}5$ with 25...$h6$ would not have dampened White’s initiative after 26.$g3$ $\text{b}8$ 27.$h4$.

Maybe 25...$e7$ was the best chance, as 26.$g5$ $h6$ achieves nothing for White, although 26.$f4$!? retains a nice plus for him.

26.$\text{xf3}$ $\text{a}8$

27.$\text{e}1$!!

This looks like utter nonsense – don’t rooks belong on open files? Karpov’s decision to place the rook on a file blocked by four pieces reminds me of one game of Kasparov against Anand. From the following position the game continued:

28.$\text{f}5$!

It took some time, but Karpov is finally ready to commence his operations on the kingside. At the same time the idea behind the mysterious rook move becomes apparent, as $...\text{xc}3$ will always be met by $\text{xc}3$ when the rook joins in the attack, while the knight will remain on the ideal $b5$-square.

28...$\text{d}6$ 29.$g4$ $e7$ 30.$f4$ $\text{b}8$ 31.$h2$

Such prophylactic moves are typical of Karpov.

31...$\text{c}7$ 32.$\text{xc}7$ $\text{xc}7$ 33.$f3$ $e7$

After 33...$g6$ 34.$c2$ $\text{xc}3$ 35.$\text{xc}3$ $\text{b}4$ 36.$\text{b}1$ $\text{d}7$ 37.$f5$ White has a dangerous attack.

34.$\text{c}2$ $f5$!

Black has to play this before he is crushed by $f5$-$f6$. 
35.\texttt{Bf1}!

Once again we see a mysterious rook move. The more natural square would appear to be g1.

35...\texttt{d7} 36.g3! \texttt{e6} 37.\texttt{Bg2}!

Karpov finds a nice way to improve his rooks before playing g4.

37...\texttt{g6}

38.g4

After some remarkable preparatory moves Karpov carries out the desired pawn break.

38...\texttt{b8} 39.\texttt{Bg3} \texttt{e7} 40.\texttt{Be3} \texttt{Bb8} 41.\texttt{Bb2}

The f4-pawn was in danger, so Karpov prepares to lend it proper support.

41...\texttt{b6} 42.\texttt{Bg2} \texttt{c6} 43.\texttt{Bf3} \texttt{e6} 44.\texttt{Bc1}

Mission accomplished.

44...\texttt{b6}

45.\texttt{h1}!!

It is difficult to work out Karpov's precise motivation for playing this move. Of course it is possible that he just wanted to return the ball and see what Black would do next. This would have been especially understandable had one or both of the players been short of time. Whatever the reasoning, the king retreat actually yields a clear improvement in White's position, due to the clearance of the h2-square for a rook. The benefit may be seen after plans such as g4-g5 and h3-h4-h5 with an attack along the h-file.

45...\texttt{fxg4}?

Black cannot resist the urge to win the d4-pawn, but now White's kingside pawns start to roll.

46.\texttt{hgx4} \texttt{c6} 47.\texttt{e6} \texttt{Be7}

47...\texttt{c7} is no better, and after 48.\texttt{fxd4} 49.\texttt{f6} and White's e- and f-pawns are tremendous.

Also after 47...\texttt{g7} 48.\texttt{f5} \texttt{gx5} 49.\texttt{fx5} \texttt{Bxg2} 50.\texttt{Bxg2} \texttt{g8} 51.\texttt{h3} \texttt{d6} 52.\texttt{Wh6} Black's position is perilous.
Black also goes down quickly after 48...\texttt{Fe}e8 \texttt{49.Gh}2! (49...\texttt{Hh}6! should also suffice for victory, but the text move is more instructive as it underlines the usefulness of the earlier 45.\texttt{Fh}1.) 49...\texttt{Fg}7 50.\texttt{Fh}3 \texttt{Gg}8 51.\texttt{Fg}5 with a crushing attack.

49.\texttt{F}xe4 \texttt{F}xe4 50.\texttt{Fb}2 \texttt{c}3

50...\texttt{Fc}5 51.\texttt{F}d2 (or 51.\texttt{Ff}4) 51...\texttt{Fxe}6 52.\texttt{F}xe4 wins.

51.\texttt{Fxc}3!

This simple move deals Black his deserved punishment on the long diagonal for taking the d4-pawn.

51...\texttt{Fg}8 52.\texttt{F}e3 \texttt{Fc}5 53.\texttt{F}e5 \texttt{Fb}8

After opening the b-file 38 moves ago, Black finally uses it to create a threat. Alas, it is too little too late.

54.\texttt{F}c3 \texttt{Fxc}2 55.\texttt{F}xc2 \texttt{d}4 56.\texttt{F}xa5 \texttt{F}d6 57.\texttt{F}d5

1-0

In the opening Karpov did not get more than a playable position, but once his opponent erred with 19...\texttt{c}4? he controlled the game superbly, halting Steinberg’s play on the queenside and steadily building pressure on the kingside. His pawn majority in the centre was present since the tenth move, and it eventually decided the game.

Karpov lost to Vaganian in the seventh game, but he recovered and went on to win the ‘triple threat match’ with a total score of 7½/12. Over the course of the six games against Vaganian he scored 3½ points with two wins, one loss and three draws. Against Steinberg he triumphed by 4–2 with three wins, one loss and two draws.

Karpov’s next event was the annual Soviet Union – Yugoslavia match. He won the first two and drew the last two games against Evrosimovsky, thus winning their match by the score of 3–1. Karpov then played a single game in the Red Armies team event in Warsaw, where he defeated Konokowski.

Karpov’s next event was the USSR Armed Forces Team Championship. He got off to a flying start, with four straight wins. The following game was the third of the quartet. His opponent has no other games in the database.

\textbf{Game 16}

\textit{Anatoly Karpov – Tserdakh}

Armed Forces Team Ch., Leningrad 1969

Karpov never fought in the army, but national service was compulsory for all young Soviet men, and it appears that even rising chess stars were not exempt from it.

1.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{e}6 2.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{d}5 3.\texttt{F}d2

This was Karpov’s usual weapon against the French throughout his career. In his childhood he played 3.exd5 a few times, and later he occasionally flirted with 3.\texttt{F}c3 as well. Overall he scored extremely well with the Tarrasch Variation, although against Korchnoi in the
1974 candidates final he only managed seven draws with no decisive results. He did, however, use the Tarrasch to defeat Viktor "the Terrible" in a training match in 1971.

3...\textit{c5}

Against other moves Karpov scored an amazing 100\%, including 7-0 against 3...\textit{\textit{d}f6}.

4.\textit{g3}

Sometimes he played 4.exd5 exd5 5.\textit{b}5t, but only managed four draws out of four.

4...\textit{a6} 5.exd5 exd5 6.dxc5

Karpov ensures that his opponent will have an isolated pawn.

6...\textit{xc5} 7.\textit{b}3 \textit{a}7

In another game Vaganian preferred 7...\textit{b}6, but Karpov beat him soundly with an attack against the Armenian grandmaster's king.

8.\textit{g5}

Karpov follows the main theoretical path. After 8.\textit{d}3 the reply 8...\textit{e}7\textit{t} relieves some of the pressure.

8...\textit{f6} 9.\textit{e}2\textit{t}

Eight years later with the black bishop on b6 instead of a7, Karpov opted for 9.\textit{d}3 against Vaganian.

After 9.\textit{fd}4 0-0 10.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}6 11.0-0 \textit{e}4 12.\textit{e}3 \textit{c}6 13.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xe}3 14.\textit{fxe}3 \textit{xc}6 White obtained no advantage and Black eventually went on to win the game Keres - Botvinnik, World Championship Final (The Hague/Moscow) 1948.

9...\textit{e}6

Against 9...\textit{e}7 Karpov would probably have doubled Black's pawns with 10.\textit{xf}6.

10.\textit{fd}4 0-0?

Black should have preferred 10...\textit{e}7 with a reasonable position.

11.\textit{xe}6 \textit{xe}6

Does White have time to grab the e-pawn?

12.\textit{xe}6t!

Yes! Apparently Black believed he would obtain sufficient compensation after this move, but Karpov's judgement proves correct. At the same time taking the pawn is not without risks, and White will have to continue carefully.

12...\textit{h}8 13.0-0-0 \textit{c}6

Taking back the pawn with 13...\textit{xf}2 was unpromising due to 14.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 15.\textit{xd}5\textit{f}8 16.\textit{h}3.

14.\textit{h}3!!
It was also possible to hold onto the pawn with: \(14.f3 \text{ Re8} (14...a5 15.\text{b5}) 15.\text{h3 Re3} \uparrow \) (after \(15...a5 16.\text{d3 Rc7} 17.\text{g3 Re7} \) White should be better, but not by much) \(16.xe3 \text{ Re3} 17.\text{d3 Re7} \) In the resulting position White has good chances to press for a win with his extra pawn, but Black's pieces are active and a tough fight lies ahead.

\[14...\text{c8?!}\]

Black wants to relieve the kingside pressure, but it leads straight to an endgame a pawn down. A better practical try was \(14...\text{xf2} 15.\text{d3 Re8} \) when White must be precise:

\[16.\text{f5}!\] This powerful move prevents Black from freeing his position with \(...\text{e4} \). (Instead after \(16.xf6 \text{ Re3} \uparrow 17.xe3 \text{ Re3} \uparrow 18.b1 \text{ Re6} 19.\text{e2} \) White is only fractionally better.) \(16...\text{h5} 17.xf6 \text{ Re3} 18.xh3 \text{ Re6} 19.xd5 \) White is a pawn up for nothing.

\[15.xc8 \text{Bxc8}\]

It is obvious that this position should be winning for White, but the way Karpov achieves it is so instructive and typical of his style.

\[16.f3\]

First he safeguards the pawn while also covering the e4-square.

\[16...\text{h6} 17.\text{d2}\]

He retreats this way in order to prevent the enemy bishop from invading on e3.

\[17...\text{d4?!}\]

Tserdak is determined to make White work for his money.

\[18.\text{d3 Dd5} 19.\text{he1}\]

Bringing the last piece into the game.

\[19...\text{c3?!}\]

Black hopes that a change in the pawn structure will lead to a change in fortune.

\[20.xe3 dx3 21.e4\]

White starts surrounding the e3-pawn. The way he converts his advantage from here is extremely instructive.

\[21...\text{c7} 22.c3 \text{Re8} 23.\text{d5! Re8}\]
24.\textit{\texttt{d1}}!
Karpov’s first priority is to improve his king. With the e-pawn securely blockaded, his remaining pieces will be free to do as they wish.

24...\textit{\texttt{f7}} 25.\textit{\texttt{e2}}  \textit{\texttt{e5}} 26.\textit{\texttt{d1}}  \textit{\texttt{e6}}
27.\textit{\texttt{exe5}} 28.\textit{\texttt{d5}}\textit{\texttt{t}}  \textit{\texttt{e6}} 29.\textit{\texttt{c5}}\textit{\texttt{t}}
Now he brings the knight into the game.

29...\textit{\texttt{f6}} 30.\textit{\texttt{d3}}  \textit{\texttt{e7}}

31.\textit{\texttt{h4}}!
Karpov is not in a hurry to win the e3-pawn. Instead he finds another way to improve his position, gaining space and preparing to fix Black’s kingside pawns.

31...\textit{\texttt{d7}}?!
This accelerates the end, but Black is lost in any case.

32.\textit{\texttt{Bxd7}}\textit{\texttt{t}}!
Exchanging some pieces opens the way to win the e3-pawn.

32...\textit{\texttt{Axd7}} 33.\textit{\texttt{Bxc6}}\textit{\texttt{t}}  \textit{\texttt{Bxc6}} 34.\textit{\texttt{Ae5}}\textit{\texttt{t}}  \textit{\texttt{Bd5}}
35.\textit{\texttt{Ag4}}  \textit{\texttt{e6}}

36.\textit{\texttt{Axe3}}
It took sixteen moves to collect the pawn.

36...\textit{\texttt{e5}}
1-0
This game may have seemed like an odd choice to present, as compared with some of the other games featured here, it seemed so easy. Therein lies the point – Karpov was able to make the technical phase of the game appear almost effortless. It was also a lovely example of one of Karpov’s outstanding qualities when playing endgames – his purposefulness. He wasted no time in the process of improving his pieces followed by surrounding the e3-pawn.

Overall it was a successful event for Karpov, who won the prize for the best performance on board two with 5\%7. But more importantly, as Karpov himself later wrote, he met Semyon Furman. Karpov started to train with Furman and they worked together during both this event and the next. The partnership would blossom into one of the most productive trainer-pupil relationships in chess history; more about this later.
World Junior Championship

This was Karpov's last competition of both the year and the decade, and it turned out to be a hugely successful, and quite possibly career-altering event for him. Although the Soviets were dominating the upper echelons of world chess, their juniors tended not to perform as well as one might have expected on the world stage. In fact, the previous occasion when a Soviet player became World Junior Champion was fourteen years earlier in 1955, when Spassky took the title.

Furman was Karpov's second at the 1969 competition. His performance in the preliminary event was far from convincing, and for a time it was not even clear if he would qualify for the finals. In one crucial game against Torre, in which the initiative kept shifting from one side to the other, Karpov wound up two pawns down in an ending. In a titanic fight, after two adjournment sessions, he eventually succeeded in holding on for a draw. In one interview in the late seventies, Karpov called this the most important game of his life. Had he lost he would not have qualified for the finals, and there is no telling how much of a difference this might have made to his career.

After struggling to qualify, Karpov produced a staggering turn of form in the finals, decimating the competition with an eight game winning streak en route to a final score of 10/11. The following game from round three is a true masterpiece, probably Karpov's best game from the sixties. His opponent, Sweden's Ulf Andersson, also went on to become a world class player. Perhaps the following game even contributed to Andersson becoming such a fine positional player. Though he consistently made solid and impressive performances at top class tournaments, the Swede never qualified at the Interzonals.

Andersson's record against world champions is interesting. Out of 121 games, he won five encounters, drew ninety four and lost twenty four. Karpov has an impressive head to head record against almost all his rivals across several generations, but his most dominant record of all is probably against Andersson; he beat the super-solid Swede twelve times, with 29 draws and just a single loss, although it is interesting that not a single one of Karpov's victories came with the black pieces.

Game 17

Anatoly Karpov - Ulf Andersson

World Junior Championship, Stockholm 1969

1.e4 e5

Andersson did not do especially well with this first move and he stopped playing it about a year later. He went on to become a great expert on the Sicilian.

2.d3 d6 3.b5 a6

Karpov played a total of twelve games against Black's other third moves; he dropped only two draws and won the rest.

4.a4 d6

Other moves resulted in just a single draw against Karpov out of eight games.

5.0-0 d7 6.e1 b5 7.b3 0-0 8.c3 d6 9.h3

According to my database Karpov reached this starting position of the main line Ruy Lopez forty two times with the white pieces. He performed remarkably, winning twenty two games and drawing the rest.

9...a5

Karpov achieved six victories against this move, with the same number of draws.
10.\textit{c}2 \textit{c}5 11.d4 \textit{c}7 12.\textit{d}bd2 \textit{b}7

Interestingly Karpov only once faced the main line of 12...\textit{c}xd4. The text move is ambitious, as Black wants to carry out the central break ...\textit{d}5, which may or may not be prefaced by ...\textit{c}xd4. This particular move order is rarely played nowadays, and is only employed regularly by the Hungarian IM Bela Lengyel, who continues to play it, and not without success.

Let me show you one interesting game to illustrate the theme of the strong \textit{b}7-bishop in this line. This is a memorable game for me, as when I myself played this line, I wanted to emulate my mentor. 1.e4 e5 2.\textit{f}f3 \textit{c}6 3.\textit{b}b5 \textit{a}6 4.\textit{a}4 \textit{g}6 5.0-0 \textit{e}7 6.\textit{e}e1 \textit{b}5 7.\textit{b}b3 \textit{d}6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 \textit{a}5 10.\textit{c}2 \textit{c}5 11.d4 \textit{c}7 12.\textit{d}bd2 \textit{c}xd4 13.\textit{c}xd4 \textit{b}7 14.\textit{f}f1 \textit{b}b8 15.\textit{e}e2 \textit{d}5! 16.\textit{d}xe5 \textit{d}xe4 17.\textit{g}3 \textit{x}xg3 18.\textit{x}xg3 \textit{d}4 19.\textit{d}g5 \textit{g}6 20.\textit{h}h2 \textit{dd}8 21.h4 \textit{c}c4 22.e6 f6 23.\textit{f}f7 \textit{wb}6 24.\textit{d}d3 \textit{d}e5 25.\textit{x}xe5 \textit{exe}5 26.\textit{h}h6 \textit{e}5 27.\textit{b}b3

\textit{h}5 Black got a lovely position and should have won later, Lengyel – Honfi, Kecskemet 1981.

13...\textit{c}c8

The bishop has to come back to this diagonal, and the sooner the better. The same position can also occur via the move order 12...\textit{d}6 13.d5 \textit{a}5, which is in fact the more common route.

14.\textit{f}f1

14.b3 would have prevented the idea mentioned in the following note.

14...\textit{d}d7

Black scores better when he transfers the knight to \textit{b}6 with 14...\textit{c}c4.

15.b3 \textit{b}7

Karpov decides to prevent a possible queenside strike with ...\textit{c}4, while also gaining space. It is an interesting plan which attracted other notable followers, as seen in the following example.

Alexander Grischuk used to play the Chigorin Variation and did well with it, at least until he met Kasparov. They reached the following position.
At this point White embarked on a strong plan: 16.c4! b4 17.\( \text{Nb}d2 \) g6 18.\( \text{Ng}f1 \) \( \text{Nh}5 \) 19.g4 \( \text{Ng}4 \) 20.\( \text{Nfx}4 \) exf4 21.\( \text{Nd}2 \) \( \text{Ng}6 \) 22.e5 dxe5 23.\( \text{Nxe}5 \) White obtained a better position and went on to win in Kasparov – Grischuk, Cannes (Rapid) 2001.

It should be added that Karpov's move is not the only promising path. A year later, from the same position as was reached in the main game, Geller won a fine game against Mecking with 16.\( \text{Ng}3 \).

16...\( \text{Nh}8 \) 17.\( \text{Ne}3 \) \( \text{Nf}8 \)!!

It would have been more prudent to prevent the following knight hop with 17...g6.

18.\( \text{Nd}5 \)

This knight will cause a lot of trouble for Black. Taking it with the bishop would be a mistake, as White would gain additional space plus the use of the e4-square, not to mention the two bishops.

18...\( \text{Nd}8 \)

Black transfers the knight to help the king.

19.\( \text{Nh}2 \) \( \text{Ne}8 \) 20.h4!

This is a somewhat unusual idea in the Ruy Lopez, but it works very well here.

20...\( \text{f}6 \) 21.h5

If Black exchanges this pawn, he opens a file close to his king, but if he leaves it, it could become like a sharp needle.

21...\( \text{Qf}7 \)

22.\( \text{Be}3 \)!!

With this imaginative rook move Karpov begins an operation which provokes the weakening move ...h7-h6.

22...\( \text{Qg}5 \)

The queenside knight finally arrives at the kingside.

23.\( \text{Nh}4 \)

Preventing ...g6.

23...\( \text{Nd}8 \) 24.\( \text{Bc}3 \) \( \text{Qc}7 \)
As a general rule, the player with more space will strive to avoid exchanges. In this instance Karpov shows good judgement, realizing that it is more important to remove the knight from the g5-square.

25...h6
Black bolsters the knight, at the cost of permanently weakening his light squares. In the event of 25...\(\texttt{\textit{xf3}}\) 26.\(\texttt{\textit{xf3}}\) his king would have became more vulnerable.

26.\(\texttt{\textit{g6}}\)
White immediately occupies the newly created outpost, reaping the fruits of his previous play.

26...a5

27.a4!
By preventing the opening of the a-file, Karpov limits his opponent's queenside counterplay.

27...\(\texttt{\textit{xc4}}\) 28.\(\texttt{\textit{xc4}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{a6}}\)
Andersson's kingside knight prepares to occupy the outpost on the queenside.

29.\(\texttt{\textit{e2}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{a7}}\) 30.\(\texttt{\textit{d2}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{ab7}}\) 31.\(\texttt{\textit{c3}}\)
It is really instructive to observe how Karpov prevents Black's counterplay on the b-file.

31...\(\texttt{\textit{b4}}\) 32.\(\texttt{\textit{d1}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{a6}}\) 33.\(\texttt{\textit{d2}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{b4}}\)
The knight reaches a seemingly impressive outpost, but achieving this objective has consumed several tempos and a lot of effort. Depending on the specific situation, such a knight could either be a dominant force or a wasted resource which shoots the air. Let me offer you, dear reader, one small tool which can be used to determine whether the knight is strong or weak. It is often enough to ask whether or not the knight attacks a weakness in the opponent's camp. If the knight attacks nothing, then its value is questionable. For example, if Black's pawn was on a3 and White's on a2, the b4-knight would be better than in the game, as it attacks a weakness.

34.\(\texttt{\textit{e3}}\)
The rook has done its job, and now it is time to reorganize the kingside pieces.

34...\(\texttt{\textit{e8}}\)
Andersson decides to wait passively, allowing Karpov the pleasure of strengthening his position at his leisure. Of course 34...f5 is risky, but at least Black gets some play: 35.exf5 \(\texttt{\textit{xf5}}\) 36.\(\texttt{\textit{f1}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{g6}}\) (36...\(\texttt{\textit{f6}}\) 37.\(\texttt{\textit{f4}}\) 37.\(\texttt{\textit{hxg6}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xf6}}\) 38.\(\texttt{\textit{h5}}\) The situation does not look great for Black, but White has less freedom than in the game.
Karpov improves another piece and stops ...f5.

White is obviously in control, but how can he improve his position?

What is so clever about this little queen move? Once again it is all part of a positional plan. White has gained as much space as was possible, and improved his pieces while preventing Black’s intended queenside counterplay. Now it is time to decide what to do with the position. Karpov hits on the right plan, namely to exchange the light-squared bishops. By exchanging his worst piece for Black’s best one, he paves the way for a future invasion on the light squares. The way he does it is highly instructive, and I would advise the reader to pay close attention, as any player might find himself in a similar situation.

Karpov follows the plan with his characteristic purposefulness.

Karpov was able to complete his plan while Black merely played waiting moves.

Black takes the opportunity to loosen his shackles while he still has the chance.

Karpov demonstrates a well known advantage of having more space: the ability to transfer
pieces from one part of the board to another with maximum speed and efficiency.

48...\textipa{d}d7 49.f4!
White wastes no time in opening the kingside. He does not mind exchanging Black's bad bishop, as the opening of the kingside will yield greater benefits.

49...\textipa{e}x\textipa{f}4 50.\textipa{e}x\textipa{f}4 \textipa{a}xc3
Black has no choice but to exchange this valuable defensive piece.

51.\textipa{e}x\textipa{c}3 \textipa{e}8

52.\textipa{e}3!
Exchanging pieces will favour White, as his material superiority on the kingside will increase in magnitude. The principle is exactly the same as in Game 45 (Fraguela Gil – Karpov).

52...\textipa{a}bb8 53.\textipa{f}2!
Creating a vicious threat in the form of \textipa{e}c7. By the way, one can try to argue that the knight on \textipa{g}6 is not attacking any pawn or weakness, but this is only partially true. Please keep it in mind that one's king also can be a weakness! In the present position the knight plays a key role in supporting the mating threats.

If you have the idea of manoeuvring a knight to such an outpost, remember that the stakes are high – you can do a lot of good to your position, and a lot of damage as well. Let me show you two marvellous examples by Botvinnik, which illustrate both sides of the coin.

Here is the first. It is perhaps the most famous game Botvinnik ever played.

15...\textipa{h}b8 Black embarks on a long knight manoeuvre. 16.\textipa{a}ae1 \textipa{c}c6 17.\textipa{g}g3 \textipa{a}a5 18.\textipa{f}3 From this square the knight assists Black in winning the a4-pawn, but this does not justify the time spent. 19.e4 \textipa{x}a4 20.e5 \textipa{d}d7 21.\textipa{f}f2 \textipa{g}6 22.\textipa{f}4 \textipa{f}5 23.\textipa{x}xe6 \textipa{a}xf6 24.\textipa{f}xe6 \textipa{e}8 25.\textipa{a}xe1 \textipa{a}ae8 26.\textipa{e}e6 \textipa{x}xe6 27.\textipa{x}xe6 \textipa{g}7 28.\textipa{h}4 \textipa{e}e8 29.\textipa{e}e5 \textipa{e}e7 Now Botvinnik crowns his energetic play with a memorable finishing sequence:
30.\(\text{a3}\)!! \(\text{xa3}\) 31.\(\text{h5}\) \(\text{gxh5}\) 32.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{g8}\) 33.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{g8}\) 34.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{c2}\) 35.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{f4}\) 36.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{h4}\) 37.\(\text{h2}\) 38.\(\text{kxh5}\) \(\text{e2}\) 39.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{e4}\) 40.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{c2}\) 41.\(\text{h5}\) 1–0

Botvinnik – Capablanca, AVRO 1938. Once the knight arrived on b3 it became a spectator and never moved again.

And here is the second:

![Chess Diagram](image1)

33.\(c5\)! The knight is headed for d6, where it will dominate the entire board. 33... \(a5\) 34.\(b1\) \(f8\) 35.\(a3\) \(d8\) 36.\(c4\) \(c7\) 37.\(d6\) White achieved his objective and went on to win in Botvinnik – Flohr, Moscow 1936.

Let us now return to the game.

![Chess Diagram](image2)

53... \(\text{h7}\)

This looks horribly passive, but Black had to cover the f8-square somehow.

54.\(\text{f5}\)

White's pieces simply outnumber and overpower Black's forces on the kingside. The knight on b4 contributes nothing.

![Chess Diagram](image3)

54... \(\text{xe3}\) 55.\(\text{xe3}\) \(\text{g6}\) 56.\(\text{g7}\) \(\text{h8}\)

57.\(\text{xh6}\)!

The demolition begins.

57... \(\text{e8}\) 58.\(\text{f7}\) \(\text{h7}\) 59.\(\text{e4}\)

This is good enough to win in short order, although 59.\(\text{g5}\) would have led to a forced checkmate: 59... \(\text{h8}\) 60.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{gxf6}\) 61.\(\text{f7}\) \(\text{g7}\) 62.\(\text{h6}\) \(\text{xf7}\) 63.\(\text{h7}\) \(\text{f8}\) 64.\(\text{g6}\)

59... \(\text{xe7}\) 60.\(\text{xe7}\) 1–0

Although Andersson played the game passively, this was undoubtedly a strategic masterpiece, and probably Karpov's best game from the sixties.

Karpov met the Romanian representative in round eight, by which time it was more or less clear that he would win the title. His opponent was a decent international master. This was the only time they met over the board.
The Making of a Champion

Aurel Urzica – Anatoly Karpov

World Junior Championship, Stockholm 1969

1.e4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.d3

Karpov did not face this move many times, and he never lost against it. After 1.e4 e5, the only line apart from the Ruy Lopez which caused him problems was the Scotch with 4..\(\text{d}f6\), in which he scored 3/7, although two of the losses came at the hands of Kasparov. He did better with 4..\(\text{c}5\), scoring two wins and two draws with no defeats, but for some reason he did not play it as frequently.

3..\(\text{f}f6\) 4.b5 a5 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d6 7..\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{x}c3\) 8..\(\text{x}c3\) \(\text{d}7\)

This move is no longer in fashion. Later Karpov would switch to the normal 8..\(\text{h}6\) 9..\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{e}7\), with which he drew against Speelman at Linares 1992.

9.d4

Black was planning to break the pin with the witty ...\(\text{e}7\).

In a subsequent game White tried 9..\(\text{b}1\), achieving a slight advantage after 9..a6 10..\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{b}8\) 11..\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{h}6\) 12..\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{e}7\) 13..\(\text{e}1\)

\(\text{d}a5\) 14.d4 \(\text{bd}8\) 15..\(\text{h}3\) in Chandler – Karpov, Reykjavik 1991. The further course of the game was interesting. Karpov outplayed his opponent in the middlegame, but Chandler had the last laugh as he eventually managed to hold a highly unpleasant endgame in which Black had rook and knight versus rook and bishop, with four pawns versus three on the kingside.

9..\(\text{h}6\)

Forcing White to commit his bishop to one of the available diagonals. Instead after 9..\(\text{e}7\) 10..\(\text{xd}7\) \(\text{xd}7\) 11..\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 12..\(\text{b}1!\) \(\text{b}6\)
13..\(\text{b}4\) Black is underdeveloped.

10..\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{e}8\) 11..\(\text{e}1\) a6 12..\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{g}4\)

This move clarifies matters in the centre. If 12..\(\text{g}5\) then 13..\(\text{x}g5\)?? is dangerous.

13.d5 \(\text{b}8\) 14..\(\text{h}3\)

14..\(\text{c}3\)?

14..\(\text{c}8\) deserved consideration, but Karpov feels comfortable giving up his second bishop. In closed positions a single knight is often superior to a bishop, but two bishops versus two knights can be a different story. Although one knight may find a stable outpost (c5 in the present case), the second one can often have trouble finding a useful role.
Obviously Karpov understood this, so it is interesting to observe the way in which he justifies his decision with his subsequent play.

15.\(\text{fxe3}\) \(\text{Qbd7}\) 16.\(\text{Ag3}\)

The bishop was disturbing White’s natural plans like \(g3\) and \(f4\) or transferring the d3-bishop to \(h3\).

16...\(\text{c5}\) 17.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{f6}\)

This does not look like a special move, but it is a part of a plan.

18.\(\text{Be3}\)

White is thinking about a kingside attack, and prepares to swing the rook to \(g3\).

18...\(\text{Qfd7}\)! 19.\(\text{h4}\)

19...\(\text{aeb8}\)!

Preparing to open the queenside. Many times in the Ruy Lopez and other closed positions, Black makes the mistake of focusing too heavily on the queenside and leaves his king short of defenders. The way Karpov has arranged his pieces, the queen is on hand to assist the defence while the other pieces are ideally placed to support his queenside play.

20.\(\text{We2}\)

Stopping \(...\text{b5}\).

20...\(\text{b6}\) 21.\(\text{a3}\)

This is a clear sign that Urzica does not know what to do. 21.\(\text{f3}\)! was more useful, in order to bring the dark-squared bishop back into the game.

21...\(\text{Qxd3}\) 22.\(\text{Bxd3}\)!

22.cxd3 was better, improving White’s structure. In that case Black would have enjoyed only a modest edge on the queenside after: 22...\(\text{b5}\) (22...\(\text{Qc5}\) 23.\(\text{Qc2}\) \(\text{b5}\) transposes) 23.\(\text{Qc2}\) \(\text{Qc5}\) 24.\(\text{Qeel}\) (or 24.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{a5}\)) In the resulting position Black is just a bit better. He has a few different ways of developing his plan, including 24...\(\text{a5}\), 24...\(\text{b4}\) and 24...\(\text{b7}\) 25.\(\text{ab1}\) \(\text{ab8}\). It would have been interesting to see which method Karpov would have chosen.

22...\(\text{Qc5}\) 23.\(\text{Bdd1}\)

23...\(\text{c6}\)!?

This is a subtle way to maintain the initiative. Karpov is anticipating White’s potential plan of \(\text{f3}\) and \(\text{Qf2}\) followed by exchanging on \(c5\), and prepares to open the c-file.

24.\(\text{a4}\)

After 24.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{Qc7}\) (24...\(\text{b5}\)) 25.\(\text{Qf2}\) \(\text{cxd5}\) 26.\(\text{cxd5}\) \(\text{Qa4}\) Black is somewhat better.

24...\(\text{cxd5}\) 25.\(\text{Bxd5}\)
25...\text{cxd5} 26.d5 26.a5 26.a4 is unpleasant for White.

26.c6 \text{Karpov combines defence of the d6-pawn with an intended doubling of rooks to increase the pressure against c4.}

27.a5?
This move hastens the end. The best chance was 27.f2 \text{eac8} 27.d2, challenging Black to find a way to capitalize on his advantage.

27...\text{bxa5} 28.xa5 \text{eac7} 29.e1
29.d2 e7 wins a pawn.

29.e6 30.g3?
With this move White voluntarily weakens the king even more.

30.f1 would have forced Black to play more accurately, although he can still win as follows:
30...f4! Forces a weakening of the kingside.
(After 30...\text{exc4} 31.e6 e2 32.e6\text{White has some chances to survive.)} 31.d1 e4 There is no need for further improvement of the position. 32.g3 e6 From here a possible finish is: 33.exd6? (A better chance is 33.c3, but after 33...\text{bc6 White is unlikely to survive.)} 33...\text{exf6} 34.e6\text{exf6} 35.ea6 c5 36.f2 c3 And Black wins.

30...\text{exc4}

31.d3
31.c3 would have lasted longer, although the result should not be in much doubt.

31...\text{exc2} 32.ea6
If 32.e6 e1 33.e2 eel wins.

32.ea6 33.ea6 d4 34.d3 a7
35.f1
35.e2 a2 wins.

35...e1
0–1
I have already mentioned that Karpov likes to use pins to reduce the mobility of the enemy pieces. On this occasion the effect is rather more serious, and White simply had to resign.

After winning the world junior title so decisively, Karpov ended the year in a somewhat anticlimactic manner in a Hungary - Russian Republic junior match in Budapest, where he lost by a score of 1\frac{1}{2}–\frac{1}{2} against both Adorjan and Ribli. Despite this small setback, Karpov's tremendous victory at the World Junior Championship cemented his status as a future star, and was most probably the pivotal result that enabled him to become a full time chess professional.
1969 Summary

World Junior Qualification:
  Versus Vaganian: 3½/6 (+2 =3 -1)
  Versus Steinberg: 4/6 (+3 =2 -1)

USSR – Yugoslavia Junior Match (Board three): 3/4 (+2 =2 -0)
Tournament of the Eastern Bloc Armies Reserve: 1/1 (+1 =0 -0)

USSR Armed Forces Team Championship (Board two): 5½/7 (+5 =1 -1)

World Junior Championship, Stockholm:
  Preliminary: 4½/6 (+3 =3 -0)
  Final (1st place): 10/11 (+9 =2 -0)

Hungary – Russian junior match, Budapest: 1/4 (+0 =2 -2)

Total 72.2 % (+25 =15 -5)
This was the year in which Fischer started his magical three year run, during which time he became arguably the most dominant force in chess history. The chess world had never before, and may never again witness anyone achieve twenty straight wins over world class grandmasters. Karpov and Fischer never met over the board, although it is quite possible that the young Soviet rising star was influenced or even inspired by the American and his brilliant results.

In 1970 Karpov played in three major events, the first being the Championship of the Russian Republic in Kuybyshev. He won it with an impressive eight wins, nine draws and no losses. His next tournament took place in Caracas, Venezuela - his only foreign event of the year. It was also his first grandmaster tournament, and one can imagine his uncertainty as to how he would measure up against this higher class of opposition. He started with a draw, and in round two he faced Gedeon Barcza. The Hungarian grandmaster played a total of thirty four games against a string of world champions, from Alekhine to Karpov. He won three of those games, lost eighteen and drew thirteen.

**Game 19**

**Gedeon Barcza – Anatoly Karpov**

Caracas 1970

1.\( \text{d}3 \)\( \text{c}5 \)

Karpov seldom played anything other than 1...\( \text{d}f6 \) here, but on this occasion he opts for a different set-up. Even when the game began 1.\( \text{c}4 \)\( \text{e}5 \), he almost always developed the knight to \( \text{f}6 \) in the near future. It is interesting to note that on those rare occasions when he did develop the knight on a different square, he was very successful. For instance, he twice met the English Opening with the reverse Closed Sicilian setup with ...\( \text{d}g8-e7 \) and scored two victories, including a twenty five move drubbing of the Hungarian grandmaster Ribli, who was generally known as a very strong and safe player.

2.\( \text{c}4 \)\( \text{g}6 \) 3.\( \text{g}3 \)\( \text{g}7 \) 4.\( \text{g}2 \)

If 4.\( \text{d}4 \)\( \text{cxd}4 \) 5.\( \text{d}x\text{d}4 \)\( \text{d}c6 \) White is unable to keep his knight on \( \text{d}4 \).

4...\( \text{d}c6 \) 5.\( \text{d}c3 \)\( \text{e}5 \) 6.\( \text{d}3 \)

If White really wishes to strive for an opening advantage then 6.0-0 \( \text{d}g7 \) 7.a3! is a more accurate move order, as in certain positions White can save time by delaying \( \text{d}2-\text{d}3 \), as shown in Chapter 4 of Mihail Marin's third volume on the English Opening in the *Grandmaster Repertoire* series.
Barcza was a strong player but he was not known as a fearsome theoretician. And to be fair to him, the superior move order had not been tested in many games prior to 1970.

6...\texttt{Q}e7 7.0-0
White could try to transfer the knight at once with 7.\texttt{Q}d2?! in order to cover the key \texttt{d}5-square.

7...0-0
Karpov also castles without delay, although he could have started his queenside play without it.

8.\texttt{Q}e1 \texttt{B}b8 9.\texttt{Q}c2 a6
Preparing to develop some queenside activity in the event of White neglecting that flank. One gets the impression that after drawing in round one, Karpov wanted to play for a win in round two, without taking any wild risks of course.

10.\texttt{B}b1 \texttt{d}6 11.b4 \texttt{Q}e6

12.bxc5
Another idea is 12.\texttt{Q}g5, which should be countered by 12...\texttt{f}6!, preventing the intended minor piece exchange on \texttt{e}7. In order to illustrate this theme, let me show you a positional masterpiece involving Karpov. The only surprising point is that on this occasion, he was on the receiving end of the masterpiece! His antagonist was his long-time nemesis Kasparov, and the game took place in their 1987 World Championship match in Seville.

1.e4 e5 2.\texttt{Q}c3 d6 3.g3 c5 4.\texttt{Q}g2 \texttt{Q}c6 5.a3 g6 6.b4 \texttt{Q}g7 7.\texttt{B}b1 \texttt{Q}e7 8.e3 0-0 9.d3 \texttt{B}b8 10.\texttt{Q}e2 \texttt{Q}e6 11.b5 \texttt{Q}a5 12.\texttt{Q}d2 \texttt{b}6 13.0-0 \texttt{Q}b7 14.e4

14...\texttt{A}h8?!
14...\texttt{h}6 intending ...\texttt{f}5 looks better.

15.\texttt{C}c1 \texttt{f}5

16.\texttt{Q}g5!  
Portisch called this the best move of the entire match.

16...\texttt{W}e8 17.\texttt{Q}xe7?! \texttt{W}xe7 18.\texttt{Q}xf5 \texttt{Q}xf5?!
18...\texttt{g}x\texttt{f}5 19.\texttt{f}4+  
19.\texttt{Q}d5 \texttt{W}d7 20.\texttt{Q}d2 \texttt{Q}a5?!  
20...\texttt{Q}d8 was preferable.

21.\texttt{Q}e3 \texttt{B}be8 22.\texttt{Q}e4
Black is beautifully paralysed. Kasparov continues to manoeuvre with great skill.

22...\(\operatorname{Qb}7\) 23.a4 \(\operatorname{Qa}5\) 24.h4 \(\operatorname{Qb}7\) 25.\(\operatorname{Qh}2\) \(\operatorname{Qb}8\) 26.\(\operatorname{Qa}1\) \(\operatorname{Qa}5\) 27.\(\operatorname{Qa}3\) \(\operatorname{Qf}7\) 28.\(\operatorname{Qc}3\) \(\operatorname{Qd}8\) 29.\(\operatorname{Qa}2\) \(\operatorname{Qh}6\) 30.\(\operatorname{Qg}5\) \(\operatorname{Qf}8\) 31.\(\operatorname{Qe}2\) \(\operatorname{Qg}7\) 32.\(\operatorname{Qc}2\) \(\operatorname{Qde}8\)

33.\(\operatorname{Qe}3!\) \(\operatorname{Qh}6\) 34.\(\operatorname{Qd}5\) \(\operatorname{Qg}7\) 35.\(\operatorname{Qd}1\) \(\operatorname{Qh}6\) 36.\(\operatorname{Qe}4\) \(\operatorname{Qd}8\) 37.\(\operatorname{Qa}2\) \(\operatorname{Qc}8\) 38.\(\operatorname{Qc}3!\) \(\operatorname{Qh}5\) 39.\(\operatorname{Qe}4\) \(\operatorname{Qe}6\) 40.\(\operatorname{Qcd}5\) \(\operatorname{Qh}6\) 41.\(\operatorname{Qg}2\) \(\operatorname{Qg}7?!\)

After spending a prolonged period with his pieces in a defensive huddle, Karpov stumbles into an unfortunate piece configuration. The punishment is swift and severe.

42.f4!

Finally Kasparov chooses the perfect moment to open the position and invade.

42...exf4 43.\(\operatorname{Qgxf}4\) \(\operatorname{Qe}5\) 44.\(\operatorname{Qxg}6!\) \(\operatorname{Qxf}1\) 45.\(\operatorname{Qxf}1\) \(\operatorname{Qxe}4\) 46.dxe4 \(\operatorname{Qxg}6\) 47.\(\operatorname{Qf}2\) \(\operatorname{We}8\) 48.e5! dxe5 49.\(\operatorname{Qf}6\uparrow\) \(\operatorname{Qg}7\) 50.\(\operatorname{Qd}6\) 1–0

Kasparov – Karpov, Seville (8) 1987. I rate this game as one of Kasparov’s best ever positional wins.

Back to the game.

12...\(\operatorname{dx}c5\) 13.\(\operatorname{Qe}3\) \(\operatorname{b}6\)

Another idea was 13...\(\operatorname{b}5\) 14.\(\operatorname{Qe}4\) \(\operatorname{Wb}6\).

14.\(\operatorname{Qed}5\) \(\operatorname{Qd}7\)

When commenting on the game some time after the event, Karpov revealed that he was told beforehand that the Hungarian grandmaster played well with his knights, therefore he wished to swap them.

15.\(\operatorname{Qd}2\)

15.\(\operatorname{Qg}5\) was more accurate, as after 15...\(\operatorname{f}6\) 16.\(\operatorname{Qd}2\) the inclusion of ...\(\operatorname{f}7-\operatorname{f}6\) is not helpful to Black.

15...\(\operatorname{Qxd}5\)

Still following the game plan.

16.\(\operatorname{Qxd}5\)
After 16.cxd5?? 0d4 17.a4 0e7 18.e3 0f5 Black is also not worse.

16...0e7 17.0c1!!
Perhaps Barcza wanted to swap the g7-bishop, but apart from that the queen does almost nothing here. 17.a4?? was more purposeful.

Mission accomplished - the white knights are no more!

18.0xd5
18.cxd5?? is more interesting.

18...0b3 19.0e1
Safer would have been: 19.0g2 0xg2 I doubt that Karpov would have minded swapping these bishops. 20.0xg2 0d6 21.a4 0c6 22.f3 0xa4 23.0a1 And the game is likely to end in a draw.

19...0b5 20.a3
White could have attempted to justify the position of his queen with 20.0h6, when best play looks to be: 20...b4! (Barcza might have been concerned about the exchange sacrifice 20...bxc4 21.0xb8 0xd5 22.e4 0xd3 23.0xb7+ 0f8. It looks worrying for White, but he can in fact keep his position together with 24.0e3!) 21.0xg7 0xg7 And Black's pawn majority gives him a small edge on the queenside.

20...0d6 21.0f3
This signifies the beginning of a faulty plan. Instead the following alternatives all deserved consideration.

If White just wants to play solidly he can continue 21.0c3 0f8 22.0b3 when it is not easy to improve Black's position.

White can also base his play around pushing the c-pawn with 21.0e3, for instance 21...b4 22.axb4 cxb4 23.0e4 a5 24.c5 0c7 25.c6 when the position looks balanced.

Finally, another interesting idea is 21.e4 b4 22.d4?! (or 22.axb4 cxb4 23.0e4 0f6 24.0d1 with a double-edged game) 22...exd4 (22...0f6 23.0b3) 23.axb4 cxb4 24.c5 and White should not be worse.

21...0e6 22.axb5??
Barcza wants to exert pressure against Black's queenside, but the plan turns out to be too optimistic.

22...0xb5
The b5-c5 pawn duo is not only strong enough to withstand White's pressure, it also possesses some aggressive energy of its own.
23. \( \text{d}e3? \)

It was better to restrain the b-pawn with 23.\( \text{a}a5 \) \( \text{f}8 \) 24.\( \text{d}2 \), when White is still in the game.

23...\( \text{f}c8 \) 24.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{b}4! \)

Now the b-pawn becomes a powerful force.

I noticed that one year later Karpov executed a similar strategy against the three time Soviet Champion Leonid Stein:

25.\( \text{b}5! \) \( \text{cxb5} \) (25...\( \text{d}7 ???) \) 26.\( \text{cxb5} \) \( \text{d}7 \) 27.\( \text{b}1 \) \( \text{e}c8 \) 28.\( \text{b}6 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 29.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{a}8 \) 30.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{e}e8 \) (after 30...\( \text{cxb5} \) 31.\( \text{cxb5} \) \( \text{xa4} \) 32.\( \text{x}a4 \) \( \text{x}c3 \) 33.\( \text{xa7} \) the b-pawn decides the issue)

31.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 32.\( \text{f}c1 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 33.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{d}4 \) 34.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{g}5 \) 35.\( \text{x}c8 \) \( \text{xc8} \) 36.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 37.\( \text{x}d6 \) \( \text{g}6 \)

38.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 39.\( \text{c}7 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 40.\( \text{c}5 \) \( \text{xc7} \)

Nevertheless after 26.\( \text{e}c1 \) \( \text{xc}1 \) 27.\( \text{xc}1 \) \( \text{b}3 \) Black’s b-pawn is tremendously powerful and White is unlikely to be able to sacrifice an exchange for it. If 28.\( \text{e}4 \) then 28...\( \text{b}4 \) is very strong.

26...\( \text{b}5 \) 27.\( \text{e}c1 \) \( \text{xc}1 \) 28.\( \text{xc}1 \) \( \text{b}3 \)

White has been outplayed, and a final inaccuracy hastens the end.

29.\( \text{w}c6? \)

The Hungarian grandmaster must have miscalculated something.

29...\( \text{x}c6 \) 30.\( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{a}5 \) 31.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{a}2 \) 32.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{b}2 \)

The culmination of Black’s strategy. The mighty pawn will cost White too much material.

33.\( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{e}4 \) 34.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{b}3 \) 0–1
Karpov’s wins over Barcza and Stein did not contain quite the level of mastery of Kasparov’s win over Karpov, yet they were still highly instructive. Both games demonstrated a high degree of purposefulness and consistency in his strategy; once he created the passed b-pawn, he wasted no time in forcing the pawn up the board in a forceful yet always controlled manner.

Karpov finished the tournament with a highly respectable 11½/17, with eight wins, seven draws and two losses. This was good enough to share fourth place with Ivkov and Benko, and was only half a point behind the joint winners Kavalek, Stein and Panno. Against those top five rivals he only scored three draws and two losses without a win, but against the lower part of the cross table he made a massacre. Overall, the result was sufficient for Karpov to earn the coveted grandmaster norm and title, making him at nineteen years of age the youngest grandmaster in the world.

1970 was a breakthrough year for Karpov in another respect: he was invited to take part in the Soviet Championship for the first time. The line-up included former world champions and many other top class players including Tal, Smyslov, Stein, Polugaevsky and Geller.

Karpov went for safety and started with eight consecutive draws, but in round nine he lost to Korchnoi. After two more draws he met Vladimir Bagirov, an experienced grandmaster who excelled at positional play. He played in the Soviet Championship many times and once finished as high as fourth, which shows his class. I found thirty games in which Bagirov met the world champions, of which he won one, drew twenty three and lost six.

Game 20

Anatoly Karpov – Vladimir Bagirov

USSR Championship, Riga 1970

1.e4 d6

Bagirov is one of the very few grandmasters who employed Alekhine’s Defence as his main weapon against 1.e4 for most of his career.

2.e5 d5 3.d4 d6 4.Qd3

The main line suits Karpov’s style. White aims for a small but steady advantage.

4...g4

The most popular alternative is 4...g6. In the sixties Karpov reacted with 5.Qe2 here, but in the early seventies he switched to 5.a4 and won all three games.

5.Qe2 e6

A few rounds later Mikenas played the provocative 5...Qc6 against Karpov, just as Alburt did at the 1980 Olympiad. Neither of them were successful.

6.0-0 Qe7

White can insert the moves h2-h3 and ...Qb5 at more or less any moment, which could
potentially benefit either player depending on how the game develops. On this occasion Karpov decides to do without those moves.

7...\texttt{b6} 8.\texttt{exd6} \texttt{cxd6} 9.\texttt{c3} 0-0 10.\texttt{e3} \texttt{d5} 11.c5 \texttt{xf3} 12.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{c4}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 \\
\hline
a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

13.\texttt{c1}!

Bagirov had reached this position the previous year against Radovici, who opted for 13.b3. The text move was presumably a prepared improvement by Karpov, and Bagirov never repeated the line again.

13...\texttt{c6}

13...\texttt{b6} is also possible, although after 14.b3 \texttt{a5} 15.\texttt{cxb6} \texttt{axb6} 16.\texttt{e3} or 16.\texttt{b5}? White maintains a slight plus.

14.b3 \texttt{a4} 15.\texttt{e3} \texttt{b6}

At some point Black needs to counter the pressure of the choking pawn chain. Another way to do it was seen in the following game: 15...\texttt{f6} 16.\texttt{c1} \texttt{b6} 17.\texttt{a4} \texttt{bxc5} (17...\texttt{b5}?) 18.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{e7} Black was okay and went on to draw in Lein - Vukic, Vrsac 1979.

16.\texttt{a4} \texttt{b8}

According to Karpov 16...\texttt{g5} deserved consideration, but so far nobody has tested this approach. 16...\texttt{b5}? is also interesting.

A few decades later Black tried a different plan: 16...\texttt{b7} 17.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c8} 18.\texttt{b4} \texttt{f6} 19.\texttt{ad1} \texttt{e7} 20.\texttt{e2} \texttt{d7} 21.\texttt{b5} \texttt{d8} Hracek - Jansa, Czech Republic 1994. Usually Jansa is known for playing actively; on this occasion he handled the position rather differently, but nevertheless still managed to hold a draw.

17.\texttt{c1} \texttt{bxc5}!

With this move Black reveals his cards a bit too early. I would prefer a developing move like 17...\texttt{f6} or perhaps instead seek a bishop exchange with 17...\texttt{g5}, although White should maintain an edge after the simple 18.\texttt{d2}.

18.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{f6}

19.\texttt{a3}!

The immediate 19.\texttt{e2} (as well as other natural moves such as 19.\texttt{d2}) allows Black to develop interesting play with 19...\texttt{b4}? (19...\texttt{e7} 20.g4?? is mentioned by Karpov) 20.a3 \texttt{xd4} 21.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{xd4} with reasonable compensation. Objectively White should still be better, but compared with the game continuation he does not enjoy the same level of control over the position, and a subsequent advance of Black’s central pawns might well prove troublesome.
The text move prevents the exchange sacrifice and prepares a queenside advance while maintaining full control.

19...\(\text{d}e7\) 20.\(\text{d}e2\)!

Controlling \(c4\) in preparation for the following pawn advance.

20...\(\text{d}f5\) 21.b4 \(d\text{b}7\)

21...\(\text{c}5?\) is interesting but not fully satisfactory: 22.\(\text{a}xc4\) dxc4 23.\(\text{a}xc4\) \(d\text{d}5\) 24.\(\text{a}d3\) \(\text{c}d8\) (after 24...\(\text{b}c8\) 25.\(\text{f}c1!\) \(\text{fd8}\) 26.\(\text{e}e4\) White keeps his extra pawn) 25.\(\text{b}b3\) \(\text{bc8}\) (25...e5? 26.\(\text{e}c5\) 26.\(\text{f}c1\) \(\text{axc4}\) (26...\(\text{d}xd4\)?! 27.\(\text{x}d4\) e5) 27.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 28.\(\text{xc4}\) e5 (after 28...\(\text{d}xd4\) 29.\(\text{xc4}\) e5 30.\(\text{f}f1\) \(\text{exd4}\) 31.\(\text{e}e2\) White has excellent winning chances) 29.\(\text{bc7}\) \(\text{exd4}\) 30.\(\text{a}d2\) Black managed to win back the pawn, but still fell short of equality.

The other option was to eliminate the dark-squared bishop: 21...\(\text{d}xe3\) 22.\(\text{f}xe3\) \(\text{d}b7\) (22...\(\text{g}5?\) 23.\(\text{bxa5}\) \(\text{xe3}\) 24.\(\text{h}1\) \(\text{xc1}\) 25.\(\text{xa1}\) \(\text{xa5}\) 26.\(\text{d}d7\) \(\text{bc8}\) 27.\(\text{f}4\) wins) 23.\(\text{a}6\) (23...\(\text{a}4?!\) 23...\(\text{d}6\) (23...\(\text{xc5}\) 24.\(\text{xc5}\) 24.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{g}5\) 25.\(\text{d}3\) According to Karpov White is somewhat better here. He has succeeded in preventing ...\(\text{d}f5\) and can look to invade along the c-file with his heavy pieces.

22.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{bd6}\)

23.\(\text{e}5!\) \(\text{xe5}\)

Another possibility was 23...\(\text{c}8\) 24.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{gxf6}\) (24...\(\text{xc6}\) 25.\(\text{d}7\) 25.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{h}8\) 26.\(\text{h}5\) \(\text{g}8\) 27.\(\text{xf5}\) and whichever way Black recaptures, he is worse.

Black could also have adopted a wait-and-see approach with 23...\(\text{g}5?\) 24.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{b}6\). In this case White is certainly better, but it will take a lot of effort and skill to obtain something tangible.

24.\(\text{dxe5}\) \(\text{d}b7?\)

Black is destined to have a lot of trouble with this knight. 24...\(\text{e}4\) was a much better try, when a likely continuation is 25.\(\text{d}3\) (25.\(\text{d}d3\) should also suffice for a small edge) 25...\(\text{xc5}\) 26.\(\text{xc5}\) transposing to 25.\(\text{d}3\) in the next note.

It should be noted that, by contrast to the game, the attempt to avoid exchanges with 25.\(\text{b}3?!\) does not achieve the desired effect after 25...\(\text{b}6\) 26.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{f}c8\), when Black gets fluent play.

25.\(\text{b}3!\)

Karpov refuses to allow his opponent to get rid of the misplaced knight. Instead after 25.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{xc5}\) 26.\(\text{xc5}\) \(\text{e}7\) 27.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{c}8\) 28.\(\text{f}c1\) \(\text{d}7\) White's advantage is smaller than in the game.
Karpov also mentioned the possibility of 25.\textit{a}a4 to avoid the exchange while also preventing ...\textit{wb}6. However, the knight is a long way from the centre and this might encourage Black to counter with: 25...\textit{f}6?! (Karpov notes that White is better after 25...\textit{wd}7 26.\textit{a}a6; the same is also true after 25...\textit{xc}8 26.\textit{a}a6 ...\textit{xc}1 27.\textit{wc}1 \textit{wd}7 28.\textit{dc}5 \textit{xc}5 29.\textit{wx}c5) 26.\textit{ex}f6 \textit{wx}f6 27.\textit{xd}3 \textit{bd}6 (or 27...\textit{dd}4) And Black's pieces are not badly placed.

25...\textit{wb}6

With the white knight closer to the centre, 25...\textit{f}6 can be met by 26.\textit{dd}4 \textit{xd}4 27.\textit{xd}4 \textit{wb}6 28.\textit{xb}6 axb6 29.\textit{f}4 when Black still has problems with his knight.

26.\textit{d}3 \textit{de}7?!

Karpov opines that after this move Black is unlikely to be able to save the game, and instead recommended:

26...a5?!

This is an ugly move, nevertheless it serves one important purpose: it gives Black good chances to eliminate the queenside pawns.

27.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}5

White's advantage is undeniable, but it is by no means clear whether it is enough to force victory.

28.\textit{dd}4

Another option is 28.\textit{wd}4 \textit{xd}4 29.\textit{xd}4 axb4 30.axb4 (after 30.\textit{c}c6 \textit{be}8 31.axb4

\textit{dd}8 Black has reasonable chances to survive) 30.\textit{dd}8 31.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xb}4 32.\textit{de}7 \textit{hb}8 33.\textit{xd}5

8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

a b c d e f g h

If White's pawn stood on e4 instead of e5, he would have excellent winning chances as the ending with four pawns against three on the same side should normally win with this many pieces remaining on the board. With the pawn on e5, however, Black will have good chances to exchange a pair of pawns with a well timed ...\textit{f}6. The resulting ending with three pawns versus two should normally be a draw with accurate defence.

28...axb4 29.\textit{xc}6

29.axb4 \textit{dd}8 30.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xb}4 31.\textit{xd}5 \textit{de}6 does not change much.

29...\textit{wa}7 30.axb4 \textit{dd}8 31.\textit{dd}6 \textit{xb}4 32.\textit{xf}5 \textit{de}6

8
7
6
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3
2
1

a b c d e f g h

We have reached another position with four pawns versus three (after White takes on d5),
The Making of a Champion

except that this time the queens remain on the board. This might offer White some additional chances, but the win would still be a long way off.

27...g4 f5
27...f6 28.h4 g6 29.xg6 hxg6 30.exf6 xf6 31.g3 is insufficient for Black according to Karpov.

Karpov does not mention how he intended to meet 27...g6!?, which looks like a sensible try to defend the king. The correct reaction looks to be: 28.g3! (Going for checkmate with 28.xg6 is too optimistic: 28...hxg6 29.d4 xc8 30.h4 [30.f4 d8 31.e3!?] 30...d8 31.b3 a6 32.g5 [or 32.c7 c6 33.d7 b6 and Black can keep attacking the queen.] 32...xc1 33.xc1 c8 Black is still alive.) 28...c8 29.h4 White keeps a strong initiative.

28.d4 d8
Black hastens to improve the misplaced knight, but it will still struggle to find a meaningful role in the game.

35.a6 a8 36.i7 i7 37.c7 d8 37...i8 38.d4 (38.c6 d8) 38...xe5 39.xa7 wins.

38.c6 b6 39.b6?
There are several ways to win, but this is one of the cleanest.

39...axb6 40.a6
The a-pawn will cost Black a rook.

40...h6 41.e1 g4 42.a7 xe5 43.e6 c4 44.a8=xb8 45.xa8 b5 46.a2
1-0
From this point onwards, Karpov started to have more decisive games; perhaps his first victory boosted his confidence. Over the next six rounds he made three wins with two draws and one loss, before meeting Doroshkievich in the penultimate round. Doroshkievich was a decent International Master, but never became a GM. He qualified for the Soviet Championship final a few times, without ever scoring particularly well against the top class field. Over his lifetime he played eight games against world champions, scoring three draws and five losses.

This whole variation is characterized by the fight between White's two bishops and Black's lead in development. Paradoxically, it is Black who will generally be looking to open the position, despite fighting against the bishop pair, in order to exploit his superior coordination.

12.\textit{c}1?!  
This is now known to be inaccurate, although at the time of the game the theory was not so well mapped out. Here are a few of Karpov's other games in this variation:

12.0-0 h6 13.\textit{h}4 cxd4 (After 13... d5 14.\textit{cx}d5 \textit{cx}d5 15.\textit{el} \textit{sf}6 16.\textit{d}1 a6 17.\textit{b}1 \textit{e}7 18.\textit{e}4 \textit{cx}d4 19.\textit{cx}d4 \textit{e}5 White was a little better and the game Sigurjonsson – Karpov, Munich 1979, was eventually drawn.) 14.\textit{xf}d4 \textit{e}5 15.\textit{e}1 \textit{xd}3 16.\textit{xf}d3 \textit{d}5 17.\textit{cx}d5 \textit{xfd}5 Black equalized effortlessly, Bareev – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2002.

12.\textit{xb}3 h6 (Also possible is: 12... d5 13.\textit{cx}d5 \textit{xd}5 14.\textit{a}4 \textit{cx}d4 15.\textit{cx}d4 \textit{c}6 16.\textit{d}1 b5 17.0-0 \textit{b}6 18.\textit{c}1 \textit{d}5 Black has equalized although he later went wrong and lost in Adianto – Karpov, Jakarta 1997.) 13.\textit{h}4 \textit{cx}d4 14.\textit{ex}d4 \textit{d}5 15.\textit{a}8 16.\textit{a}6 \textit{c}7

Karpov was also not afraid to play the white side of the position: 12.\textit{d}2 cxd4 13.exd4 d5 (13...\textit{a}6?) 14.cxd5 \textit{x}d5 15.\textit{a}6 \textit{c}6 16.\textit{b}5 \textit{e}c7 17.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}c8 18.\textit{a}6 \textit{a}8 19.\textit{c}1 \textit{d}8 20.\textit{d}3 \textit{b}7 21.\textit{g}5 \textit{b}d7 22.0-0 h6 23.\textit{h}4 \textit{e}c8 24.\textit{c}3 \textit{a}6 25.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}5 26.\textit{e}4 \textit{b}6 27.\textit{c}5 \textit{f}e8

This move creates a target, and reveals why White would have been better off evacuating his queen from the c-file.

15.b3 bxc4

Taking at once reduces White's options, compared with 15...\textit{a}6 16.\textit{b}4 bxc4 when 17.\textit{xc}4?! is possible.

16.bxc4 \textit{a}6! 17.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 18.\textit{a}5 \textit{b}8 19.\textit{c}3

12...h6

Black usually inserts this move at some point.

13.\textit{h}4 cxd4 14.exd4

19...d5

Having already begun exerting pressure on the c4-pawn, Karpov continues to apply the same strategy.

20.c5?

This tempting move is in fact an error; the passed pawn will have no impact on the game as Black's knight will blockade it perfectly. White should instead have exchanged to ease his suffering on the queenside: 20.cxd5 \textit{xd}3 (After 20...\textit{xc}3 21.\textit{xc}3 \textit{e}c8 22.\textit{d}2 \textit{xd}3 23.\textit{xd}3 exd5 24.0-0 White easily holds.) 21.\textit{xd}3 \textit{g}5 22.\textit{f}2 \textit{c}6 23.\textit{a}4 \textit{xd}5 24.\textit{c}1 White is fairly active, so he can live with the isolated pawn.

20...\textit{xd}3 21.\textit{xd}3 \textit{c}6 22.\textit{d}2

22.\textit{a}4? controls the queenside but drops a pawn to 22...\textit{g}6! with a double attack.
22...\texttt{Bb8}!
White is tied to the defence of the d4-pawn, so he is unable to challenge Black's control over the open file.

23.0-0 \texttt{Bb7} 24.f4
After 24.\texttt{Bf4} \texttt{Bxf4} 25.\texttt{Bxf4} \texttt{Bb8} White faces a difficult endgame.

24.\texttt{Bb8} 25.h3 \texttt{Bb2}!
Simple and strong.

26.\texttt{Bc3}

26...\texttt{Da5}!
White's c-pawn is receiving no support from its colleagues, so Black can afford to improve his knight.

27.\texttt{Bg3}?
Moving the knight away from the centre does not help White. Instead it was necessary to play on the kingside to keep Black distracted from the queenside: 27.f5 \texttt{Dc4} (after 27...\texttt{exf5} White can target the d5-pawn with 28.\texttt{Cc3}) 28.\texttt{Df4} e5 29.dxe5 \texttt{Dxe5} 30.\texttt{Bxe3} \texttt{Dc4} 31.\texttt{Ag3} \texttt{Dd2} 32.\texttt{Ad1} \texttt{Dc4} 33.\texttt{Ee3} White has to be careful, but he is still in the game.

27...\texttt{Cc4} 28.\texttt{Df1}

28...\texttt{Bxb3}!
Removing White's only defending piece in the centre. The ease with which Karpov outplayed his opponent is remarkable.

29.\texttt{Exb3}
After 29.\texttt{Af3} \texttt{Bb1} 30.\texttt{Dd1} \texttt{Exf3} 31.\texttt{Exb1} \texttt{Exd4} 32.\texttt{Dh1} \texttt{Ee3} Black wins.

29...\texttt{Exd4}+
White's position has fallen apart.

30.\texttt{Dh2} \texttt{Exb3} 31.\texttt{f5}
This attempt for counterplay is too little too late, and Karpov crushes his opponent's resistance with ease.

31...\texttt{Dc3} 32.\texttt{Exc5} \texttt{Exc5} 33.\texttt{Exe6} \texttt{Exe6} 34.\texttt{Dh5} \texttt{Dd6} 35.\texttt{Dg1} d4 36.\texttt{Dg3} \texttt{Bb7} 37.\texttt{Dd2} \texttt{Db1}+
Karpov drew his final two games and finished in equal fifth place in a formidable field. In total he scored five wins, fourteen draws and only two losses.

Later in the year he played in three minor Soviet team events, playing ten games altogether. His results were respectable, with a combined total of four wins and six draws.

1970 was the year in which Karpov successfully made the transition from junior to adult tournaments – with two years to spare. His impressive results suggest that he was working very hard on his chess, and was almost certainly assisted by Semyon Furman. It is worth noting that the great era of Soviet chess had been dominated by players who were born in the late 1920s and 1930s. The best players of that generation were by now approaching or already into their forties, and Fischer was storming the Soviet barricades. The country needed a new chess star and the superpower spared no resources to create one. No young player at the time showed greater promise than Anatoly Karpov.

1970 Summary

Russian Republic Championship, Kuibyshev (1st place): 12½/17 (+8 =9 –0)
Caracas (4th-6th place): 11½/17 (+8 =7 –2)
USSR Championship, Riga (5th-7th place): 12/21 (+5 =14 –2)
Soviet Team Events: 7/10 (+4 =6 –0)

Total 66.2% (+25 =36 –4)

Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses
Rating 2540 (39-46 in the world)

The year in which Karpov turned twenty years old was one of his most active periods, with the second highest number of games of any year of his career. This was the year in which he produced his first world class tournament performance, as well as registering his first ever ELO rating.

His first event was a six-game training match against Korchnoi, which ended in a tie, with two wins from each player and two draws. Next was the semi-final of the USSR Championship, which Karpov won with a most impressive score of nine wins, eight draws and no defeats.

It was not possible to find any games from his next event, which was the 18th Student Olympiad in Puerto Rico, although it is known that Karpov scored a superb 7½/8 on board three. Even without knowing who the opponents were, it is safe to say that achieving such a score is an outstanding achievement.

Karpov followed this by playing in some minor Soviets events, including the USSR Armed Forces Championship. The database lists eleven of his games from this event, with six wins, four draws and one loss. Interestingly, in *Chess is My Life*, Karpov modestly states that he played just seven games, with two wins, four draws and one loss. Perhaps there were preliminary rounds that he did not categorize as part of the event.

In any case, here is one of his wins.

### Game 22

**Sinakov – Anatoly Karpov**

USSR Armed Forces Team Championship, Leningrad 1971

1.e4 c5

Karpov employed the Sicilian in less than twenty percent of his games when he faced 1.e4. He took it up in 1969, and remained undefeated with it until 1979.

2.d4 exd4 3.cxd4 d6

This was his usual choice, although he sometimes played 4...a6.

5.dxc6 bxc6 6.e3 a6 7.d3 b5 8.0-0 b7 9.e2

9.dxc6 is the most common move here, but Black scores fairly well against it.

9...d6 10.f4 d4 11.cxd4 c5 12.xc5 x5f+ 13.h1 b4 14.d1
Later in the same year Karpov deviated with 14...d6 and soon made a draw: 15.\(\text{g}2\) e5 16.\(\text{g}4\) \(\text{x}g4\) 17.\(\text{x}g4\) 0-0 18.\(a3\) \(\text{c}6\) 19.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{bxa3}\) 20.\(\text{xe3}\) \(\text{d}5\) 21.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{b}4\) 22.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{e}5\) 23.\(\text{c}3\) ½-½ R. Byrne - Karpov, Moscow 1971.

15.\(c4\)!!
The c2-pawn is not weak, so there is no need to waste a tempo on this move. 15.\(\text{f}2\) was more logical.

15...d6 16.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{d}7\)

16.\(\text{g}4\)!!
White would like to threaten something on the kingside, otherwise Black can count on a pleasant game thanks to his control over the c5-square. Unfortunately the knight move fails to accomplish anything at the moment. I would prefer 17.\(\text{e}1\) to develop the last piece, for instance 17...\(\text{e}8\) 18.e5 and the position is balanced.

17.\(\text{e}8\) 18.\(\text{e}1\)

18...\(\text{f}5\)!
This strong move not only stops White's attacking ideas on the kingside, but also enables Black to fight for the initiative by clearing the long diagonal for his bishop.

19.\(\text{f}5\)!!
White opens the e-file and the long diagonal, but it is Black's pieces that will benefit.
A better idea was 19.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{f}6\) 20.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{g}6\). White's position is rather passive, but overall Black's advantage remains within manageable proportions.

19...\(\text{f}5\) 20.\(\text{e}3\)
The knight turns out to be surprisingly passive on this square.

20...\(\text{f}6\)!!
Having strategically outplayed his opponent, Karpov acts quickly. The calmer 20...\(\text{g}6\) was also promising.
21. \( \text{Bd2} \)

It was worth considering:

21. \( \text{Bxf5!?} \)

Simplifying leads to a joyless position, but White still obtains reasonable drawing chances.

21... \( \text{Exe3} \) 22. \( \text{Bxe3} \) \( \text{Bxf5} \) 23. \( \text{Bb6} \)

It would be interesting to know how Karpov would have tried to win from this superior position. He has several options, including:

23... \( \text{e4} \) 24. \( \text{exd4} \)

22. \( \text{Bxe4} \) 23. \( \text{Bxe4} \)

White cannot realistically expect to live with the knight on e4. For instance: 22. \( \text{Bc1} \) \( \text{Be6} \) 23. \( \text{Be2} \) \( \text{Bae8} \) 24. \( \text{Bf5} \) g5! (Black can maintain control with a move like 24... \( \text{c6} \), but he has every reason to be more ambitious.) 25. \( \text{Bf1} \) g4 26. \( \text{Bf1} \) (26. \( \text{Bd1} \)? This mistake allows a lovely combination: 26. \( \text{Bf3} \) 27. \( \text{Bxf3} \) \( \text{Exe3} \) 28. \( \text{Bd1} \) \( \text{Xg2} \) 29. \( \text{Xg2} \) \( \text{Bc6} \) 30. \( \text{h2} \) \( \text{Bf6} \) And Black's attack breaks through.) 26... \( \text{g3} \) 27. \( \text{Bxe4} \) \( \text{Bxe4} \) 28. \( \text{Bd2} \) \( \text{gxh2} \) 29. \( \text{Bh2} \) \( \text{Bxe6} \) White is living dangerously.

22... \( \text{Bxe4} \) 23. \( \text{Bxe4} \) 24. \( \text{Bf2} \)

A better chance was: 24. \( \text{Bb2} \) \( \text{Bc4} \) (24... \( \text{Bd3} \) 25. \( \text{Bxf5} \)!! \( \text{Bxf5} \) 26. \( \text{Bf7} \) 25. \( \text{Bf2} \) \( \text{Bd3} \) (after 25... \( \text{a5} \) 26. \( \text{Bd2} \) \( \text{Bxd2} \) 27. \( \text{Bxd2} \) a4 it is not easy to improve Black's position further) 26. \( \text{Bxe2} \) \( \text{Be8} \) 27. \( \text{Bd1} \) d5 White must suffer but he has chances to survive.

24... \( \text{Bd3} \) 25. \( \text{Bc2} \)?
The Making of a Champion

White should have retreated the knight to d1 instead, with the idea of transferring it to b2, where it prevents ...a4 and disturbs the d3-rook.

25...\(\text{\&}e4\) 26.\(\text{\&}e3\)

26...a5!
Opening the a-file gives White one more thing to worry about. 26...\(\text{\&}c3??\) was worth considering as well, when Black can follow up by transferring the queen's rook to g6, via e8 and e6.

27.\(\text{\&}xd3\) \(\text{\&}xd3\) 28.\(\text{\&}xc5?\)
This soon leads to a hopeless situation. The last chance was 28.\(\text{\&}f3\), when play might continue: 28...\(\text{\&}e4\) 29.\(\text{\&}f2\) a4 30.\(\text{\&}d4\) d5 (Black can also insert a pawn exchange on b3 at any moment) 31.cxd5 \(\text{\&}xd5\) 32.\(\text{\&}e3\) \(\text{\&}e4\) 33.\(\text{\&}c1\) \(\text{\&}d5\) 34.\(\text{\&}d2\) h6 White is passive and faces an unpleasant defence, nevertheless Black will have to work to convert his advantage into a win.

28...\(\text{\&}xc5\) 29.\(\text{\&}c1\) a4!
The subsequent invasion along the a-file will decide the game.

30.\(\text{\&}e3\) \(\text{\&}e4\) 31.\(\text{\&}g1\) \(\text{\&}xb3\) 32.\(\text{\&}xb3\) \(\text{\&}a3\)

The b-pawn is defenceless, and the rest is easy.

33.\(\text{\&}d1\) \(\text{\&}xb3\) 34.\(\text{\&}d8+\) \(\text{\&}f7\) 35.\(\text{\&}c8\)
According to the database, the game ended after the moves:

35...\(\text{\&}b1\) 36.\(\text{\&}f2\) b3
0–1
It is hard to imagine Karpov rejecting 35...\(\text{\&}xe3\), even though the above continuation is also winning comfortably. Perhaps there was a data error, but in any case it was a fine positional game from the future champion.

Karpov's next event was the USSR Team Championship, where he played on the junior board and excelled with a score of 6112/7. This was followed by the final of the USSR Championship, where Karpov finished fourth - a good achievement in a strong field. His overall score was 13/21, with seven wins, twelve draws and two losses.

Although Karpov's results for 1971 have thus far been highly impressive, they pale in comparison to his accomplishments at his next event, the Alekhine Memorial tournament in Moscow. This must rank as his first indisputably world class tournament result. He began solidly with two draws, before meeting
the Hungarian grandmaster Levente Lengyel in round three. Lengyel played against all the Soviet world champions except Kasparov, winning one, drawing fifteen and losing six against them. Karpov played him once more, a year later, and drew.

**Game 23**

Levente Lengyel – Anatoly Karpov

Alekhine Memorial, Moscow 1971

1.d4 ƒ6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.£g2 dxc4 5.£f3 b5

Karpov opts for a risky continuation, keeping his extra pawn at the expense of the initiative.

6.£c5 £d5 7.0–0 £b7 8.e4 £f6 9.Ee1 £bd7 10.Ee2 a6 11.£c3 £xe5 12.dxe5 £d7

I do not want to comment too heavily on the early phase of the game, as the most interesting and instructive moments occur later. Over the next few moves both players continue to play logically, with White retaining enough of an initiative to balance his one pawn deficit.

13.£d1 £c8 14.f4 £c5† 15.Ee3 0–0 16.£d2 £xe3† 17.£xe3 c5 18.£ad1 £c6 19.£d6 £e8 20.£d2 £c7 21.£d1

The position remains dynamically balanced: Black is a pawn up but his pieces do not work well, and White firmly controls the d-file.

21...b4??

With this move Karpov effectively decides to return his extra pawn in order to relieve the pressure.

22.£f1 £b5 23.£xc4

23.b3 £b6 24.£xc4 25.£xe2 £xf1 26.£xc5 £b7 27.£xf1 £d4 The position is equal.

23...£b6 24.£xb5

Another possibility is 24.£e2 £c8 (24...£ab8 25.£c2 £xe2 26.£xe2 c4 is also playable) 25.£xb5 axb5 26.£d7 £b6 27.f5 c4 when the position is balanced.

24...axb5 25.b3
The knight moves backwards, but it is all part of Black's intended regrouping.

White could also have prepared for the endgame with 27.\textit{\texttt{Qf2}}, for instance: 27...\textit{\texttt{c4}} (or 27...\textit{\texttt{Qe7}} 28.\textit{\texttt{Qc2}} \textit{\texttt{Qe8}} 29.\textit{\texttt{Qxe7}} [29.\textit{\texttt{Qd6}} \textit{\texttt{Qa7}}] 29...\textit{\texttt{Qd8}} 30.\textit{\texttt{Qb7}} \textit{\texttt{Qxd1}} when White's king is too open to hurt Black) 28.\textit{\texttt{Qxb6}} \textit{\texttt{Qxb6}} 29.\textit{\texttt{Qb7}} \textit{\texttt{c3}} 30.\textit{\texttt{Qc2}} \textit{\texttt{Qeb8}} 31.\textit{\texttt{Qc7}} \textit{\texttt{Qc8}} 32.\textit{\texttt{Qb7}} With equality.

It should be noted that taking the pawn with 28.\textit{\texttt{bxc4}} \textit{\texttt{bxc4}} 29.\textit{\texttt{Qxc4}}? would have been a grave error, as 29...\textit{\texttt{Qxe3}}† 30.\textit{\texttt{Qxe3}} \textit{\texttt{Qb6}} wins an exchange.

White decides to play ambitiously. The alternative was 28.\textit{\texttt{Qxb6}} \textit{\texttt{Qxb6}} 29.\textit{\texttt{Qd6}} \textit{\texttt{Qc8}} 30.\textit{\texttt{Qd4}} \textit{\texttt{Qb6}} 31.\textit{\texttt{Qd6}} when Black cannot do much except settle for a draw.

It should be noted that taking the pawn with 28.\textit{\texttt{bxc4}} \textit{\texttt{bxc4}} 29.\textit{\texttt{Qxc4}}? would have been a grave error, as 29...\textit{\texttt{Qxe3}}† 30.\textit{\texttt{Qxe3}} \textit{\texttt{Qb6}} wins an exchange.

28...\textit{\texttt{Qa3}}!

This is an unpleasant move to face, although objectively it should not hurt White too much.

The Hungarian grandmaster thinks that the knight on d1 is misplaced. He has a point, but in reality d1 is still the best square for it, at least for the time being.

A better continuation would have been 29.\textit{\texttt{Qf1}} \textit{\texttt{Qa5}} (29...\textit{\texttt{Qe7}} 30.\textit{\texttt{Qd7}}) 30.\textit{\texttt{Qe2}} \textit{\texttt{Qb6}} 31.\textit{\texttt{Qd6}} \textit{\texttt{cxb3}} (31...\textit{\texttt{Qe7}} 32.\textit{\texttt{Qf5}}) 32.\textit{\texttt{axb3}} \textit{\texttt{Qxb3}} 33.\textit{\texttt{Qc5}} when the position remains balanced.

Suddenly Black takes over on the queenside. 29...\textit{\texttt{c3}}? would be premature because of 30.\textit{\texttt{Qd3}}!.

White's plan prevails, and his knight reaches d4.

Karpov chooses the right moment to force his pawn to c3 without losing the b4-pawn. Now his pawns will choke White.

This subtle move prepares to exchange the strong white rook and invade with \ldots\textit{\texttt{Qd4}}.

Karpov's plan prevails, and his knight reaches d4.

A desperate attempt in a lost position.
34...\textit{\texttt{exd6} 35.e\textit{\texttt{cd6} 36.axb4 dxc2 37.cxc2}

\textbf{Game 24}

Anatoly Karpov – David Bronstein

Alekhine Memorial, Moscow 1971

1.e4 c5 2.d\textit{\texttt{f3} d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.cxd4 \textit{\texttt{Af6} 5.d\textit{\texttt{c3} a6 6.\textit{\texttt{e2} e5}}

Throughout his career Karpov scored very well against this variation. Against the Scheveningen setup he did well until the mid 1980s, but then his percentage score dropped heavily. This had a lot to do with Kasparov, who frequently employed it against him.

7.\textit{\texttt{db3} \textit{\texttt{e6}}

Nowadays 7...\textit{\texttt{e7}} is more common.

8.f4 \textit{\texttt{c7} 9.0–0

The strong 9.g4! first appeared a year later in the game Kaplan – Saidy, San Antonio 1972.

9...\textit{\texttt{bd7} 10.f5 \textit{\texttt{e4} 11.a4 \textit{\texttt{e7}}}

\textbf{12.e3}

With this move Karpov deviates from 12.a5, which he had played in round three of the same event: 12...0–0 13.\textit{\texttt{g5} \textit{\texttt{fc8} 14.\textit{\texttt{xc4} \textit{\texttt{xc4} 15.\textit{\texttt{b2} h6 16.\textit{\texttt{xf6} \textit{\texttt{xf6} 17.\textit{\texttt{a4} \textit{\texttt{c7} 18.\textit{\texttt{d2} b5 ½–½ Karpov – Gheorghiu, Moscow 1971.}}}}}}}}}}

37...d4!

Now White does not even get the c-pawn in return for the exchange.

38.\textit{\texttt{db3}

38.e5 \textit{\texttt{xb4} is equally hopeless, as White is unable to support the d6-pawn.

38...e5 39.d\textit{\texttt{d3} exf4 40.gxf4 f6

0–1

After this win Karpov drew seven in a row, the last three of which were against Spassky, Tal and Petrosian. These results probably elevated his confidence, which encouraged him to go for a sharp attacking game against Hort, whom he beat. After one further draw he then faced a legendary player in David Bronstein, who came within a whisker of becoming World Champion in 1951 when he drew his match against Botvinnik. Even though the present game took place two decades after the match, it must still have been a momentous occasion for the young Karpov. According to my database Bronstein played 167 games against world champions, scoring seventeen victories, 119 draws and thirty one losses.
12...0-0 13.a5 b5

This is a thematic idea, but it is not the strongest in the present position. It was Portisch who eventually found the strongest answer to White's setup: 13...\(\text{Bf}c8\)! 14.\(\text{Bh}1\) \(\text{Bxe}2\) 15.\(\text{Bxe}2\) d5 16.exd5 \(\text{Bb}4\) 17.\(\text{Bd}2\) \(\text{Bxc}3\) 18.\(\text{Bxc}3\) \(\text{Bxd}5\) Black obtained a nice position and went on to win the game Sigurjonsson – Portisch, Buenos Aires (ol) 1978.

14.axb6 \(\text{Bxb}6\) 15.\(\text{Bh}1\) \(\text{Bfc}8\) 16.\(\text{Bxb}6\) \(\text{Bxb}6\) 17.\(\text{Bxc}4\) \(\text{Bxc}4\)

18.\(\text{Bc}2\) \(\text{Bb}4\)

Karpov would go on to repeat the same position in two more games, both of which continued: 18...\(\text{Ba}c8\) 19.\(\text{Ba}2\) \(\text{Bd}8\) (19...\(\text{d}5??\)) 20.\(\text{Bf}a1\) \(\text{Bb}7\) 21.\(\text{Ba}4\) \(\text{Ba}4\) At this point Karpov agreed a draw with Robert Byrne at the 1973 Leningrad Interzonal, despite having enjoyed success from the same position the previous year. The earlier game continued as follows: 22.\(\text{Bxa}4\) \(\text{Bc}6\) 23.\(\text{Bd}3\) g6 24.h3 \(\text{Bh}5\) 25.\(\text{Ba}1\) \(\text{Bf}4\) Karpov – Stoica, Graz 1972. Despite his eventual defeat, Black is not doing badly at this stage, which explains Byrne's willingness to repeat the line as well as Karpov's decision to take a draw with him.

19.\(\text{Ba}2\)

Karpov homes in on the weak a-pawn.

19...\(\text{h}6\)

An earlier game between two legends continued 19...\(\text{Bb}7\) 20.\(\text{Ba}5\) \(\text{Bc}7\) 21.\(\text{Bd}5\) \(\text{Bxd}5\) 22.exd5 with an edge for White although the game was eventually drawn, Geller – Fischer, Curacao 1962.

20.\(\text{Bf}a1\) \(\text{Bf}8\)

21.\(\text{Ba}4\)!

By exchanging Black's active rook, Karpov eases the pressure on the e4-pawn. A much later game saw 21.\(\text{Bxa}6\) \(\text{Bxa}6\) 22.\(\text{Bxa}6\) \(\text{Bb}7\) 23.\(\text{Ba}5\) \(\text{Bc}6\) 24.\(\text{Bxa}6\), Kononenko – Pasko, Alushra 2004, and now after 24...\(\text{Bxe}4\)! 25.\(\text{Bxe}4\) \(\text{Bxe}4\) 26.\(\text{Bc}4\) \(\text{Bxc}2\) Black should not be worse.

21...\(\text{Bc}8?!\)

The former world title contender plays for an exchange sacrifice. The idea is well known, but not quite sufficient in the present position.

A better choice was 21...\(\text{Bxa}4\) 22.\(\text{Bxa}4\) \(\text{Bb}7\), which has been played in a few games. Black is a bit passive, but he has fared okay in practice.

22.\(\text{Bxb}4\) \(\text{Bxb}4\) 23.\(\text{Bxa}6\) \(\text{Bxc}3\)

After 23...\(\text{Bc}4\) 24.\(\text{Bxc}4\) \(\text{Bxc}4\) 25.\(\text{Be}1\) d5 26.exd5 \(\text{Bb}4\) 27.\(\text{Bxe}5\) Black is too far behind in material.
If Black could collect just one more pawn then he would be okay, but as it stands he does not quite have enough compensation for the exchange.

The queen returns to the centre without delay.

After 25...\textsf{c}4 White would follow with \textsf{g}1 and \textsf{d}2-e4, with good winning chances.

Karpov exchanges queens under his own terms. After the less accurate 27..\textsf{c}4?! \textsf{g}4 28..\textsf{g}3 \textsf{x}g3 29..\textsf{h}xg3 \textsf{e}3 the position is equal according to Karpov.

Another line is 27...\textsf{d}5 28..\textsf{f}3 wins.

Another line is 27...\textsf{c}7 28..\textsf{e}2 \textsf{g}4 (28...\textsf{d}8 29..\textsf{b}1) 29..\textsf{h}5 30..\textsf{h}3 \textsf{g}6 31..\textsf{d}4 \textsf{g}5 32..\textsf{c}6 \textsf{x}f8 33..\textsf{f}3 when White has stopped Black’s play, and can aim to improve his own position by transferring his rook to the eighth rank.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\t\draw[black, very thick] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\t\draw[fill=white] (1,1) circle (0.1);
\t\draw[fill=black] (2,2) circle (0.1);
\t\draw[fill=white] (3,3) circle (0.1);
\t\draw[fill=black] (4,4) circle (0.1);
\t\draw[fill=white] (5,5) circle (0.1);
\t\draw[fill=black] (6,6) circle (0.1);
\t\draw[fill=white] (7,7) circle (0.1);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

30..\textsf{b}1

30..\textsf{a}1! is more precise, as it is useful for White to have the option of a check on the eighth rank.

Black regains a pawn, but White still has four remaining.

Another line is 27...\textsf{d}6 28..\textsf{g}1 \textsf{x}g3

Black can choose between several worse endgames, and it is hard to determine which one gives the best practical chance of surviving.
One alternative is 32...e3 33...e4 34...e3 35...e2 and now White can maintain a substantial advantage with 35.g4!.

33...e2?

It is a pity that after playing the whole game so well, Karpov now makes a bad mistake. Even in his subsequent analysis he did not mention the much stronger 33...b5! 34...e4 35...h7 35...e8 when White wins, as he will break up Black's pawn chain with c4.

33...f4?

It looks as though both players were in time trouble. Black could have drawn with: 33...e4 34...f1 (34...e3 35...g2 35...e2 34...f4 is a repetition.) 34...e3! (I can imagine Karpov planned for 34...h5, when he presumably planned to repeat moves once just to get closer to the time control. The text move is much better though.) 35...f3 e2 36...g1 35...f4 It is practically impossible for Black to lose the ending with the pawn on e2.

34...e5 35...e3 36...d5 36...d5 would have won easily.

36...h7 37...d5 38...f2?

Another inaccuracy. After 38...e3 39...b6 Black cannot resist.

38...d4+ 39...e1 39...d5

40...b4!

Luckily for Karpov, even after the last mistake he is still winning.

40...e3 41...e2 42...b5 43...c5

Despite the overall material equality, White is winning relatively easily as Black cannot handle the c-pawn.

43...f4+ 44...f2

44...e3 was also good enough: 44...xg2+ 45...xg2 45...h4 (45...g5 46...c4 47...e5 44...c5 48...f6 49...e6 50...d5 51...f5 52...f7 wins) 46.c4 f5+ (46...g5 47...d5 47...f5 48...f5 g6+ (after 48...g8 49...e6 50...f5 50...d7 White promotes with check) 49...e5 50...g7 50...c5 51...d3 52...b7 and White wins.

44...g6 45...g3 46...d5 f5 47...c4 f4 48...c5 e3+ 49...f3 f3 49...f3 fxg3

50...xg3

Karpov's king will restrain the enemy pawns, while his rook and pawn decide the outcome on the other side.

50...h5 51...c6 e2

After 51...h4+ 52...xh4 e2 53...e5 54...d4 White wins with 54...c7! (or 54...e2!) 54...f3+ 55...g3 55...e5 56...f2++.
After this fine victory Karpov finished superbly, beating Korchnoi, drawing with Stein and Smyslov, then winning against Savon in the last round. This enabled him to share first prize with Stein, who had previously been leading by half a point. This was Karpov's first world class result against elite opposition, and many more would follow in the coming years. From this point it became clear that he would sooner or later become a contender for the highest title in chess.

Karpov's next event was the historic Hastings tournament, where his excellent form did not desert him, as evidenced by his score of four points from the first five games. Next he faced the former child prodigy Henrique Mecking of Brazil. Mecking became a strong grandmaster and would go on to win two interzonal tournaments, although he lost both of his candidate matches, first against Korchnoi and later against Polugaevsky. He was subsequently forced to take a long break from chess due to a serious illness. He only played one subsequent game with Karpov, which ended in a quick draw.

Game 25

Anatoly Karpov - Henrique Mecking

Hastings 1971-72

1.e4 c5 2.\f6 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\f6 d4 d4 5.\f6 c6 6.\f6 e2 e5 7.\f6 b3 \f6 8.\f4 \f7 9.a4 \f6?

This was a new move, but unsurprisingly it failed to catch on. Some strong players have developed the knight here in certain 6.\f6 lines, but they do not give up the bishop for the b3-knight.

10.e5!

Karpov weakens Black's control over the key d5-square.

10...\f6 11.\f6 \f6

Played to prevent White from castling.

12.\f5 \f7

After 12...\f6 13.\f6 \f6 14.\f6 Black is in trouble.

13.\f6 \f6 14.\f6

Karpov has already outplayed his opponent, but the win is still a long way off, and it is instructive to see how he converts his advantage.

14...\f6

Karpov mentions the line 14...\f8 15.0-0 \f8 16.\f4 when White has an overwhelming position.

15.\f2 \f2 16.\f2

White has a large advantage as the d5-knight is very strong. He has good chances to gain control over the c-file, as well as prospects to gain space on either flank. At the same time Black has no serious weaknesses yet, and the opposite-coloured bishops might offer him drawing chances in certain types of endgame.
The Making of a Champion

One would normally prefer to keep the king closer to the centre for the ending, but this approach also fails to solve Black's problems. For instance, after 17 ... 0-0 18.h4  \( \text{\textit{h6}} \) 19.g4 \( \text{\textit{f4}} \) 20.ea1 Black loses a pawn.

Another possible continuation is 17 ...  \( \text{\textit{d8}} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{eac1}} \)  \( \text{\textit{d4}} \) (After 18 ...  \( \text{\textit{e7}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{c7}} \)  \( \text{\textit{xc7}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{xc7}} \) b6 21.\( \text{\textit{hcl}} \) White's domination on the c-file gives him a large advantage.) 19.b4 (19.\( \text{\textit{c7}} \)  \( \text{\textit{xc7}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{xc7}} \) b5) 19 ... b5 (If 19 ... h5 20.a5 Black is very passive.) 20.a5 h5 (20 ...  \( \text{\textit{d7}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{g4}} \) h5 22.\( \text{\textit{h3}} \) 23.\( \text{\textit{c3}} \) and Black's position is rather sad.

Knocking back the bishop and obtaining the c1-square for the rooks.

18.\( \text{\textit{d8}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{eac1}} \) a5 20.\( \text{\textit{d2}} \)  \( \text{\textit{xb8}} \) 21.g4

White gains space, and threatens an attack as well.

21.\( \text{\textit{d4}} \) 22.\( \text{\textit{c4}} \)

22.\( \text{\textit{xb4}} \) axb4 23.\( \text{\textit{c4}} \) also offers excellent winning chances.

22.\( \text{\textit{xd5}} \) 23.\( \text{\textit{xd5}} \) g5

Alternatively 23 ... b5 24.axb5  \( \text{\textit{xb5}} \) 25.g5 and White is once again clearly better.

24.hxg6!

Karpov refuses to allow his opponent to close the kingside. It is harder for a defender to protect two wings at the same time.

24.\( \text{\textit{hxg6}} \) 25.\( \text{\textit{d3}} \) \( \text{\textit{g7}} \)

25 ... b5 may have been a better attempt, although White remains on top with 26.axb5 (the immediate 26.\( \text{\textit{c6}} \) is also good) 26.\( \text{\textit{xb5}} \) 27.\( \text{\textit{c6}} \) \( \text{\textit{b6}} \) 28.\( \text{\textit{c8}} \).

26.h5!

Karpov creates another potential plan of attack, namely to invade along the h-file.

26.\( \text{\textit{b6}} \)
Moving the bishop to the queenside leaves the king vulnerable. On the other hand, placing it on the kingside with 26...\(\text{g}5\) allows an invasion on the other flank with 27.e\(\text{c}7\), when Black is in big trouble.

27.e\(\text{h}3\) e\(\text{c}5\)

Black seals up the queenside.

28.e\(\text{f}1\) f6?

Black is anxious to remove the weakness on f7, but this move further weakens the light squares.

It should be noted that White was threatening to win immediately. For instance, after a move like 28...b6?, White breaks through with 29.h6\(\text{t}\) e\(\text{g}8\) 30.h7\(\text{t}\) e\(\text{g}7\) 31.h8\(=\text{W}\), as pointed out by Mihail Marin in Learn from the Legends.

The best chance was 28...b5, hoping for some queenside activity, although Black's position remains highly unpleasant. After the natural 29.h6\(\text{t}\) e\(\text{h}7\) 30.axb5 e\(\text{xb}5\), White's strongest continuation looks to be 31.e6!, when he enjoys a powerful grip over the position.

29.hxg6 e\(\text{x}g6\) 30.e\(\text{h}1\)

Suddenly Black's king is in mortal danger.

30.e\(\text{b}5\)

After 30...b5 31.e\(\text{h}6\) e\(\text{g}5\) White can win in fabulous style:

32.e\(\text{b}4\)! In opposite-coloured bishop endgames, such moves occur more often than one might expect. 32...\(\text{axb}4\) (32...\(\text{axb}4\) loses immediately to 33.e\(\text{e}3\) followed by mate) 33.a5 d\(\text{d}4\) 34.a6 (34.e1\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{e}xb2\) 35.e\(\text{e}6\) wins as well) 34...\(\text{e}xg4\) (34...\(\text{be}8\) 35.e\(\text{e}2\) f\(\text{f}4\) 36.e\(\text{g}6\) wins) 35.e\(\text{g}6\) f\(\text{f}1\) e\(\text{f}2\) 37.e\(\text{b}3\) Followed by mate in two.

31.e\(\text{h}7\)

White starts weaving the mating net.

31...e\(\text{g}5\) 32.e\(\text{e}2\) f\(\text{f}4\) 33.e1\(\text{h}3\) d\(\text{d}4\) 33...\(\text{e}xg4\) 34.e\(\text{f}3\) wins.

34.e\(\text{g}7\)!

1–0

Black resigned, as it is mate next move. This game not only demonstrated Karpov's skill at developing his positional advantage in the endgame, but also showcased his ability to develop lethal checkmating attacks with few pieces.

In the next seven rounds Karpov won three and drew four. He then stumbled against Korchnoi, who avenged his recent loss to Karpov at the Alekhine Memorial, taking a half point lead in the process. Korchnoi proceeded to draw his final game, leaving Karpov needing a win against Markland in order to tie for first prize. He achieved it by virtue of a masterful endgame performance.
1971 Summary

Training match versus Korchnoi: 3/6 (+2 =2 −2)
USSR Championship semi-final, Daugavpils (1st place): 13/17 (+9 =8 −0)
Student Olympiad, Puerto Rico (Board three): 7½/8 (+7 =1 −0)
USSR Armed Forces Team Championship (Board one): 7/11 (+6 =4 −1)
USSR Team Championship, Rostov on Don (junior board) 6½/7 (+6 =1 −0)
USSR Championship, Leningrad (4th place): 13/21 (+7 =12 −2)
Alekhine Memorial, Moscow (1st-2nd place): 11/15 (+5 =12 −0)
Hastings (1st-2nd place): 11/15 (+8 =6 −1)

Total 71.6% (+50 =46 −6)

Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses
Rating 2630 (7-8 in the World)

Following a hectic twelve month period, Karpov was relatively inactive during the year that Fischer defeated Spassky to become the first non-Soviet world champion since 1946. This reversal in Soviet fortunes probably worked in Karpov's favour, as he would later receive even more support as the new contender. The Soviet Union desperately wanted the chess crown back, and their desire was only magnified by the Cold War. Chess had never before, and may never again play such a role in world politics! Karpov fully deserved all the help he received, due to his immense talent and the exceptional results he had achieved. He did not waste the investment that was made in him.

Karpov began the year by playing in the USSR Olympiad. After seven games he had a fifty percent score, at which point he met the sixth World Champion, Vassily Smyslov. Despite being fifteen years removed from his peak, the former champion was still a fierce competitor. Before this encounter they had only met once over the board, and on that occasion the old lion triumphed over his future successor.

**Game 26**

Anatoly Karpov – Vassily Smyslov

USSR Olympiad, Moscow 1972

1.e4 e5 2.êf3 êf6 3.êxe5

Karpov only seldom tried 3.d4, and abandoned it altogether after suffering an unpleasant defeat against Bent Larsen, who played superbly.

3...d6 4.êf3 êxe4 5.d4 êc7 6.êd3 êf6?! 7.h3 0–0 8.0–0 c5?!
This whole variation is unappealing for Black, as he gives up some space without gaining anything in return. 8...c6 looks better, followed by slow development.

9.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{c6}?!\)
With 9...b6?! Black can hope to exert pressure against the d5-pawn if White pushes it.

10.\(\text{e1!}\)
Aside from being a generally useful move, this also takes the sting out of a future ...\(\text{b}4\) by freeing the fl-square for the bishop.

10...\(\text{a}6\) 11.d5!
White wins a tempo and gains space at the same time.

11...\(\text{a}7\)
The point of White's rook move can be seen after 11...\(\text{b}4\) 12.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{f}5\) 13.\(\text{e}2\) when Black is practically forced to play 13...\(\text{a}5\), and after 14.a3 White dominates the light squares on the queenside.

12.a4 \(\text{d}7\) 13.a5 \(\text{e}8\) 14.\(\text{f}1\)
This move is a bit mysterious; perhaps Karpov wanted to overprotect the d5-pawn in anticipation of ...\(\text{b}5\), as mentioned in the next note.

14...h6
14...\(\text{b}5\) was possible; it would be in Black's interest to exchange pieces as his position is somewhat cramped. For this reason 15.\(\text{e}2?!\) looks like the most logical reply.

15.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{f}8\) 16.\(\text{xe}8\) \(\text{xe}8\) 17.\(\text{h}2\) \(\text{d}8\)
18.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{c}7\)
18...\(\text{b}5\) 19.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{xc}3\) 20.bxc3 \(\text{c}7\) looks better for Black than the game.

19.\(\text{d}e4\)
19.\(\text{e}4?!\) would also retain a small edge.

19...\(\text{xe}4\) 20.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 21.\(\text{d}2\)
21.\(\text{xe}3?!\) is interesting as well.

21...\(\text{e}8\)
22...c3
Karpov is aiming to maintain a modest edge. One gets the impression that he had two things in his mind during this game. Obviously he was motivated by the desire to defeat his legendary opponent, but at the same time he wanted to make sure he would not lose.

22...d8 23.b3 d7 24.c4??
Many players would have preferred to keep this square free for White's other pieces, especially the knight, but Karpov has other ideas. It looks like he wanted to restrict the enemy knight.

24.e8
After 24...g5 25.d3 x.d3 26.xd3 g7 27.b1 White keeps a slight edge.

25.g4 h7 26.d3 x.d3 27.xd3 g6

28.b1!
Karpov plans to open another file to keep Black busy on the queenside.

28...g7 29.b4 x.b4 30.xb4 c7 31.b3 e5 32.xe5 x.e5 33.g2
The king stands slightly better on g2. This type of small improving move was characteristic of Karpov's play.

33...g5?
This stabilizes the position of the rook on e5, but the cost in terms of the weakening of Black's kingside is too high. Better was 33...b6! in order to increase the influence of the knight. In the following line of analysis the knight moves more than it eventually will do for the remainder of the game: 34.axb6 xxb6 35.d4 (35.a5? x.d5) 35...c5 36.c6 e8 37.d4 d7 Black has good drawing chances.

34.d4 e7 35.d2 e1 36.b3 e2
Black is trying to generate some activity, but he cannot achieve anything without his knight.

37.f3!
Karpov uses his king with style. Interestingly 37.b2!! was stronger, even though White steps into a pin. Fortunately there is no means to exploit this and Black drops the b7-pawn.

37...e5 38.e3 f6?
In fortifying the e5-square, Black weakens his kingside even further. 38...xe3# 39.fxe3 f6 would have been a slight improvement, although Black is still very passive.

The best chance was probably 38...f8, intending to wait and see how White intends...
to continue. A likely continuation is 39.\( \mathcal{Q}e4 \) \( \mathcal{W}c7 \) 40.\( \mathcal{W}c3 \) when White maintains a large plus, although there is still some work required to win the game.

39.\( \mathcal{Q}e4 \)

Karpov spots a new weakness.

39...\( \mathcal{W}g7 \)!!

The alternative 39...f5 is not much better, and after 40.\( \mathcal{Q}g3 \) fxg4 41.\( \mathcal{H}xg4 \) White should win here as well.

39...\( \mathcal{W}f8 \) is more resilient, although after 40.\( \mathcal{Q}g2 \) f5 41.\( \mathcal{Q}d2 \) \( \mathcal{E}x e3 \) 42.\( \mathcal{W}x e3 \) \( \mathcal{W}f7 \) 43.f4 fxg4 44.\( \mathcal{W}x g5 \) Black is in trouble.

40.\( \mathcal{W}g2 \)

The king's work is finished, so he retreats in order to prepare \( \mathcal{Q}g3 \), after which the rook capture will no longer occur with check.

40...\( \mathcal{W}c7 ? \)

This loses at once. 40...\( \mathcal{W}f7 \) was the only chance, although after 41.\( \mathcal{W}d3 \) White maintains a massive advantage.

41.\( \mathcal{B}f3 \)!

This move reveals a second purpose of the king retreat. Black's position collapses, as he has no way to defend f6.

41...\( \mathcal{B}b5 \) 42.\( \mathcal{A}xb6 \)

1-0

This was Karpov's first win over a former world champion. At this point in their respective careers the two great players were separated by just ten rating points; Karpov was rated 2630 and Smyslov 2620. Their personal score eventually ended with Karpov winning three, with eleven draws and one loss - which occurred in their very first encounter. Karpov finished the tournament by beating Taimanov and Stein. Overall he won four games, lost one and drew four.

Next came the Graz Student Olympiad. The previous year Karpov played on the third board, but this time he was number one. He started slowly, drawing against two unrated players, but in the finals he found his form, winning five games and drawing four.

Later in 1972, Karpov represented the Soviet Union at the Skopje Olympiad for the first time. He was on fine form in the preliminaries and won all four games, and won his first game in the finals as well. Then he suffered a reversal against Padevski of Bulgaria, who ground out a win in an isolated pawn endgame. It seems that the rising superstars from the Soviet Union had a tendency to struggle against Bulgarian opponents at Olympiads - eight years later, Kasparov was taken apart by Krum Georgiev in the 1980 Malta event.

After that setback, Karpov really showed his class. He won three games in a row, then made a draw followed by another win. His next opponent was Arthur Bisguier of the United States. This was their second meeting - they had previously drawn in Caracas and had not played each other since. The American played a total of forty three games against the world champions, starting with Euwe and finishing with Fischer. He won one of those games, drew sixteen and lost twenty six.
Game 27

Arthur Bisguier – Anatoly Karpov

Skopje Olympiad 1972

1.c4 c5

Karpov used this move in the early and mid-1970s, but gradually switched to other systems as time went on. One of his main weapons was 1...e5, and he also played 1...d6 in several games, followed by 2.Qc3 e5, although he sometimes played 2...e6 there as well.

2.Qc3 g6 3.Qf3 g7 4.e3

This variation has little power, as long as the black knight has not committed itself to c6. If White wishes to fight for an advantage he should prefer either 4.g3 or 4.d4 cxd4 5.Qxd4.

4...d6 5.d4 0-0 6.Qe2 cxd4 7.exd4 d5 8.0-0 Qc6 9.h3 Qf5 10.Qe3

The players have transposed to an innocuous line of the Grunfeld. It could also be viewed as a reversed Tarrasch Defence, with an extra tempo for White.

10...dxc4!

Karpov forces an isolated pawn position. He played well and scored highly in positions of this type. Instead after 10...Qc8 11.c5! Qe4 12.Qc1 White has done well.

11.Qxc4 Qc8 12.Qe2?

This move is too passive. 12.Qc1, 12.a3 and 12.Qa4 were all better alternatives.

12...Qe6!

Halting the d-pawn. If it got to d5 it might exert a choking effect on the black position, assuming White could protect it properly.

13.Qd2 Qa5!

In the next few moves Karpov efficiently directs his forces against the isolated pawn.

14.Qh6?

On principle, minor piece exchanges should help the side playing against the isolated pawn.

10...dxc4!
130 The Making of a Champion

14...£d8 15.£xg7 £xg7 16.£fd1

16...£d6!
Karpov simply increases the pressure against the d4-pawn. As it turns out, this rook is destined to play a starring role in future events.

17.£e3 £cd8 18.a3?! £b3!
Preventing White's intended b2-b4, after which his extra space on the queenside would have given him something to cheer about.

19.£d2

19...£e6!
After posting all his pieces on good squares, Karpov inserts an unpleasant rook move.

20.£f4?
Paradoxically, the queen would have been in less danger on the d-file, and 20.£d3 should have been preferred. Black should respond with 20...£a6!, stopping £b5. At this point exchanging bishops with 21.£d1 is in White's interest. Normally it would not be the case, but it is worth it here in order to get the d1-square for a rook. White's situation is still far from pleasant, but he would have reasonable chances to resist.

20...£d5!
Winning the d5-square for his rook, which will function there superbly.

21.£xd5 £xd5
Suddenly White's queen and rook are under pressure, and 22...£f5 followed by ...£xf3 is a serious threat.

22.g4
White has to resort to this move, as after 22.£d3 £f6 23.£e3 £xd4 24.£xd4 £xd4 Black has won a pawn.

22...£g5!
Great stuff from Karpov - after some fine positional play, he now exploits his tactical chances.
23. \( \text{g}3 \)

The queen is out of play here and never gets back into the game.

23... \( \text{d6}! \)

Threatening to take on \( f3 \).

24. \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c4} \)

24... \( \text{b5} \) was also strong, as after 25. \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{d5} \) White is in trouble.

25. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{a6} \) 26. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{d8} \)

Black is also better after 26... \( \text{xb4} \) 27. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{b5} \), but the position is more complicated than in the game.

27. \( \text{b3} \)

Another line goes 27. \( \text{a2} \) \( \text{c4}! \) (better than 27... \( \text{xd4} \) 28. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 29. \( \text{e5} \) 28. \( \text{ac2} \) \( \text{b5} \) when White is practically paralysed. Play might continue 29. \( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xe2} \) 30. \( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{xf3}! \) (but not 30... \( \text{xd4}? \) 31. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 32. \( \text{e5} \) 31. \( \text{xf3} \) \( \text{xd4} \) and Black is a pawn up.

Bisguier wants to stir things up, but goes down quickly. White can prolong the end with 29. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 30. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{e6} \) 31. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{f4} \), but Black should still win with his extra pawn.

29... \( \text{d3}! \) 30. \( \text{h4} \) \( \text{h6} \) 31. \( \text{xf7} \)

31... \( \text{d4}! \)

Black is not only ahead in material but his pieces also work better, so White cannot even hope to resist.

32. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{hxh3}! \)

0–1

Karpov followed this victory with two wins and one draw from the final three games. Altogether he scored 13/15 on the fifth board—an outstanding result for his first Olympiad.

Karpov participated in only one individual tournament in 1972, in San Antonio, Texas. The field was packed with strong American players, in addition to a strong contingent of foreign grandmasters including Petrosian, Portisch, Keres, Larsen and Hort. In the first round Karpov faced the American IM Anthony Saidy with the black pieces. It was the only time they met over the board. Saidy faced all the world champions from Tal to Karpov; out of thirteen games he drew three and lost ten. He wrote a book entitled *The Battle of Chess*
Ideas, in which he discusses his meetings with those elite players.

**Game 28**

**Anthony Saidy – Anatoly Karpov**

San Antonio 1972

1.\( \text{d}3 \text{f}6 \) 2.\( \text{g}3 \text{b}5 \)

Karpov played this ambitious move three times and only dropped half a point.

3.\( \text{g}2 \)

A year later Korchnoi tried 3.\( \text{c}3?! \), playing against the \text{b}5-pawn and in the centre: 3...\( \text{b}7 \) 4.\( \text{a}4 \) \( \text{a}6 \) 5.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 6.\( \text{d}4 \) e6 7.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 8.\( \text{bd}2 \) \( \text{a}7 \) 9.\( \text{d}3 \) 0-0 10.\( \text{e}4 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 11.0-0 \( \text{c}5 \) 12.\( \text{bc}5 \) \( \text{dc}5 \) 13.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 14.\( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 15.\( \text{axb}5 \) \( \text{axb}5 \) 16.\( \text{b}1 \) \( \text{cxd}4 \) 17.\( \text{cxd}4 \) h6 18.\( \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{b}6 \)

Black obtained decent positional compensation for the pawn, and later White blundered and lost, Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow 1973.

3...\( \text{b}7 \) 4.0-0 e6 5.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \)

In 1978 Karpov deviated with 5...\( \text{d}6 \) against Vukic, and the game ended in a draw after a long fight.

6.\( \text{e}4 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 7.\( \text{a}4 \)

White tends to score better with the standard King's Indian Attack plan, involving moves like \( \text{e}1 \) and \( \text{bd}2 \) followed by \( \text{c}3 \) and \( \text{d}4 \).

7...\( \text{a}6 \) 8.\( \text{xb}5 \) \( \text{axb}5 \) 9.\( \text{xa}8 \) \( \text{xa}8 \) 10.\( \text{a}3 \)

11...\( \text{b}4 \)

The pawn can be attacked on this square, but it can be defended as well.

11.\( \text{c}4 \) 0-0 12.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 13.\( \text{a}1 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 14.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{xd}5 \)?

Karpov chooses to go for a slow position. It was not an easy decision, as the white knight is well placed on \( \text{c}4 \). The alternative 14...\( \text{exd}5 \) 15.\( \text{ce}5 \) would have led to an equal position.

15.\( \text{a}6 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 16.\( \text{a}1 \) h6
17.\textbf{Be}1
In some ways the position is easy to play for White, but in other respects it is hard. White has a stable position and a lot of choices, as Black threatens very little. On the other hand it is not easy to choose between the numerous options of roughly equal value.

17...\textbf{e}7 18.\textbf{D}e5 \textbf{d}d6 19.\textbf{D}c4
White could not resist the temptation of this indirect draw offer. Simpler was 19.\textbf{D}xc6 \textbf{D}xc6 20.d4 \textbf{A}a8 21.\textbf{D}c4 with an equal position.

19...\textbf{c}5
Karpov wants to play on.

20.\textbf{A}e3?!
Black's eventual victory comes as a result of his subsequent domination of the dark squares, so one might say that the text move is the first step towards White's eventual demise. At the moment there are a lot of pieces on the board, so White does not have to worry too much about the dark squares, but the more pieces are exchanged, the more White's sensitivity on the dark squares will grow.

I would personally prefer 20.\textbf{A}a1, which would just hold the position, although Saidy thinks there is nothing wrong with the move he played. The position was equal before and remains the same after this move as well, so the American – who is not only a decent chess player but a medical doctor as well – certainly has a point. In chess certain things are a matter of taste; it is one of the things that makes the game so fascinating.

By the way, Portisch later produced a positional masterpiece to defeat Saidy in the same event, helped at one point by the move 1xb6, exchanging his bishop for Saidy's knight. On the other hand the American also enjoyed success against a legendary player by utilizing the same concept: in 1993 he defeated Korchnoi after exchanging his bishop for an enemy knight in the early stages of the game.

20...\textbf{A}xe3 21.\textbf{A}xe3 \textbf{D}e7 22.\textbf{G}f62 \textbf{G}d5!
Karpov does not want to take on g2, as White's remaining knights would be strong enough to counter his bishop. Instead he allows the exchange, but only on his own terms, when the recapture ...exd5 would cost White his treasured outpost on c4.

23.\textbf{D}e4?!
White wants to simplify, but he goes about it in an unfortunate way. More promising was: 23.\textbf{B}b3 \textbf{C}c6 (23...\textbf{D}xc4 24.\textbf{D}xc5 \textbf{D}xa6 25.\textbf{D}xa6 \textbf{A}xb2 26.\textbf{A}a1 \textbf{D}c3 27.\textbf{B}b3 White soon regains the pawn with equal chances.) 24.\textbf{D}xc6 \textbf{D}xc6 25.\textbf{A}a1 \textbf{D}xc4 26.\textbf{D}xc6 \textbf{A}xb3 27.\textbf{A}xb3 \textbf{A}xb2 28.\textbf{A}a8 White is a pawn down, but he should be able to draw the opposite-coloured bishop ending.

It was also reasonable to play 23.\textbf{A}a1 intending to exchange queens on a5.

23...\textbf{D}xe4 24.\textbf{D}xe4 \textbf{h}5 25.\textbf{W}a1?!
Saidy brings back his queen to defend, but he could have played more actively with: 25.\textbf{B}a1! White can generate enough play with his rook. 25...\textbf{W}g5 26.\textbf{B}b7 \textbf{h}4 (or 26...\textbf{D}d5 27.\textbf{A}a8 \textbf{D}xe3 28.\textbf{B}xf8 \textbf{D}xf8 29.\textbf{W}xb4+ and
White is not worse) 27...a8 28.d5 29.xf8+ c8 30.xd5 exd5 31.xc7+ And White holds.

25...g6 26.d1

27...h4!
Karpov softens his opponent up on the dark squares.

27.e2 g5 28.f3 g7!
This is typical of Karpov; the king move has no special purpose, other than providing a small but definite improving of his position.

29.f4 e5
Black needs his queen to develop an attack on the dark squares.

30.a1 d5 31.e2 c6! 32.a5 e7

33.g4?
This leads to a further weakening of the dark squares. Though it was not much fun, White should have continued to defend this pawn on the g3-square and only advance it as a last resort.

33...c7 34.a1 g5 35.h1
White can do nothing but wait passively.

35...h6 36.g1 f6 37.b3 d8!
It is hard to evaluate this move, apart from calling it sly. As Saidy points out, "it has NO value unless I overlook the positional threat - which I did"

38.a1?
For reasons that will become obvious, White should have preferred 38.e2.

38...b3!
Karpov seizes the opportunity to open the position and fracture his opponent's pawn chain. In the resulting position his bishop will work superbly, while Saidy's bishop is restricted by the enemy pawns and has no target to attack.

39.a6 bxc2 40.xc2 d5 41.d2?
Maybe White was short of time and did not realize he had passed the 40 move mark. When
I asked Saidy about the game he said: “Yes, I was always in zeitnot in those days.” His last move is directed against ...\(\text{\#}\text{b}\text{b}_4\), but the queen is stepping into a different type of hazard. Instead White should have preferred 41.\(\text{\#}\text{e}\text{e}_2\) \(\text{\#}\text{b}_4\) 42.\(\text{\#}\text{a}_3\).

41...c5?! Perhaps Karpov was also playing too fast, as he missed a direct refutation of White’s last move: 41...\(\text{\#}\text{x}\text{e}_3\)! 42.\(\text{\#}\text{x}\text{e}_3\) \(\text{\#}\text{f}_4\) 43.\(\text{\#}\text{x}\text{c}_6\) \(\text{\#}\text{x}_e\text{e}_3\) 44.\(\text{\#}\text{x}_e\text{e}_3\) \(\text{\#}\text{x}_e\text{e}_3\) 45.\(\text{\#}\text{e}_4\) \(\text{\#}\text{b}_8\) And Black is winning.

42.\(\text{\#}\text{e}_2\) \(\text{\#}\text{b}_4\) 43.\(\text{\#}\text{a}_3\)

Another line runs as follows: 43.\(\text{\#}\text{b}_6\) \(\text{\#}_d7\) (43...\(\text{\#}\text{a}_7\)??) 44.\(\text{\#}\text{g}_1\) (44.\(\text{\#}\text{d}_4\) \(\text{\#}_d_5\); 44.\(\text{\#}\text{b}_7\) \(\text{\#}_d_8\) 45.\(\text{\#}_x\text{d}_7\) \(\text{\#}_x\text{d}_7\) 46.\(\text{\#}_e_5\) \(\text{\#}_c_7\) 47.\(\text{\#}\text{c}_4\) \(\text{\#}_d_8\) Black wins the d3-pawn) 44...\(\text{\#}\text{g}_7\) (44...\(\text{\#}_d_8\) 45.\(\text{\#}_d_4\) 45.\(\text{\#}\text{b}_7\) (45.\(\text{\#}\text{f}_1\) \(\text{\#}_x\text{d}_3\)) 45...\(\text{\#}_d_8\) 46.\(\text{\#}_x\text{d}_7\) \(\text{\#}_x\text{d}_7\) and White drops the d3-pawn.

\[\text{Diagram:}\]

43...\(\text{\#}\text{g}_7\) 44.\(\text{\#}\text{g}_2\) \(\text{\#}_g_6\)

Karpov follows a cunning plan: he wants to exchange knights. Once this has been achieved, there will be nothing to stop his bishop from becoming overwhelmingly powerful.

45.\(\text{\#}\text{f}_1\) \(\text{\#}_c_6\) 46.\(\text{\#}\text{f}_2\)?

White does nothing to prevent the knight exchange. It is a common mistake – the defender allows exchanges, hoping that the simplification will bring him closer to a draw when in fact the opposite is true. The temptation is especially great in positions with opposite-coloured bishops.

The same theme has been illustrated in many games involving the great champions of the past. The following is a good example:

\[\text{Diagram:}\]

24.\(\text{\#}\text{c}_3\)?? White should have manoeuvred his knight to el in order to defend g2. 24...\(\text{\#}\text{x}\text{c}_3\)!
And in Kotov – Botvinnik, Moscow 1955, the first Soviet Champion got a superior position and went on to win a famous endgame. Other shining examples of this theme include Matulovic – Botvinnik, USSR vs. Rest of the World 1970, as well as the more recent game Kasparov – Vallejo Pons, Linares 2002.

Returning to the main game, let us consider how White might have improved. Avoiding the exchange with 46.\(\text{\#}\text{g}_1\)\(\text{\#}\text{e}_5\) 47.\(\text{\#}\text{d}_2\) was unsatisfactory, as after 47...\(\text{\#}_b_8\) 48.\(\text{\#}\text{a}_2\) \(\text{\#}_e_7\) White is very passive, and Black should be able to break in sooner or later.

A better try was 46.\(\text{h}_3\)?? This does not fully save White from suffering, but at least it sets up an obstacle: 46...\(\text{\#}\text{e}_5\) 47.\(\text{\#}_h_2\)!! Now Black cannot get out of the pin without exchanging queens. 47...\(\text{\#}_g_5\) (after 47...\(\text{\#}_b_7\) 48.\(\text{\#}\text{g}_2\) \(\text{\#}_b_4\) 49.\(\text{\#}\text{x}_e_5\) \(\text{\#}_e_1\) 50.\(\text{\#}\text{g}_1\) White is very much alive) 48.\(\text{\#}\text{g}_2\) \(\text{\#}_d_7\) 49.\(\text{\#}\text{b}_3\) (or
The Making of a Champion

49.Bc3 0xc4 50.0xc7 0xc7 51.0xc4 0xb2)
49...0xc4 50.0xc7 0xc7 51.dxc4 Black has excellent winning chances, but the game is not completely over.

46...0e5! 47.0xe5 0xe5
From the time of the first minor piece exchange, it took Karpov a further twenty seven moves to swap all the minor pieces except for the opposite-coloured bishops.

48.b3 0d7 49.e4
This gives Black even more dark squares on which to play, but White's position was already beyond saving. After 49.a5 0c3 50.b5 0a7 Black invades.

49...0c5!
Black directs his forces against the vulnerable h2-pawn.

50.0e2 0b7 51.0f3 0e5! 52.0a5?
A blunder in a hopeless position. White could have struggled on with 52.0g2, but is unlikely to last much longer after 52...0c1.

52...0d2
0–1
This was a masterful demonstration of how to handle a middlegame with opposite-coloured bishops. Saidy did not make many obvious mistakes. I wonder if he was subsequently consoled by the fact that Karpov did something similar to Kasparov in their second world championship match thirteen years later – see Game 75 on page 423.

Karpov followed this first round win by powering ahead to a score of 6/7, courtesy of wins over, amongst others, Browne and Byrne, as well as a draw with Petrosian. In round eight he faced Svetozar Gligoric, who was firmly established as the top Yugoslav player and had formerly been ranked among the very best in the world. He played all the world champions from Euwe to Anand, missing only Kramnik and Topalov. Out of 183 encounters, he won twenty three games, drew 109 and lost fifty one. Karpov and Gligoric had only played once before, and drew. Their lifetime result is 7–3 in favour of Karpov, who achieved four victories and six draws with no defeats.

Game 29
Anatoly Karpov – Svetozar Gligoric
San Antonio 1972

1.e4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.c4 a6 4.d4 d6
5.0–0 e7 6.0e1 b5 7.0b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.0h3 0b8
Karpov's lifetime result against the Breyer is seven wins and nine draws without a loss.

10.d3
In the early seventies Karpov played this unassuming move three times, dropping only half a point. Gligoric would go on to repeat the Breyer against Karpov on three subsequent occasions, but with little success. Each time Karpov opted for the main line with 10.d4, and the Yugoslav grandmaster only achieved a single draw.
10. \( \text{Qbd7} \)
Black can also play in the style of the Chigorin by means of 10...c5?! 11. \( \text{Qbd2} \) a6, although White may be able to benefit from the fact that his light-squared bishop has not been forced to retreat to c2.

11. \( \text{Qbd2} \) a5 12. \( \text{Qf1} \) c5 13. \( \text{Ac2} \) \( \text{Qe8} \)
14. \( \text{Qg3} \) a8 15. b4 \( \text{Qcd7} \)

16. d4 h6
Up to this point both sides have played normal moves, but the text is rare. 16...a5 is the main line, and 16...g6 has also been seen regularly.

17. \( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{Qb6} \) 18. \( \text{Qd3} \)
This small nudge of the bishop stops two of Black's ideas, namely ...\( \text{Qc4} \) and ...a5. As is typical for Karpov, the move is not only preventing but also building, as it prepares an eventual c3-c4.

18...\( \text{Qc8} \)
The following year Spassky tried to improve with 18...g6. It is worth checking the course of the game, as it was remarkable: 19. \( \text{Qc2} \) a6d7 20. \( \text{Qad1} \) g7 (Kasparov recommends 20...c5) 21. dxe5 dxe5 22. c4! Revealing the building function of White's 18th move. 22...bxc4 23. \( \text{Qxc4} \) \( \text{Qxe7}?! \) (23...\( \text{Qxc4} \) 24. \( \text{Qxc4} \)

25. a4!! Karpov demonstrates a superb handling of the initiative as well. 25...c4 26. \( \text{Qa2} \) c6 27. a5 \( \text{Qa4} \) 28. \( \text{Qc1} \) c8 29. \( \text{Qxh6} \) \( \text{Qxd1} \)
30. \( \text{Qxd1} \) a6d6? 31. xg7 hgxg7

32. \( \text{Qg5}! \) f6 33. \( \text{Qg4} \) h7 34. \( \text{Qh4} \) 1–0 Karpov – Spassky, Moscow 1973.

19. \( \text{Qc2} \) \( \text{Qd7}?! \)
Black should have opted for a complicated middlegame with 19...exd4! 20. cxd4 c5 21. bxc5 dxc5 22. d5 c4 23. \( \text{Qf1} \) a4. The resulting position is double-edged.

20. \( \text{Qad1} \) c6 21. \( \text{Qe3} \) a4 22. \( \text{Qc1} \) a6 23. \( \text{Qb1} \)
Karpov wants to keep the queens on the board. Another possibility was 23. \( \text{Qd2}?! \), aiming to transfer the knight to a5 or play a4.
23...exd4 24.cxd4 (Also after 24.exd4 e6 25.e3 e8 the position looks balanced.) 24...xc2 25.xc2 d5 26.e5 ffd7 Black has equal chances as his knight will be strong on c4.

23...d7

Karpov handles the closed position with great skill, obtaining more and more space.

24.f2!
Intending to gain space with f4.

24...e5 25.bxc5 dxc5 26.d5 a4 27.c4!
Otherwise Black would play ...c4 himself.

27.b4 28.f1! c7

29.f4

Gligoric is a King's Indian expert and fully understands the power of White's impending pawn storm. He knows it would be futile to try and prevent it, so instead he evacuates his king.
35.h4 \( \text{c7} \) 36.g5
Karpov pushes his opponent back by increasing his own space.

36...hxg5 37.hxg5 \( \text{d7} \)

38.g4!
Even in closed positions one should not become lazy at improving the pieces to the fullest extent possible.

38...\( \text{e8} \) 39.\( \text{f2} \! \)
Karpov improves his king and starts fighting for the only open file.

39...\( \text{e8} \) 40.\( \text{h1} \) \( \text{e8} \)

41.d1!
This is part of a deep and subtle plan, which can be carried out without taking any real risks. From a practical perspective this is an ideal strategy.

Nevertheless it was objectively even stronger to soften Black on the other flank with 41.a3!!, when the game might proceed as follows: 41...a5 42.a4 \( \text{b6} \) 43.b5!! This wins but requires precise calculation. It would be interesting to know if Karpov spent much time looking at this, and whether he missed a detail in what follows. 43...\( \text{c8} \) 44.a5 \( \text{a5} \) 45.a4 \( \text{d4} \) 46.a3 The threat of trapping the queen appears frightening, but White has a beautiful retort:

46.\( \text{h7} \! \) \( \text{a8} \) 47.\( \text{g6} \! \) 48.\( \text{xf6} \! \) 49.\( \text{xf6} \! \) 50.\( \text{xf6} \! \)

49.\( \text{h5} \! \) White does not save the queen but instead plays for mate. 49...\( \text{g4} \) 50.\( \text{xb6} \! \) and White wins.
41...\(\text{d}8\)

42.\(\text{g}1!!\)
With this brilliant move Karpov beautifully finds better places for his pieces. Black has no counterplay so there is no need to hurry.

42...\(\text{b}6?\)
Gligoric wants to fight for the h-file, but Black's c5-pawn is weak, so there was not much to be gained from moving the knight away from d7.

A better idea was Kasparov's suggestion of 42...a5, intending ...a4 to take away the b3-square from the white knight.

43.\(\text{h}2!\)
White begins fighting for the h-file; the first function of the magical queen move.

43...\(\text{e}7\) 44.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{c}7\) 45.\(\text{f}3!\)
White makes full use of his space advantage. The king is ideally placed not on the second rank but the third, for reasons that will soon become apparent.

45...\(\text{d}7\)

46.a3!!
Karpov switches to the opposite flank and brings his opponent down in no time. My students have great difficulty in finding this move. The principle is clear though: when one has an advantage in space, one should look for opportunities to switch the focus of the attack between both sides of the board.

46...bxa3 47.\(\text{a}2!\)
And now we see why Karpov opened the second rank. I cannot say for sure if he envisioned this idea when making his 42nd move, but it would not surprise me if he did.

47...\(\text{h}4\) 48.\(\text{xa}3\) \(\text{gh}8\)
48...\(\text{f}6??\) is a witty suggestion from Kasparov. It does not solve Black's problems, although it would have been worth trying as a
last ditch attempt. After $49.gxf6\  gxf6\  50.a5\  \text{b}xg4\  51.xg4\  52.xg4\  53.xc5\  54.xc5+\text{d}7\  55.a1\  a8\  56.d2$ 

White's king escapes the checks, as Kasparov himself pointed out.

49.$b1\  b8$

50.$e1!$

The introduction of the queen to the attack signifies the end for Black.

50...$xg4\  51.xg4\  c8\  52.a5+$

1-0

In round nine Karpov suffered a setback and lost to Portisch. He bounced back with a win over Smith, and then drew the rest of his games, including one against the legendary Estonian Paul Keres. He finished with $10\frac{1}{2}/15$, which was enough for equal first place alongside Petrosian and Portisch. Despite his relatively slow finish, his overall performance was impressive. By the end of 1972, Karpov had firmly established himself as a world class player.
1972 Summary

USSR Olympiad, Moscow (Board two): 5½/9 (+4 =3 -2)
Student Olympiad, Graz (Board one):
  Preliminary: 2½/4 (+1 =3 -0)
  Finals: 4½/5 (+4 =1 -0)
World Olympiad, Skopje (Board five):
  Preliminary: 4/4 (+4 =0 -0)
  Finals: 9/11 (+8 =2 -1)
San Antonio (1st-3rd): 10½/15 (+7 =7 -1)

Total 75% (+28 =16 -4)
Before Karpov set out on the road to the world crown, he played in two tournaments. The first was in Budapest, at a time when the Hungarian capital was celebrating the centenary of establishing the combined city by uniting Pest and Buda. In the first round the German endgame specialist Hecht thwarted Karpov’s attempts to grind out a full point, and held him to a draw. In the second round Karpov defeated Hort, who committed surprising mistakes in the endgame for a player of such high calibre. Throughout the tournament, Karpov ruthlessly punished his rivals who would later become candidates in the world championship cycle. The win over Hort was followed by a sequence of five draws. In round eight he met another future world championship candidate, Gyula Sax of Hungary. This was their first encounter, and they would go on to meet six more times. Overall Karpov won three of their encounters and drew the other four. The Hungarian grandmaster faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Kramnik. He won four of those encounters, drew thirteen and lost thirty.

\[
\text{Game 30}
\]

Anatoly Karpov – Gyula Sax

Budapest 1973

1.d4!

The exclamation mark is in recognition of Karpov’s willingness to expand his repertoire. 1973 was the first year in which Karpov regularly utilized the queen’s pawn openings. Before that he only sporadically played anything other than 1.e4.

1...\text{c6} 2.c4 \text{g6} 3.\text{c3} \text{d6}

Sax’s main opening at this period was the Grünfeld. On this occasion, perhaps fearing Karpov’s preparation, he employs his secondary weapon.

4.\text{g3}

Karpov regularly used this safe line, as well as the Sämisch and the main line with \text{\textit{e2}} and \text{\textit{e3}}. He won numerous games with each variation.

4...\text{\textit{g7}} 5.\text{\textit{g2}} 0–0 6.\text{\textit{e3}} \text{c5} 7.d5 \text{e5}

Gyula Sax is a superb tactician with a great feel for dynamics, so it is surprising that he opted for such a static structure.
8.0-0 \( \text{d6} \) 9.e4 \( \text{d7} \) 10.a4
Preventing any sacrifices in the style of the Benko Gambit.

10...b6

11.\( \text{a}5 \)!
Improving the knight and preparing a possible \( f4 \).

11...\( \text{h5} \) 12.\( \text{d}3 \) \( f5 \) 13.exf5!
With this move Karpov wins control over the e4-square.

13...\( \text{exf5} \) 14.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d7} \) 15.f3 \( \text{f6} \) 16.\( \text{d}f2 \)!
Having more space, Karpov only allows Black to exchange a single piece.

16...\( \text{exf4} \)!!
Black had to parry the threat of 17.\( \text{xf6} \) followed by \( g4 \), but giving up his light-squared bishop was not the best way to do it. 16...\( \text{e7} \)!! would have enabled Black to keep the bishop pair.

17.\( \text{xf4} \) a6 18.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{f}b8 \)
The immediate 18...b5 would have allowed White to open the queenside in his favour: 19.b4! \( \text{cxb5} \) 20.axb5 (20.c5!!) 20...\( \text{xb5} \) 21.c5 And White will soon dominate on the queenside.

19.\( \text{h3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 20.\( \text{d}2 \) b5
Sax may have been aiming for counterplay, or perhaps even a complete closing of the queenside, after which it would be hard for White to prove anything on the other flank.

21.b4!
Karpov forcefully opens the queenside. It is a thematic breakthrough for such positions. Let me cite you another beautiful example:

14.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{xb5} \) 15.b4! White went on to win in 1. Sokolov – Miles, Sarajevo 1987.

21...\( \text{cxb4} \) 22.\( \text{axb5} \) \( \text{axb5} \) 23.c5! \( \text{d}a4 \) 24.\( \text{d}a1 \)
This move does not let Black off the hook, although 24.\( \text{xd6} \)!! may well be faster, as after 24...\( \text{xd6} \) 25.\( \text{d}c1 \) \( \text{d}a6 \) 26.\( \text{c}6 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 27.d6 Black is in big trouble.
24...\texttt{O}e8!
Sax finds the most resilient defence.

25.c6
Karpov relinquishes any ideas of a quick breakthrough, in favour of creating a monstrous passed pawn. In the long run it will be hard for Black to restrain this pawn while also holding his queenside together.

25...\texttt{O}c7 26.\texttt{Ba}1!
This subtle move prepares to pose a dilemma to Black. He will either have to give up the a-file, or allow the exchange of a rook which would have been useful for restraining the c6-pawn.

26...\texttt{Da}6 27.\texttt{D}d3 \texttt{O}c7 28.\texttt{Ba}b1 \texttt{Da}6 29.\texttt{Ba}1 \texttt{O}c7

30.\texttt{B}b3!
Karpov has a clear advantage so of course he avoids a repetition.

30...\texttt{Ba}a8
Sax opts for the latter of the two evils noted above.

31.\texttt{Ex}a4 \texttt{Ex}a4 32.\texttt{D}d2 \texttt{Da}6 33.\texttt{D}d3 \texttt{Ba}5 34.\texttt{Cc}2!
Again it is hard to read what Karpov wants to do. This move makes \texttt{Cc}8 a dangerous threat, as the response ...\texttt{Cc}5 will no longer win a tempo by attacking the queen.

34...\texttt{W}a7 35.\texttt{Cc}3
If 35.\texttt{Cc}8 \texttt{Ba}2 is the answer.

35...\texttt{Cc}5 36.\texttt{Cc}1!
With this move Karpov prepares to create a second passed pawn by capturing on c5, which will also secure his control over the e6-square.

36.\texttt{D}d3! \texttt{Ex}e4 37.\texttt{W}g4 was also winning.

36...\texttt{Cc}8

37.\texttt{W}g4!
Black has put too many of his pieces on the queenside, and his king will pay the price after the white queen invades. White had another solution in 37.\texttt{D}d7! \texttt{Cc}7 38.\texttt{Cc}x5 dxc5 39.d6 when the mighty pawns decide the game.

37...b3
Black has no time to exchange the rook:
37...\texttt{Ba}1 38.\texttt{Ex}a1 \texttt{W}a1 39.\texttt{Cc}g2 \texttt{Ba}8 40.\texttt{Cc}x5 dxc5 41.\texttt{Cc}e6+ \texttt{Kh}8 42.d6 wins.

38.\texttt{Cc}2
Karpov often liked to improve his king before moving in for the kill, but here it is an unnecessary precaution. The cleanest route to victory was: 38.\texttt{Cc}x5! b2 (38...dxc5
39...e6† f7 40.d6 b2 41.d1 wins) 39...b1
dxc5 (39...a1 40.xa7) 40.xb2 White stops
the queenside counterplay and wins.

38...b2
38...e6 is too slow: 39.xc5 dxc5 40.e8
a8 41.e6† g7 42.xc5 b2 43.d7† h8
(43...h6 44.g4† g5 45.xh7 b1= 46.h4#) 44.c7 And White wins.

38...e7 also fails: 39.e8! (better than
39.b1 a3 40.d1 b4 41.xc5 dxc5 42.xb3
a5) 39...f8 40.b1 And Black is in serious
trouble.

39.b1 a3
If 39...a2 40.xc5 dxc5 41.d6 cxd6
42.e6† f7 43.c7 wins.

40.xc5 dxc5

41.xb2
Without the b2-pawn Black has no
counterplay and will quickly be crushed.

41...b8 42.e6†
1-0
Black resigned as White will easily invade.
In the last five rounds Karpov drew three and
beat two more future world championship
candidates in Adorjan and Vaganian. Karpov
finished in second place with 9 1/2/15, having
won four games with eleven draws.

There was a rumour within Hungarian chess
circles that Geller, who won the tournament a
full point ahead of Karpov, went to the Soviet
ambassador and told him proudly that he had
won the event, only to be scolded. Apparently
Karpov “should have won” the tournament.
There is no guarantee that the story is true, but
if it was so, it would show how badly the Soviet
authorities wanted the chess crown back from
Fischer. Their obvious choice to achieve this
was Karpov, and they would go to almost any
lengths to build up their new rising star.

After Budapest, Karpov took part in the ‘Three
Teams’ event in Moscow, where he defeated
both Spassky and Taimanov by the score of
1 1/2–1 1/2. His next tournament was the Leningrad
Interzonal. He began as favourite to qualify,
as he already had the highest rating in the
competition. Karpov began well, scoring three
wins and three draws before facing Gennady
Kuzmin, who obtained his grandmaster title
at this event. They had drawn once before,
but Karpov won all three of their subsequent
encounters. Kuzmin played against all the world
champions from Smyslov onwards, except for
Fischer and Topalov. Out of thirteen games he
won two, drew six and lost five against them.

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**Game 31**

Anatoly Karpov – Gennady Kuzmin

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.d2

Karpov scored nineteen wins and eleven
draws with the Tarrasch Variation, and never
lost a single game with it. It is a fantastic score,
although it is interesting that in his 1974
match with Korchnoi, he was unable to score a
victory in seven attempts.
3...c5
Against other moves Karpov has scored nine out of nine, which is quite incredible.

4.exd5 exd5 5.\(\Delta\)g53
In his 1978 world championship match against Korchnoi, Karpov tried 5.\(\Delta\)b5† \(\Delta\)c6 6.\(\Delta\)e2† and drew twice.

5...\(\Delta\)c6 6.\(\Delta\)b5 \(\Delta\)d6 7.\(\Delta\)xc5 \(\Delta\)xc5 8.0-0 \(\Delta\)ge7 9.\(\Delta\)b3 \(\Delta\)d6 10.\(\Delta\)g5
This was Karpov’s most frequent choice in this line. He played it three times in total, although he tried some other moves as well. Overall he won three games and drew four from this variation, although he was never able to hurt Korchnoi.

10...0-0 11.\(\Delta\)h4 \(\Delta\)c7?!
This move was criticized by several commentators at the time. Indeed, just a few moves later the queen will lose a tempo by moving to \(b6\). A few months later the French expert Uhlmann deviated with the more common 11...\(\Delta\)g4, but even this did not enable him to solve all his problems: 12.\(\Delta\)e2 \(\Delta\)h5 13.\(\Delta\)e1 \(\Delta\)b6 14.\(\Delta\)fd4 \(\Delta\)g6 15.c3 \(\Delta\)e8 16.\(\Delta\)f1 \(\Delta\)e4 17.\(\Delta\)g3 \(\Delta\)xg3 18.hxg3 a5 19.a4 \(\Delta\)xd4 20.\(\Delta\)xd4 \(\Delta\)c6 21.\(\Delta\)b5 \(\Delta\)ed8 22.\(\Delta\)g4 \(\Delta\)xd4 23.\(\Delta\)xd4 \(\Delta\)xd4 24.\(\Delta\)xd4 White went on to win an instructive endgame, Karpov – Uhlmann, Madrid 1973.

12.\(\Delta\)g3 \(\Delta\)xg3?!
There was no reason not to develop with 12...\(\Delta\)g4 or 12...\(\Delta\)d8. Even if Black intends to exchange bishops, why reveal his cards so early?

13.hxg3 \(\Delta\)g4 14.\(\Delta\)e1 \(\Delta\)ad8 15.c3 \(\Delta\)b6 16.\(\Delta\)d3 \(\Delta\)g6
Black stops 17.\(\Delta\)xh7†, but as the game develops his knight will not stand well on \(g6\).

17.\(\Delta\)c2 \(\Delta\)xf3?!
Giving up the bishop voluntarily enables White to dominate on the light squares. In addition Black strengthens White’s pawn structure. This last factor can be directly attributed to Black’s decision to exchange bishops on g3.

17...\(\Delta\)e8 was better, for instance 18.\(\Delta\)fd4 \(\Delta\)ce5 (or 18...\(\Delta\)e6) 19.\(\Delta\)b5 \(\Delta\)e7 and Black should be able to live with the isolated pawn.

18.\(\Delta\)xf3 \(\Delta\)d6
18...\(\Delta\)d4 was worth considering, although after 19.\(\Delta\)e4 White is slightly better thanks to his strong bishop.

19.\(f\)f4!
Gaining space and taking away the e5-square from the black knights.
19...\textit{f6} 20.a3!

Karpov is anticipating \ldots d4, which can now be met by c4 as the reply \ldots eb4 is no longer possible.

20...h5

Kuzmin wants to get some play on the h-file. It is true that White's king does not have many defenders, but Black's pieces are far away from that area as well.

21.\textit{g2} h4

22.\textit{e2}!

Another small improving move by Karpov, protecting the f2-pawn and preparing to double on the e-file. If 22.\textit{d2} then 22...h3! is annoying.

22...\textit{f6} 23.\textit{d2}!

Karpov improves his knight by transferring it to the kingside.

23...\textit{h6} 24.\textit{d3} bxg3

Pushing the pawn to h3 would mean losing it in the long run.

25.fxg3 \textit{d7} 26.\textit{e1} \textit{f6}

Out of the blue, Black has back rank problems. If 26...\textit{f6} 27.g4! is strong.

27.g4!!

This is a brilliant move, gaining space and driving the black rook away from its ideal post.

27...\textit{c7} 28.g5 \textit{h8}?

The rook will have no function on the h-file. A better chance was:

28...\textit{e6}

This would have eased the pressure along the e-file. White can maintain a big advantage, but he has to be precise:

29.\textit{xe6}

After 29.\textit{g3} \textit{c5} 30.\textit{f5} \textit{xe2} 31.\textit{xe2} \textit{d7} 32.\textit{c2} White is somewhat better, but the text move is more ambitious.

29...\textit{fxe6}

30.\textit{g3}!!

White can settle for a positional advantage
with 30.\textit{W}d2 or 30.\textit{Q}h4 \textit{Q}e7 31.\textit{Q}g6+ \textit{Q}xg6 32.\textit{Q}xg6, but the stronger text move enables him to develop an attack along the h-file.

\textbf{30...e5}

Or 30...\textit{Q}c5 31.\textit{Q}g6 \textit{Q}e7 32.\textit{Q}f2 and White is better.

\textbf{31.\textit{Q}g6}

31.\textit{W}h2 \textit{e}4 32.\textit{W}h8+ \textit{Q}f7 33.\textit{W}h5+ \textit{Q}e7 34.\textit{W}h4 \textit{Q}f8 35.c4 is also dangerous.

\textbf{31...\textit{exf}4†}

After 31...\textit{e}4 32.\textit{W}h2 \textit{Q}e7 33.c4 \textit{Q}f8 34.cxd5 White has a huge advantage.

32.\textit{W}g2 \textit{Q}g8 33.\textit{W}f5 \textit{Q}f8 34.e8\textit{Q}k

Black is in trouble.

Let me cite another Karpov game in which his opponent neglected to ease the pressure being exerted by doubled rooks:

\textbf{29.\textit{Q}g3!}

Karpov uses his king effectively. It is reminiscent of Game 29 (Karpov – Gligoric) in which he also advanced his king to the third rank in order to facilitate the transfer of heavy pieces along the second rank.

\textbf{29...\textit{Q}c5 30.\textit{Q}f5}

Threatening \textit{Q}h2.

\textbf{30...g6 31.b4 \textit{Q}e4†}

Black must sacrifice a pawn to stop White’s attack. If 31...\textit{Q}d7 32.\textit{Q}xg6 wins.

\textbf{32.\textit{Q}xe4 \textit{dxe}4 33.\textit{W}xe4 \textit{Q}g7}

This position was reached in Karpov – Polugaevsky, Moscow (4) 1974. According to Kasparov in his \textit{My Great Predecessors} series, 36... \textit{B}e5? was the best defence as it forces the exchange of one of the strong rooks. Kasparov’s analysis continues 37.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{Q}xd5 38.\textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}d7 39.\textit{Q}xg5 \textit{Q}c5 40.\textit{G}g4 \textit{Q}xe4† 41.\textit{Q}f3 \textit{Q}d2† 42.\textit{Q}f2 \textit{Q}e4† with a perpetual. Polugaevsky played differently and lost. It was a vital win for Karpov.

\textbf{34.b5!}
Karpov has already outplayed his opponent strategically, and now he allows no time for
Kuzmin to bring his h8-rook into the game.

The alternative was 34.c4, intending to convert
White's extra pawn by slow technical means.
If 34...\( \text{Wc}8 \) 35.\( \text{c5} \) \( \text{Ah}3 \uparrow \) 36.\( \text{f2} \) and Black's
attack is halted, as 36...\( \text{g4} \) can be met by
37.\( \text{g1} \).

34...\( \text{Da5} \) 35.\( \text{Wc7}! \)

White takes advantage of a tactical
opportunity to conquer the seventh rank.

35...\( \text{xc3} \) can be refuted as follows: 36.\( \text{e3} \)
\( \text{Wc8} \) (36...\( \text{b2} \) 37.\( \text{b1} \) ! This is not the only
win, but it is the fanciest. 37...\( \text{xbl} \) 38.\( \text{f6} \uparrow \)
\( \text{g8} \) [38...\( \text{h7} \) 39.\( \text{xf7} \uparrow \) \( \text{h7} \) 39.\( \text{xd8} \uparrow \) \( \text{h7} \)
40.\( \text{xa5} \) And White wins.)

37.\( \text{xc7} \)
Doubling the rooks on the seventh rank
simply dismantles Black's defences.

37...\( \text{b3} \) 38.\( \text{g4} \)
38.\( \text{ec7} \) \( \text{d2} \) 39.\( \text{xf7} \uparrow \) \( \text{g8} \) 40.\( \text{fd7} \) ! wins
as well.

38...\( \text{f8} \) 39.\( \text{ec7} \)
1–0

In the next game Karpov survived a scare
as his countryman Tal, who was having a bad
tournament, missed an easy win against him.
Next he beat Quinteros and drew two more
games. He had reached 'plus five' when he
met the strongest ever East German player
Wolfgang Uhlmann, who had made it as far
as the candidates matches in the previous decade.
By 1973 Karpov was ahead by 11/2–1/2 in
their personal meetings. He added two more
victories, including the following game. The
grandmaster from Dresden played thirty nine
games against the World Champions. He has
drawn 21 times, with sixteen losses and two wins; Fischer and Botvinnik were his victims.

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**Game 32**

**Wolfgang Uhlmann – Anatoly Karpov**

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{d}f3\) \(\text{d}f6\) 3.\(\text{d}c3\) \(\text{d}5\) 4.cxd5 \(\text{d}x\text{d}5\) 5.e3

Back in 1971 the East German grandmaster played 5.g3 against Karpov and the game ended in a draw.

5.d4 is probably the most testing move, when Black has to transpose to another opening. He can choose between the Grünfeld, the Semi-Tarrasch and the Queen’s Gambit Accepted. Karpov tried each of them once.

5...\(\text{e}6\) 6.d4 \(\text{d}c6\) 7.\(\text{d}d3\) \(\text{c}xd4\)

Many have tried to benefit from delaying this capture, but Karpov does not mind allowing White a few more options.

8.exd4 \(\text{e}7\)

In the nineties when Karpov reached the same position from the Panov variation of the Caro-Kann, he repeated the text move but also tried 8...\(\text{b}4\) on some occasions. He made a plus score with both moves.

9.0-0 0-0 10.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{f}6\)

Karpov won two and drew four of his six games with 10...\(\text{f}6\), but on his last attempt he was in trouble against Anand in their 1998 world championship final, although he eventually won that game.

11.a3!

Black eases his position if he can play ...\(\text{b}4\) followed by ...\(\text{b}6\).

11...\(\text{b}6\) 12.\(\text{e}3\)

Upon facing 12.\(\text{c}2\) against Smyslov in the 1971 USSR Championship, Karpov responded with 12...\(\text{b}7\) and lost.

Later he improved with 12...\(\text{a}6\)!, and went on to make an interesting pawn sacrifice:

13.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{e}8\) 14.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{c}4\) 15.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{g}6\) 16.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{a}6\) 17.\(\text{x}c6\) \(\text{x}c6\) 18.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{c}8\) 19.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{d}5\) 20.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 21.\(\text{c}6\) \(\text{d}7\) 22.\(\text{x}e7\) \(\text{x}e7\) 23.\(\text{a}6\) \(\text{a}7\) 24.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 25.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{c}8\) 26.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{b}5\) Black obtained reasonable compensation and went on to draw in Timman – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998.

12.\(\text{b}7\)

13.\(\text{c}1\)!

This is a natural-looking way to develop the rook, but it does nothing on \(\text{c}1\). The most common move here is 13.\(\text{c}2\)!, intending to
put the queen on d3 and rook on d1, where it supports a future d4-d5 break.

13...\texttt{Bc8} 14...\texttt{b1} \texttt{Cc7}?!
Black is also doing fine after 14...\texttt{a5} 15.\texttt{e5} \texttt{c4}.

15.\texttt{d3} \texttt{Ed7} 16.\texttt{c2} \texttt{g6} 17.\texttt{a2}
17.h3?? deserved attention.

17...\texttt{g4}!
Karpov exchanges the dark-squared bishop.

18.\texttt{cd1} \texttt{xe3} 19.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{f6}!
White controls slightly more space and is strong in the centre, which is why Karpov takes the time to improve his pieces carefully before daring to open the position for his bishops.

20.\texttt{f2} \texttt{g7} 21.\texttt{Ed2} \texttt{e7}! 22.e4
White is not interested in exchanging more minor pieces, so he stops ...\texttt{d5}.

22...\texttt{h6}! 23.\texttt{Ed1} \texttt{b5} 24.\texttt{e3} \texttt{Efd8}
Karpov keeps improving his position.

25.h3 \texttt{h7}
He cares about his king as well.

26.\texttt{h1} a6!
It is remarkable how Black now controls all the squares on the fifth rank with his pawns.

27.\texttt{f2}

27...\texttt{g8}!
Improving the last piece.

28.\texttt{Ed1} b5 29.h4?
White hopes to get an attack, but he merely weakens his position. Kotov suggested 29.\texttt{b1} and evaluated the position as equal, but I would say Black has the better chances after active moves such as 29...\texttt{a7} or 29...\texttt{f5}?

The most principled move looks to be 29.\texttt{e5}!, which can lead to interesting complications: 29...\texttt{ad4}?! (After 29...\texttt{exe5} 30.\texttt{exe5} \texttt{g7} 31.\texttt{f4} \texttt{c6} Black has a slight initiative on the queenside, but it will probably not be enough to achieve anything serious.) 30.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{Ed3} 31.\texttt{e2} (31.\texttt{c1} \texttt{Ee8} 31...\texttt{Ed2} 32.\texttt{e1} \texttt{xf2} 33.\texttt{xf2} \texttt{Ed3} Black will have compensation even if he drops the e6-pawn, but it is not clear if he really stands better. 34.\texttt{exe6} (34.\texttt{h4} \texttt{g3} 35.\texttt{hxg3} \texttt{Exg3}) 34...\texttt{f6} 35.\texttt{e5} \texttt{h5} The position is unclear.

29...\texttt{f6}! 30.\texttt{e5} \texttt{Ed4}
Karpov has correctly evaluated that the opening of the position will work in his favour.

31.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{exe5} 32.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{Ed7} 33.\texttt{Ed7} \texttt{Ed7}
Black has sweet prospects. His pieces are working in harmony, and he has strong control over the dark squares. Uhlmann may have been short of time, as he fails to offer much resistance.

34.\textit{Wh}3 \textit{Ed}6 35.\textit{Gb}1?

White commits another error, but his position was bad anyway, for instance 35.\textit{We}3 a5 with a clear plus for Black.

35...\textit{Fd}2! 36.\textit{Hh}5 \textit{Gh}5 37.\textit{Dd}1 \textit{Cc}6

Karpov continues to wear down his opponent. 37...\textit{Xe}4 should be winning as well.

38.\textit{Ff}3 \textit{Ee}8 39.\textit{Bb}4 \textit{Gg}6 40.\textit{Df}2

40...\textit{Dd}4

Black has achieved complete positional domination.

41.\textit{Dh}3 \textit{Ee}5

This paralyses the knight as well. White could almost have resigned here.

42.\textit{Df}2 \textit{Bb}2 43.\textit{Wh}2 \textit{Cc}4 44.\textit{Dd}1 \textit{Gb}3 45.\textit{Dd}3 \textit{Xe}4

0–1

Karpov won the next two games, followed by a draw. In the penultimate round he had a very tense game against Smejkal, who started with two early losses but bounced back strongly and even enjoyed a seven game win streak in the middle of the event. The Czech player was on ‘plus-five’ when he met Karpov, and he needed to win to keep his qualifying chances alive. Smejkal had his chances, but after a blunder Karpov won a pawn. Smejkal thought he had an easy draw, but Karpov skilfully found a way to cause him problems, and although Smejkal may have had a study like defence, he did not find it and eventually lost. Karpov beat Torre in the last round for a final tally of 13\frac{1}{2}17, with ten wins and seven draws. With this fine result Karpov not only qualified for the candidates matches, but finished in equal first place with Korchnoi. The fact that the event took place in his home country may have helped him slightly, but even so, there was no questioning his worthiness as a world title candidate.

Karpov's next event was the European team championship, where he began with three wins and two draws. In the last round he defeated Ribli from Hungary, thus raising his score to a superb 5/6.

His form took a slight dip in the USSR Championship Final, even though his results looked okay on paper. He had difficult positions and was quite possibly lost in both of his first
two wins. He won from a position a pawn down against Korchnoi; he had some compensation but would never have expected to defeat such a formidable rival from such a situation. Later he was a piece up for inadequate compensation against Spassky, but only drew, and then he lost against Petrosian. He recovered to defeat Kuzmin, and ended with six draws and a final round win over Rashkovsky. Spassky won the championship, and Karpov shared the second to fifth places with Petrosian, Polugaevsky and Korchnoi. His performance can be judged in different ways. It is unlikely that the quality of his play would have frightened Fischer, but on the other hand his final result was incredibly good if one takes into account the fact that he was clearly not on form.

Karpov's last tournament of the year was in Madrid. He began by blundering an exchange but still winning against Pomar, and drew in round two. Next he faced Ulf Andersson, in their first encounter since 1969 (see Game 17, page 85). Karpov managed to overcome his dubious run of form to produce another masterpiece against the Swede.

### Game 33

**Anatoly Karpov – Ulf Andersson**

**Madrid 1973**

1.\(d4\) e5 2.\(c4\) \(e6\) 3.\(\text{\textit{d}f3}\)

Karpov allowed the Nimzo-Indian in less than 20% of his games after 2...\(e6\). His winning percentage was also lower in that opening.

3...\(b6\) 4.\(g3\)

Occasionally Karpov tried other moves, but this was his main weapon all the way. He scored well with it, winning thirty nine games out of seventy seven – more than half. He lost five as well, but most of those games occurred towards the end of his career.

4...\(b4\)†

Usually the Swedish grandmaster gave this check one move earlier. For some reason he achieved amazingly poor results with the text move, achieving just three draws and six losses from nine games.

5.\(\text{\textit{d}bd2}\)

Later Karpov blocked the check with the bishop.

5...\(b7\)

5...\(a6\) would have led to a well known position that is usually reached via the 4...\(a6\) move order.

6.\(\text{\textit{g}g2}\) 0–0

Black can also opt for a Hedgehog position with 6...\(e7\) as the knight is passive on d2. If 7.0–0 then 7...\(c5\) can be played.

The immediate undermining of the centre with 6...\(c5\) should be playable as well: 7.a3 \(\text{\textit{x}d2}\)† 8.\(\text{\textit{x}d2}\) (after 8.\(\text{\textit{w}xd2}\) \(\text{\textit{x}cxd4}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{w}xd4}\) \(\text{\textit{c}c6}\) 10.\(\text{\textit{h}h4}\) \(\text{\textit{e}e7}\) Black's fast development gives him a good game) 8...\(\text{\textit{c}cxd4}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{b}b4}\) \(\text{\textit{a}a6}\) 10.\(\text{\textit{d}d6}\) \(\text{\textit{e}e4}\) And Black has a free game.

7.0–0 \(c5\)

8.a3!
White secures the advantage of the bishop pair.

8...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}\texttt{d} 9.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}d}2 \texttt{cxd}2 10.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}d}2 

This inaccuracy will cause Black a lot of suffering. Instead he should have settled for a slightly worse position with 9...d6.

10.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{b}}b}4! \texttt{e}e8 11.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{d}}}d6!

The bishop manoeuvre secures a space advantage and fixes the d7-pawn as a potential target.

11...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e4

Or 11...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}f3 12.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}f3 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c6 13.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{f}}}f4 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c8 14.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c1 and Black is rather passive here as well.

12.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{w}}}xd4 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{a}}}a6

12...f5 is well met by 13.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e5! (after 13.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{a}}}d1 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c6 14.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c3 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{f}}}f6 Black becomes active)
13...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c6 14.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xc6 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xc6 15.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e5 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e7 16.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{a}}}ad1 and White's strong dark-squared bishop gives him the edge.

13.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{b}}}b4!

Isolating the poorly placed knight on a6.

13...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c8 14.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{a}}}c1 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}d6

Another line is: 14...f6 15.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{f}}}fd1 c5 16.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e3 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xd6 (16...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c6 17.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{g}}}g5 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xd6 18.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xe4 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}d1† 19.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xdl \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xe4 20.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{d}}}xe4 is no fun for Black)

17.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xd6 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c6 18.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{d}}}d2 And White maintains the pressure.

15.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{w}}}xd6 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c7 16.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{f}}}fd1 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e7 17.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{d}}}d3 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xf3

18.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xf3 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e8

Black improves his awkwardly placed knight. 18...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{b}}}b8!! would prevent the coming invasion, but it is too slow. 19.c5! (19.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c6 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{f}}}f8; 19.e3 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e8 20.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{g}}}g2 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{f}}}f6 is better for Black than the game.) 19...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xc5 20.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{x}}}xc5 \texttt{\textit{\texttt{e}}}e8 21.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{d}}}ce1 White's undisputed control over the c-file gives him a clear advantage.

19.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{b}}}b7!!

Although Black is obviously somewhat worse, his position is solid and lacks any obvious weaknesses. Karpov maintains and increases his advantage in a subtle and unusual way. The artistry with which he orchestrates his position using a limited number of pieces is simply magical.

19...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{c}}}c7 20.\texttt{\textit{\texttt{a}}}a6!!

Black's queenside is paralysed in a most original way.

20...\texttt{\textit{\texttt{a}}}c6?

Even such a strong grandmaster as Andersson, with his finely tuned positional sense, did not anticipate what was coming. The text move wastes valuable time. He should have played
more consistently by improving his knight with 20...\( \text{Nf6} \). Then play may continue 21.\( \text{Nb5} \) d5 (21...e5 22.e4) 22.c5 bxc5 23.bxc5 h6 when White keeps an edge, but a much smaller one than in the game.

21.\( \text{Nb3!} \) b8 22.\( \text{a4!} \) \( \text{Be7} \) 23.\( \text{b5!} \)

This whole sequence is immensely strong. White’s queen and bishop have taken up strong attacking positions from which they cannot easily be dislodged. It is only a matter of time before he increases the pressure with a pawn advance.

23...\( \text{f6} \) 24.e3 d5

24...\( \text{e8} \) 25.\( \text{d6} \) is highly unpleasant for Black.

25.c5 h5 26.a4 b8 27.cxb6 axb6

28.a5!

Having built up a commanding position, Karpov wastes no time in breaking through on the queenside.

28...\( \text{Bxc1} \) 29.\( \text{Bxc1} \) e5 30.\( \text{xb6} \) d4

Black’s counterplay is too little, too late.

31.\( \text{h1} \) e3 32.\( \text{f1} \)

White’s queenside pawns will be unstoppable, so he can afford to put his rook in a passive position in order to prevent any kingside threats.

32...e5 33.\( \text{d3} \) h4 34.\( \text{gxh4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 35.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{xb4} \)

Black has made some progress, but he has not managed to create any threats, so the time has finally come for White to cash in on his queenside pawns.

![Chess Diagram](image)

36.a6 g6 37.a7 g7 38.\( \text{xg6} \)

1–0

This was a true masterpiece. The manoeuvres \( \text{a6-b7} \) and \( \text{b3-a4-b5} \) were stunningly original and effective. And once Karpov achieved a dominating position on the queenside, he wasted no time and broke through with his characteristic directness and efficiency.

Over the next seven games Karpov achieved a win against Silvino Garcia and six draws. Then suddenly he shifted into top gear and scored four wins and one draw from his last five games, for a total of 11/15 with seven wins and eight draws. His final four victims were Kaplan, Uhlmann, Calvo and Planinc. This strong finish enabled him to claim sole first place, half a point ahead of Tukmakov and a further half in front of Furman, his trainer.
In 1973 Karpov was as strong as any other tournament player in the world. His form took a slight dip after the Interzonal, but he nonetheless cemented his reputation as a world class player and future contender for the ultimate crown.
1973 Summary

Budapest (2nd place): 9½/15 (+4 =11 -0)
Three Team event, Moscow (Board one): 3/4 (+2 =2 -0)
Leningrad Interzonal (1st-2nd place): 13½/17 (+10 =7 -0)
European Team Championship, Bath (Board four): 5/6 (+4 =2 -0)
USSR Championship (2nd-6th place): 10½/17 (+5 =11 -1)
Madrid (1st place): 11/15 (+7 =8 -0)

Total 70.9% (+32 =41 -1)
1974

Rating 2700 (2 in the World)

This was the year in which Karpov effectively earned the title of World Champion through his efforts over the chessboard. 1975 was more a matter of tying up the loose ends.

The first order of business was a candidates quarter-final match against Polugaevsky. Karpov entered the match as the clear favourite, having qualified in a much more dominant fashion, while also boasting a seventy point rating advantage.

Before the match they had drawn twice. Overall they played each other twenty four times, with Karpov winning five, and the remaining nineteen ending in draws. Polugaevsky played 136 games against world champions, starting with Botvinnik and finishing with Anand (with the exception of Kramnik). He won seventeen games, drew ninety five and lost twenty four. On the basis of these results, Polugaevsky can be considered one of the best of the players who never challenged for the world title.

In the first three games of the match Karpov had no real chances to win. In the fourth, he achieved no advantage and may have even stood slightly worse, but he showed the skill and determination needed to grind out a victory. This game was briefly referenced in the note to Black's 28th move in Game 31 (Karpov – Kuzmin). The way in which he slowly outplayed Polugaevsky was truly a world champion's performance. However, one gets the impression that Karpov would have had more trouble achieving such results against the Fischer of 1972.

In the next game, in a 4.e3 Nimzo-Indian (which occurred in all the match games in which Karpov played Black), Polugaevsky outplayed Karpov and got an extra exchange, but he was unable to break Karpov's resistance; maybe he even realized Karpov's middlegame strength was too much for him. In Game 6 Karpov sacrificed a pawn and later broke through after Polugaevsky failed to find the most accurate defence. Karpov held the seventh game, with the black pieces.

The winner of the match would be the first player to obtain three wins. Here is the eighth game, in which Karpov sealed a convincing match victory.

**Game 34**

**Anatoly Karpov – Lev Polugaevsky**

Candidates quarter-final, Moscow (8) 1974

1.e4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.exd4 a6 5.0-0 e6 6.e2 e5 7.d3 a7 8.0–0 a6 9.f4 c7 10.a4 Bbd7 11.h1

According to the Hungarian commentator Florian, it was Efim Geller – one of Karpov's seconds in the present match – who first introduced this move at the 1973 Avro tournament.
11...0-0

According to my database this move was first played in Game 2 of the present match. Karpov stuck to this move in all four of the games in which he had the white pieces.

12.\textit{Re3}

Polugaevsky also kept repeating his move.

13.\textit{Bxf4} \textit{Re5}

Polugaevsky played 13...\textit{Rfe8} in the second game. He probably hoped to put exert pressure against the e4-pawn with the rook. The game continued 14.\textit{Qd4} \textit{Re5} 15.\textit{Qf5} \textit{Qg6} 16.\textit{Bxf1} \textit{Qxb6} 17.\textit{Qd4} \textit{Re5} 18.\textit{Qg5} \textit{Qd7} 19.\textit{Qxd1} \textit{Qc5} 20.\textit{Qxd6} \textit{Qxd6} 21.\textit{Qxd6} \textit{Qxd6} 22.\textit{Qxd6} \textit{Qd7} 23.b3 \textit{Qc6} 24.\textit{f5} and Black got enough play for the pawn.

14.a5

This multifunctional move gains space on the queenside, secures the b6-outpost and also frees the a4-square for the white pieces.

The fourth game continued as follows: 14.\textit{Qd4} \textit{Qad8!} 15.\textit{Qg1} \textit{Qd7} 16.\textit{Qd1} \textit{Qe8} 17.\textit{Qf5} \textit{Qd8} 18.\textit{Qd4} \textit{Qg6} 19.\textit{Bxf1} \textit{Qe5} 20.\textit{Bxf4} \textit{Qc5} 21.\textit{Qxe6} \textit{Qxg1}+ 22.\textit{Qxg1} \textit{Qxe6} 23.\textit{Qf3} \textit{Qeg4} 24.\textit{Qgf1} \textit{Qb6} Karpov had some problems here, but managed to turn things around and eventually won, as noted previously.

14...\textit{Rfe8}

The text move was Polugavevsky's improvement on the sixth game, which continued: 14...\textit{Qd7} 15.\textit{Qf1} \textit{Qf6} 16.\textit{Qd5} \textit{Qxd5} 17.\textit{Qxd5} \textit{Rxc2} 18.\textit{Qd4} \textit{Qxb2} 19.\textit{Qb1} \textit{Qc3} 20.\textit{Qf5} \textit{Qc2} 21.\textit{Qe1} \textit{Qc5} 22.\textit{Qxd6} \textit{Qd3} 23.\textit{Qxd3} \textit{Qxd3} 24.\textit{Qd1} \textit{Qb4} 25.\textit{Qxb7} \textit{Qab8} 26.\textit{Qa7} \textit{Qc6} 27.\textit{Qf4} \textit{Qa8} 28.\textit{Qf2} \textit{Qad8} 29.\textit{Qg3} And White went on to win.

In 1976 in Manila, Walter Browne introduced a significant improvement in 14...\textit{Qac8!}, preventing the idea seen on move 16 of the present game. Karpov was unable to obtain any advantage and the game was agreed drawn on move 28.

15.\textit{Qb6} \textit{Qd7}
16...ac8 17.Rd4! Wc6

After this game Polugaevsky recommended the exchange sacrifice 17...Bxc3 18.bxc3 Wc6, but I doubt that he would have been eager to test this idea if they played again.

It was worth considering a waiting move such as 17...h6!?

18.Ed2 Ab3?

Polugaevsky misjudges the consequences of the ensuing change in the material balance. After the safer 18...Ag6 19.Ed4 Black should just give up his plan with 19...Wd7, when his position should be playable. Note that 19...Bxc3?! would be misguided, as after 20.bxc3 Bxf4 21.Axf3 Black does not have enough for the queen.

19.cx b3 Ad7

This was probably planned on the previous move. In fact, it is possible that Polugaevsky even analysed this position before the game.

20.Bcd8 was possible, but after 21.Od5 White's knight is strong and 21...Ag5? achieves nothing after 22.Bc2.

Alternatively, after 20...Ac5 21.b4 Ae6 22.b5 White gains valuable space on the queenside and maintains a solid plus. A slightly deeper analysis reveals a neat tactical motif: 22...Wd7 23.Bf5 Ac4 24.Axc4 Bxc4 25.bxa6 bxa6 26.Bxf7! White wins a pawn with this lovely shot. 26...Bxc3 (26...Ag5 27.Bf4) 27.Axe7 Wxe7 28.bxc3 And White is clearly on top.

21.Bxd6!

Karpov shows excellent judgement in swapping his two rooks for a queen and a pawn. The idea works to perfection, as Black's queenside is weak while his rooks are unable to achieve anything constructive.

21...Bxf4 22.Bxc6 Bxc6

23.b4!

With this move Karpov immediately seizes the initiative on the queenside.

23...Af6
The Russian grandmaster strives for counterplay in the centre. Waiting passively with 23...£c8 would have led to a difficult position as well: 24.b5 axb5 25.g3 £h6 26.a6 £xe8 27.£d6 Black is badly tied up.

24.b5 £ce6 25.bxa6
White has a choice of strong continuations. 25.£d5 was also tempting, for instance: 25...£g6 (or 25...£xd5 26.exd5 £f6 27.g3 £g5 28.bxa6 £xa6 29.£a4 £ib8 [29...£b8 30.£a7] 30.£d4 £f5 31.d6 and Black is in trouble) 26.£c4 £xe4 27.£xf6t £xf6 28.£d5 White has a clear advantage.

25...bxa6 26.g3!
Karpov gives his king some breathing room and ensures that Black's bishop will be cut off from the queenside.

26.£g5 27.h4 £h6 28.£b6
It is likely that Karpov appreciated the potential weakness of the a6-pawn in this type of position as early as move 20.

28.£ed7 29.£c4 £e5

30.£b3!
Before taking on a6, Karpov first goes after the f7-pawn.

30...£b8 is met by 31.£c7, and if 31...£h5 then 32.£d6 wins.

31.£xf7t £h8 32.£c4 £d2
After 32...£xb6 33.axb6 the b-pawn becomes far too strong: 33...£e7 34.£e5 £xe5 35.b7 The mighty pawn decides the game.

33.£c7!
Simplifying to an easily winning endgame.

33...£e5 34.£xc5 £xc5 35.£xb8 £xc3 36.£xc3 £xe4 37.£c4
White is not only a pawn up, but his bishops are also much stronger than Black's knights.

37...£d7 38.£c7 £g6
Black is trying to activate his king, but the plan is too slow.

39.£e6 £ec5 40.£xd7
This wins a piece.

40...£xd7 41.£d6
1-0
Thus Karpov won the match with three wins and five draws - a superb result against one of the most formidable Soviet grandmasters of the time. Nevertheless, there were some moments when Karpov's play was not totally convincing. After the match Polugaevsky told
Tibor Florian “I got excited and fired up, but Karpov was like water - he came at me firmly and evenly, and gradually he put out my fire. It hurt...the heavy defeat really hurt, but later I understood everything: I had lost to the future World Champion!”

**Candidates semi-final match**

Karpov's semi-final opponent was Spassky, who two years earlier had lost the crown to Fischer. Karpov had defeated Spassky once before; indeed, the passage of time has demonstrated that Spassky's style suited Karpov very well. Their all time personal score is simply astonishing, as Karpov won fifteen games with just two defeats, draws not included. This is the most lopsided head to head score between any two world champions.

In view of the above, the reader may be surprised to learn that Spassky started the match in the best possible way, winning the very first game with the black pieces. Karpov managed to get two pieces for a rook, but Spassky had two dangerous passed pawns, and eventually Karpov had to give up a piece for them and subsequently lost.

Semyon Furman, Karpov's trainer, later explained that they had noticed that Spassky did not like to solve new opening problems over the board. Therefore in Game Two Karpov unveiled a surprise with 4...\( \text{\textsc{f5}} \) in the Caro-Kann, and effortlessly held a draw in a mere 17 moves. In the third game Karpov again surprised his opponent with 1.d4. Spassky responded with a King's Indian, which he rarely used. Maybe he wanted to bring Karpov into unknown territory. It turned out to be a bad decision, as he played the opening poorly and got a very passive position, which may even have been losing outright in an absolute sense. The game lasted fifty five moves, yet it was a one-sided affair.

In the next Caro-Kann, Spassky was once again unable to develop any pressure and the game was drawn. In Game Five Spassky wisely played the Nimzo-Indian, an opening that he knew much better than the King's Indian, and drew fairly comfortably. In the sixth game Spassky tried a different plan against Karpov's 4...\( \text{\textsc{f5}} \) Caro-Kann. After the normal moves 5.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{\textsc{g6}} \), he opted for an unfashionable yet challenging set-up without the move h2-h4. This time an interesting battle ensued. Spassky obtained a small edge, but was unable to achieve anything serious and later simplified to a balanced endgame. Unfortunately for him, Karpov played the endgame incredibly well and went on to win, taking the lead in the match for the first time.

In the seventh game Spassky played a Stonewall set-up and got a terrible position. However, Karpov went on to open up the position in a less than optimal way, allowing his opponent just enough counterplay to save the game. In the eighth game Spassky played a main line against Karpov's Caro-Kann, which he had seemed reluctant to do until this point. It seems that his strategy at the start of the match had been to play relatively offbeat openings, perhaps because he feared the analytical power of Karpov's team of seconds. However, as the match went on it looks as though he came to the realization that main lines would be required. In this game he was pressing, but Karpov held.

Game Nine was the best of the match.

**Game 35**

Anatoly Karpov – Boris Spassky

Candidates semi-final, Leningrad (9) 1974

1.e4
Karpov returns to his main weapon.

1...c5 2.d3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\( \text{\textsc{x}} \text{xd4} \) \( \text{\textsc{f6}} \)
5.\text{\textit{d}c3} \text{d6}  
Nowadays the Scheveningen is rarely seen at the highest levels with its original move order.

6.\text{\textit{a}e2}  
Karpov only opted for this move in five games out of twenty two, preferring the Keres Attack with 6.g4 in all the rest.

6...\text{\textit{d}e7} 7.0-0 0-0 8.f4 \text{\textit{c}c6} 9.\text{\textit{d}c3} \text{\textit{d}d7}  
Spassky decides to do without the move ...a7-a6. Interestingly he had only played this position once prior to this match.

In the first game of the match Spassky preferred 9...e5. The game continued: 10.\text{\textit{b}b3} a5 11.a4 \text{\textit{b}b4} 12.\text{\textit{f}f3} (Spassky later repeated this variation against Kavalek and Mecking, both of whom preferred 12.\text{\textit{d}h1} over Karpov's move.) 12...\text{\textit{e}e6} 13.\text{\textit{d}h1} \text{\textit{e}e7} 14.\text{\textit{b}b2} \text{\textit{f}f8} 15.\text{\textit{d}d2} \text{\textit{c}c4} 16.\text{\textit{b}b5} \text{\textit{a}xb5} 17.axb5 a4 18.\text{\textit{c}c1} d5 19.\text{\textit{f}xe5} \text{\textit{d}xe5} 20.c3 \text{\textit{d}xd2} 21.\text{\textit{d}xd2} \text{\textit{d}xe5} 22.\text{\textit{c}cxb4} \text{\textit{d}xb2} 23.\text{\textit{d}d3} \text{\textit{d}d4} Spassky went on to win this unclear position.

10.\textit{b}b3??  
A logical move. Black is looking to save time by omitting or postponing ...a7-a6. In response Karpov stops him from carrying out his plan of ...\text{\textit{d}xd4} and ...\text{\textit{d}c6}. Other moves turn out fine for Black:

10...\text{\textit{e}e4} 11.\text{\textit{d}d4} \text{\textit{d}d6} 12.\text{\textit{g}g3} \text{\textit{g}g6} 13.\text{\textit{f}f3} (13.\text{\textit{d}d3} \text{\textit{h}h5} 14.\text{\textit{f}f2} \text{\textit{d}d4}) 13...\text{\textit{b}b5} 14.\text{\textit{d}d1} \text{\textit{b}b4} with good counterplay.

10.\text{\textit{h}h1} a6 (There is also 10...\text{\textit{d}d4} 11.\text{\textit{d}d3} \text{\textit{d}d7} and Black carries out ...e5.) 11.\text{\textit{e}e1} \text{\textit{d}d4} 12.\text{\textit{d}d3} \text{\textit{d}d7} 13.\text{\textit{f}f7} \text{\textit{d}d7} 14.\text{\textit{d}d1} e5 15.\text{\textit{d}d5} b5 16.\text{\textit{d}f5} \text{\textit{d}c5} 17.\text{\textit{e}e5} 1/2-1/2 Karpov – Dzindzichashvili, USSR 1971.

10...a5??  
This is an ambitious and risky move. If Black does not obtain enough activity, White may be able to exploit the weakness of the b5-square in the long run. Karpov was able to do the same thing in some of his games against the Dragon; see for instance Game 46 (Karpov – Sosonko).

11.a4 \text{\textit{b}b4} 12.\text{\textit{f}f3}  
12...\textit{c}c6??  
This automatic move does not fully meet the demands of the position. It is now known that 12...e5! is better, for instance 13.\text{\textit{f}f2} \text{\textit{c}c8?? with interesting play.

13.\text{\textit{d}d4} \text{\textit{g}g6}  
13...\text{\textit{e}e7} was another idea, followed by developing the rooks and intending ...\text{\textit{d}d5} at the right moment.
14. Bf2 e5!

Spassky opens the position, but he will sorely miss the light-squared bishop.

15. 0xc6! bxc6 16. fxe5 dxe5 17. 0f1!

Karpov manoeuvres his queen to an ideal spot on c4.

17... 0c8

Botvinnik recommended 17... 0d7, but added that 18. 0c4 maintained White's advantage.

18. h3!

A useful waiting move. From now on Karpov can use his light-squared bishop more freely as ... 0g4 can no longer be played.

18. 0c4 was less ambitious but still promising, for instance: 18... 0a6 19. 0xa6 0xa6 20. 0c2 0g7 Black can probably live with his slightly passive endgame, although it would not be much fun against Karpov.

18... 0d7?!

This attempt to exchange the dark-squared bishops is too transparent. More resilient was 18... 0b7! 19. 0c4 (19. 0d1 0ad8) 19... 0d8 (after 19... 0a6 20. 0xa6 0xa6 21. 0c2 White is somewhat better) 20. Baf1 (20. 0h2 0b6 21. 0xb6 0xb6 22. 0d2 0fd8) 20... 0b6

21. 0xb6 0xb6 22. 0h2 0e8 and Black consolidates his position.

19. 0g4 h5?!

Kasparov prefers 19... 0c7, aiming for a similar position but without moving the h-pawn. After 20. 0xd7 0xd7 21. 0c4 he evaluates the position as better for White, but Black's kingside is certainly a bit more secure with the pawn on h7.

20. 0xd7

It is often said that one of the advantages of the bishop pair is the ability to exchange a bishop for an enemy knight at an opportune moment.

20... 0xd7 21. 0c4 0h4?!

Interestingly Kasparov does not mention the improvement of 21... 0e6??, which is somewhat passive but perhaps the best chance to make the black position playable. Kasparov almost always preferred to look for complications in worse positions, rather than defend passively. After 22. 0xe6 fxe6 White's advantage may not be decisive, but Black will obviously have to fight to make a draw. Spassky probably wanted to maintain some chances for a third result.

22. 0d2 0e7 23. 0f1

23. 0c5 can be met by 23... 0g5.
The Making of a Champion

23...b6d8

After 23...b8d8 24.b1 g5 25.c5 c7 26.xf8 xxf8 27.xd2 xd2 28.xb4 xb4 29.a5 the passed a-pawn is dangerous.

24.b1!!

This is one of Karpov's deepest moves. The knight has little function on c3, so Karpov improves it with a backward move. Apart from the overall beauty of the idea of improving a piece by retreating it to its original square, there is something else that makes this move so special. We all can see White has the initiative, but when we appreciate the power of the ensuing knight manoeuvre we come to the realization that Black's position is probably already beyond salvation.

This was not Karpov's only amazing knight retreat. Consider the following:


Unlike Karpov's Tunisian opponent in the above example, Spassky was a world class player and was not in the habit of making big mistakes, and yet still he is unable to muster much resistance in the game.

24...g7

24...g3? 25.c3 wins a pawn.

25.bh2!!

This is all part of Karpov's plan. Before he transfers the b1-knight to f3, he uses his king to take away the g3-square from the enemy bishop. If 25.e2 g3 26.d2 c7 Black is still in the game.

25...g7 26.c3 a6

The knight finds itself far away from the area where the actions will take place. 26..xd2 27.xd2 c2 was also unsatisfactory: 28.c5 (There is also 28.g1 c1 29.xc1 xg1 30.f3 xf2 31.xf1 when White's two pieces are superior to Black's rook.) 28..c1 29.b3 (or 29.b4 axb4 30.axb4 with a positional advantage) 29..d3 30.xd3 xxb3 31.xd6 b6 32.xxe6 fxe6 33.d1 Black is unlikely to survive this difficult endgame.
Anatoly Karpov - Boris Spassky

27.\textit{Be}2\textbf{!}

Karpov keeps the rook to defend the b2-pawn. Later it can assist in an attack on the f-file or an invasion along the d-file.

27...\textit{Bf}8
27.\textit{Ed}7

This would have offered more resistance, but Kasparov shows the way forward for White with the following beautiful line.

28.\textit{Dd}2 \textit{Ec}7 29.\textit{Db}3

29.\textit{Db}3 is adequately met by 29...\textit{Ee}6. 29...\textit{Ef}6 30.\textit{Dg}5

30...\textit{Dxg}5

I decided to check what happens if Black tries to exchange queens: 30...\textit{Ea}6 31.\textit{Dx}f6 \textit{Dxf}6 32.\textit{Dc}5! \textit{Dg}7 (32...\textit{Dxe}2 33.\textit{Dxe}5#) 33.\textit{De}1! White switches the rook to the d-file to invade. (33.\textit{Ef}2 f6 defends) 33...\textit{f}6

34.\textit{Dd}1! \textit{Dad}8 35.\textit{Dxe}5 And White wins.
31.\textit{Dxg}5 \textit{f}6 32.\textit{Df}2 \textit{Df}8 33.\textit{Dc}5 h4

After 33...\textit{Da}8 34.h4! Black is in zugzwang!
34.\textit{Dh}7! \textit{De}6 35.\textit{Dc}4

With a clear advantage according to Kasparov.

28.\textit{Dd}2 \textit{Dd}8

On 28...\textit{Dc}7 Kasparov's 29.\textit{Db}3 is strong.

Black has no time to play 28...\textit{Db}8 to bring the knight to the centre, as demonstrated by the following short line: 29.g3!? (29.\textit{Df}3 is also promising) 29...\textit{Dd}8 30.\textit{Df}2 \textit{f}6 31.\textit{Df}3 \textit{Dd}7 32.\textit{Dc}6 Black's position is about to fall apart.

29.\textit{Df}3

29.\textit{Db}3 \textit{Dd}6 defends.

29...\textit{f}6

If 29...\textit{Df}6 30.\textit{Df}2 \textit{Dc}7 (30...\textit{Da}8 31.\textit{Dg}5 \textit{De}6 32.\textit{Dd}4 wins.) 31.\textit{Dg}5! White eliminates the strongest defensive piece and Black's position soon collapses: 31...\textit{De}6 32.\textit{Dx}f6 \textit{Dxf}6 33.\textit{Dxe}5+ \textit{Dxe}5 34.\textit{Dd}3! And White catches the enemy king.

30.\textit{Ed}2\textbf{!}

Spassky has temporarily stabilized his king, but allowed White to achieve total domination on the d-file.
Karpov exchanges in order to invade.

Karpov required just one more win to secure victory and advance to the candidates final.

In Game Ten Karpov departed from the Caro-Kann in favour of the Breyer variation of the Ruy Lopez. He fared quite well with this system, although he never tried it against Kasparov. Spassky pressed for a long time but Karpov held the draw. In Game Eleven Spassky employed the Orthodox Queen's Gambit, but instead of defending patiently he played much too riskily and soon found himself in a desperately lost position. Karpov made no mistake and the match was over.

With hindsight it is clear that Spassky had a faulty match strategy, especially with regard to his opening choices, nevertheless Karpov proved himself to be the stronger player and deserved to win. His overall result in this match - four wins, six draws and one loss, against a recent World Champion - must rank as one of his most impressive accomplishments of Karpov's career, and can be compared with Fischer's Reykjavik win. It was arguably even better than the drawn championship match against Kasparov in 1987.

Karpov's next event was the Nice Olympiad, where he played on the top board for the very first time. He won all five games in the qualification stages, one of which was a gem. His Welsh opponent never faced any other world champions. His rating was 2405 at the time of the game, which would equate to at least 2500 nowadays.

To win the semi-final match required four wins: one more than the quarter-final. This meant that after the above game Karpov required just one more win to secure victory and advance to the candidates final.

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Howard Williams - Anatoly Karpov

Nice Olympiad (qualification stage) 1974

1.e4

Williams usually played 1.e4, so he must have prepared his opening especially for this game.

1...e5 2.c4 e6 3.d4 b4 4.Ag5

In a way it is not a bad decision to play a sideline against a top player, who may not be used to facing unusual lines in high level events. On the other hand Karpov had just played a match against Spassky, who often played the Leningrad Variation, so Karpov must have been thoroughly prepared for this particular option. Over his career Karpov faced the Leningrad Variation five times, winning three and drawing two.

4...b6 5.h4 c5 6.d5 d6 7.e3 Axe3+ 8.bxc3 e5 9.Ag3

More than two decades later Artur Yusupov tried a different approach: 9.Ac2 Ac7 10.Ag3
9...e4 10.\(\textit{\text{c}}\)c2

10...g5  
Karpov decides early where he will put his king.

11.\(\textit{\text{g}}\)\(3\) \(\textit{\text{e}}\)7 12.h4 \(\textit{\text{g}}\)8 13.hxg5 hxg5 14.\(\textit{\text{d}}\)e2 \(\textit{\text{b}}\)d7 15.\(\textit{\text{b}}\)1

18.\(\textit{\text{a}}\)a6!  
Karpov activates the rook and defends the d6-pawn.

19.\(\textit{\text{b}}\)5 \(\textit{\text{b}}\)8  
Karpov is not lazy, and takes the time to bring his king to the safest possible location.

20.\(\textit{\text{b}}\)2 \(\textit{\text{a}}\)7!  
Black should avoid the temptation to win the queen with 20...\(\textit{\text{b}}\)6, which turns out badly after 21.\(\textit{\text{d}}\)\(x\)d7! \(\textit{\text{d}}\)xd7 22.\(\textit{\text{b}}\)xb6 when the d6-pawn is weak.

It is also worth mentioning the possibility of a stunning \(\textit{\text{d}}\)d4 sacrifice, which can...
sometimes be played to good effect in this variation. Perhaps this was also a factor in Karpov's decision to retreat his king to a safer spot.

21.\*b3?

Retreating the queen loses time and allows Black to exchange the rooks. Williams may have been worried about ...\*b6 and ...\*d7, but it was not necessary to retreat just yet. 21.\*b1 was better: 21...\*g4 (21...\*b6 is adequately met by 22.\*b3 \*d7 23.\*a2) 22.\*h7 \*b6 23.\*b3 \*f5 Black remains somewhat better, but he will have to work hard to achieve a serious advantage.

21...\*g4!

Karpov was able to improve his pieces a lot on the queenside, and now he does the same on the other wing.

22.\*h1 \*f5 23.\*d1 \*b6! 24.\*a2 \*xb2

After the rook exchange White has no chance of hurting his opponent on the queenside.

25.\*xb2 \*b6!

Suddenly the c4-pawn comes under fire, and it soon becomes clear that Black is simply winning.

26.\*b3 \*a6 27.\*c1 \*d6 28.\*e2

Taking the knight would also have failed to solve White's problems: 28.\*xe5 \*xe5 29.\*h7+ \*g7 30.\*xg7+ \*xg7 31.\*d2 \*h8 Black should win.

28...\*g6!

Karpov prepares to push his opponent back even further. 28...f4!? was also good enough, as after 29.exf4 gxf4 30.\*xf4 \*xc4 31.\*xc4 \*xc4 Black is winning.

29.\*d2 \*f6 30.\*d1 f4

0–1

White is almost paralysed, and chose to end his suffering sooner rather than later.

Karpov did not slow down in the finals, where he began with a good win over Hort. Finally, after six consecutive wins, Karpov was briefly slowed down by Hartston who managed to draw with him. Karpov followed up by winning a true positional masterpiece against Wolfgang Unzicker.

Before this encounter, the two protagonists had only played one game, which was drawn. Their lifetime score was four wins to Karpov, with two draws. Although Karpov played very well in several of these games, it must be said that the German grandmaster's best years were behind him.

Unzicker is one of the very few western players to have won a top level tournament in Soviet
Russia, when in 1965 he tied for first prize with Spassky at the Chigorin Memorial in Sochi. He played on the top board for West Germany at ten Olympiads, and played a total of sixty six games against all the world champions from Euwe to Kasparov. He beat them four times, drew forty two and lost twenty. His accomplishments are even more impressive in light of the fact that his primary occupation was as a lawyer rather than a chess professional. At his peak he was regarded as the strongest amateur player in the world.

Game 37

Anatoly Karpov – Wolfgang Unzicker

Nice Olympiad 1974

1.e4 e5 2.\(\text{d}^\text{c}3\) \(\text{d}^\text{c}6\) 3.\(\text{i}^\text{b}5\) a6 4.\(\text{a}^\text{a}4\) \(\text{f}^\text{f}6\) 5.0-0 \(\text{e}^\text{e}7\) 6.\(\text{e}^\text{e}1\) b5 7.\(\text{i}^\text{b}3\) d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 \(\text{a}^\text{a}5\)

Unzicker also played the Open and Breyer variations, but today he opts for the Chigorin.

10.\(\text{c}^\text{c}2\) c5 11.d4 \(\text{w}^\text{c}7\) 12.\(\text{d}^\text{bd}2\) \(\text{d}^\text{c}6\)

Karpov faced this move five times. Surprisingly he won only the present game and drew the others. A year later Unzicker switched to 12...\(\text{d}^\text{d}7\) against Karpov, no doubt hoping to avoid the kind of slow torture that happened in the present game. In a way he succeeded, although not in the manner he intended, as the game was over in just ten more moves:

13.\(\text{f}^\text{f}1\) \(\text{g}^\text{e}8\) 14.d5 \(\text{g}^\text{b}7\) 15.\(\text{g}^\text{h}2\) g6? 16.\(\text{g}^\text{g}3\) c4 17.\(\text{f}^\text{f}4!\) exf4 18.\(\text{x}^\text{xf}4\)

18...\(\text{x}^\text{f}8\)? 19.\(\text{g}^\text{g}5\) \(\text{c}^\text{c}7\) 20.\(\text{w}^\text{d}2\) \(\text{x}^\text{c}8\) 21.\(\text{e}^\text{e}1\) \(\text{d}^\text{d}7\) 22.\(\text{g}^\text{g}4\) 1-0 Karpov – Unzicker, Milan 1975.

13.d5! \(\text{d}^\text{d}8\) 14.a4!

Karpov fights for the a-file. In a game from 1967 he only played on the kingside, but by now he understood the need to combine play on both flanks.

14.\(\text{b}^\text{b}8\)

If 14...\(\text{b}^\text{b}4\) 15.a5!? White will utilize the c4-square to his advantage.

15.\(\text{axb}5\) \(\text{axb}5\)

16.b4!
The Making of a Champion

White fights for queenside space and stops Black from improving his knight by means of ...\textit{c4}, ...\textit{\textit{b7}} and ...\textit{\textit{c5}}.

16...\textit{\textit{\textit{b7}}?}

The German grandmaster follows a Spassky – Korchnoi game and also hopes to improve on one of Karpov's games from the Soviet Championship. The problem is that the knight has no future on \textit{b7}.

After 16...\textit{\textit{c4}} 17.\textit{\textit{f1}} \textit{\textit{e8}} 18.\textit{\textit{h2}} \textit{\textit{f6}} 19.\textit{\textit{f4}} \textit{\textit{f7}} 20.\textit{\textit{b3}} \textit{\textit{g6}} 21.\textit{\textit{f5}} \textit{\textit{g7}} 22.\textit{\textit{g4}} Karpov subjected his opponent to unpleasant pressure although Black eventually held the draw in Karpov – Spassky, Soviet Union (ch) 1973.

Nowadays 16...\textit{\textit{d7}} and 16...\textit{\textit{e8}} are regarded as better and more flexible moves.

17.\textit{\textit{f1}} \textit{\textit{d7}}

18.\textit{\textit{e3}}!

Spassky developed his knight to the same square but got nowhere: 18.\textit{\textit{d2}} \textit{\textit{a8}} 19.\textit{\textit{e3}} \textit{\textit{f8}} 20.\textit{\textit{h2}} \textit{\textit{xa1}} 21.\textit{\textit{xa1}} \textit{\textit{d8}} 22.\textit{\textit{a7}} \textit{\textit{a8}} 23.\textit{\textit{xb7}} \textit{\textit{b8}} ½–½ Spassky – Korchnoi, Kiev (1) 1968.

18...\textit{\textit{a8}} 19.\textit{\textit{d2}} \textit{\textit{f8}} 20.\textit{\textit{d3}} \textit{\textit{g6}}!

Later Black chooses to push with ...\textit{c4}, but it would have been better to do so immediately, as the white bishop would have had to settle for a slightly worse retreat square.

21.\textit{\textit{g3}} \textit{\textit{f8}}

21...\textit{\textit{a4}} does not help Black: 22.\textit{\textit{xax4}} \textit{\textit{bxa4}} 23.\textit{\textit{a6}} \textit{\textit{b8}} 24.\textit{\textit{b2}}! The knight will come to \textit{d2} and White will keep the upper hand on the queenside.

22.\textit{\textit{b2}}!

Karpov fights for the only open file.

22...\textit{\textit{c4}} 23.\textit{\textit{b1}}!

This deep move is connected with the idea of gaining space with \textit{f2–f4}. By keeping the bishop on this diagonal, White defends the e4-pawn in advance.

23...\textit{\textit{d8}}?

Unzicker wants to exchange rooks, but he has overlooked Karpov's brilliant response. The immediate exchange with 23...\textit{\textit{xax2}} was somewhat preferable, but White would remain clearly better after 24.\textit{\textit{xb2}} \textit{\textit{b8}} 25.\textit{\textit{c2}}.

The best chance was 23...\textit{\textit{d8}}!, correcting the error from the sixteenth move. White keeps a nice plus after 24.\textit{\textit{e2}}, but his advantage is smaller than in the game after either 24...\textit{\textit{b7}} or 24...\textit{\textit{a2}} 25.\textit{\textit{xa2}} \textit{\textit{b7}}.
24.\textit{a7}!!

Karpov covers the a-file in order to double his rooks without allowing exchanges, which would relieve the congestion in Black's cramped position. Interestingly, Karpov mentions that Spassky played the same \textit{a7} move against him in the tenth game of their candidates match.

I often show the present game to my pupils but the text move does not come naturally to them, despite my efforts to explain in advance that the player with more space should generally strive to avoid swapping pieces. By the way, there are exceptions to this principle. For example, in the main Ruy Lopez White often plays the move \textit{f5}, not fearing the reply \ldots\textit{xf5}, because the change in the pawn structure after \textit{exf5} may yield additional benefits to White (extra kingside space, increased scope for the c2-bishop and so on).

24...\textit{e8}

Black can do nothing but wait passively.

25.\textit{c2} \textit{c7} 26.\textit{ea1}

Black will constantly have to reckon with the idea of White retreating his bishop and invading on the a-file.

26...\textit{e7} 27.\textit{b1} \textit{e8}

28.\textit{e2}!

The point behind this subtle move is that White is planning to play \textit{f4} in the near future, and if Black exchanges pawns, White will quickly occupy the d4-square with his knight.

28...\textit{d8} 29.\textit{h2} \textit{g7}

30.\textit{f4}!

Karpov has improved his pieces as much as possible, and the time has come to expand on the kingside.

30...\textit{f6}?

Black was already clearly worse, but he should at least have taken on \textit{f4} in order to obtain some breathing room for his pieces. Now his position becomes hopelessly passive.
31. $b1 \text{g5}$

The bishop fulfilled its earlier duty by guarding the e4-pawn, but this function is no longer needed so Karpov immediately finds a better role for it.

32. $c2!$

The text move illustrates another important principle: in positions with a space advantage, one of the most effective strategies is to attack on both flanks. The defending side may be able to protect one weakness, but the difficulties associated with transferring defensive pieces from one side to the other will often prove insurmountable.

My experience as a junior trainer has been that young players tend to have problems with exchanging pieces and attacking both sides, because they are not aware of these basic principles.

35... $e8$

Perhaps Karpov was thinking about tripling on the a-file, with the queen behind the two rooks. On the other hand the whole idea may have been a bluff, designed to tire his opponent and keep him thinking that the invasion would come from the queenside.

37... $f8$

It is fancier to transfer the knight via the g4-square.

39... $f8$

Black was unable to take twice on h5 for obvious reasons.
40.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}e3 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}g8 41.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xf7 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xf7

If 41...\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xf7 42.\text{\texttt{\textit{W}}}h5 \text{\texttt{\textit{W}}}xh5 43.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xh5 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}b7
44.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}g4 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}f7 White will win by bringing his king to the queenside and playing \text{\texttt{\textit{b}}}b6. 44...\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}e8 is no improvement because of 45.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}a6.

42.\text{\texttt{\textit{W}}}h5 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}d8

Covering the g6-square by 42...\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}h8 would not have helped. Karpov gives the following line, which he finds amusing: 43.\text{\texttt{\textit{G}}}g4 \text{\texttt{\textit{W}}}xh5 44.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xh5 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}f7 45.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}b6 \text{\texttt{\textit{A}}}xa3 46.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xa3 \text{\texttt{\textit{A}}}a8
47.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xa8 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xa8 48.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}a5 Karpov calls this total zugzwang, and it is hard to argue with somebody who creates a masterpiece like this.

In the next round Karpov drew quickly with black against Andersson. Next he faced Lubomir Kavalek, a strong grandmaster who had recorded a win in their first meeting. Kavalek faced the world champions fifty eight times, winning five games, losing twelve and drawing forty one. The final phase of the following game has attracted many commentators, and is one of Karpov’s most analysed endgames. This is not by accident, as the endgame is the culmination of Karpov’s fine strategic play, and contains numerous subtle finesses. In this particular endgame there is so much beauty, not only in the moves that appear on the board, but also in the analysis of the many superb commentators.

\textbf{Game 38}

\textit{Anatoly Karpov – Lubomir Kavalek}

\textit{Nice Olympiad 1974}

1.e4

Karpov probably wanted to hide some of his main openings for his impending match against Korchnoi. He played the English quite a few times in Nice.

1...c5 2.d3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xd4 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}c6 5.e4

Karpov employed the Maroczy Bind a total of nine times, through several opening move orders. He scored five wins and four draws.

5...\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}d6 6.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}c3 d6 7.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}e2 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xd4 8.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}xd4 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}d7
9.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}g5

Fifteen years later Karpov preferred 9.0–0 and defeated Petursson.

9...0–0 10.\text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}d2 \text{\texttt{\textit{D}}}c6 11.\text{\texttt{\textit{B}}}c1 \text{\texttt{\textit{A}}}a5 12.b3 \text{\texttt{\textit{B}}}c8
13.f3 a6
14. \( \text{Na}_4 \)

This move was first played in 1974, although it is not completely clear whether or not it was technically Karpov's novelty, as there was another game without an exact date. In any case, Karpov writes in *My Best Games* that the move was an original idea for him. The move was also seen in a game between Samuel Reshevsky and Walter Browne in the 1974 US Championship, in which Black eventually prevailed.

14...\( \text{Wx}d2 \)† 15. \( \text{Wx}d2 \)

The king is well placed here in the position without queens.

15...\( \text{Bc}6 \)

Later 15...\( \text{Bd}7 \) became more popular, intending to push the f-pawn.

16.\( \text{Bc}3 \)

Returning the knight to the centre is more logical than 16...\( \text{Be}3 \), as played by Reshevsky in the aforementioned game.

The world of endgames is deeply fascinating, but openings can be wonderful as well. In this game Karpov plays both simultaneously.

17.\( \text{Dd}5 \)\( ! \) \( \text{Bf}8 \)

After 17...\( \text{Dx}d5 \) 18.\( \text{ex}d5 \) \( \text{Bc}6 \) 19.\( \text{Bh}4 \) White is slightly better.

18.\( \text{Bc}3 \) \( \text{Dd}7 \)

[Diagram]

19.\( \text{Hh}4 \)!

Karpov contrives to gain space on the kingside.

19...\( \text{Dx}d5 \)??

Black's position is already a bit worse and this exchange only helps White to gain additional space. 19...\( \text{Bf}5 \) was also not helping, as after 20.\( \text{Df}4 \) White exchanges the e6-bishop and will prepare g4 later.

A better alternative was 19...f5??, as Karpov mentions. In that case White should probably proceed with 20.h5 or 20.g4, maintaining a slight plus.

20.\( \text{ex}d5 \) \( \text{Bc}6 \) 21.\( \text{h}5 \)

Gaining space on the queenside with 21.b4 would be premature in view of 21...\( \text{Df}5 \) when Black obtains counterplay.

21...\( \text{g}8 \)
Presumably Kavalek wanted to prevent a rook invasion on h7.

22.f4!
This move controls e5, gains space and most importantly opens the diagonal for the light-squared bishop.

22...Qe5 23.Qg4!
White improves the bishop and occupies the important diagonal. If permitted, he may also advance his f-pawn, which may explain Black’s next two moves.

23.Qe4† 24.Qd3 f5 25.Qf3 b5
Black tries to undermine White’s pawn structure, but this is where the active king proves its value. Indeed, Black must be careful not to exchange too many pieces as White’s king can then dominate the scene, even if it means giving up a pawn.

26.g4!
Karpov undermines Black’s pawns.

26...bxc4† 27.Qxc4!
Exchanging helps to safeguard White’s king, as Black will have a hard time creating threats with only one rook. In playing this way, Karpov avoids committing the same error that Polugaevsky made against him in the encounter mentioned in the note to White’s 28th move in Game 31.

27...Bxc4 28.bxc4 Qe5† 29.Qxe5
If 29.Qe2 Bb8 Black obtains counterplay.

29...Bxc5
After 29...dxс5 30.Qb1! Black’s position is extremely unattractive.

30.h6!
This is not the first time that Karpov has pushed a flank pawn all the way to the sixth rank. This time it does more than fix the opponent’s pawn as a long term weakness – it also helps to weave a mating net.

30...Qf8
This endgame has captured the attention of several players and has been analysed extensively. In particular I would like to mention Dvoretsky, Marin and Karpov himself as three analysts who have made especially important contributions to our understanding of this endgame. I decided to take a detailed look at this endgame, and since I enjoyed the immense benefit of “standing on the shoulders of giants”, I was able to discover some important finesses which had not been mentioned previously.
30...fxg4?! is a weaker option than the game move, because of 31.\texttt{hxg4 f8} (31...f6 32.e6f f8 33.b1 wins.) 32.e6f f8 33.e6t f8 34.b1 f3 35.e2 f3 36.f1 f8 37.f6!! Karpov pointed out this lovely creation of a mating net.

30...f6?!

This move was brought to my attention by my editor Andrew Greet, who suggested it in his book on the Accelerated Dragon. Black tries to build a fortress, and compared with the game his active bishop brings certain advantages. Nevertheless White has a subtle way to break through.

31.g5!

After 31.b1 a5 Black obtains counterplay.

Greet mentions the line 31.gxf5?? gxf5 32.b1 c8 33.b6 a5 (33..f8 34.c5!

34.a5 35.b3

This move in itself is not special, as White needs to defend the a-pawn. However, it also contains a deeper point, as Black is actually in zugzwang! It underlines the fact that zugzwang is often the key to breaking a fortress.

35..b2

The bishop has to move to a more exposed square. Had it been able to remain on a1, Black would probably have survived. Greet ends his analysis here, concluding that it is not clear if White can break through. It turns out that he can do so in an instructive and spectacular fashion.
36...c5!!

This breakthrough only works thanks to the position of the bishop on b2.

36...a4xa4 37...xb2 b3\# is unconvincing. White does not have time to escape the checks and penetrate with his rook to h8 to good effect, as his f- and g-pawns are too vulnerable.

36...a4

After 36...xc5 37...a4 xdx5\# 38...c2 White is winning, as the black rook is about to be pinned.

37...d8 xc5 38...a4

Black is defenceless against the impending bishop invasion.

Black must make the most of his one active piece. He can win the a2-pawn, but White should be able to exploit his positional pluses to break his opponent's defences. The key to success will almost always be the activation of the light-squared bishop. In certain positions this can be achieved by means of a bishop manoeuvre to d1 and a4, while in others White will have to resort to a breakthrough with c5 and possibly d6.

For an endgame with so few pieces, the position contains an incredible range of subtle resources. We will consider two possibilities for White.

a) 32...b1

This is the obvious move, and it gives excellent winning chances. We will analyse two responses in detail.

a1) 32...f7

It should be mentioned briefly that taking the pawn loses with little resistance: 32...xa2 33.c5 xa3\# 34...e2 dxc5 Otherwise the pawn marches towards c8. 35.d6 exd6 36...d5\# h8 37...b8 And mate follows shortly.

33...d1!!

Activating the bishop is the key to White's success in this and several other variations.

33...b2 is less effective: 33...xa3\# 34...b3 (34...e2? a3) 34...xa2 With the rook on b3 Black can safely take this pawn. 35.c5 dxc5 36.d6 c4\# (36...e6 37...b8\#) 37...xc4
The Making of a Champion

33...\(\text{a}2\) 34.\(\text{b}8\)
White threatens to bring his bishop into the attack via \text{b}3 or \text{a}4.

34...\(\text{a}3\)
34...\text{a}5 35.\text{c}5! \text{dxc}5 36.\text{\f}b3 \text{\f}a3 transposes to the main line below.
34...\text{\f}a5 is inadequate: 35.\text{\f}b3.\text{\f}g8 (35...\text{\f}c5 36.\text{\f}a4 wins) 36.\text{\f}b4! The subsequent \text{\f}a4 will overwhelm the defence.

35.\text{\f}b3 \text{a}5

36.\text{c}5! \text{dxc}5
36...\text{\f}a4 37.\text{c}6! wins.

37.\text{\f}c2 \text{\f}a4 38.\text{\f}c4
Black has no defence. However, he could have improved earlier as we will now see.

a2) 32...\text{a}3!
This is Black's best chance, although it is probably still not enough to hold the game.

33.\text{b}3
Now we reach a further branching point.

a21) 33...\text{\f}x\text{b}3? 34.ax\text{b}3
Black is unable to hold this opposite-coloured bishop endgame.

34...\text{\f}a5
Black must try to blockade on the dark squares. After 34...\text{\f}f7 35.b4 \text{e}5 36.dxe6t \text{\f}xe6 37.\text{\f}d5t \text{\f}d7 38.\text{\f}g8 \text{\f}e8 39.\text{\f}d4 White's king invades.

35.\text{\f}d4!
This lovely move was discovered by Morylev. It is in the spirit of many opposite-coloured bishop endings. White chooses a plan and executes it aggressively.
35.\text{\f}c3 is tempting, but not quite good enough: 35...\text{\f}f7 36.\text{\f}b2 \text{\f}e8! (36...\text{\f}e5
loses in instructive fashion: 37.\textit{dxe6} \textit{f6}  
\textit{d5}+ \textit{d7} 39.\textit{a3} \textit{e7} 40.\textit{a4} \textit{d8}

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
  & a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
  8 & & & & & & & & \\
  7 & & & & & & & & \\
  6 & & & & & & & & \\
  5 & & & & & & & & \\
  4 & & & & & & & & \\
  3 & & & & & & & & \\
  2 & & & & & & & & \\
  1 & & & & & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

41.\textit{b5}! [According to Karpov White can win with 41.\textit{g8} \textit{e8} 42.\textit{b5}, but Dvoretsky points out that Black can draw with 42...\textit{d5}! 43.\textit{cx}d5 \textit{c7}, attacking White's kingside pawns.] 41...\textit{e7} 42.\textit{c6} and White wins, as analysed by Dvoretsky.)

37.\textit{a3} e5! This is a cunning way to utilize the seemingly dead bishop on \textit{f8}. 38.\textit{dxe6} Alternatives are no better. 38...\textit{d5}+ 39.\textit{a4} \textit{dxc4} 40.\textit{bxc4} \textit{e6}! 36.\textit{d7} c4!! This is why Black had to entice the rook to the b3-square.

37.\textit{xc4}  
37.\textit{c3}? gets nowhere after 37...\textit{c2}+!.

37...\textit{d2}

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
  & a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
  8 & & & & & & & & \\
  7 & & & & & & & & \\
  6 & & & & & & & & \\
  5 & & & & & & & & \\
  4 & & & & & & & & \\
  3 & & & & & & & & \\
  2 & & & & & & & & \\
  1 & & & & & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

38.\textit{c6}!

38.\textit{b7} is weaker: 38...\textit{e7} 39.\textit{b8}+ \textit{f7}  
40.\textit{h8} \textit{xd7} 41.\textit{hx}h7+ \textit{g8} 42.\textit{g7}+ \textit{h8}  
43.\textit{x}x\textit{g6} \textit{d6} 44.\textit{e}xe6 \textit{xf}4

35...\textit{f7} 36.c5! \textit{dxc5}+  
36...\textit{e8} 37.\textit{c6} is hopeless for Black.

37.\textit{c5}!  
Black is in zugzwang and any move allows the White king to invade.

37...\textit{e6} 38.\textit{d6}!  
And White wins.

a22) 33...\textit{xa2}  
The delayed capture is the best drawing chance. White will be hindered by the unfortunate placement of the rook on b3.

34.\textit{c5}! \textit{dxc5} 35.\textit{d6} \textit{e6}! 36.\textit{d7} \textit{c4}!  
This is why Black had to entice the rook to the b3-square.

37.\textit{xc4}  
37.\textit{c3}? gets nowhere after 37...\textit{c2}+!.

37...\textit{d2}

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
  & a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
  8 & & & & & & & & \\
  7 & & & & & & & & \\
  6 & & & & & & & & \\
  5 & & & & & & & & \\
  4 & & & & & & & & \\
  3 & & & & & & & & \\
  2 & & & & & & & & \\
  1 & & & & & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

Black should draw.

38...\textit{c2}+ 39.\textit{d3} \textit{xc6}  
This trick keeps Black alive, but his problems are not yet over.
40.d8=\(\Box d6\) 41.\(\Boxxd6\) \(\Boxxd6\) 42.\(\Boxe3\) e5
43.\(\Boxb7\)
43.fxe5 \(\Boxxe5\) 44.\(\Boxb7\) a5 45.\(\Boxa7\) \(\Boxc3\) is not an improvement for White.
43...\(\Boxxf4\) 44.\(\Boxi3\)

White should be winning this endgame, as his kingside pawns are too strong.

b) Returning to the position after 31...\(\Boxa5\), White also has a more subtle route to a probable victory:

32.\(\Boxd1!\)

As far as I am aware, the only commentator to have mentioned this move is Dvoretsky, in his remarkable analysis on the www.e3e5.com website. The choice of punctuation is not easy. Even with the benefit of extensive analysis, it is not clear whether the text move is objectively stronger than 32.\(\Boxb1\), and it may well be that both moves lead to eventual victory. But if we were awarding exclamation marks for ingenuity, then the bishop retreat would undoubtedly have received a well deserved "!!".
32...\(\Boxxa2\) 33.\(\Boxb3\) \(\Boxa5\)

After 33...\(\Boxe2\)!! 34.c5 \(\Boxf3\) 35.\(\Boxc2\) \(\Boxf2\)
36.\(\Boxb1\) \(\Boxf3\) 37.\(\Boxb2\) White obtains a strong passed pawn and excellent winning chances.

34.\(\Boxc3\) \(\Boxf7\)

35.\(\Boxb4!\)

35.\(\Boxe1\) allows an amazing saving resource: 35...e6!! (Alternatives are insufficient: 35...\(\Boxc5\) 36.\(\Boxa4\) White has excellent attacking chances; 35...e5? 36.\(\Boxxe5\) dxe5 37.d6 \(\Boxc5\) 38.\(\Boxd1\) \(\Boxe8\) 39.\(\Boxa4\) \(\Boxd8\) 40.\(\Boxb4+-\) ) 36.\(\Boxb4\) \(\Boxc5\) 37.\(\Boxxe6\) \(\Boxe7\)

According to Dvoretsky White’s advantage is not enough to win.
35...\(\Boxc5\) 36.\(\Boxe1!\)

Now this move works well.
36.\(\Boxa4\) e5! enables Black to obtain some breathing space.
36.\(\Boxa1\) a5\(\Box\) 37.\(\Boxxa5\) \(\Boxxa5\) 38.\(\Boxxa5\) reaches an interesting opposite-coloured bishop endgame, which should be tenable for Black: 38...e6 39.\(\Boxb6\) (Or 39.\(\Boxxe6\) \(\Boxxe6\) 40.c5\(\Box\) \(\Boxd7\) 41.\(\Boxg8\) dxc5 42.\(\Boxxh7\) \(\Boxd6\) and Black starts taking the pawns in time.) 39...\(\Boxxd5\) 40.\(\Boxxd5\) \(\Boxe7\) 41.\(\Boxc7\) \(\Boxe8\) 42.\(\Boxa4\) \(\Boxf7\)
43.\(\Boxd7\) \(\Boxf8\) 44.\(\Boxe6\)
44...\texttt{\textfrak{d}8}t! This stalemate finesse is simpler than Dvoretsky’s line – it draws almost effortlessly. (44...\texttt{\textfrak{e}8} 45.\texttt{\textfrak{c}8} \texttt{\textfrak{f}8}! 46.\texttt{\textfrak{c}7} \texttt{\textfrak{e}7} 47.\texttt{\textfrak{g}8} \texttt{\textfrak{f}8} 48.\texttt{\textfrak{d}7}! [48.\texttt{\textfrak{x}h7} \texttt{\textfrak{f}7} 49.\texttt{\textfrak{d}7} \texttt{\textfrak{g}5}! 48...\texttt{\textfrak{x}g5}! as Dvoretsky indicated, Black holds the ensuing queen endgame – if White takes the pawn a perpetual check follows.) 45.\texttt{\textfrak{x}d6} \texttt{\textfrak{a}5} Black can live with being a pawn down, as White’s kingside pawns are too vulnerable. 46.\texttt{\textfrak{e}5} \texttt{\textfrak{c}3}t 47.\texttt{\textfrak{d}6} \texttt{\textfrak{d}2} 48.\texttt{\textfrak{c}6} \texttt{\textfrak{x}f4} 49.d6 \texttt{\textfrak{x}g5} Black draws.

39.\texttt{\textfrak{c}6}! (The attempt to invade immediately with 39.\texttt{\textfrak{b}1} does not quite work: 39...\texttt{\textfrak{x}a4} 40.\texttt{\textfrak{b}8}t \texttt{\textfrak{d}7} 41.\texttt{\textfrak{x}f8} \texttt{\textfrak{a}3}t 42.\texttt{\textfrak{b}4} \texttt{\textfrak{f}3} 43.\texttt{\textfrak{f}7} \texttt{\textfrak{f}4} 44.\texttt{\textfrak{x}h7} \texttt{\textfrak{g}4} 45.\texttt{\textfrak{g}7} \texttt{\textfrak{x}g5} And Black is safe.) 39...\texttt{\textfrak{b}3}t 40.\texttt{\textfrak{b}4} \texttt{\textfrak{a}2} (40...\texttt{\textfrak{f}3} 41.\texttt{\textfrak{a}1}t–t 41.\texttt{\textfrak{b}3} \texttt{\textfrak{a}5} 42.\texttt{\textfrak{b}1} \texttt{\textfrak{c}8} 43.\texttt{\textfrak{e}8} White invades successfully, this time with the bishop.

36...e5! This active try is Black’s best chance.

If Black tries to wait with 36...\texttt{\textfrak{e}8}, he can eventually be broken down: 36...\texttt{\textfrak{e}8} 37.\texttt{\textfrak{a}4}t \texttt{\textfrak{d}8} 38.\texttt{\textfrak{c}3}! This subtle move opens the b-file for the rook to invade. (38.\texttt{\textfrak{c}6} e5! gives Black some chances, despite the fact that White keeps an edge with 39.\texttt{\textfrak{c}3}.) 38...\texttt{\textfrak{a}5}

37.\texttt{\textfrak{d}xe6}t \texttt{\textfrak{c}7} 38.\texttt{\textfrak{c}3}

38.\texttt{\textfrak{a}1} a5t 39.\texttt{\textfrak{a}xa5} \texttt{\textfrak{a}5} 40.\texttt{\textfrak{xa}5} \texttt{\textfrak{xe}6} 41.c5t \texttt{\textfrak{d}7} 42.\texttt{\textfrak{g}8} It is not enough for a win. 42...\texttt{\textfrak{d}c} 43.\texttt{\textfrak{x}h7} \texttt{\textfrak{d}6} 44.\texttt{\textfrak{g}x6} \texttt{\textfrak{xf}4} Black draws easily.

38...\texttt{\textfrak{a}5} 39.c5 \texttt{\textfrak{a}x}5t 40.\texttt{\textfrak{d}4}

Dvoretsky says it is not clear how much better White really is. I decided to analyse further, and have concluded that Black is in serious trouble due to the threat of \texttt{\textfrak{d}5} followed by an invasion along the b-file. Here is a plausible continuation.

40...a5 41.\texttt{\textfrak{d}5}
41...c4? is also dangerous.
41...a4
41...d8 gives White two options:
42.e7+ xe7 43.g8 looks tempting, but Black can remain in the game with the help of careful defence.

43...b5! Black must go after the base of White’s pawn chain. (43...c7 44.xh7 xg5 45.fg5 xe7 46.e6 White wins.)
44.xh7 b4+ 45.d5 xf4 46.xg6 xg5 In this endgame Black has chances to survive.
Therefore White should prefer 42.b1!, improving the rook before attempting to break through. 42.e7 43.b6 bcl
44.b6 b1+ 45.c4 bcl+ 46.b3 b5 47.b8 b8 48.xa5 Black is very passive, and it is doubtful that he will survive.
42.b1
There is a second promising line: 42.b1 d8 43.b4 (After 43.e7+ xe7 44.g8 d5 45.xh7 c4+ 46.xd5 xf4 Black is worse but the game goes on.) 43.b1 (43...a5 44.b8+) 44.xa4 b1+ 45.c4 bcl+ 46.b4 It is not over yet, but White’s advantage is considerable.
42.a5 43.b1 a3
43...e7 44.b8 a3 45.c6 xe6 46.xf8 a2 47.d5+ wins.
44.b7+ e8 45.c6+ d8 46.d7+ c8 47.d5 a2 48.xa2 b2

49.e7!
White wins.

The above analysis was extensive and contained a huge number of subtle finesses. It would be interesting to know exactly how much Karpov calculated at the board, and which of Black’s defensive possibilities he found most troubling.

31...fg4 32.xg4 f7
Black decides to jettison the h7-pawn in order to improve his king. The alternative was:
32...c7 33.e6+ h8
This time Black maintains material equality, but allows his king to be driven to an unpleasant position. There are two responses that we should consider.
a) 34.\texttt{b}b4!?
An idea of Inarkiev.

34...a5†

34...\texttt{c}c5 is less resilient: 35.\texttt{f}f5 \texttt{a}c7 (35...a5†
36.\texttt{a}c3 \texttt{c}c7 37.\texttt{b}b1 \texttt{x}xh6 38.f6 wins with
a nice mating net.) 36.\texttt{h}h2! (The immediate
36.\texttt{a}a5 allows 36...\texttt{x}xc4 37.\texttt{b}b1 \texttt{x}xh6
38.f6 \texttt{d}d2† when Black survives.) The text
move prepares \texttt{a}a5 and the rook covers
the checking square on \texttt{d}2. It is not easy
to suggest a defence for Black.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\fill[lightgray] (0,0) rectangle (2,2);
\draw (0,0) grid (2,2);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

In this position White must choose the
correct route for his king. The immediate
capture on a5 would lose the a2-pawn, so the
king must go a different way.

a1) 35.\texttt{a}a4?! \texttt{e}x\texttt{c}4† 36.\texttt{b}xa5 \texttt{x}xf4 37.a4

Dvoretsky evaluates this position as winning
for White, who is indeed strides ahead in
the pawn race. However, a closer inspection
reveals that Black is not without resources.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\fill[lightgray] (0,0) rectangle (2,2);
\draw (0,0) grid (2,2);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

43...\texttt{g}g7! 44.\texttt{e}xe7† \texttt{f}f6 45.\texttt{f}f7†
45.\texttt{e}e8 \texttt{e}e5 46.\texttt{e}c6 g3! is good enough.
45...\texttt{e}e5 46.\texttt{g}g7 \texttt{h}h5 47.\texttt{c}c6 \texttt{h}h1 48.\texttt{d}d7
\texttt{h}h2

Black has just done enough to draw.
a2) In view of the above, White should not dive head first into a race. Instead he can improve with:

35.\texttt{b3}!

This small finesse effectively gains a tempo.

35.\texttt{b5} 36.\texttt{a4} \texttt{xc4} 37.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{c4} 38.\texttt{f5} transposes to the main line below. White could also consider 38.a4, with a full extra tempo over line a1 above.

36.\texttt{b4} 37.\texttt{a4} \texttt{xc4} 38.\texttt{xa5}

Compared with line a1, White has gained the free move f4-f5. Obviously this difference should work heavily in his favour, so his winning chances are excellent.

b) 34.f5

This active move is perhaps a more natural choice, and it also offers good winning chances.

34...\texttt{b7}

Black should take the opportunity to improve his rook.

35.a3!!

35.\texttt{f7}? would be a mistake because of 35...\texttt{hxh6!} 36.\texttt{hxh6} \texttt{g7}.

The text move is a wonderful idea of Mihail Marin. It takes some time to understand the reason for it. The main purpose is to prevent a future rook check on b4. The following analysis is based on that presented by Marin in \textit{Learn from the Legends}. Black has two main replies.

a) 35.\texttt{b8}

This is a consistent follow-up to Black's last move. By positioning his rook on the back rank Black prepares to capture on f5, as the reply \texttt{f1} will no longer force mate.

36.\texttt{d4}
White prepares a timely c4-c5 to activate his king. It is here that the usefulness of the earlier a2-a3 becomes apparent.

36...gx5 37. hxg5 hxg2 38. hxg6 hxg2

Other moves do not change the result:
38...b8 39.c5 dxc5t 40. bxc5 a5 41. c6 a4 42. c7 b8 43. b7! This places Black in zugzwang, and after 43... b8 44. d7 b8 45. c6 he must lose his rook.

38... d2t 39. c3 b2 40. b1 a5 41. b8 b2 42. a8 f3t (42... a4 43. c5 dxc5 44. c4) 43. d4 f4t 44. e3 b1

45. c5! This temporary sacrifice enables White to penetrate with his king. 45... dxc5 46. d3 f4 47. c3 a4 48. d3 c4t 49. c3 Black is in zugzwang and must allow the king to advance. White will then win in a similar fashion as in the main line below.

39. b1 a5 40. b8 b2 41.c5 dxc5 42. xc5 b2 43. d4 b2 44. a8 a4 45. c5 c2t

46. b6 c6t 47. b7 c7t 48. b8 b7t 49. c8 b7t 50. d8

White escape from the stalemate checks.
50... c1 51. e8 f1 52. f7 bxh6 53. xe7t

White wins as Marin’s lovely analysis shows.

b) There is a second move that should be considered:
35... a5

This is a principled response to White’s last move. Black is preparing to attack the a3-pawn.

36. d4

Now we reach a further dividing point.

b1) 36... a4

This was the only move considered by Marin.
37. c5 dxc5 38. xc5 b3 39. c6 xa3 40. d7 b3 41. d6!

39. b8 b2 41.c5 dxc5 42. xc5 b2 43. d4 b2 44. a8 a4 45. c5 c2t
The discovered attack on the rook appears difficult to meet. However, at this point there is an obstacle to Marin’s superb analysis in the form of:

41...\(\text{b}6\)!

The Romanian grandmaster mentions the line 41...\(\text{d}3\) 42.\(\text{c}e8\) \(\text{xd}6\) 43.\(\text{xf}8\) \(\text{gxf}5\) 44.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{d}8\) 45.\(\text{f}7\) \(\text{a}3\) 46.\(\text{g}7\) \(\text{a}2\) 47.\(\text{xf}5\) when White checkmates.

The text move forces White to come up with an extraordinary reply.

42.\(\text{c}1\)!! \(\text{xd}6\)†

42...\(\text{b}8\) 43.\(\text{c}7\)! \(\text{a}8\) 44.\(\text{d}7\) wins.

43.\(\text{e}8\) \(\text{hxh}6\)

44.\(\text{e}8\)!!

This is a splendid example of the power of a battery.

44...\(\text{g}7\) 45.\(\text{c}e7\) \(\text{exe}6\)†

45...\(\text{f}4\) 46.\(\text{f}6\)† wins.

46.\(\text{exe}6\)

And White wins.

\(\text{f}6\)!!

The obvious 40.\(\text{d}7\) is not quite good enough: 40...\(\text{b}4\) 41.\(\text{e}8\) \(\text{b}8\)† 42.\(\text{f}7\) \(\text{gxf}5\) 43.\(\text{d}7\) (43.\(\text{xf}5\) \(\text{e}6\) [43...\(\text{d}8\) 44.\(\text{c}2\)]

44.\(\text{exe}6\) [44.\(\text{exe}6\) \(\text{a}4\); 44.\(\text{exe}6\) \(\text{a}4\)]

44...\(\text{d}6\) 45.\(\text{e}7\) \(\text{b}7\) 46.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{exe}7\)† 47.\(\text{exe}7\)

\(\text{exe}7\) Black has simplified to a theoretical draw.) 43.\(\text{d}8\) 44.\(\text{e}8\) \(\text{hxh}6\) 45.\(\text{hxh}6\)

\(\text{xd}5\) 46.\(\text{a}6\) \(\text{ed}6\) and Black survives. (But note that he must avoid 46...\(\text{f}4??\) 47.\(\text{d}7\)!!

when White checkmates in two.)

40...\(\text{c}4\)†
40...exf6 41.d6 wins.
41...b5 Bb4†
41...bxf4 42.f7 a4

43.h3! This forces Black into zugzwang. 43...g5 (43...Bd4 44.Bc3! wins) 44.Bh5 Bh6 45.Bxg5 Bg6 46.Bf5 Bxh6 47.Bxa4 White should be winning this ending.
42.Bxa5 exf6
After 42...Bf4 43.f7 g5 44.Bc1 Bxh6 45.Bc8† Bg7 46.Bg8† Bh6 47.Bb6 White has excellent winning chances.
After the text move White must once again find something spectacular.

33.Be6† Bf6 34.Bg8 Bc7
34...Bxh6? does not work here, as 35.Bxh6 Bh7 36.Bxh7† Bxg8 37.Bxe7 wins for White.

Interestingly the various commentators seem to have missed the tactical defence offered by:
34...e6! 35.Bxe6 (after 35.dxe6 Bh5 36.Bb1 Bxh6 37.Bd4 Bb2 Black’s position should be tenable) 35...Bc7 36.Bd4 a5 Black is a pawn down but he has stabilized his position, and White’s rook remains tied to the defence of the h6-pawn. Black has decent drawing chances.

35.Bxh7 e6
If 35...Bf7 36.f5 g5 37.f6 exf6 38.Bf5 Bh8 39.Bh7† Bh8 40.Bb1 White wins.

36.Bg8 exd5 37.h7 Bh7?
This loses without a fight. It seems that the long and gruelling defence finally took its toll. Kavalek must have missed a finesse somewhere in the following line:
37...Bxc4†
This should give good drawing chances.

38.Bd3 Bh7 39.Bh8=B
Objectively White’s best winning chance is 39.Bxh5 Bc5 40.Bf4? (40.Bf4 Bb5=) 40...Bh8 when he still has chances to press for a win, but I suspect that Black should be able to hold with correct defence. Essentially
the position has the same character as the
game continuation, except that White is
without his c4-pawn, which obviously
improves Black's chances considerably.

39...\textit{\texttt{xh8}} 40.\textit{\texttt{xh8}}
Perhaps it was here that Kavalek overlooked
the key defensive move:

40...\textit{\texttt{c8}}!
After the obvious 40...\textit{\texttt{0g7}}? 41.\textit{\texttt{xd5 \texttt{c5}}}
42.\textit{\texttt{xg8\texttt{t}} \textit{\texttt{h7}} 43.\textit{\texttt{b3}} White saves the
bishop and wins.

41.\textit{\texttt{f5 \texttt{g7}} 42.\textit{\texttt{h7\texttt{t}} \textit{\texttt{xg8}}}
Black draws easily.

38.\textit{\texttt{xd5}}
The rest is not difficult – White simply piles
up his forces on the weak g6-pawn.

45.\textit{\texttt{g4}}
1–0
Apart from the inaccuracy on move 31,
Karpov conducted this masterpiece almost
flawlessly.

After this win Karpov slowed down
momentarily for a quick draw with the black
pieces against Gheorghiu, but he immediately
followed up with a victory over Westerinen
of Finland. He then repeated the pattern in
the final two rounds, drawing quickly against
Radulov and beating the Spanish grandmaster
Pomar. His overall result from the Nice
Olympiad was a staggering ten wins and four
draws with no defeats.

\section*{Candidates Final}

In this, Karpov's last and most important event
of the year, he battled Korchnoi for the right
to challenge Fischer. The match took place in
Moscow, and had a fixed duration of twenty
four games.

After a fighting draw in Game 1, Karpov
unleashed a devastating piece of opening
preparation against Korchnoi's Dragon and
won convincingly. The next three games were
drawn, although they were all hard fought and
contained interesting moments. Then in Game
6 Korchnoi played the Petroff and tried a risky
pawn sacrifice, but was unable to generate
enough compensation and lost.

It seems that Korchnoi took a while to realize
that he should aim for safety with the black
pieces instead of taking risks. It is remarkable
that both Spassky and Korchnoi misjudged
Karpov and had to adjust their openings
during the match.
Games 7-12 were hard fought but all ended in draws. In Game 13 Karpov avoided a perpetual and tried to press for a win with the black pieces, but went wrong and allowed a forced win. But Korchnoi missed his chance, and even though he kept a clear advantage in the endgame he was unable to convert it. The next three games were draws, but then Korchnoi suffered a disaster, blundering in an equal position with the white pieces.

With a 3-0 advantage and just seven games to play, it appeared that Karpov was almost assured of victory. But to his great credit, Korchnoi almost staged a remarkable comeback. First he stayed disciplined and held a French with an isolated queen’s pawn. Then in Game 19 he finally scored his first win after Karpov became a bit too relaxed in an endgame with opposite-coloured bishops. In Game 20 Korchnoi played a risky opening with Black and almost paid the price, but Karpov failed to capitalize. Then he played a prepared novelty in the Queen’s Indian which suffered from a huge tactical flaw, and Korchnoi destroyed him in a mere nineteen moves (you can find it on page 199, in the note to Black’s 7th move in Game 41). Suddenly the match was wide open.

With three games remaining, Karpov managed to compose himself. The fact that he had the white pieces in two of these games must have been a big help. He held the next two games comfortably, which meant that only one more draw was required to seal the match. Here is the game.

1.e4

For most of the match Karpov opened with 1.e4. Although he had been successful with the king’s pawn, scoring two wins and eight draws without a loss, he switched to the text move for the last couple of games when he was content to draw.

1...d5

In Game 22 Karpov preferred 2.c4 and drew solidly: 2...e6 3.g3 d5 4.d4 exd4 5.e5 dxc4 6.a4+ bxc4 7.g2 f6 8-0-0 e5 9.a3 d7 10.dxc5 bxc5 11.b4 a6 12.a2 b5 13.e4 dxe4 14.bxe4 0-0 15.bxc7 bxc7 16.e1 e8 17.a1 a5 18.b3 a8 19.c1 c8 20.e4 b7 21.f4 fxe7 22.exf7 0-0 Karpov obtained a super-safe position and a draw was agreed a few moves later.

2.d5

It is a bit surprising that Korchnoi opts for a symmetrical set-up.

3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 g6??

The combination of the Queen’s Gambit and the Grünfeld is not highly regarded by theory, but Korchnoi was in a must-win situation so his choice is understandable.

5.e4 e5

6.0-0

...
long time, or plays it but allows considerable
simplifications in the centre.

7...c6?!
Korchnoi prefers to keep the position more
complex, but his choice enables White to claim
a long-lasting space advantage.

8.b2 g4 9.bd2!
Black's only active plan involved ...e5, so
Karpov prefers not to develop his knight on
c3.

9.bd7 10.h3 f5
After 10...xf3 11.xf3 White's bishop pair
gives him a nice edge, while Black is not any
closer to creating counterplay.

11.e1 b6 12.d1 e4
Korchnoi stops e4, but in doing so he
exchanges a pair of minor pieces, which is not
against Karpov's interests in this game.

13.xe4 xxe4 14.d2 xf5 15.e1
Karpov develops his last piece. Under normal
circumstances he may well have preferred the
more ambitious 15.e4 xe6 16.f3, when
White has gained space and enjoys a pleasant
positional advantage.

15..e8?
Korchnoi is having trouble finding a plan.
A better idea was 15...a5!, hoping for some
queenside play, when Black is only a bit worse.

16.e2 c7

17.a4!
Karpov gives himself the option of driving
the enemy knight away, and in some positions
the pawn might advance all the way to a6 in
order to undermine the c6-pawn.

17..e8
Korchnoi has no idea how to find a target
in Karpov's position; his choice of opening
turned out to be a disaster for this game.

18.a3
Karpov allows no counterplay.

18..e6
If 18..e8 19.e4 is strong.

19.d1 e8 20.e4
Karpov does not just wait, but improves his
knight.

20..f5 21.c5 f7 22.b2!!
The huge pressure of the occasion can be felt
in this somewhat passive move. One stronger
idea was 22.c2?, for instance 22..e5 23.dxe5
1974  Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

\text{1xe5 24.\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}}\text{c}d1 and Black faces problems as 24...\text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}d5 is well met by 25.e4.

22...\text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}d7 23.\text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}d3 \text{\textit{\textsc{B}}}c8

23...e5 is a reasonable move, but after 24.dxe5 \text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}xe5 25.\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}xe5 \text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}xe5 26.\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}xd1 \text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}exd1 27.\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}xd1 we reach a sterile endgame, which Karpov would have drawn easily.

24.b4

Karpov gains space.

24...a5?!

Korchnoi loses patience. He should have improved his queen with 24...\text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}c7 25.b5 \text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}d6 when the position is balanced.

25.bxa5 \text{\textit{\textsc{B}}}xa5 26.\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}c3 \text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}a7

27.a5!

Karpov fixes Black's queenside.

27...c5?!

27...\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}f6 was better, although after 28.\text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}c5 White has the initiative on the queenside. Korchnoi cannot resist the urge to instigate a direct confrontation, but Karpov is up to the challenge.

28.\text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}a4!

Exploiting the vulnerability of the black knight.

28...\text{\textit{\textsc{B}}}b6?

This loses a pawn, but even after the superior 28...\text{\textit{\textsc{F}}}ed8 29.\text{\textit{\textsc{B}}}b5, White's queen dominates on the queenside.

29.\text{\textit{\textsc{A}}}a1 \text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}d5?!

After 29...\text{\textit{\textsc{D}}}d7 30.\text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}xc5 White is a pawn up for nothing, but still it was better than the game continuation.

\begin{center}
\begin{picture}(180,180)
\put(0,0){\includegraphics[width=180pt]{chessboard.png}}
\end{picture}
\end{center}

30.\text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}xc5 \text{\textit{\textsc{C}}}c3 31.\text{\textit{\textsc{A}}}xc3

\text{\textit{\textsc{B}}}d5

Karpov took a draw here, which was as good as a win in view of the match situation. Indeed, at this level the final position can be regarded as close to winning for White. Karpov's play in the final game was not only objectively strong, but also perfectly suited to the match situation.

Although the match was close, Karpov played the better chess overall, he held his nerves when needed and deserved his victory. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that the Soviet authorities favoured Karpov, perhaps for political reasons, but mainly because he clearly had the best chance to wrest the coveted crown from Fischer, especially in future championship cycles if not the present one.

Being disfavoured in his home country must have been hard for Korchnoi, and soon after the match he defected from the Soviet Union.
1974 Summary

Candidates quarter-final versus Polugaevsky, Moscow: Won 5½–2½ (+3 =5 –0)
Candidates semi-final versus Spassky, Leningrad: Won 7–4 (+4 =6 –1)
Nice Olympiad (Board one): 12/14 (+10 =4 –0)
Candidates final versus Korchnoi, Moscow: Won 12½–11½ (+3 =19 –2)

Total 64.9% (+20 =34 –3)
1975

Rating 2705 (2 in the World)

This was the year in which Fischer forfeited his World Champion title when he refused to take part in a match against Karpov under the prevailing FIDE regulations. In March the FIDE congress had agreed to Fischer’s demand that the match would continue until one player scored ten wins. However, it did not accept Fischer’s insistence that the champion would retain his title if the score became tied at nine wins apiece.

It is hard to determine the extent to which Karpov was personally involved with the negotiations. It seems likely that the Soviet authorities would have had at least some involvement. Later Karpov referred to a “gap” in his career, created by the lost experience of playing Fischer for the title. Given the chance to turn back the clock, would Karpov have accepted the conditions laid down by Fischer – or were matters completely out of his hands?

In conversation with my Russian trainer colleagues, many of them have told me they believe Fischer was scared to face Karpov. Perhaps not surprisingly, this is not an opinion I have heard from many westerners. Personally I doubt that this was Fischer’s main motivation, although it should be remembered that he had not played a competitive game since winning the title from Spassky in 1972. Karpov’s impressive results may have made Fischer understand that he would have to muster all his strength, and perhaps he did not feel capable of achieving this.

Unfortunately we cannot do more than speculate at this stage. If I had to give my own best guess as to the reason for Fischer’s behaviour, I would suggest that he had already achieved his main goal in becoming World Champion and lacked the necessary motivation to keep on playing.

The history of chess is full of epic matches that never happened. Tarrasch never got a chance against Steinitz. Rubinstein and Maroczy were never able to test Lasker. Alekhine never gave a return match to Capablanca. And Keres never faced Botvinnik.

There is no way of knowing who would have won had Karpov and Fischer met in 1975. Karpov was certainly strong enough to compete with the American, especially considering Fischer’s inactivity over the previous few years. On the other hand Karpov lacked any previous match experience at World Championship level. When Kasparov stepped up to challenge Karpov in 1985, he was almost massacred in the early stages of the match, and needed time to adapt to the playing strength of an opponent who was head and shoulders above anyone he had faced previously. It is possible that a similar fate may have befallen Karpov.

Had Karpov played a match or matches against Fischer, it is likely that he would have beaten him at some point; if not in 1975, then probably by the early 1980s. Perhaps more importantly, there is no doubt that playing Fischer would have deepened Karpov’s chess understanding and made him an even more formidable player – especially in match play. We can only wonder how
Karpo's matches with Kasparov would have played out, had the 1975 match gone ahead.

When Karpo went back to Zlatoust, the whole town filled the streets to celebrate the success of their hero. Grandmaster Yuri Razuvaev, who worked so much with Karpo in the 1970s, told me he did not go to the theatre with him as he did not like the Beatles-style adoration with which ordinary people treated Karpo in public. On one occasion, when Karpo was spotted in a car, the mob of fans lifted the vehicle off the ground!

Having won the highest title by default, Karpo had to prove he was a true champion. He was never as charismatic as his predecessor but his results over the board left no doubt that he was the strongest active player in the world.

His first event in 1975 was the Portoroz/Ljubljana tournament. In his first game as the World Champion he defeated Portisch for the first time, after the Hungarian grandmaster made an unfortunate error. In the next round he met the Slovenian player Rudolf Osterman, who never faced any other world champions.

**Game 40**

Rudolf Osterman – Anatoly Karpo

Portoroz/Ljubljana 1975

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 b6 4.e3

Karpo faced this move ten times. He won four games, drew four and lost two, the last number being more than one would normally expect from him.

4...♗b7 5.♕c3 d5

Karpo usually plays this way; only once has he opted to transpose to the Nimzo-Indian with 5...♗b4.

6.♗d3 ♗e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.♗e2 c5

Karpo had played the same way a few years back, so Osterman had probably prepared for that.

9.♗xc5 bxc5

It was necessary to improve on the aforementioned game, which continued: 9...♗xc4 10.♗xc4 ♘xc5 11.e4 ♘bd7 12.e5 ♘xf3?? 13.gxf3 ♗h5 14.♗d1 ♗e7 15.f4 ♗g6 16.f5! ♗xf5 17.e6 ♘df6 18.exf7+ ♘g7 19.♗xe7 ♘xe7 20.♗b5 Black got a bad position and went on to lose, Petrosian – Karpo, Moscow 1973.

10.e4! 10.♗d1 is reasonable and leads to a balanced position.

```
10...d4 11.♗b1
In such situations one must always consider the possibility of 11.e5, but here it achieves nothing and after 11...♗xc3 12.exf6 ♘xf6 13.bxc3 ♗d7 Black has a pleasant position.

11...♗bd7 12.e5
The other main option is:
12.♗f4
But it turns out that White cannot stop ...e5.
12...♗h5! 13.♖d2 e5! 14.♗xd4
After a quieter continuation such as 14.g3
Black's space advantage gives him the upper hand.

14...cxd4 15.exd4 c5 16.e3

After 16.e3 Black has far too much activity for a pawn.

16...cxd4 17.d2 f5 18.exf5 gxf5 19.h3 Black has much activity for a pawn.

17.e4

After the less incisive 16...dxe4 17.dxe4 dxe4 18.e3 d7 19.e4 c4 20.b5 White can live with his position.

17...dxe4 18.dxe4 dxe4 19.b2 d8 20.b5

White has tremendous compensation for the pawn.

12...d3! 13.g3 d8

It is hard to tell why Karpov preferred this over 13...h5. Perhaps he expected the continuation 14.f4 g6 against either knight move, and planned to transfer the knight to f5 via g7, in which case it makes no difference. I find it doubtful that he intended to put the knight on c7, where it has very few prospects.

14.f4

14.f4 is the natural alternative, when Karpov would probably have played 14...g6. Another idea is 14...f5 15.exf6 gxf6, but after 16.d2 White's two bishops and active pieces do a reasonable job of making up for his structural deficiencies.

14...d5 15.b3 g6 16.d2 g7 17.b1?

This is too slow. 17.h6? g5 is also bad for White, but he should have preferred 17.g3 d5 18.h3. Even here though, Black has a comfortable position and can exert pressure both on the queenside with ...a5-a4, and on the kingside by transferring his bishop to h6.

17.d5 18.h6

After 18.g3 g5 19.a3 d4 the e5-pawn falls.

18...d5!!

Exchange sacrifices are often not difficult to understand; the problem is that they may not occur to us easily. This one is strong for several reasons. White's rooks have no useful files, the e5-pawn will soon perish and White's b-pawns are also weak. Finally, the f4-square will be a tremendous outpost for the black pieces, especially the knight.

19.d8 xf8 20.g1 d4 21.c4 xe5 22.d1 d4 23.wd2 c7!

Black has plenty of time to build his position. With his last move he withdraws his bishop to a safe spot while preventing any future queen invasions on a5.

24.e1 w6 25.e1
25...f5!
Preventing the white pieces from using the e4-square.

26...e2 c7 27...b1 a5
Karpov makes sure that White will not be able to open a file on the queenside.

28.a3 h5!
Preparing to push White back even further.

29...g1?! h4 30...f1

30...e7!
Karpov exploits White's error on the previous move. The rook has vacated the g-file, so he immediately looks to invade there.

31...e3?! fxe5?
Karpov does not even bother taking the knight yet. He can afford to leave it as his positional advantage is so great.

32...d1
If 32...g2 dxe2 33...xe2 h3 34...e1 d6 35.f4 dxe4 wins.

32...dxe3
Karpov was not obliged to take this piece, but it is the simplest way to exploit Black's advantage. In the resulting position he is ahead on material while also retaining most of his position plusses. It is a bit surprising that Osterman played on for another fourteen moves against the reigning world champion. The remaining moves require no comment.

33...xe3 d8 34...c2 d3 35...f1 e5 36.e4 d4 37.axf5 gxf5 38.axb4 axb4 39.axb4 cxb4 40.g2 e4 41...xe4 dxe4 42...e5 e5 43...a1 b3 44...b7 b2 45...b7 dxc4 46...d1 e1

0–1
Karpov went on to win the event convincingly with a score of 11/15, with seven wins and eight draws. Amongst his main rivals he defeated Portisch and Velimirovic and drew with players like Hort, Ljubojevic and Gligoric. His score against the lower ranked players was a massacre.
The recently crowned champion's first event in his home country was the USSR Spartakiad team event. Following a first round draw with Beliavsky, he won three consecutive games against Grigorian, Georgadze and Kupreichik. He then made a quick draw with Petrosian before meeting Spassky in round six. This game later won the award for the best game of the year.

![Game 41](image)

**Anatoly Karpov – Boris Spassky**

USSR Team Championship, Riga 1975

1.d4 ّf6 2.c4 e6 3.ّf3 b6 4.g3 ّb7 5.ّg2 ّc7 6.ّc3 0–0?!  
This is inaccurate. The correct 6...ّe4! reduces White’s options.

![Chessboard](image)

7.ّc2?!  
White tries to take advantage of the delayed castling by threatening to occupy the centre with e4. Karpov had suffered an unpleasant defeat on the black side of this variation in his match against Korchnoi, so it looks like the idea made a positive impression on him.

7...ّd5  
The aforementioned game was a disaster for Karpov: 7...ّc5 8.ّd5 (Interestingly Aronian did not go for the Benoni type of position and preferred 8.ّxc5, but all he got was a quick draw: 8...ّxc5 9.0–0 ّd6 10.ّd1 ّb6 11.ّe3 ّc6 12.ّa1 ّa8 13.ّa3 ّa5 14.ّb3 ّh6 15.ّh3 ّd8 16.ّg4 ½–½ Aronian – Grischuk, Moscow 2006.) 8...ّxd5 9.ّg5 ّc6 (In Game 5 of the Korchnoi match Karpov had preferred 9...ّg6, but he stood worse and obviously felt the need to improve his play.) 10.ّxd5 ّg6 11.ّd2 ّxd5 12.ّxd5

12...ّb8?? Karpov claims this move was prepared by one of his seconds and he did not check it. 13.ّxh7! ّe8 14.ّh6 ّe5 15.ّg5 ّxg5 16.ّxg5 ّxg5 17.ّxg5 ّxd5 18.0–0 ّxc4 19.ّf4 1–0 Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow (21) 1974. This was one of the worst defeats of Karpov’s career. On the other hand it did not affect the overall outcome of the match, and he never again lost such a game as a result of bad home analysis.

8.ّxd5 ّxd5  
Perhaps influenced by the course of this famous game, defenders of Black’s side tended to prefer 8...ّxd5 in later years. The reality is that White has a pleasant advantage in both cases. Two years later Spassky himself tried 8...ّxd5 against Korchnoi and was alright for a while, although he eventually went down.

9.0–0 ّd7 10.ّxd5 ّxd5
Thirteen years later, the long time number one West German player tried taking with the bishop, but also failed to equalize: 10...\textit{xd}5 11.e4 \textit{bd}7 12.\textit{ed}1 \textit{ed}6 13.\textit{de}5 \textit{we}8 14.\textit{ae}3 \textit{ec}8 15.d5 \textit{ad}6 16.\textit{dc}4 \textit{exd}5 17.\textit{exd}5 \textit{we}7 18.a3 \textit{fe}8 19.\textit{ae}1 White maintained an edge and went on to win, Ribli – Unzicker, Germany 1988.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
& & & & & & & & \\
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

11.\textit{ed}1 \textit{fe}6?! It is a bit too early to determine the placement of the knight.

11...c5 Playing this move immediately would have reduced White’s options.

12.dxc5 bxc5 12...\textit{xc}5 is another idea, when Black should only be slightly worse.

13.\textit{eh}4?! This move has yet to be played, but the quieter 13.\textit{ee}1 and \textit{af}4 do not give White much.

Another energetic and untested continuation that deserves attention is 13.e4?! d4 14.b4!.

13...\textit{axh}4

After 13...\textit{f}6 14.\textit{ef}5 \textit{ef}8 15.\textit{ag}5 White exerts unpleasant pressure against the hanging pawns.

14.\textit{xd}5

14...\textit{ab}8!

After 14...\textit{xd}5 15.\textit{xd}5 \textit{fe}6 16.\textit{wd}2 White wins back the piece. Black will obtain some compensation for the pawn, but probably not enough.

15.\textit{xb}7 \textit{xb}7 16.\textit{we}4 \textit{eb}4 17.\textit{we}5 \textit{eb}7 18.\textit{gxh}4 \textit{gh}4

Black seems to be okay in this sharp line. White's king is a bit exposed, and he cannot take on d7 as the reply ...g6 wins material.

12.\textit{de}5! c5 13.dxc5 \textit{xc}5

13...bxc5 was also possible. Black’s pieces are not ideally placed to coordinate with the hanging pawns, but on the other hand it is not clear if White can exploit this in a convincing manner. A possible continuation is: 14.\textit{g}5 (14.\textit{dc}4 \textit{wd}7 15.\textit{da}5!!) 14...\textit{ec}8 (14...\textit{h}6? 15.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 16.\textit{dd}3) 15.\textit{dc}4 \textit{wd}7 16.\textit{ed}2
14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}3!}

The knight is heading for f4, where it will attack the isolated pawn.

14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}6} 15.e4!

Minor piece exchanges are known to help the side playing against the isolated pawn.

15...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}8}

15...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}7} loses time, and after 16.e4 White can look to invade on the c-file.

16.e3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}4} 17.xd6 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}d6} 18.g4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}8}?

Spassky probably miscalculated something in the tactical sequence that follows this move. Karpov recommended 18...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}8}, although after 19.e4 White is in control, and has a simple plan of doubling rooks and playing f4 or b3.

Black can also try 18...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}5}, but once again after 19.e4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}8} 20.b3 White is pressing.

19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}4}!

Karpov sets up a double attack as the knight on e4 is also hanging.

19...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}7}?

Spassky aims to put pressure on e3, but the queen is stepping into a pin. A better try was: 19...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}6} 20.xa7 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}8}

Black is hoping to generate some threats on the long diagonal.

21.xe4

This looks best. After 21.a3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}2} 22.xe4 dxe4 23.xc1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xb}2} White is a bit better, but Black should be able live with it.

21.e4 should be met by 21...g5! (after 21...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}2} 22.xe4 dxe4 23.e1 Black does not have much for the pawn) 22.d3 Black has some compensation for the pawn, and can choose between 22...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}2} and 22...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}7} followed by ...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{ec}7}.

21...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}4}

Black needs to maintain the possibility of opening the long diagonal for his bishop. After 21...dxe4? 22.b2 he has no compensation.
After 23...\(e5\) 24.e4 \(\text{Wxe4}\) 25.acl \(e8\) 26.f3 \(\text{We2}\) 27.d4 \(\text{Wxf3}\) 28.xf3 \(\text{fxf3}\) 29.d2 the endgame is equal. 23...\(e8\) 24.e4 \(\text{Wxe4}\)

20...\(g7\)

20...\(\text{xa7}\)!

After playing an excellent positional game up to this point, Karpov demonstrates sharp calculation. A word of warning to the readers: if you are thinking about venturing into enemy territory with your queen, then make sure she can come back in time!

The main alternative was 20...\(\text{xe4}\) 21.d4 \(\text{Wc2}\) 22.a7 \(\text{xb2}\) 23.ad1 \(\text{a8}\) 24.xd5 \(\text{xd5}\) 25.d5 g6. In the resulting position Black is likely to be able to exchange the final two queenside pawns to leave an endgame with four versus three on the kingside, which he would have good chances to hold.

20...\(e\)

21.xd5!

21.xf2? is of course impossible due to the direct 21...\(\text{xe3}\)\(\oplus\) 22.d1 \(\text{c2}\) followed by mate.

21...\(x\) 22.\(\text{e7}\) 23.e5 \(\text{g4}\) 24.d6

Another idea is 24.h3?! \(\text{xe3}\) 25.e8 \(\text{xd5}\) 26.d1.

24...b5

After 24...\(\text{xe3}\)\(\oplus\) 25.e1 \(\text{f8}\) 26.xb6 White should win.

25.c6 b4 26.ad1 h5 27.d8\(\oplus\)

Another possibility is 27.e4 \(\text{h7}\) 28.d1, when it is hard to tell if White can win with his extra pawn.

27...\(\text{xd8}\) 28.d8\(\oplus\) \(\text{h7}\) 29.e4
29...b3!!
29...c7 30.a4! maintains good winning chances.
30.axb3 c7 31.d6 e5 32.d5 c1
Black has decent drawing chances.

23.c1!!
It is instructive and beautiful, although White should be able to win by less spectacular means as well.

23.b8 24.b4 xg2 25.xg2 xe3+ 26.g1 e6 27.f4 d6 28.d4 de8 29.d7! g4 30.c8!
White exchanges rooks in order to ensure that Black will not have enough pieces to hurt his king.

30.f6 31.xe8+ xe8 32.b7 e6 33.b8+ de8 34.a4 g6 35.b4

Black's last remaining drawing chance involves sacrificing his knight to eliminate White's last queenside pawn. But Karpov is an endgame maestro, and is unlikely to fall for such tricks. For the moment he improves his position and prepares to create a passed pawn.

35.g7 36.b7

36.h5?
This damages Black's chances of constructing a successful fortress. The point is revealed in the event that Black manages to sacrifice his knight to eliminate White's last queenside pawn. In the resulting endgame with rook and three pawns against queen and two pawns on the kingside, Black can draw with a pawn on h6 but would lose with the pawn on h5, as in the latter case the white king can invade using the g5-square.

For this reason Black should have preferred 36...h6.

37.h3 f6 38.g2 d6 39.a5 bxa5 40.bxa5 e6 41.a6 c7!
Black's best chance is to try and sacrifice his knight for the a-pawn, even if the resulting fortress is less than watertight.
42.a7!
After 42.\texttt{exc7 Exa6} 43.\texttt{c3† e6} 44.\texttt{g7}
White is winning, and would still be winning
even if the black king was on h7, due to the
availability of the g5-square as explained
previously. Nevertheless Karpov's move is more
precise and enables a quicker kill.

42...\texttt{e7} 43.\texttt{c6† e5}

44.\texttt{f3†!}
1-0
Karpov reveals the major problem associated
with a fortress – zugzwang. It is one thing to
build a fortress, but one must also have a spare
move to play. Fortresses and zugzwangs are
similar to exchange sacrifices: they are often
easy to understand once you see them, but
the hard part can be finding them in the first
place.

Karpov finished the team event with a quick
draw against Tal, thus scoring a total of four
wins and three draws.

Karpov's last event of the year was the Milan
super-tournament. Technically speaking he
won the competition, although the result
was not as superlative as it sounds. The event
began with a round robin tournament. This
was won by Portisch, who played arguably
the best tournament of his life to achieve
a score of 7/11, one point ahead of Karpov,
Petrosian and Ljubojevic. According to the
regulations, the top four players would qualify
for a knockout competition to determine the
overall champion.

In the semi-final stage, Karpov recorded four
dull draws with Petrosian. He qualified for the
final, although the database does not make
it clear on what basis he overcame Petrosian.
Perhaps he won a tie-breaker at a fast time
limit which did not make it to the database.
Or maybe there was another tie-break system
based on their results
in the round robin
tournament.

In the other semi-final Portisch continued
his fine form and defeated Ljubojevic, thus
setting up a dream finale between the winner
of the round robin and the reigning
world
champion. In the first game Karpov went
for safety with the black pieces and secured a draw.
We will look at their second game shortly.

Portisch qualified for the candidates stage
of the world championship cycle eight times,
and was the top ranked Hungarian player for
nearly three decades. He never played Euwe,
but played against all the subsequent world
champions from Botvinnik to Anand. Over
242 encounters, Portisch won twenty six of
these encounters, with 161 draws and fifty five
losses.
1. e4 e5 2. d3 d6 3. b5 a6 4. a4 d6

Portisch was strong in the openings. He had a wide repertoire, although he tended to pick one main opening for each tournament and stick with it throughout. In Milan he answered 1. e4 with 1...e5 in all but one case, so Karpov must have been expecting it. Over his career Karpov scored a perfect 5/5 against the present variation.

5.0-0

Karpov chose this move in two of the five games.

5... e7

Karpov must have anticipated this move, as Portisch had already used it to defeat Walter Browne in the round robin tournament.

A year earlier Karpov had faced 5...d7 and gained the upper hand as follows: 6.d4 d6 7.c3 e6 8.d2 0-0 9.xe1 e8 10. e1 h6 11.xg3 xg8 12.d2 b5 13.xc2! The right square for the bishop. 13...a5 14.b3 c5 15.d5 xh7 16.h3 e7 17. c5 b7 18.a4 bxa4

19.b4! Playing against the knight on b7. 19...a5
20.xa4 axb4 21.exb4 x8 22.xc6! x7 23.b5
Karpov outplayed his opponent and converted his advantage in Karpov - Westerinen, Nice (ol) 1974.

6.xc6†

This is a surprising decision from Karpov. He probably just wanted to get a playable position.

Portisch’s earlier game had continued: 6.c3 g4 7.d3 f6 8.d2 d7 9.h3 h5 10.c2 c6 11.g4 g6 12.d4 h5 13.d5 c8 14.c4 d7 15.g2 hxg4 16.hxg4 f6 17.e3 d7 18.d2 c6 19.c4 d8 20.f3 b6 21.xf5 xf5 22.exf5 e3 23.d4 d4 24.xf6† xf6
Black went on to win this highly complex position, Browne – Portisch, Milan 1975.

6...bxc6 7.d4 exd4 8.xd4

Another possibility is 8.xd4 f6.

8...e5 9.c6 d7

10.xa5?! The knight is not badly placed here, and it is useful to prevent ...b7. Nevertheless Black has a number of routes to a decent position.

10...f6
10...\(\text{b}6\) and 10...\(\text{b}5\) 11.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{f}6\) were equally valid alternatives.

11.\(\text{d}3\)
Karpov does not want to have doubled c-pawns.

11...\(\text{c}7\)
Also after 11...\(\text{b}5\) 12.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}6\) 13.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{d}7\) Black should be fine.

12.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{b}8\) 13.\(\text{c}4\) 0–0 14.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{x}3\)
Portisch decides to simplify the position. It is probably no better or worse than keeping the pieces on the board, for instance 14...\(\text{c}6\) 15.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{d}8\) 16.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}7\), or 14...\(\text{e}6\) 15.\(f4\) \(\text{d}7\) 16.\(f5\) \(\text{e}5\), with a balanced position in both cases.

15.\(\text{x}3\) \(\text{c}6\)
The active 15...\(\text{f}5\) 16.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{g}6\) is also possible.

16.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{a}5\)
Another possibility was 16...\(\text{e}8\) 17.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 18.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{f}7\) with a balanced position, but Portisch prefers to exchange the knights, perhaps expecting to simplify to a draw. Indeed, with opposite-coloured bishops it looks as though it will be hard for either side to achieve much, so it is highly instructive to observe the way in which Karpov improves his position.

17.\(\text{x}a5\) \(\text{e}8\) 18.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{e}6\)

19.\(\text{c}4!\)
Karpov carries out an interesting strategy. He positions his pawns on light squares in order to choke Black’s bishop. He used the same idea in a number of his games, including against Ljubojevic earlier in the same event. Obviously White must use this tool with skill, as if it goes wrong then the pawns could fall prey to the enemy bishop in an endgame.

19...\(\text{b}7\)
It was worth considering 19...\(\text{c}6?\) 20.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{g}6\). Later Black can move his bishop to d7 or e6, followed by ...\(\text{b}8\) and eventually ...\(\text{f}5\).
20.f3!
Karpov strengthens the e4-pawn and continues his policy of restricting the enemy bishop.

20...Be8?!  
This move looks natural, but it lacks any real purpose and indeed Portisch chooses to bring it back to b8 a few moves later. 20...Bf8!? deserved consideration in order to prepare ...f5.

21.d2 c6?!  
Once again Black should have tried to undermine White's centre or at least generate some activity on the kingside. For instance:
21...g6 22.c3  
22.d5 can be met by 22...f6.
20...f5  
Black can also play on the h-file with 22...h3 23.h1 h5 or 23...h6.
23.exf5 Bxe1† 24.Bxe1 Bxf5 25.Be8† Bf7 26.e2 Bg5  
Both sides are somewhat tied up with the task of defending their kings.
Black can simplify to an opposite-coloured bishop ending with 26...e6 27.Bxe6 Bxe6 28.Bxe6† Bxe6 29.Bxg7, but it is not clear if he can hold.
27.Bh8  
Or 27.Be3 &c6.
27...e6 28.Bd3 Bg6  
Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.

It seems like Portisch failed to appreciate the danger, and thought he could draw the position by keeping his pieces in a defensive formation.

22.b3  
Karpov places another pawn on a light square.

22...Be7  
Freeing the position with 22...f5?! would cost a pawn. Nevertheless after 23.exf5 Bxe1† 24.Bxe1 Bxe1† 25.Bxe1 Bxf5 26.Bxc7 Black should be able to hold the ending.

23.Bf4 Bb8?!  
Once again Portisch eschews any active ideas, such as 23...f6!, in favour of a passive move. Portisch is used to facing formidable opponents, and there is no doubting his toughness and ability to withstand pressure. However, this was his first time playing a match against a reigning world champion, and perhaps the occasion got the better of him.

24.c3 f6?  
Portisch decides to sit firmly and hold the position, but his last move presents White with an important target. The way in which Karpov increases his advantage from this point is magical.

25.h4!  
Karpov immediately visualizes the attack on the g-file and frees the g1-square for his rook.

25...Be7 26.h5† Be8 27.g4!  
With the last two pawn moves Karpov has gained a lot of space.

27.Bb7
Barczay proposes the interesting sacrifice 27...\texttt{exb3}\texttt{??} 28.\texttt{exb3} \texttt{wxc4} 29.\texttt{aeb1} \texttt{ta4}, although he mentions that Portisch preferred not to play messy positions of this type. Play continues 30.\texttt{b8} (another possibility is 30.\texttt{b7} \texttt{wxc3}) 30...\texttt{xc3} 31.\texttt{exe8t} \texttt{exe8} 32.\texttt{b8 \texttt{d4t} when Black is worse, yet he has some chances to hold (analysis by Barczay).

28.\texttt{a2} \texttt{eb8} 29.\texttt{ab1} \texttt{e8}

By moving the rook away from the b-file, Black liberates one of his opponent's rooks from its defence of the b-pawn. He should have preferred a waiting move such as 29...\texttt{e8}.

30.\texttt{gb1} \texttt{e8}

Portisch may have been running low on time, which would explain why he resorted to shuffling around with his bishop. The critical alternative was:

30...\texttt{f8} 31.g5!

White does not have to defend the b-pawn, but instead presses on with the attack.

31...\texttt{xb3}\texttt{?!!}

This is rather risky, but it is the most interesting move to analyse.

The objectively best continuation is: 31...\texttt{fxg5} 32.\texttt{wxc5} g6 33.\texttt{wxe5} (33.h5? \texttt{wxe4}) 33...\texttt{f8} (after 33...\texttt{wxc3}?) 34.\texttt{wxb3} \texttt{wxb3} 35.\texttt{wxf4} \texttt{wxe6} 36.\texttt{wxe4} \texttt{wce7} 37.\texttt{wxf5} \texttt{wxe8} 38.\texttt{wxf6} \texttt{wxe8} 39.\texttt{wxe5} h6 40.\texttt{wxe4} White's attack is too strong) 34.\texttt{wxe3} \texttt{wxd7} 35.\texttt{wxe3} \texttt{wxf4} Black survives to the endgame, although White still keeps some pressure after 36.h5.

32.\texttt{wxb3} \texttt{wxb3} 33.\texttt{wxf6} g6 34.\texttt{e1} \texttt{e3}

The alternative is 34...\texttt{wxc4} 35.h5 \texttt{wxc3} (35...\texttt{wxf7} loses to 36.hxg6 hxg6 37.\texttt{wxf7}?) 36.f7t! \texttt{wxf7} (36...\texttt{wff8} 37.\texttt{wxf7} \texttt{wxf7} 38.\texttt{wxf7} \texttt{wxe8} 39.\texttt{wxe8+} \texttt{wxe8} 40.\texttt{wxe3} wins) 37.\texttt{wxf7} \texttt{wxf7} 38.hxg6t in this endgame White's rook should prevail over Black's bishop and pawns.

35.e5!

After 35.h5 \texttt{e2t} 36.\texttt{e2} \texttt{wxd2t} (36...a5 37.\texttt{a1}) 37.\texttt{wxd2} \texttt{wxf6} White's aspirations of winning the game are hampered by the exposed position of his king.

35...\texttt{d7}

35.dxe5 36.\texttt{wxe5}.

36.\texttt{wxc3} dxe5
White avoids the perpetual and has good winning chances.

31...\texttt{W}e3!

For several moves the queen stood well on \texttt{f}4, where it prevented Black from becoming active and helped to threaten an attack. Now her work is done, so Karpov finds another role for her.

31...\texttt{W}e6 32.\texttt{W}d3! \texttt{c}6

33.\texttt{b}4

This was Karpov's idea – the queen defended the c-pawn in order to facilitate this advance. Now White can exert pressure on the queenside as well.

33...\texttt{a}xb4 34.\texttt{axb}4 \texttt{W}e8 35.\texttt{B}d2 \texttt{B}b6

35...\texttt{f}7? allows White to break through on the kingside with 36.\texttt{g}5.

A better way of improving the bishop was 35...\texttt{a}4, although White maintains strong pressure after 36.\texttt{W}d4 (Another idea is 36.\texttt{B}a1 \texttt{b}3 37.\texttt{W}d5 \texttt{xd}5 38.cxd5 \texttt{c}4 39.\texttt{B}c2, with a pleasant endgame for White.) 36...\texttt{b}3 37.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{xc}4 38.\texttt{gx}f6 \texttt{xd}4 39.\texttt{A}xd4 \texttt{g}6 40.\texttt{h}5 when Black faces a difficult defence.

36.\texttt{W}d4 \texttt{W}e5?

Under pressure, Portisch overlooks an elementary tactic. The best chance was to counterattack with:

36...\texttt{B}c6

Waiting passively leads to a tough situation:

36...\texttt{h}8 37.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{h}3 38.\texttt{g}4! \texttt{g}6 39.\texttt{a}e3! \texttt{b}b8 40.\texttt{B}d4 And White is dominating on the dark squares.

37.\texttt{c}5

Nullifying the threat, while also caging the black rook.

37...\texttt{w}f7

Black had better free the rook.

37...\texttt{f}7 38.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{dxc}5 39.bxc5 \texttt{h}3 40.\texttt{e}3! \texttt{xh}4 41.\texttt{d}g2 All of White's pieces are participating in the attack, and Black is in trouble.

37...\texttt{f}7 38.\texttt{d}5! \texttt{d}7 (38...\texttt{dxc}5 39.\texttt{xe}6 \texttt{xe}6 40.bxc5 leads to a tough ending
for Black) 39.\( \text{fxe6} \) \( \text{fxe6} \) 40.\( \text{d4} \) White continues to press, even without queens.

38.\( \text{bxa5} \)

38.g5 \( \text{axb4} \) 39.gxf6 \( \text{bxc3} \) 40.\( \text{xg7} \) 41.\( \text{f7} \) looks frightening, but after 41...\( \text{e5} \) 42.\( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{dxe5} \) 43.\( \text{xe8} = \text{e} \) \( \text{xe8} \) 44.\( \text{dd7} \) White has no more than a perpetual on the seventh rank.

38...\( \text{xc5} \)

White keeps some advantage after 39.\( \text{b2} \) or 39.\( \text{a6} \), but Black has chances to defend and the position is no longer one-sided.

37.\( \text{xb6!} \)

As is typical for him, Karpov not only plays a great strategic game, but also seizes upon the tactical opportunity.

37...\( \text{g2} \) 38.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{xd2} \) 39.\( \text{xh2} \) \( \text{cxb6} \)

The tactical skirmish ends with White winning a pawn. His pieces are also much more active, so the position should be winning in spite of the opposite-coloured bishops.

40.\( \text{f7} \) 41.\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{b8} \) 42.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{h5?} \)

This is a good attempt to soften White's pawn chain, but it does not solve the problem of the queenside.

43.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{hxg4} \) 44.\( \text{fxg4} \) \( \text{xc8} \) 45.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{e6} \) 46.\( \text{g5} \)

51.\( \text{h5!} \)

Black has consolidated his queenside, so White creates a passed pawn on the kingside. Black will not be able to cope with the threats on both flanks.

51...\( \text{g4} \) 52.\( \text{h6} \) \( \text{gxh6} \) 53.\( \text{gxh6} \) \( \text{f5} \) 54.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{g8} \) 55.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{b8} \) 56.\( \text{a7} \) \( \text{f6} \) 57.\( \text{g7} \) \( \text{c6} \) 58.\( \text{c7} \) \( \text{h8} \) 59.\( \text{c6} \)

Finally the queenside pawns fall.

59...\( \text{g8} \) 60.\( \text{xd6} \) \( \text{f5} \)
The next two games ended in draws. In the fifth game Portisch had a forced win, but chose an incorrect move order which allowed Karpov to find a great defensive resource which enabled him to hold an endgame a pawn down. The final game ended in a draw in twenty one moves, which gave Karpov a $3\frac{1}{2} - 2\frac{1}{2}$ victory.

This was Karpov's last event of 1975. Over the year he did not seem to suffer from any additional pressure from his status as World Champion, and produced a series of results that were worthy of the title.
1975 Summary

Ljubljana/Portoroz (1st place): 11/15 (+7 =8 -0)
Spartakiad USSR (Board one): 5½/7 (+4 =3 -0)
Milan
   Preliminary (2nd-4th place): 6½/11 (+3 =7 -1)
   Semi-final match versus Petrosian: Drew 2–2 (+0 =4 -0)
   Final match versus Portisch: Won 3½–2½ (+1 =5 -0)

Total 66.3% (+15 =27 -1)
Karpov's first event of the year was a tournament in Skopje, Macedonia. He began brightly, scoring three wins and a draw from his first four games, including two well executed attacking victories against Vaganian and Velimirovic. In round five he met the former World Junior Champion, Bojan Kurajica.

The contestants had met just once before, a few years back in Hastings, when Karpov was victorious. After the present game they played three more games, all of which were drawn. Kurajica faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Kramnik, winning two games, drawing nine and losing seven.

In the present game we see how Karpov deals with the problem of how to press for a win against an opponent who is playing for a draw. All chess players face this problem, and it must have become all the more common for Karpov as he moved up the world rankings and especially after he won the world title. Many players have ended up losing such games after making unreasonable attempts to win. It is remarkable how relaxed Karpov remains throughout this game.

Game 43

Bojan Kurajica – Anatoly Karpov

Skopje 1976

1.e4 e5 2.³f3 ³c6 3.³b5 a6 4.³a4 ³f6 5.³xc6

Karpov scored exceptionally highly against the early sidelines of the Ruy Lopez, so with hindsight we can say that White already made a bad choice. Out of thirteen games he won ten, drew two and lost just one, and that solitary defeat came against Ribli when Karpov was still a junior. Karpov also performed solidly against the main Exchange Variation with 4.³xc6, scoring two wins and seven draws with no defeats.

5...³xc6 6.³c3 ³d6 7.d4 ³b4!

Karpov aims to take the e4-pawn. The tempo loss is of no consequence, which is hardly surprising considering that White already lost a tempo on the fifth move.

8.³xe5 ³xe4 9.0–0
Karpov gives up the bishop pair in return for more fluent development. After 9...\texttt{\textbackslash x}c3 10.bxc3 \texttt{\textbackslash e}d6 11.\texttt{\textbackslash e}el 0-0 12.\texttt{\textbackslash c}c4 \texttt{\textbackslash e}e7 13.\texttt{\textbackslash f}f4 White will attack the c7-pawn, so Black will probably have to relinquish the bishop pair anyway.

10.bxc3 0-0 11.\texttt{\textbackslash a}a3 \texttt{\textbackslash d}d6 12.c4

Otherwise Black’s knight will have a chance to occupy the c4-square.

12...\texttt{\textbackslash f}6!

The knight has to be driven away.

13.\texttt{\textbackslash g}4 \texttt{\textbackslash e}e8 14.\texttt{\textbackslash e}e3

14...\texttt{\textbackslash d}f5?!

Karpov has no qualms about playing a position with opposite-coloured bishops, as he has seen that he will be able to exert enough pressure to cause practical problems for his opponent.

15.\texttt{\textbackslash x}f5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}f5 16.\texttt{\textbackslash d}d2 \texttt{\textbackslash e}e6 17.\texttt{\textbackslash c}c3 \texttt{\textbackslash d}d7 18.\texttt{\textbackslash f}e1 \texttt{\textbackslash f}f7

Karpov forces White to give up the d5-square while also blocking the a3-bishop.

19.\texttt{\textbackslash b}b2 b6 20.c5 b5 21.\texttt{\textbackslash b}b4 a5! 22.\texttt{\textbackslash d}d2 \texttt{\textbackslash d}d5 23.\texttt{\textbackslash f}3!

Kurajica sensibly limits the power of the enemy bishop.

23.\texttt{\textbackslash a}3? would have been extremely risky to play over the board. 23...\texttt{\textbackslash g}6 24.g3 \texttt{\textbackslash h}5 25.\texttt{\textbackslash c}c3 White might be able to survive, but who would want to play such a position? 25...g5 (Also after 25...\texttt{\textbackslash h}3 26.f3 g5 27.\texttt{\textbackslash d}d3 \texttt{\textbackslash f}7 White is living very dangerously.) Black keeps a strong initiative, and the attempt to defend by exchanging rooks backfires on White: 26.\texttt{\textbackslash x}e8?! \texttt{\textbackslash x}e8 27.\texttt{\textbackslash e}el \texttt{\textbackslash x}e1 28.\texttt{\textbackslash x}e1 \texttt{\textbackslash h}h3 29.f3 \texttt{\textbackslash c}c4 White is defenceless.

23...\texttt{\textbackslash x}e1 24.\texttt{\textbackslash x}e1

24...b4!
This move virtually guarantees Black a passed a-pawn. Karpov is still a long way from winning the game, but he continues to improve his position, bit by bit.

25.\textit{a}4 \textit{b}xa3 26.\textit{w}xa3 \textit{a}4 27.\textit{b}b4
A better idea may have been 27.\textit{f}f4!? \textit{w}g6 28.\textit{e}e2 \textit{c}c4 29.\textit{e}e4 when it is difficult for Black to make progress.

27...\textit{g}g6 28.\textit{c}c3 \textit{h}5 29.\textit{a}a3 \textit{g}e8
Black has to exchange the rooks in order to create some possibilities to invade.

30.\textit{x}xe8+ \textit{w}xe8 31.\textit{w}f2 \textit{w}g6

Karpov begins by securing some additional kingside space.

34.\textit{g}3!?
This does not lose, but it renders White's defensive task more difficult. The correct move was:

34.\textit{g}4!
Gaining some additional kingside space.

34...\textit{h}3?
Karpov comments that if White were allowed to play \textit{h}3 then the position would be completely drawn.

35.\textit{g}3 \textit{f}7 36.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}2
After 36...\textit{g}6 37.\textit{x}h3 \textit{f}3 38.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}2 39.\textit{h}4 \textit{xd}3 40.\textit{h}5 White holds.

37.\textit{f}2
Black has no way to invade, for instance:

37...\textit{e}6 38.\textit{e}3 \textit{d}5 39.\textit{b}b2 \textit{f}1 40.\textit{d}d2 \textit{g}6 41.\textit{e}3
Black can make no further progress.

34...\textit{f}7
For an endgame involving so few pieces, the number of subtle resources and finesses is astonishing. Just as with the ending of Game 38 (Karpov – Kavalek), I decided to explore the endgame in detail in an effort to get closer to the truth of the position.
White decides to wait and see. There is nothing wrong with this, but he could also have drawn with:

35.gxh4?  
It looks risky for White to fracture his kingside; on the other hand, he picks up a pawn and also prevents Black’s g-pawn from advancing as it does in the game.

35...g6 36.g3 h5 37.b2 g8  
According to Karpov, Black will win the d3-pawn and the game. But White has a finesse.

38.a3 h7 39.d5!  
Without this White would indeed be losing.

39...cxd5 40.d4  
White should draw without difficulty. The change in the pawn structure was of vital importance. Had the black pawn remained on c6, Black could have brought his king to d5 and bishop to d1, followed by a decisive king penetration on one flank or the other. Now that the d5-square is blocked, the black king does not have a convincing route into the white position.

35...f5 36.f4 g6

37.e3  
Another option was:

37.gxh4 h5

From here, White can play the position in two different ways.

a) 38.xf5!?  
This move was analysed in Anatoly Karpov’s Games as a World Champion 1975-77 by O’Connell and Levy. White simply plans to exchange as many pawns as possible. It leaves the door open for the black king to invade, but in the end White should be able to hold.

38.xf3  
38...xh4 39.f4! should hold without too many problems.

39.f4!  
This king must retreat. Other moves are not good enough, for instance: 39.b2 d5 40.c1

40...xh4! After a liquidation of the remaining kingside pawns Black will invade on the queenside. (Surprisingly Karpov only
mentioned 40...Af7? in his 1975-77 book, and even repeated the mistake in his 2007 edition of his best games. 41.b2 xh4 42.d5 And White draws.) 41.g6 h3 42.xg7 xh2 43.f6 g3 44.e7 f3 45.d7 e2 46.xc7 d1 47.a3 c2 48.b6 b3 Black wins easily.

39...e2

40.e5
But not 40.e3? f1 when White is in trouble.
However, there was a second route to a draw in 40.g3 xd3 41.c1 c4 42.b2 g6 43.f4 when the black king has no way through.
40...xd3
After 40...f3 41.f4 Black gets nowhere.
41.d5 cxd5 42.xd5 xh4
42...b5 leads to the same result: 43.c6 xh4 44.b2 g5 45.e5 a3 46.xc7 g4 47.e5 a2 48.c7=

38...g6
Now we will examine a couple of different approaches from White.

b1) 39.f4?!
This does not lose, but it leads to a further weakening of the light squares which increases Black's chances to invade. Even though it is not the best move, it is worth analysing as some of the variations are fascinating.

43.c6 h3 44.xc7 xh2 45.c6 g5 46.b6 g4 47.c7 f5 48.a5
White holds.

b) White can also adopt a strategy to block all invasions with:
38.g3

Interestingly, in his Chess Informant analysis Karpov evaluates a position with similar characteristics to this as winning for Black.
40.\textit{h}3 \textit{b}1 41.\textit{g}3 \textit{xd}3 42.\textit{h}3 \textit{e}4 43.\textit{g}3 \textit{h}6 44.\textit{f}2

The attempt to use the king actively on the kingside is doomed to failure: 44.\textit{b}2? \textit{d}5 45.\textit{a}3 \textit{g}7 46.\textit{h}5? \textit{gxh}5 47.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}6 48.\textit{b}2 \textit{f}3 49.\textit{a}3 \textit{f}6 50.\textit{b}2 \textit{e}6 51.\textit{g}5 \textit{g}4 52.\textit{h}4 \textit{d}5 53.\textit{h}3

48...\textit{b}1

White’s situation appears desperate, as \textit{h}t cannot cover both flanks against the invasion of the black king, but we will see that his resources are not yet exhausted.

49.\textit{b}4 \textit{c}2 50.\textit{c}3 \textit{b}3 51.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}4 52.\textit{c}3 \textit{b}5

53.\textit{c}1

53.\textit{b}4?! This should also be enough to draw, although it relies on a spectacular follow-up on the next move. 53...\textit{e}4

48.\textit{c}3!

White must walk a narrow path to a draw. His first task is to prevent the black king from assisting the a-pawn.

48.\textit{e}3? is not good enough: 48...\textit{c}4 49.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}3 50.\textit{a}1 \textit{a}3 51.\textit{c}3 \textit{c}2 52.\textit{a}5 (52.\textit{a}1 \textit{b}1 53.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}4 54.\textit{a}5 \textit{b}2 Black wins.) 52...\textit{b}2 (52...\textit{b}1 53.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}4 also wins thanks to the zugzwang.) 53.d5 \textit{cxd}5 54.\textit{xc}7 \textit{a}4 and Black wins.

54.d5!! Here we see another illustration of the principle that in opposite-coloured bishop positions one often has to play with extreme purposefulness to achieve one’s goal. (54.\textit{a}1? \textit{xf}4 55.d5 loses to 55...\textit{cxd}5 56.\textit{xb}5 \textit{e}4 57.\textit{xc}6 \textit{f}4 58.\textit{xc}7 \textit{f}3 and Black promotes.) 54.\textit{xd}5 55.\textit{e}5 \textit{e}4 56.\textit{xc}7 \textit{f}3 57.\textit{e}5 \textit{g}4 58.\textit{d}6 \textit{h}4 59.\textit{e}7\textdagger \textit{g}3 60.\textit{g}5 And White holds.
This is an important drawing position which can be reached in several ways.

53...\(\text{e}4\) 54.\(\text{d}2\)

Now Black can cause problems with:

54...\(\text{e}2!\)

This nice manoeuvre was found by Filipino IM Lito Maninang. The point is that the bishop is vulnerable when it defends the a-pawn from b5, so Black relocates it.

The immediate invasion does not quite work: 54...\(\text{f}3\) 55.\(\text{b}4!\) \(\text{e}2\) 56.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{d}1\) 57.\(\text{e}3!\) (after 57.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{c}2\) 58.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{cxd}5\) 59.\(\text{xb}5\) \(\text{b}3\) Black wins) 57...\(\text{c}2\)

58.\(\text{f}2!\) (The tempting 58.\(\text{d}5\) loses:

58...\(\text{c}xd5\) 59.\(\text{xb}5\) a3! (59...\(\text{d}3\) 60.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{c}2\) 61.\(\text{e}3\) repeats) 60.\(\text{a}4\) a2 61.\(\text{d}4\)

c6 62.\(\text{h}5\) gxh5 63.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{b}1\) 64.\(\text{a}5\) a1=\(\text{w}\)†

65.\(\text{x}a1\) \(\text{x}a1\) 66.\(\text{b}6\) d4 67.\(\text{xc}6\) d3

68.\(\text{b}7\) d2 69.\(\text{c}6\) d1=\(\text{w}\) 70.\(\text{c}7\) \(\text{d}7\) 71.\(\text{b}8\)

b2 72.c8=\(\text{w}\) \(\text{x}c8†\) 73.\(\text{xc}8\) \(\text{c}3\)

74.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{d}4\) 75.\(\text{e}6\) \(\text{e}4⇒\) 58...\(\text{d}3\)

(After 58...\(\text{b}2!\) 59.\(\text{d}5!\) Black is suddenly in trouble!) 59.\(\text{e}1\) White can afford to lose the d-pawn and still draw comfortably.

55.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{d}1\) 56.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{b}3\) 57.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{f}3\) 58.\(\text{d}2\)

\(\text{g}2\) 59.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{xe}2\) 60.\(\text{a}5\) \(\text{g}3\) 61.\(\text{xc}7\) \(\text{xe}4\)

62.\(\text{d}8†!\)

White has to stop Black from creating a kingside passed pawn.

62.\(\text{a}3?\) \(\text{g}4\) 63.\(\text{d}5\) Black will have only one passed pawn but as White’s king finds himself out of play it is enough. 63...\(\text{xd}5\)

64.\(\text{xa}4\) g5 65.\(\text{f}xg5\) f4 66.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{e}5\) 67.\(\text{e}1\)

\(\text{g}4\) 68.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{f}3\) 69.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{e}4\) wins.

62...\(\text{g}4\) 63.\(\text{a}5\) \(\text{f}3\) 64.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{e}4\) 65.\(\text{h}6\)

\(\text{d}5\)

65...\(\text{d}1\) 66.\(\text{b}4\) changes nothing.

66.\(\text{b}4\)

In the end White also holds the position according to Maninang’s plan. Not 66.\(\text{g}5??\) a3 67.\(\text{h}6\) a2 68.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{xd}4\) 69.\(\text{f}8\) g5 wins.

b2) 39.\(\text{b}2\)
Although 39.f4 did not lose, it seems preferable not to weaken additional light squares.

39...\textbf{a}_b3 40.\textbf{a}_c1 \textbf{a}_c2 41.\textbf{a}_b2 \textbf{a}_xd3 42.\textbf{a}_c1 \textbf{a}_c4 43.\textbf{a}_b2 \textbf{a}_d5 44.\textbf{a}_c1 \textbf{a}_e6

The direct try with 44...f4\textsuperscript{+} is not good enough for a win. 45.\textbf{a}_xf4 (45.\textbf{a}_xf4 a3 46.\textbf{a}_c1 a2 47.\textbf{a}_b2 \textbf{a}_h6 48.\textbf{a}_d4 \textbf{a}_g7 49.\textbf{a}_a1 \textbf{a}_f6 50.\textbf{a}_b2 White can probably hold.) 45...\textbf{a}_xh4 46.\textbf{a}_e3 \textbf{a}_h3 47.f4 White can hold this endgame, just as in the main line below.

45...c_4

White continues to wait.

45...\textbf{a}_f6 46.\textbf{a}_f4 reveals the advantage of keeping the pawn on f3. 46...\textbf{a}_d5 47.\textbf{a}_c1 \textbf{a}_g7 48.h5 \textbf{a}_xh5 49.\textbf{a}_xf3 \textbf{a}_xf3 50.\textbf{a}_h4 White can block all invasions.

45...f4\textsuperscript{+} 46.\textbf{a}_xf4 \textbf{a}_xh4 keeps some chances alive, but White can achieve a draw through active defence: 47.\textbf{a}_e5 \textbf{a}_d5 48.\textbf{a}_f4 \textbf{a}_h3 49.\textbf{a}_e6 \textbf{a}_e4 50.\textbf{a}_e5 White seems to be holding, for instance: 50...\textbf{a}_d3 51.d5 \textbf{a}_xd5 (51...\textbf{a}_f5 52.\textbf{d}_xc6) 52.\textbf{a}_xf3 \textbf{a}_xf3 52...\textbf{a}_b5 53.\textbf{c}_c6 \textbf{g}_3 54.\textbf{a}_c1= 46.\textbf{a}_a3 f4\textsuperscript{+} 47.\textbf{a}_xf4 \textbf{a}_xh4 48.\textbf{a}_e3 \textbf{a}_h3 49.f4

White should draw this type of endgame, as has already been noted in the analysis of 44...f4\textsuperscript{+} above.

49...\textbf{a}_xh2 50.\textbf{a}_c1 \textbf{g}_2 51.\textbf{d}_d2 \textbf{f}_3 52.\textbf{c}_c3 \textbf{e}_6 53.\textbf{c}_c2 a3

Thus we can conclude that 37.gxh4 would have drawn if followed up correctly. Nevertheless there was nothing wrong with White's choice in the game. Let us return to it now.

37...\textbf{h}_5 38.\textbf{b}_4 g5!

Planning a possible breakthrough with ...f4\textsuperscript{+} and g4.

39.\textbf{f}_2 \textbf{a}_a2

Karpov wants to wear out his opponent before revealing his intentions.

40.\textbf{a}_a3 \textbf{a}_b1 41.\textbf{e}_2 \textbf{a}_a2 42.\textbf{a}_c1 \textbf{e}_6 43.\textbf{f}_2 \textbf{c}_8
44.d5?
Kurajica cannot stand to wait passively any longer, but this impetuous move seals his own fate. It was not at all easy to recognize the many nuances in the position.

The right move was 44...e2, after which Black has a couple of ideas:

a) 44...f4
This move was recommended by Kasparov, but it allows White to draw without too many problems.

57...h3 58.g2 h5 59.g1 d1 60.h1 g4 61.g2 h5 62.h3 c4 63.b2 d3 64.xh4 c2 65.a1 a3 66.g5 a2 67.f6 b1 68.c3 a1= 69.xa1 b2 70.e7 b2 71.d7 f3 72.h4 c3 73.h5 xd4 74.h6 e4

b) 44...a6!
This is a bit more challenging. Black improves his bishop and waits for the best moment to break with ...f4. Nevertheless White has more than one route to a draw here as well.

75.h7
And White draws by one tempo.
45.\texttt{Be}3!

This is the most comfortable drawing line. 45.\texttt{Bb}2 is also good enough: 45...\texttt{hxg}3 46.\texttt{hxg}3 \texttt{f}4 47.\texttt{gx}4 (But not 47.g4? \texttt{h}4 48.\texttt{f}2 \texttt{h}3 49.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{xd}3 when Black will win with the aid of a bishop sacrifice on \texttt{g}4.) 47...\texttt{gx}4 48.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{g}5 Karpov evaluated this position as 'minus-plus', but a closer inspection reveals no win for Black: 49.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{h}4 50.\texttt{f}2 (50.d5? \texttt{xd}5 51.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{g}3 52.\texttt{xc}7 \texttt{a}3 53.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{b}5 54.\texttt{a}1 \texttt{a}2 55.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{d}7 56.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{g}2 57.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{g}4 wins) 50...\texttt{xd}3 51.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{g}5 52.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{c}2 (also after 52...\texttt{c}4 53.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{d}5 54.\texttt{e}2 White should hold) 53.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{h}4 54.\texttt{f}2 \texttt{d}1 55.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{g}5 56.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{f}5 57.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{e}6 58.\texttt{xf}4 \texttt{a}3 59.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{a}2 60.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{d}5 61.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{xf}3 62.\texttt{d}2 White is safe.

47.f5!

Karpov showed that White can draw by playing actively.

Kasparov points out a second route to safety: 47.\texttt{fxg}4 \texttt{g}4 48.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{c}8 49.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{h}3 (or 49.\texttt{f}5 50.d5 \texttt{xd}5 51.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{xd}3 52.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{h}3 53.f5! and White has no problems) 50.f5 \texttt{xf}5 51.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{g}xh2 52.d5 \texttt{cx}d5 53.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{g}2 54.\texttt{xc}7 The race is even.

47...g3 48.hxg3 h\texttt{g}3 49.f6 \texttt{g}6 50.f4 \texttt{xd}3 51.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{xf}6 52.\texttt{g}x\texttt{g}3 \texttt{e}6 53.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{d}5 54.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{c}4 55.f5

White is not slower in the race.

44.\texttt{cx}d5 45.d4

45...\texttt{f}4!

To repeat an earlier statement, one must often play extremely purposefully in opposite-coloured bishop endgames. This opens the way for an invasion.

46.\texttt{gx}4

After 46.g4? \texttt{g}6! Black just transfers his king to the queenside and wins. If the white king tries to follow, the black bishop will gobble the kingside pawns.

I should say that 46...\texttt{gx}4? 47.\texttt{fxg}4 \texttt{g}x\texttt{g}4 does not work due to 48.c6! when White obtains enough counterplay to draw.
46...g4!

47.g2?! 
This is too passive. It is a strange choice, considering that Kurajica already sacrificed one pawn three moves ago. He should have continued his policy of active counterplay with:

47.c6!

This superb idea was recommended by GM Groszpeter. The idea is to use the c-pawn as a decoy, thus allowing White to keep his f4-pawn. Opening the a3-f8 diagonal also helps the white bishop to play a more active role in the game. I believe Black should still be able to win with precise play, but this was undoubtedly White's best chance.

47...a6!

47...f5 is possible, but there is no reason for Black to delay rounding up the c-pawn.

48.a3 b5

At this point White must decide whether to sit and wait, or advance his f-pawn.

a) 49.e7 xc6 50.c5 
White waits passively, using his bishop to restrain both of Black’s spare queenside pawns.

50...b5!

The bishop heads for d1, in order to force the capture fxg4.

51.e7 d3 52.c5 c2 53.e7 d1 54.fxg4† xg4

Finally the black king reaches its ideal location.

55.e3 c2 56.b4 h3 57.e7

The bishop is doing sterling work, preventing ...a3 while menacing the h4-pawn, thus inhibiting ...xh2. Unfortunately for White, this key piece is overloaded.

57...f5!

First Black ensures that the f-pawn will remain immobile.

58.f3 c6!

This puts White in zugzwang.

59.e3

Bishop moves would allow either ...a3 or ...xh2.

If 59.f2 xh2 60.xh4 a3 the white king blocks the bishop from returning to the queenside via the e1-square.
59.\(\texttt{c2}\) c5! 60.\(\texttt{dx}c5\) a3 61.\(\texttt{xf6}\) a2 With ...\(\texttt{xc}h2\) coming next, Black is winning easily.

59...c5! 60.\(\texttt{xc}5\)
60.\(\texttt{dx}c5\) a3 61.\(\texttt{xf6}\) \(\texttt{xc}h2\) 62.\(\texttt{xh}4\) d4\(\uparrow\)!
63.\(\texttt{xd}4\) a2\(\rightarrow\)
60...\(\texttt{xc}h2\) 61.\(\texttt{xf2}\) \(\texttt{h}3\)
Black wins easily.

b) 49.f5
Black will have to keep an eye on this pawn, but he should still be able to win.

49...\(\texttt{xc}6\) 50.\(\texttt{f6}\) \(\texttt{e}8\) 51.\(\texttt{e}7\) \(\texttt{f7}\) 52.\(\texttt{c}5\)
Taking on \(g4\) would free the black king, so White tries to postpone it for as long as possible.
52...\(\texttt{g}5\) 53.\(\texttt{e}7\) 65
White will be forced to exchange on \(g4\) in another move or two.
54.\(\texttt{a}3\)

54.\(\texttt{fx}g4\)\(\uparrow\) \(\texttt{hx}g4\) is similar to the main line.
54.\(\texttt{e}3\) g3 55.\(\texttt{hx}g3\) \(\texttt{hx}g3\) 56.\(\texttt{e}2\) \(\texttt{h}5\) is winning for Black.
54...\(\texttt{h}5!\) 55.\(\texttt{f}xg4\)\(\uparrow\) \(\texttt{hx}g4\) 56.\(\texttt{e}7\) \(\texttt{f}7\)
This is not strictly necessary, but Black may as well prevent the f-pawn from advancing altogether.

57.\(\texttt{a}3\)
White can do little except keep his bishop on the long diagonal. If he centralizes his king then the h-pawn will fall.
57...\(\texttt{f}4\) 58.\(\texttt{e}7\) \(\texttt{e}4\) 59.\(\texttt{c}5\)

59...\(\texttt{a}3!\)
The a-pawn looks much more dangerous than the d-pawn, yet Black has to exchange the outrider.
Black can win the enemy bishop, but it will not win him the game: 59...\(\texttt{d}3\) 60.\(\texttt{f}3\) \(\texttt{c}3\) 61.\(\texttt{g}4\) \(\texttt{b}3\) 62.\(\texttt{xh}4\) a3 63.\(\texttt{x}a3\) \(\texttt{x}a3\) 64.\(\texttt{g}5\) \(\texttt{b}4\) 65.h4 c5 66.\(\texttt{dx}c5\) \(\texttt{b}5!\)
(After 66...\textit{\texttt{xc}5??} 67.h5 Black is losing, as he will lose his bishop to a check on \texttt{f}8. Incidentally, Black can arrange to enter the same ending with the bishop on \texttt{e}8 instead of \texttt{f}7, but the game ends in a draw there too.)

67.h5 d4 68.h6 d3 69.h7 d2 70.h8=\texttt{E} d1=\texttt{E} 71.b8\texttt{\texttt{c}4} It is a draw.

60.axa3 \textit{\texttt{xd}4}

Despite White's efforts, it is doubtful that he can hold this endgame, although it is not a trivial position for the human mind to evaluate. It is worth bearing in mind that the endgame with no kingside pawns on the board would be winning for Black (with mate in twenty five according to the tablebases). In the present position I cannot think of any way for White to utilize his kingside pawns in a way that would affect the result. One idea is to try to force Black's \texttt{h}-pawn to \texttt{h}3 and sacrifice his bishop for the \texttt{c}- and \texttt{d}-pawns, which would lead to a draw, but I do not see how White can make it happen.

Thus it seems that the active 47.c6 is not quite enough to hold the draw against perfect play from Black, but from a practical perspective it was clearly the best chance by far.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
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 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 \\
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1 & a & b & c & d & e & f & g & h \\
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47...\textit{\texttt{f}5}

Compared with the last note, White's bishop is passive and he has no chance to defend himself against the invasion of the black king.

48.\textit{\texttt{f}2} \textit{gf}3 49.\textit{\texttt{xf}3} \textit{\texttt{f}4}+ 50.\texttt{\texttt{f}2} \textit{\texttt{g}4}

White is in zugzwang; he could push the \texttt{c}-pawn but that would not change anything.

51.\texttt{\texttt{b}2} \textit{\texttt{xf}4} 52.\texttt{\texttt{c}1}+ \textit{\texttt{g}4}

When I presented this endgame to the young Peter Leko to solve, he came up with an alternative winning method to the one used by Karpov in the game. Unfortunately I can no longer remember the details of his solution.

53.\texttt{\texttt{b}2} \texttt{c}6 54.\texttt{\texttt{c}1}

Black's last remaining obstacle concerns the transfer of his king to the queenside. Karpov solves the problem beautifully and in a most instructive way.

54.\textit{\texttt{h}3} 55.\textit{\texttt{g}1} \textit{\texttt{g}6} 56.\texttt{\texttt{h}1} \texttt{\texttt{h}5}!

Black needs to show some finesse to secure the victory. Instead after 56...\textit{\texttt{g}4} 57.\textit{\texttt{g}2} \textit{\texttt{f}5} 58.\texttt{\texttt{f}3} \texttt{\texttt{h}5}+ 59.\texttt{\texttt{e}3} the path is blocked.

57.\texttt{\texttt{g}1}

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\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
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1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 \\
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57...\textit{\texttt{d}1}!

0–1

Drawn into a deadly zugzwang Kurajica resigned. Here are a few sample lines:

58.\texttt{\texttt{h}1} \textit{\texttt{g}4} 59.\texttt{\texttt{g}2} \textit{\texttt{f}5} 60.\texttt{\texttt{f}2} \textit{\texttt{e}4} 61.\texttt{\texttt{e}1} \texttt{\texttt{h}5} 62.\texttt{\texttt{b}2} \texttt{\texttt{d}3} Black wins.
The Making of a Champion

58.\text{b}2 \text{g}4 59.\text{g}2 \text{f}3\dag reveals why the bishop had to go to d1. (59...h3\dag would spoil the win: 60.\text{h}2 \text{f}4 61.\text{e}1 \text{h}5 62.\text{d}2 \text{f}3 63.\text{d}3 \text{g}2 64.\text{e}3 \text{x}h2 65.\text{h}2 The black king has buried himself in a cage and cannot get out.) 60.\text{h}2 \text{f}4 And the black king reaches the queenside.

Kurajica told me a few interesting facts about this game. He had analysed the adjourned position with grandmaster Ivanovic for half an hour and they concluded that it was a draw. At the end of the analysis they started to drink wine, and he still had a bad hangover when play was resumed. Kurajica also felt that Karpov in his published analyses was more proud of this endgame than he should have been. The Bosnian grandmaster wisely decided not to drink before any of their subsequent games, and indeed he was able to draw all three of them, as was noted in the introduction to this game.

In the next round Karpov continued his fine form with a neat positional beauty. This was Sofrevski’s only encounter with Karpov, and he lost two other games against world champions.

**Game 44**

Anatoly Karpov – Jovan Sofrevski

Skopje 1976

1.d4 \text{f}6 2.c4 \text{d}6 3.\text{c}3 \text{B}d7 4.e4 \text{e}5 5.\text{g}e2 \text{c}6 6.g3

Interestingly Sofrevski had the same position with black in rounds two and four. He lost both games, and Karpov feels no need to change White’s play.

6...\text{g}6

Sofrevski decides to transpose to a King’s Indian. In the other two games he tried different approaches.

In the second round he tried to act in the centre:
6...\text{b}6 7.b3 \text{exd}4 8.\text{xd}4 \text{d}5 9.\text{xd}5 \text{cxd}5 10.\text{g}5 \text{e}7 11.\text{xf}6 \text{xf}6 12.e5 \text{e}7 13.\text{g}2 \text{e}6 14.0-0 0-0 15.\text{f}4 \text{c}8 16.\text{cxd}5 \text{e}5 17.\text{wd}3 \text{xd}5 18.\text{xd}5 \text{cxd}5 19.\text{cxd}5 \text{b}6 20.\text{fe}1 White was a pawn up in Timman – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976.

Two rounds later he played more modestly but again failed to equalize: 6...\text{exd}4 7.\text{xd}4 \text{b}6 8.\text{e}2 \text{e}7 9.\text{g}2 0-0 10.0-0 \text{e}8 11.\text{d}1 \text{f}8 12.\text{f}1 \text{g}4 13.\text{e}1 \text{d}7 14.\text{h}3 \text{c}5 15.\text{c}2 \text{a}4 16.\text{d}1 \text{c}6 17.b3 \text{b}6 18.\text{c}3 \text{b}8 19.\text{b}2 a6 20.\text{ad}1 Vaganian – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976.

7.\text{g}2 \text{g}7 8.0-0 0-0 9.\text{h}3 \text{b}6\dagger!

In the more common position with the white knight on f3 instead of e2, this is considered the main line, but in the present position it does not work so well. 9...\text{e}8 is better.

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10.\text{e}3\dagger scores better and is objectively the
stronger move, as 10...\(\text{Nxb2}\) 11.a3! traps the queen and 10...exd4 11.exd4 is better for White.

10...cxd5 11.exd5 \(\text{Qc5}\) 12.\(\text{Ab1}\)!

White prepares to play on the queenside, as is customary for this pawn structure.

12...a5 13.\(\text{Bb7}\) 14.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{Bf8}\) 15.\(\text{Be3}\) \(\text{Bd8}\)

16.\(\text{Bd2}\)

Karpov is true to himself and does not rush his queenside activity. Indeed after 16.b4 axb4 17.axb4 \(\text{Qa4}\) 18.\(\text{Bb3}\) (18.\(\text{Bb6}\)) 18...\(\text{Qxc3}\) 19.\(\text{Qxc3}\) \(\text{Bxa3}\) 20.\(\text{Be2}\) (If 20.\(\text{Bf1}\) \(\text{Qxe4}\)) 21.\(\text{Qxe4}\) \(\text{f5}\) Black takes over the initiative.) 20...\(\text{Qb6}\) Black has nice play.

16...b5?!

This might look active, but the pawn will soon be fixed and become a target.

Two years later Bielczyk improved on Black's play by keeping the b-pawn on its original square: 16...\(\text{De8}\)! 17.b4 axb4 18.axb4 \(\text{Qa4}\) 19.\(\text{Qxa4}\) \(\text{Bxa4}\) 20.\(\text{Ba1}\) (20.\(\text{Bb3}\) \(\text{Bc4}\) 21.\(\text{Bb2}\) \(\text{Bc8}\) 22.\(\text{Qc3}\) \(\text{Ba8}\) 23.\(\text{Qh2}\) \(\text{f5}\) Black is okay here as well.) 20...\(\text{Ba8}\) 21.\(\text{Qxa4}\) \(\text{Bxa4}\) 22.\(\text{Bb1}\) \(\text{f5}\) Black has equalized, Grahn - Bielczyk, Slupsk 1978. According to my database the position has not occurred since.

Black can play actively as well: 16...\(\text{a4}\)? 17.bxa4 (17.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{Qb3}\) 18.\(\text{Qd3}\) is possible, although the knight has some nuisance value on b3.) 17...\(\text{Qxa4}\) 18.\(\text{Bxb7}\) \(\text{Qc5}\)!(After 18...\(\text{Qxc3}\) 19.\(\text{Qxc3}\) \(\text{Bxa3}\) 20.\(\text{b5}\) White has an edge despite the absence of pawns on the queenside.) 19.\(\text{Qxc5}\) \(\text{Bxc5}\) Black has good compensation for the pawn.

17.b4 axb4 18.axb4 \(\text{Qa4}\)?

Exchanging knights help White, as he can solve the problem of the passive e2-knight. With fewer pieces on the board White will find it easier to target the weak b5-pawn.

18...\(\text{Qa6}\)! 19.\(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Qc4}\)! was better, when White will, to some extent, be tied up defending the b4-pawn. 20.\(\text{Bb2}\) \(\text{f8}\) (Black can also try 20...\(\text{Qh5}\) intending \(\text{f5}\).) 21.\(\text{Ba1}\) \(\text{Wh6}\) Black is still in the game.

19.\(\text{Qxa4}\) \(\text{Bxa4}\)

If 19...\(\text{bxa4}\) 20.\(\text{b5}\) \(\text{Wb5}\) 21.\(\text{Bxa5}\) \(\text{Bxa5}\) 22.\(\text{b6}\) White's passed pawn is more dangerous.

20.\(\text{Qc3}\)

Karpov is happy to improve his bad knight, while also opening the f1-a6 diagonal for his bishop.

20...\(\text{Ba3}\) 21.\(\text{Bf1}\) \(\text{Be4}\) 22.\(\text{Wb2}\) \(\text{Ba8}\)
23.\textbf{h2}!

This type of prophylactic move is so typical of Karpov. He defends the h3-pawn, anticipating Black's counterplay on the kingside.

23...\textbf{h5}

Defending the pawn at once with 23...\textbf{wb8} does not solve Black's problems. 24.\textbf{f1} \textbf{xc3}?! (After 24...\textbf{c7} 25.\textbf{a1} White is clearly better.) 25.\textbf{xc3} \textbf{xe4} Under different circumstances, this type of exchange sacrifice can work well, but here the position is too open. 26.\textbf{a3} \textbf{b7} 27.\textbf{a1} White invades.

24.\textbf{f1} \textbf{c8} 25.\textbf{f3} \textbf{c8} 26.\textbf{a1}!

Karpov fights for control of the a-file, which will also help him to get closer to the b5-pawn.

26...\textbf{xa1} 27.\textbf{xa1} \textbf{e8} 28.\textbf{a7}

Karpov wastes no time posting his rook on the seventh rank.

28...\textbf{f5}

Black tries to generate counterplay on the kingside, but he does not have the piece power to make anything happen there.

28...\textbf{c8}!

Black could try to transfer his passive bishop to b6.

29.\textbf{a5}!?

White forces the knight to block the diagonal.

Another possibility is 29.\textbf{d2} (29.h4 is also sensible) 29...\textbf{f6} 30.\textbf{h4} \textbf{d8} 31.\textbf{d3} \textbf{b6} 32.\textbf{xb6} \textbf{xb6} 33.\textbf{a5} \textbf{c7} 34.\textbf{c1} \textbf{b8} 35.\textbf{a3} Black has a passive but solid position, with reasonable chances to hold on for a draw.

29...\textbf{c7} 30.\textbf{h4} \textbf{f8} 31.\textbf{d3}

White has a stable advantage, and in the next few moves he can proceed to transfer his king to the centre.

29.\textbf{d2} \textbf{f6}?

It was not too late for Black to opt for passive defence with: 29...\textbf{h4}! 30.\textbf{g4} \textbf{f4} 31.\textbf{f2} \textbf{f6}
32.\textit{d}3 \textit{e}8 Play is very much one-sided, but with the kingside closed it will not be \textit{easy} for White to invade.

30.\textit{e}x\textit{f}5!

The world champion switches his attention to the kingside.

30...\textit{g}x\textit{f}5

30...\textit{a}x\textit{f}5? 31.\textit{a}xb5 White's extra pawn should decide the game.

31.\textit{h}6!

Black's king is vulnerable, so Karpov exchanges its key defender.

31...\textit{d}e8 32.\textit{a}x\textit{g}7 \textit{a}x\textit{g}7 33.\textit{b}6?!

Karpov goes for the knockout punch, but his pieces are somewhat scattered and his king is slightly exposed to checks. The prophylactic 33.\textit{g}2! would have been objectively stronger.

33...\textit{h}4?

Black misses a chance to get right back into the game with:

33...\textit{a}8!!

This does not completely solve Black's problems, but it gives him some practical chances. The main line runs as follows:

34.\textit{x}a8 \textit{x}a8 35.\textit{x}d6 \textit{a}1!!

36.\textit{g}2!

Senseless is 36.\textit{x}d7? \textit{x}f1.

36.\textit{g}2 is also less than ideal: 36...\textit{xc}3 37.\textit{x}d7 \textit{xb}4 38.d6 (or 38.\textit{c}7 h4!)

38...h4! Black obtains counterplay against White's king.

36...\textit{xc}3 37.\textit{xd}7 \textit{d}2† 38.\textit{h}1!

After 38...\textit{g}1 \textit{d}4† 39.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}4! Black has enough counterplay.

38...\textit{xb}4

White is still much better after 39.\textit{xb}5 or 39.d6, but it is hard to say if his advantage is enough to win the game.

34.\textit{xd}6 \textit{hxg}3†

35.\textit{g}2!

Now Black gets no play against the king.
35...e8 36...xe5
White has an extra pawn on d5, as well as the safer king. Karpov makes no further mistake and the game is over in a few short moves.

36...f7 37.f5 b6 38.xb5 h6 39.d3 g5 40.e2 xh3 41.xh3 h5 42.xg3 f4+ 43.xf4 1–0
Karpov followed this win with a quick draw against Reshevsky and then a victory over Ivanovic. He drew his next two, and then won three in a row against Jancev, Georgievski and Tarjan. He then drew a hard fought game with Timman, bringing his total score to 11½/14 with one round to play. In the final round he met the number one East German player, Wolfgang Uhlmann, who was also having an excellent tournament and occupied sole second place, just half a point behind Karpov. Interestingly Karpov turned down a draw, which would have guaranteed him sole first prize, and went on to win. Perhaps he felt he needed to fight on to justify his world title. Whatever Karpov’s motivation, his final tally of ten wins and five draws with no defeats was one of the highest percentage scores of his career.

Karpov’s next event was a team competition in the Georgian capital Tbilisi. He won two games against Anikaev and Romanishin and drew the other three.

After that he travelled to Amsterdam for a four player, double round robin tournament. There he took first prize, winning two games and drawing the other four.

He then went all the way to Manila to play in another event of the same type. This one did not go so well. He drew the first game quickly, and in round two he met with an inspired Eugenio Torre, who beautifully outplayed and beat the world champion with the black pieces. Although their lifetime score is in Karpov’s favour, the Philippine grandmaster beat him twice when he was the reigning World Champion, which is quite an achievement. Torre went on to win his next two games, and won the short tournament by a remarkable one and a half point margin. Karpov finished on fifty percent after beating Ljubojevic.

Karpov’s next tournament was in Montilla, Spain, and was somewhat weaker than those in which he normally participated. He started with 3½/5, and in round six he faced a local player named Fraguela Gil. The Spaniard had no other game against the world champions, and after finishing last in this event, he virtually stopped playing chess altogether.

Game 45
Jose Miguel Fraguela Gil – Anatoly Karpov
Montilla 1976
1.g3 c5 2.g2 g6 3.c4 g7 4.c3 c6
Karpov used the symmetrical set-up with a view to drawing with strong opponents and outplaying lower rated ones

5.e3 Rh6
Karpov had previously won two games with 5...e5 and drawn twice with 5...e6. He only ever tried the text move in the present game.

6.Re2
6.h4?! is interesting. Some players like to push the h-pawn at a time when the opponent cannot respond with a move of their own h-pawn. The same idea sometimes occurs with reversed colours as well.
Karpov stops d2-d4, which is the primary purpose of his chosen set-up.

7.a3 0-0 8...b1 a5
Karpov liked to prevent b2-b4 in this type of symmetrical position.

9.0-0 d6 10.d3
Interestingly Karpov once reached a similar position with reversed colours against Larsen.

10...Bb8 11.d2 e6 12.d4
White could have carried out his queenside expansion by means of 12.Qa2, when play may continue 12...e5 13.Qc2 d7 14.b4 axb4 15.axb4 b5 with equal chances.

12...Qf6?
Flexible thinking. White moved away the knight and his bishop covers the d-file, so there is no special reason to keep the knight on f5.

13.Qc2 b6 14.Qbd1?
The rook stood better on b1.

14...Qb7
Karpov neutralizes White's strong bishop.

15.Qb5 Qd7 16.Qc3
Fraguela wants to exchange the dark-squared bishops, but the plan is flawed. Instead White should have played on the queenside:

16.b4
Also after 16.Qb1! Qe5 17.b4 Qxg2 18.Qxg2 Qc6† 19.e4 White is not worse. 16...e5 17.Qe2!

Better than 17.Qd5 Qxd5 18.Qxd5 (After 18.Qxd5 Qe7 19.Qc3 axb4 20.axb4 cxb4 21.Qa2 Qxd5 22.Qxd5 Qxd5 23.Qb3 Black is better, although White does have some pressure on the b-file.) 18...Qxb4! This is a sweet tactic. 19.axb4 Qxd5 20.Qxd5 Qxb5 21.bxa5 bxa5 22.Qb1 Qa6 Black is a pawn up.

17...axb4 18.axb4 Qxb4 19.axb4 Qxg2 20.Qxg2 cxb4 21.Qb3
White wins back the pawn to reach an equal position.
16...\(\text{Ke}5\)

Karpov is ready to exchange a pair of bishops – but it will be the one next to his opponent's king, rather than the defender of his own monarch.

17.e4

In view of the way the game develops, with hindsight White might have considered exchanging a few pieces with: 17.\(\text{xb7?} /\text{xb7}\) (Black can also consider 17...\(\text{xb7 18.\text{e}2 d5}\) 18.e4 (After 18.\(\text{xd6?! f3t 19.\text{h}1}\) \(\text{c6}\) White is in danger on the long diagonal.) 18...d5 Black still has a comfortable position, but the plan of ...d5-d4 is less appealing than in the game.

17...d5!

Karpov gains space.

18.\(\text{f}e1\)

This move not only secures additional space, but also shuts the b5-knight out of the game for a long time to come. The knight may look as though it is occupying an outpost, but in reality it has no weaknesses to attack and is not much more than a spectator.

18...d4!

Karpov forces a4, thus ensuring that White will never be able to open the queenside with b4. Had White exchanged bishops on b7 earlier, this idea would not have been possible.

20.a4 \(\text{b}7!\)

The bishop has accomplished its aim, and now it vacates the c6-square for the e5-knight in case it is attacked.

21.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{b}8\) 22.\(\text{h}3?\)

The knight stood well on f4. It may not have been doing anything active, but it was discouraging Black from advancing on the kingside. In the event of ...e5 then the knight would have hopped into d5, while if ...g5 then \(\text{h}5\) would be annoying.

A better idea was 22.\(\text{e}2\), intending to bring the misplaced knight back into play, perhaps via e1. Play might continue 22...\(\text{d}6\) 23.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{b}4\) 24.b3, when White's disadvantage is not too severe.

22...\(\text{d}6\) 23.f4?

White misunderstands the situation and allows the position to be opened up on the side where he is weaker.

23...\(\text{d}6\) 24.\(\text{f}4\)

Karpov opens the kingside and makes White pay heavily for his offside knight on b5.
24.\texttt{Af1} f5! 25.\texttt{e5}

25.\texttt{d2}?! may have been better, although White is struggling here as well.

25...\texttt{a xe5} 26.\texttt{exf5}?

26.\texttt{xf4}! was the best chance. By exchanging voluntarily, White only helps to activate his opponent’s pieces.

26...\texttt{exf5} 27.\texttt{xf4}

27...\texttt{h6}!

Karpov wants to exchange pieces. The fewer pieces that remain on the kingside, the greater the influence of his extra piece over that part of the board.

28.\texttt{d5} \texttt{xcl} 29.\texttt{xcl} \texttt{xd5}!

Karpov continues his policy of exchanging. The text move wins the e3-square for his knight, and secures a decisive advantage.

30.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{g7} 31.\texttt{e4} \texttt{e3}

Karpov completes his strategy and the game is over.

32.\texttt{xf8} \texttt{xf8} 33.\texttt{e1} \texttt{h3}

0–1

White resigned as he cannot avoid being mated.

In the next game Karpov beat Pfleger with the black pieces after a remarkable grind. He finished the tournament with three quick draws, to win by a comfortable one and a half point margin ahead of Stean, Kavalek and Calvo.

**USSR Championship**

In 1976 Karpov was the champion of the world, but he was still not the champion of his country. He entered this year’s USSR Championship as the clear favourite, especially as two of his main rivals had left the Soviet Union; Korchnoi defected and Spassky married a French lady and moved to France. Karpov started the 1976 USSR Championship with two draws, but then things went badly wrong when he experimented with the French Defence against Geller. The older grandmaster found his magic touch and made a most imaginative queen sacrifice, which eventually resulted in a rook endgame in which Geller was two pawns up. It required skill to clinch the victory, but he was up to the task.

In the next round Karpov defeated Balashov, who had often worked in his analysis team. The end of the game was rather mysterious, as Balashov made a freakish blunder, placing his queen on a square where it could simply be captured by Karpov’s knight. This appeared suspicious, and not only to Fischer.

Over the next six rounds Karpov won two games against Kupreichik and Dorfman, and drew four, although two of these could easily have been losses, as he was in serious trouble against Tal and he had to suffer against Petrosian in a rook endgame against his opponent’s extra f- and h-pawns.

After that shaky period he began to play better. First he beat Zakharov in a wonderful endgame, then drew with Sveshnikov, before going on a rampage that saw him drop just half a point out of his final five games. His last
four victims were Gulko, Vaganian, Karen Grigorian and Tseshkovsky. His final score of 12/17 was enough to secure sole first place, a point clear of Petrosian, Polugaevsky and – crucially – Balashov, whose blunder in round four turned out to be very significant indeed.

1976 Summary

Skopje (1st place): 12\frac{1}{2}/15 (+10 =5 -0)
USSR Team Cup (Board 1): 4/6 (+2 =4 -0)
Amsterdam (1st place): 4/6 (+2 =4 -0)
Manila (2nd place): 3/6 (+1 =4 -1)
Montilla (1st place): 7/9 (+5 =4 -0)
USSR Championship, Moscow (1st place): 12/17 (+8 =8 -1)

Total 72% (+28 =29 -2)
Karpov began his schedule in 1977 with a convincing tournament victory in the German holiday resort of Bad Lauterberg. His first opponent was Gennady Sosonko, who he had not faced previously.

Out of his first five games against Sosonko, Karpov only conceded a single draw. Surprisingly, he was unable to beat him in any of their next seven games, most of which were quick draws. Sosonko played all the world champions from Smyslov to Kasparov, with the exception of Fischer. Out of thirty three encounters he won two games, drew twenty and lost eleven.

**Game 46**

**Anatoly Karpov – Gennady Sosonko**

*Bad Lauterberg 1977*

1.e4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qe3 g6

Sosonko was a Dragon expert, who once remarked that one should either play the Dragon in every game, or not at all.

6.Qe2

Karpov also scored extremely well with the Yugoslav Attack, and indeed he used it to defeat Sosonko two years later. Here are a few of the relevant games he played in the 1970s.

6.Qe3 Qg7 7.Qc4 Qc6 8.f3 0–0 9.Qd2

Karpov scored a highly impressive 14½/16 from this variation, losing only one game to Korchnoi.

9...Qd7 10.0–0–0

10.h4 h5 11.0–0–0 Qe5 12.Qb3 Bc8 13.Qg5 Bc5 14.Qhe1 b5 15.f4 Qc4 16.Qxc4 Qxc4 17.Qxf6 Qxf6 18.e5 Qg7 19.e6 Qc8 20.Qxf7† Qxf7 21.Qe6 Qxe6 22.Qxe6 Qa5 23.Qe3 Qc3 24.bxc3 Qxa2 25.Qg6† White broke through to his opponent's king in Karpov - Sosonko, Tilburg 1979.

10...Qa5 11.Qb3 Bc8 12.h4 Qe5 13.Qb1 Qc4

13...b5 14.Qxb5 Qa6 15.Qc3 Qc4 16.Qd3 Qxb8 17.Qc1 Karpov consolidated his extra pawn and eventually prevailed in Karpov – Garcia Martinez, Ljubljana 1975.

14.Qxc4 Qxc4 15.Qb3 Qd8 16.Qh6 Qf8 17.Qxg7 Qxg7
18.\text{g4}!

With the queen on g7 Black is unlikely to carry out a successful queenside attack, so White has time to build up patiently on the kingside.

18.\text{\ld{e}6} 19.\text{\ld{d}4} \text{\ld{d}7} 20.\text{h5} \text{\ld{c}8} 21.\text{hxg6 hxg6}

22.\text{\ld{e}2}!

Karpov reinforces the knight on d4 and prevents the thematic exchange sacrifice on c3.

22.\text{\ld{f}4} 23.\text{c3} \text{\ld{f}8} 24.\text{\ld{d}g1} \text{\ld{e}5} 25.\text{\ld{g}3} \text{g5} 26.\text{\ld{g}f5} \text{\ld{x}f5} 27.\text{gx}\text{f5} \text{f6} 28.\text{\ld{f}4} \text{\ld{e}4} 29.\text{\ld{a}1} \text{\ld{f}7} 30.\text{\ld{a}x} \text{g5} \text{\ld{g}x} \text{g5} 31.\text{\ld{a}g5} \text{\ld{e}5} 32.\text{\ld{h}5}^+

1–0 Karpov – Whiteley, Bath 1973. This was a superb example of how to defuse Black's counterplay and win with a controlled kingside attack.

6.\text{\ld{g}7} 7.0–0 \text{\ld{c}6} 8.\text{\ld{b}3} 0–0 9.\text{\ld{g}5}^+

The bishop usually goes to e3 in these positions, but the text move is also quite playable. One advantage is that the potential freeing break ...d5 will be harder for Black to carry out.

9.\text{\ld{e}6}

10.\text{\ld{h}1}!

This was first played in 1962 by Skold, but Karpov probably picked up the idea from a 1976 encounter between Gaprindashvili and Gy. Szilagyi The hasty f4 allows Black to obtain counterplay with 10...b5!.

Grandmaster Razuvaev, who was a long time helper of Karpov, explained to me that the job of their analysis team was not necessarily to find lines that guaranteed an advantage, but rather to find ideas that suited Karpov's style. If the text move was suggested by Karpov's trainers, then on this occasion they did an excellent job.

10...\text{\ld{a}5}?!?

This is a thematic idea in such positions, but on this occasion White seems to be able to stifle Black’s counterplay and slowly choke him with the help of the outpost square on b5.

In later years Black tested many different ideas from this position. Two of the better ones are 10...h6?! 11.\text{\ld{h}4} \text{g5} 12.\text{\ld{g}3} \text{d5}, and
1977 Anatoly Karpov – Gennady Sosonko

10...Qa5?! 11.f4 Qc4 12.f5 Qxb2, both of which give Black sufficient counterplay in a complex position.

Karpov himself faced a couple of other approaches, including in round ten of the same tournament: 10...Qc8 11.f4 Bd8 12.Qf3 Qc4 13.Qf2 e6 14.Qd2 Qc7 15.Qe1 h6 16.Qh4 Bd7 17.Qad1 e5 18.Qxf6 Qxf6 19.Qg4 exf4 20.Qxd7 White went on to convert his extra exchange in Karpov – Miles, Bad Lauterberg 1977.

A few months later Karpov faced another improving attempt: 10...a6 11.f4 b5 12.Qf3 Qc8 13.Qd5 Qd7 14.c3 Qb6 15.Qe2 Qc4 16.Qad1 Qd7 17.Qfe1 Qa7 18.Qh4 Qe8 19.Qc1?! Karpov embarks on a remarkable transfer of his knight to the kingside. 19...Qb8 20.Qd3 a5 21.Qf2 Qd7

22.Qg4! This time Karpov is not playing for a positional advantage, but for a direct attack on the black king. 22...Qxg4 23.Qxg4 a4 24.a3 Qb7 25.Qf1 Qd8 26.f5 Qf 27.Qxf6! And White’s attack broke through, Karpov – Martin Gonzalez, Las Palmas 1977.

11.a4!

Karpov prevents the further advance of the a-pawn.

11...Qd7


12.f4

12.Qe3 and 12.Qb1 are also possible.

12...Qb6?

Black scores better with 12...Qxb3 13.cxb3 Qc5.

13.f5 Qc4 14.Qxc4 Qxc4

22.Qg4! With the help of some simple tactics, Karpov pushes back the knight.

15.Qe2!

15...Qxb2? loses a piece after 16.f6! exf6 17.Qc1!.

15...Qxc3?? looks risky, but it is playable. 16.bxc3 Qd5 17.f6 Qxf6 18.Qxf6 Qc8 Black will be able to chase the dangerous bishop away.

11...Qd7
16.\textit{b5} \textit{dd4}?!  
This does nor achieve much, apart from swapping White's passive knight.

17.\textit{exd4} \textit{exd4} 18.\textit{ad1} \textit{ag7}  
After 18.\textit{xc3} 19.\textit{bxc3} \textit{ec8} 20.\textit{ed3} Black is under pressure.

19.\textit{ae3} \textit{ad7}?!  
After the superior 19...\textit{a6} 20.\textit{ed3} \textit{we8} 21.\textit{bb3} Black is still worse, but his problems are less severe than in the game.

20.\textit{dd5}  
From this square the knight dominates the board.

20...\textit{ae8}  
It was worth considering 20...\textit{fd6}?!?, trying to exchange the powerful knight, although White remains clearly better after: 21.c3 (Also tempting is 21.\textit{bb6} \textit{ea6} 22.\textit{ed3} \textit{exe4} 23.\textit{ed7} \textit{ee8} 24.\textit{xb7} \textit{wa8} 25.\textit{bb5} when Black has problems.) 21...\textit{xd5} (21...\textit{exe4} 22.\textit{xb7}) 22.\textit{xd5} Black is passive, but it will not be easy to crack the defence.

21.c3 \textit{ae5}  
On 21...\textit{wc8} 22.\textit{bb6} is not dangerous because of 22...\textit{wc6}, but 22.\textit{ag5}! is unpleasant for Black.
27.\(\text{b6}\)
Collecting the exchange.

27...\(\text{xb6}\) 28.\(\text{xb6}\) \(\text{e5}\) 29.\(\text{a5}\) \(\text{e}6\) 30.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{c}7\) 31.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{a}6\) 32.\(\text{d}3\)
Karpov is ready to give back a pawn in order to exchange queens.

32...\(\text{g}7\)
After 32...\(\text{xa5}\) 33.\(\text{xa5}\) \(\text{xa5}\) 34.\(\text{fxg6}\) hxg6 35.\(\text{d}5\) White forces a queen exchange, then collects the b-pawn and wins.

33.\(\text{b5}\) g5 34.\(\text{d}5\)
Karpov withdraws the offer of the a5-pawn and improves his pieces.

34...\(\text{a}7\)

35.\(\text{g}4\)!
One of several winning plans available. The loosening of the kingside is insignificant, as Black's heavy pieces are too far away from that area.

35...\(\text{c}8\) 36.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{d}7\) 37.\(\text{c}4\)! \(\text{e}8\) 38.\(\text{b}3\)!
\(\text{d}8\) 39.\(\text{d}2\)!
Karpov attacks the g5-pawn to provoke a weakness.

39...f6 40.\(\text{h}1\)

Now he prepares to attack on the h-file.

40...\(\text{f}4\)

41.\(\text{c}3\)!
Transferring the queen while keeping the a5-pawn defended. Black has no good response and the game is soon over.

41...\(\text{h}8\) 42.\(\text{h}3\) h5 43.\(\text{hxh5}\) \(\text{xh5}\) 44.\(\text{xb5}\) \(\text{d}2\) 45.b4
1–0
Karpov played this opening variation only in 1977. This seems surprising, as it served him extremely well, as evidenced by the series of wins mentioned in the notes to the present game.

In round 2 Karpov quickly drew with his trainer Furman, then won four consecutive games against Timman, Wockenfuss, Gerusel and Liberzon. Then he slowed down with three draws, followed by a nice win over Miles, and then another draw. Karpov then won his final three games, albeit somewhat fortuitously. He beat Hermann convincingly, but then got a lost position a piece down against Csom, but the Hungarian blundered. In the final round Karpov avenged his loss to Torre, who also blundered, although this time the position was balanced.
Overall Karpov won nine games and drew six. This dominant performance gave him first place, two points ahead of Timman and three ahead of Furman. This was Furman's last tournament; perhaps he was already ill by that time.

Karpov's next event was the European Team Championship in Moscow. After starting with a fine victory over Smejkal, he then faced Ljubomir Ljubojevic.

The Yugoslav grandmaster was arguably the strongest player in chess history never to become a world championship candidate. When he was on song he was as strong as anybody. Twice in major tournaments he finished equal first with Kasparov when the latter was World Champion.

Up until the present game, Karpov had beaten Ljubojevic twice and drawn three times without a loss. They would go on to contest a total of forty-five games, from which Karpov registered seventeen victories and twenty two draws, with six losses. The longstanding Yugoslav number one played 134 games against the World Champions, from Smyslov all the way through to Anand, with the one exception of Fischer. He scored fifteen wins, seventy seven draws and forty two losses.

This variation leads to a complex fight, instead of the well known lines of the Queen's Indian. A decade later Karpov started to have problems against this move.

7.d4 transposes to one of the main lines of the Queen's Indian. Interestingly, Karpov defended Black's side of this position more than forty times without losing a single game, except for a blitz encounter with Korchnoi in 1987. His solidity is to be admired, although he only won four games, so the position proved solid and reliable for his opponents as well!

7...d5 8.cxd5 exd5

Later in Karpov's career he recaptured with the knight, but this time he opts for the hanging pawn centre.

9.d4 e5 10.a4

At the time of the game, this variation had hardly ever been played, and according to the database the text move was a novelty. Nowadays the whole line has been tested and analysed extensively, and Ljubojevic's move is regarded as the best at White's disposal.

Two years later Portisch tried a different approach, but it did not win many followers:


Black had an active position and the game was soon drawn.

10...d6?!

The concept of developing the knight to d6 is a position featuring this pawn structure was first introduced by Robert Hübner in 1976. Karpov utilized the same idea in a few games in 1977. He won against Browne and Garcia Padron, but then drew a game against Kochyev which seemed to put him off the idea.

Game 47

Ljubomir Ljubojevic – Anatoly Karpov

European Team Championship, Moscow 1977

1.e4?!

Of course there is nothing objectively wrong with the move, but it was a strange choice against the world champion: Ljubojevic played it very rarely and did not achieve good results with it.

1...d6 2.d3 b6 3.g3 b7 4.g2 e6 5.0-0 e7 6.c3 0-0 7...e1?!
Compared with the more typical destination of d7, the development of the knight to a6 has several advantages. On a6 the knight does not block the d-file, which means Black has to worry less about the d5-pawn. The c8-h3 diagonal is not blocked, so Black's queen can go to e6 if needed. Sometimes the white queen will go to a4, in which case the reply ...\textit{We}8 can be useful. Finally, in the event of \textit{B}3-e5, Black does not have to exchange knights and can instead manoeuvre his knight to e6 via c7.

11.\textit{D}d2?! 
This strange move has never been repeated. The idea must have been to manoeuvre the knight to e3, but White never gets a good chance to do it.

Nearly two decades later, Karpov reached the same position but came unstuck: 11.dxc5?! \textit{D}xc5 12.c1 a6 13.a3 \textit{We}8 14.d4 \textit{D}d6?! 15.cxd6 \textit{B}xd6 16.\textit{D}d2 \textit{ad}8 17.c1d1 g6 18.\textit{B}f4 \textit{xf}4?! 19.gxf4 \textit{B}f8 20.e3 White had a stable advantage and went on to win a positional masterpiece in Gelfand – Karpov, Vienna 1996.

11...\textit{W}d7!
White's last move was illogical but there is no direct refutation, so Karpov just continues developing.

12.\textit{E}f1?
This seems consistent, but it is a mistake as the knight has no real chance to go to e3.

12...\textit{E}fd8 13.h3
Another mysterious move. It clears the h2-square for the knight, but surely White was not planning to bring this piece to h2 and then back to f3!

It must be said that the alternatives were also unattractive: 13.c3?? cxd4 14.\textit{B}xd4 \textit{E}c5 wins a piece, and after 13.dxc5 \textit{D}xc5 14.e3 \textit{B}fe4 White is also struggling.

13...\textit{B}ac8
Bringing his last dormant piece into play.

14.\textit{B}c1
If 14.c2 cxd4 15.\textit{B}xd4 \textit{E}c4 16.\textit{B}d1 d4 17.\textit{B}b7 \textit{B}b7 18.c1 \textit{B}b4 19.c3 \textit{B}cc8 White is clearly worse.

14...cxd4!
Having developed all his pieces, the time has come for Black to take action. Karpov goes for the isolated pawn middlegame, having seen that he can force matters with a series of energetic moves.

15.\textit{B}xd4 \textit{B}c4! 16.\textit{B}d1
16. \( \text{d3}\) only entices the enemy knight to the centre: 16... \( \text{c5} \) 17. \( \text{b1} \) \( \text{d4} \) 18. \( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{xb7} \) 19. \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{xc1} \) 20. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 21. \( \text{xc1} \) \( \text{d7} \) White's pieces are disorganized, and Black's position is slightly better than in the game as his knight is on c5 instead of a6.

16... \( \text{d4}\)!

It is often said that when an isolated pawn gets to the fifth rank, it becomes strong. In the present position it exerts a powerful choking effect on White's position.

17. \( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{xb7} \) 18. \( \text{e4}\)!

Having less space, the Yugoslav grandmaster correctly decides to exchange pieces.

18... \( \text{xc1} \) 19. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 20. \( \text{xc1} \) \( \text{d5} \)

Karpov centralizes the queen with gain of tempo.

21. \( \text{b1}\)!!

With this move Ljubojevic wastes a tempo, which costs him a lot.

21. \( \text{h2}\)!!

White can improve the knight at once; it gives better practical chances than the game continuation.

21... \( \text{e6}\)!

Black has several tempting ideas, none of which are totally convincing.

21... \( \text{c5} \) 22. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{d3} \) 23. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{h6} \) (23... \( \text{e6} \) 24. \( \text{e3} \) 24. \( \text{g2} \) \( \text{b7} \) 25. \( \text{e3} \) White survives. 21... \( \text{xa2} \) 22. \( \text{a1} \) \( \text{a5} \) 23. \( \text{xa5} \) \( \text{bx5} \) 24. \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{e7} \) 25. \( \text{e5} \) Black has an extra pawn, but it is a doubled pawn on the a-file, so White has decent chances to hold.

The text move is a witty idea. If White defends the h3-pawn naturally with the king, then Black will capture the a2-pawn as the check on d3 will make a big difference.

22. \( \text{g5}\)

After 22... \( \text{c8} \) 23. \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{g5} \) 24. \( \text{xg5} \) \( \text{c5} \) (or 24... \( \text{xa2} \) 25. \( \text{c1} \) with counterplay) 25. \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{xg4} \) 26. \( \text{xg4} \) \( \text{e6} \) 27. \( \text{e3} \) White gets away with it.

23. \( \text{xa5} \) \( f6 \) 24. \( \text{c1} \) \( \text{xa2} \)

In the event of 24... \( \text{c5} \) 25. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{e4} \) 26. \( \text{c7} \) the active queen gives White enough counterplay.

25. \( \text{a1} \) \( \text{a5} \)

If 25... \( \text{c4} \) 26. \( \text{f3} \) White starts counter-attacking the d4-pawn.

26. \( \text{xa5} \) \( \text{bx5} \) 27. \( \text{c1} \)

White has reasonable drawing chances.

21... \( \text{c5} \) 22. \( \text{h2} \) \( \text{h5}\)!

Karpov softens White's kingside while incidentally creating an escape square for his king. This is fully in accordance with the principle that the side with more space should try to crack the opponent's position from multiple angles.
23.b4

Other continuations were unsatisfactory as well, for instance 23.\texttt{\texttt{d}3} d3 or 23.b4 \texttt{\texttt{d}e}4 24.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}3 \texttt{\texttt{c}8}.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 & \\
\texttt{a} & \texttt{b} & \texttt{c} & \texttt{d} & \texttt{e} & \texttt{f} & \texttt{g} & \texttt{h} & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

23...d3!

Karpov opens the position before his opponent can regain his coordination. The white kingside is quite vulnerable with the queen so far away.

24.exd3

An alternative was 24.\texttt{\texttt{d}f}1 \texttt{\texttt{c}4}? This is not the only move that leads to an advantage, but it seems to be the most purposeful in view of the pressure against the e2-pawn. 25.b4 \texttt{\texttt{c}3} 26.bxc5 dxe2 27.\texttt{\texttt{c}2} (After 27.\texttt{\texttt{d}e}3 \texttt{\texttt{d}e}1 28.\texttt{\texttt{x}c}4 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}1 29.\texttt{\texttt{d}e}4 \texttt{\texttt{b}b}4\uparrow Black wins) 27...exf1\uparrow 28.\texttt{\texttt{d}f}1 \texttt{\texttt{x}c}5 Black is a pawn up.

24...\texttt{\texttt{d}d}3 25.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}1 \texttt{\texttt{b}b}5\uparrow!

Up to this point Karpov has played brilliantly, but now he makes a slight inaccuracy.

The most precise continuation was: 25...\texttt{\texttt{d}d}4! Attacking \texttt{\texttt{f}2} and \texttt{\texttt{b}2}. 26.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}2 (After 26.\texttt{\texttt{d}e}3 \texttt{\texttt{d}b}2 27.\texttt{\texttt{x}b}2 \texttt{\texttt{x}b}2 28.\texttt{\texttt{d}f}3 \texttt{\texttt{f}6} Black is simply a pawn up.) 26...\texttt{\texttt{d}e}4! 27.\texttt{\texttt{g}5} \texttt{\texttt{x}g}5 28.hxg5 \texttt{\texttt{x}d}4 29.\texttt{\texttt{c}c}2 (29.\texttt{\texttt{f}f}1\uparrow is possible, although 29...h4 maintains the pressure) 29...\texttt{\texttt{d}d}5! 30.\texttt{\texttt{b}b}3 \texttt{\texttt{x}b}3 31.axb3 \texttt{\texttt{d}f}4! Black wins a pawn and should prevail in the knight ending.

The text move also looks appealing, as Black creates a double threat of gobbling the b2-pawn and exchanging on f4 to shatter White's kingside. Perhaps Karpov did not fully appreciate his opponent's resourceful response.

26.\texttt{\texttt{g}g}5!

Ljubojevic finds the only move to keep himself in the game.

26...\texttt{\texttt{a}x}g5 27.hxg5 \texttt{\texttt{f}f}5

With his next few moves Karpov opens up the enemy kingside. White must remain alert if he is to stay in the game.

28.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}2?!?

White should have preferred:

28.\texttt{\texttt{c}c}2!

The idea is to transfer the queen to e2, where it stands so much better. Black does not seem to have anything decisive, for instance:

28.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}4

28...\texttt{\texttt{e}e}4 prevents White from placing his queen on e2, but allows him to improve his knight: 29.\texttt{\texttt{f}f}1! \texttt{\texttt{d}d}4 30.\texttt{\texttt{d}e}3 And it is not easy to suggest a way for Black to make progress.
Also after 28...\textit{\&}d5 29.\textit{\&}e2 g6 30.\textit{\&}f3 \textit{\&}d7 31.\textit{\&}d2 White gets himself together.
29.\textit{\&}e2 g6
29...\textit{\&}d7 30.\textit{\&}e3 is okay for White.
30.\textit{\&}f3 \textit{\&}d5 31.\textit{\&}h4 \textit{\&}d7 32.\textit{\&}e4 White holds.

28...\textit{\&}d4
Karpov brings the rook closer to the enemy king, while also removing it from the square on which it could be captured with check.

29.\textit{\&}c2?
29.\textit{\&}f1!
This move makes it harder for Black to unpin the knight.
29...\textit{\&}e4
After 29...\textit{\&}f3 30.\textit{\&}d1 \textit{\&}e4 31.\textit{\&}e3 Black is only fractionally better.
The more aggressive 29...h4 is also not totally convincing: 30.\textit{\&}e3 \textit{\&}d7 (30...\textit{\&}f3 31.\textit{\&}d1) 31.gxh4 \textit{\&}g4† 32.\textit{\&}f1 \textit{\&}d4 33.\textit{\&}g1 And White is alive.
Another line is 29...\textit{\&}d7 30.\textit{\&}e3 \textit{\&}e5 31.\textit{\&}xd4 \textit{\&}xd4 32.\textit{\&}g2 \textit{\&}d3 and now White should be able to hold after 33.\textit{\&}d1!, but not 33.b3? \textit{\&}e4† when Black wins a pawn.
30.\textit{\&}c2
Also after 30.\textit{\&}e3?! \textit{\&}xf2 31.\textit{\&}xe4 \textit{\&}h3† 32.\textit{\&}g2 \textit{\&}xe4 33.\textit{\&}xh3 \textit{\&}xe3 34.\textit{\&}d8† White probably holds, despite the pawn deficit.

30...\textit{\&}h7 31.\textit{\&}e2 \textit{\&}c4 32.\textit{\&}d2 \textit{\&}g6
White is somewhat worse, but he has good chances to hold.

29...h4!
Karpov softens up his opponent’s kingside, exploiting the fact that the white pieces are tied up in the centre.
30.gxh4?!
It was better to improve the knight with: 30.\textit{\&}f1!
It is useful to have the option of \textit{\&}e3, which defends against the potential mate on g2 and gains a tempo in some lines by attacking the enemy queen.
30...\textit{\&}f3
30...h3?! 31.\textit{\&}e3 is okay for White.
30...hxg3 31.\textit{\&}xg3 \textit{\&}d7 leads to a position where Black can press for a while, but White should survive as long as he defends carefully.
31.\textit{\&}c3
31...d6 can be met by 32...c7.
32...e3 e4
32...xd2 33...xd2 g2 looks lovely but does not lead to anything special.
33...xd4 f3 34...f1 xd4 35...c8t h7
36...h3
White is okay.

30...h3

31...c6!
31.f3 is not good enough: 31...e1 32...c3 d3! This finesse is not only cute, but important as well. 33...c1 xf3 34...xf3 xf3 35...g2 g6 White’s king is too exposed to survive.

31...xd4 32...g2 f5 33...g3 d4

34.g6!
Ljubojevic correctly decides to jettison a pawn. Other continuations would not have helped him, for instance: 34...h1! e4 35.f3 g6! Black prevents the g5-g6 idea and prepares ...g7 followed by a rook transfer to h8. 36...h2 c4 37.a3 (37...h3 c5) 37...g7 38...h3 c1 White is in deep trouble.

34...fg6
Black’s extra pawn is not the best, but it still adds considerable value to his position, especially in terms of the protection it offers to the king.

35...e3 d5 36...f1
Although some of his earlier play was erratic, Ljubojevic has shown his quality by finding a series of strong moves to stay in the game.

36...f4!!
Karpov decides to offer a rook exchange. Simplification should help the side with the extra pawn, even if it is a doubled one.

37...xh4?
The idea of a fortress in a position with so many pawns is an illusion. 37...g3! would have kept White in the game for a while longer. After 37...g4 38.xd5 xd5 39.b3 e6
Black’s extra pawn gives him decent winning chances, but a long fight lies ahead.

37...\textbf{xf4} 38.\textbf{xd5} \textbf{g4}+ 39.\textbf{g3}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
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& & & & & & & \\ \hline
8 & & & & & & & \\ \hline
7 & & & & & & & \\ \hline
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\end{tabular}
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40.\textbf{d8}+ \textbf{h7} 41.\textbf{b3} \textbf{c2} 42.\textbf{g2} \textbf{g5}!

Karpov was always a cautious player. In view of his opponent's potential mating attack, he makes room for the king and gives up the e4-square as late as possible.

43.\textbf{d6} \textbf{xa2} 44.\textbf{e4} \textbf{a5} 45.\textbf{f5} \textbf{f5}+ 46.\textbf{e3} \textbf{b5} 47.\textbf{d4} \textbf{g4} 48.\textbf{e3}

48...\textbf{xb3}+

Karpov has seen that he can neutralize White’s mating threats, so he takes another pawn.

49.\textbf{h4} \textbf{g3}+ 50.\textbf{e5} \textbf{gf8}!

This is the simplest win.

51.\textbf{g5}+ \textbf{g8} 52.\textbf{e4} \textbf{b5} 53.\textbf{e6} \textbf{b4} 0–1

After this excellent game Karpov continued his fine form, and went on to win all three of his remaining games against Gheorghiu, Portisch and Keene, thus ending on a perfect score of five wins from five games.

\textbf{Semyon Furman}

Furman was the captain of the Soviet team at the European Team Championship, and he must surely have contributed towards Karpov’s perfect score there. This seems like as good a time as any to reflect on the influence of Karpov’s trainer. Furman was undoubtedly a major contributor to Karpov’s meteoric rise. Indeed, his great rival Korchnoi once wrote that if Furman had stayed with him and never joined Karpov, chess history would have been different.

I managed to obtain a page of an old Russian chess publication (probably the famous \textit{64} magazine) in which Karpov had written about his trainers. I have already cited his comments about both Grunvold and Botvinnik. Here is the translation of his warm words on Furman:

"To my good fortune, at the Army tournament of 1969 I met grandmaster S. Furman. He took me under his wing and took care of my chess education. We never separated and he is still my trainer. Semyon Abramovich is a remarkable person and chess player. He helped me to obtain the
title of World Junior Champion as well as my subsequent successes, for which I feel obliged to give him a lot of credit.

I was often asked the question about the role of a trainer in the period when a pupil overtakes his teacher as a competitive chess player. Firstly, it would be naive to suppose that the win would come easily for me in a hypothetical match against Furman. Even today when he is long past his fiftieth birthday, he remains a successful competitor in international tournaments. But this is not the most important thing. Even if Furman’s practical strength has decreased, his understanding of the game remains much higher than that of many well known grandmasters. Regarding his theoretical knowledge, it is not by accident that people call him “Mr Chess Academy”. Because of his skill, I always welcome his suggestions and recommendations and pay serious attention to them.

The role of a trainer is not limited to technical functions. It is also vitally important that trainers follow the latest developments of theory and practice. Because I was overloaded with my tournament schedule, often I was unable to play over so many hundreds of games. It is also clear that, when analysing adjourned positions during a tournament, one must listen to people with sufficiently high qualifications. The most important thing is to feel trust in one’s own trainer.

Here a lot depends on the elder. To encourage in the times of disappointment and adversity. And to ensure that one still keeps their feet on the ground in times of victory and successes. This can only be done by friends who possess great instructional tact. Semyon Abramovich fully has all these qualities.”

Over the course of his career, Furman played a total of forty games against world champions.

He won seven of them, drew eighteen (including three draws with his famous pupil) and lost the remaining fifteen games.

Here is a brief extract from one of his best wins. Tigran Petrosian was renowned for his brilliant exchange sacrifices, but Furman managed to beat the great Armenian with his own weapon!

41...a6x3! 42.bxa3 e4 43.bh3 d5 Black converted his advantage as follows: 44.bf1 b5 45.bg6 b5t 46.bh2 bxf4 47.bg2 bh1 b5 49.bh1 b7 50.bh3 bh5 51.bh5 b8 52.bf4 bh8 53.bh3 bh3 54.bh4 bh4t 55.bh1 bh1t 56.bh2 bh2 57.bf4 bh4t 58.bf4 bh5 59.bh3 bh5t 60.bh4 bh2f2t 61.bh3 bh3 62.bh6 bh6 63.bh7 bh7t 64.bh1 bh1t 65.bf4 bh5t 66.bxf4 bh2f2t 67.bh3 bh3t 68.bh2 bh5t 0–1 Petrosian – Furman, Gorky 1950.

After his tremendous success at the European Team Championship, Karpov’s next event was an individual tournament at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands. He continued his winning streak with five consecutive victories, and showed his versatility by beating his opponents using different styles of play.

In round 6 he met Tony Miles. Overall Karpov won twelve games, drew the same number and lost just once against the first English grandmaster of the modern era. Altogether Miles played seventy nine games
against all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, except for Fischer and Topalov. He won ten of these games, drew forty two and lost twenty seven.

**Game 48**

Anatoly Karpov – Tony Miles

Las Palmas 1977

1.e4 b6

Fifteen years later Miles tried to play a similar opening when Karpov opened with the queen's pawn. In this game we can also see his magic positional touch:

1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.d5 e5 4.dxe5 f5 5.e4

Karpov occupies the centre.

6...a5 7.f4 f6 8.e5 e5 9.0-0-0!

The bishop on b7 is powerful, so by castling on the queenside Karpov decreases its significance.

9...g5 10.dxe5 fxe5 11.h3

Ensuring that the kingside will be opened.

12.gxg5 13.e4 e4 14.f6 f6 15.exf6 dx6 16.gxg6 hxg6 17.hxg6 White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

14.g4 hgx4 15.hxg4 hxg5 16.d5 d5 17.d5 0-0-0

18.h6

18.e4! was worth considering.

18...exd5 19.exd5 e5 20.f3 White is somewhat better, but victory is a long way off.

19.xf6 exd5 20.cxd5 e8 21.g5 f5 22.h5 f6 23.f7

Karpov got a clear advantage and went on to win, Karpov – Miles, Biel 1992.

2.d4 b7

In the following year Miles tried to improve on the same opening by 2...e6. The game continued as follows: 3.d5! Whh4 4.c3 b4 (Maybe Miles should have taken the pawn with 4...Whc4?, even though White will obtain compensation for it.) 5.dxe5 fxe5 6.e5 bxc3 7.bxc3 d5 8.c2 bxc3 9.dxc3 0-0 10.g3 d4 11.c3 Whc6 12.d2 db7 13.dxe5 14.xe5 15.h4 Whf6 16.b5 Whf6 17.e4 Whf7 18.xc3 x5 19.e2 g6 20.d2 White went on to win a nice endgame, Karpov – Miles, Bugojno 1978.

3.d5!

A very ambitious move, which aims to restrict the b7-bishop and facilitate the acquisition of considerable space in the centre. Interestingly Karpov refrained from playing this move
against Morozevich in 2002. Presumably the decision to refrain from the sharp and ambitious approach was partially influenced by his age, as well as the playing style of his young opponent.

3...e6 4.a3!?
By stopping ...b4 Karpov consolidates the space he gained.

4...d6!?
4...g6 and 4...Wh4 have also been played, although neither should be sufficient to equalize. 4...f5 seems to be Black's best chance to reach an acceptable position.

5.Qc3 d6

6.Qf3!
Having already prevented ...b4, Karpov now stops the bishop from harassing the knight from the e5-square.

6...exd5 7.cxd5 0–0 8.Qg5 e8 9.e3 Qe7
Maybe Black should have tried 9...c6 intending a knight transfer to c7, although White keeps an edge here too.

10.Qc4!
Karpov strengthens the d5-pawn, securing his space advantage.

10...h6 11.Qf4 Qh5 12.Qe5
Karpov refuses to allow the valuable bishop to be exchanged for a knight.

12...Qf6
12...d6? wins a tempo, but resigns Black to a pawn weakness on c7 or d6 in the long run.

13.Qd4 Qa6 14.Qxa6 Qxa6 15.0–0 c5
Miles removes the weakness from c7 and transforms the position into one resembling a Modern Benoni, at least in terms of the pawn structure. The Benoni has never been very popular at the highest levels, so it is interesting to see how Karpov handles the white position.

16.Qxf6 Qxf6
Compared with a normal Benoni, the absence of a bishop on g7 reduces Black's prospects for dynamic counterplay.

This is a very strong positional move. White seizes the initiative on the queenside before Black can gain any space there. Black now faces a difficult decision. The prospect of bxc5 is unpleasant for him. If he recaptures with the d-pawn it opens the way for White's central pawns, while if he takes with the b-pawn then the outpost square on c4 will become a long term feature of the position.

18...d6!
Karpov secures the d5-pawn. It was too early to go for the d6-pawn with 20.Qb5?! as after 20...Qc7! 21.Qbxd6 Qxb8 22.a4 (22.e4? b5) 22...Qcxd5 Black has eased his position.

20...Qc7

21.b4!

This is a very strong positional move. White prepares for the capture on c5, but allows something equally unpleasant. The best chance was:

21...W a6?!

Searching for counterplay with the queen is the best chance. Alternatives are worse:

18...cxb4 This gives up the d4-square, and also opens the a-file for the white rook.
22.axb4 Qd7 23.f3 White can improve his position by doubling his rooks on the a-file, and/or transferring the c4-knight to d4, probably via e3 and f5.

After the queen move White must choose from a variety of options.
22.bxc5?! bxc5 23.f4 Qd7! The queen on a6 is irritating for White, who will have trouble improving his position.

22.b5?! The tactical attempt brings no advantage: 22...Qxb5 23.Qxd6 Qxd6 24.e5 c4! 25.Qxc4 Qc8 26.Qxb5 Qxb5 27.Qxb5 Qxd5 And Black has equalized.

22.Qfd1?! This is a sensible way to prepare the pawn advance. 22...Qab8 23.b5! Qxb5 24.Qxd6 Qxd6 25.Qxb5 Qd7 26.a4 White has the better structure, and Black will have a hard time trying to restrain the advance of the central pawns.

22...b5

Otherwise b4-b5 will lead to a clear positional plus for White, just as in the game.

23.Qe3

23.Qa5?! is also promising.

23...e4 24.Qd4 Qb6 25.Qxb6

25.Qf5 is also excellent for White.

25...axb6

Both sides have pawn weaknesses, but Black's are more significant.

26.Qc2

Also after 26.a4!? bxa4 27.b5 Black is in trouble.

26...Qa6 27.Qd4 Qda8 28.f3 Qxa3 29.Qxa3 Qxa3 30.Qc1!

White is temporarily a pawn down, but he will soon earn it back with interest.

22.b5! Qc7 23.a4

With his last two moves Karpov gained additional space on the queenside and completely nullified any potential counterplay there. Next he will turn his attention to the centre. Note that the protected passed pawn on c5 contributes nothing to Black's position here.

23...Qd7 24.f4

Karpov keeps his rook on f1, anticipating the opening of the f-file after a future e4-e5.

24...Qe8 25.Qad1 Qad8

26.h3?! 

After a couple of natural improving moves Karpov switches to prophylaxis. He prevents
any possibility of ... $\text{Qg4}$, as well as setting up ideas like $\text{Bf3}$ and $\text{g4}$. The quiet text move also cleverly highlights the fact that Black is in a mild form of zugzwang: his pieces are poised in anticipation of $\text{e4-e5}$, but apart from that they are accomplishing nothing.

26...$\text{Qc7}$?

Perhaps Miles wanted to attack the $\text{e4}$-pawn or maybe it was just an unfortunate choice of waiting move, as the queen is too exposed here.

26...$\text{h5}$?! was not much good, as after 27.$\text{Bf3}$ White remains in control and the weakening of the black kingside will tell eventually.

The best chance was 26...$\text{Qc8}$ intending to shelter the queen in the corner, although Black is still in trouble after something like 27.$\text{Bf3}$ $\text{wa8}$ 28.$\text{g4}$ $\text{Ed7}$ 29.$\text{Ed3}$. White can double his rooks on the $\text{d}$-file and break through when the time is right with $\text{e5}$ or perhaps even $\text{g5}$.

White should be able to win more slowly by means of 27.$\text{Bf3}$ followed by $\text{g4}$ and so on, but the game continuation move is much more efficient.

27...$\text{dxe5}$ 28.$\text{d6}$ $\text{Qf8}$

After 28...$\text{e4}$ 29.$\text{Qe2}$ Black loses material.

29.$\text{fxe5}$ $\text{Qh7}$ 30.$\text{Qf3}$ $\text{Qe6}$

![Chess Board Diagram]

27.$\text{e5}$!

Again we see a familiar story for Karpov. For most of the game he builds his advantage in a patient and strategically powerful way, but as soon as an opportunity arises to finish his opponent by tactical means, he immediately pounces upon it.

31.$\text{Bb7}$!

Having virtually paralysed his opponent, Karpov can afford to go after the $\text{a7}$-pawn.

31...$\text{Ba8}$ 32.$\text{Qd5}$ $\text{g6}$

Otherwise the knight could have checked on $\text{e7}$ then gone to $\text{g6}$ to win the queen.

33.$\text{Qe7+}$ $\text{Qg7}$ 34.$\text{Qc6}$

1–0

Miles resigned as White has too many threats, including $\text{d7}$ and $\text{Qxa7}$.

More than two decades ago I asked Daniel King, a very fine positional player, why he did not play 1.$\text{d4}$. He told me he did not feel at home in the Benoni positions. I remembered his words: around the time of Leko's thirteenth birthday I started to teach him 1.$\text{d4}$, and the first defence we looked at was the Benoni. We never finished our work on 1.$\text{d4}$. Leko started
playing 1.d4 and 2.c4 for the first time against Kramnik in their 2004 world championship match. With two games remaining, Peter was leading by one point, which meant that Kramnik needed 1½/2 to tie the match and retain his title. In the penultimate game he gambled with the Benoni and Peter played poorly, although he did manage to draw in the end. Nevertheless I suspect that this game gave Kramnik a confidence boost, which helped him to obtain the win he so desperately needed in the final game.

In the above game we saw that the Benoni structure gave Karpov no problems whatsoever, and he simply outclassed Miles.

In round seven Karpov drew with Timman, thus bringing to an end an extraordinary winning streak. With his three wins at the end of Bad Lauterberg, five at the European Team Championship and six at the start of Las Palmas, Karpov achieved a total of fourteen consecutive victories, one of the longest winning streaks in chess history at the top level.

After drawing with Timman he beat Adorjan, then drew against Larsen. Karpov then produced another winning run, posting five consecutive victories against mainly Spanish opponents. In the final round he drew with Tal, to finish with a remarkable total of 13½/15, with twelve wins and three draws. He finished a massive two and a half points ahead of Larsen who was second, three and a half more than Timman who was third, and a further point ahead of Tal, Browne and Hernandez.

Karpov’s next event was a tournament in Leningrad, which celebrated the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution. In round one he suffered a setback, falling for a beautiful checkmating combination against Taimanov. He drew in round two, then got back to fifty percent by beating Smejkal. But in the fifth he lost again, forfeiting on time in an otherwise promising position against Beliavsky.

Over the course of the remaining twelve games, Karpov gradually clawed his way up the ranks with wins over Kuzmin, Mariotti, Garcia Gonzales and Gheorghiu. But he drew a lot of games along the way, and his final score of 10/17 was only good enough to share fourth and fifth place.

1977 was the first year in which the Dutch city of Tilburg organized its prestigious tournament, and Karpov took part in the inaugural event. Out of the first five games he only won in round two, thanks to some strong opening preparation against Miles. In rounds six and seven he moves through the gears, beating Balashov and Hübner. After a short draw with Kavalek, he then defeated both Olafsson and Andersson, before securing his overall victory with a final draw against Hort. Karpov took the first prize convincingly, a point ahead of Miles. His final tally of five wins and six draws was an excellent result against this strong field.
1977 Summary

Bad Lauterberg (1st place): 12/15 (+9 =6 -0)
European Team Championship (Board one): 5/5 (+5 =0 -0)
Las Palmas (1st place): 13½/15 (+12 =3 -0)
October Revolution, Leningrad (4th-5th place): 10/17 (+5 =10 -2)
Tilburg (1st place): 8/11 (+5 =6 -0)

Total 77% (+36 =25 -2)
Three years had passed since Fischer was stripped of his crown, and the time had come for Karpov to defend his coveted title. His challenger was a familiar opponent: his old rival, Viktor Korchnoi.

Before we explore that subject fully, it is worth noting briefly that 1978 was the year in which the young Garry Kasparov made his first serious mark on the chess world, when he won the Sokolsky Memorial in Minsk. The year after he won the Banja Luka grandmaster tournament, a massive three points ahead of Smejkal and a further half point ahead of Petrosian and Andersson. From this point on, one can imagine Karpov’s attention gradually shifting away from the ‘retired’ American and towards the young rising star.

For obvious reasons, world champions tend to play fewer tournaments during the year of their title defence, and Karpov was no exception. He only played one tournament in 1978, in Bugojno, located in the former Yugoslavia (now Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Karpov began with a nice win over Larsen, then he had to struggle to draw with Ivkov, who was a pawn up for a long time. After a convincing win over Miles in round three, Karpov drew with Balashov fairly quickly. He then suffered a setback, as Timman outplayed him and collected the full point. It slowed him down – he drew the next four. He then managed to regain his momentum, defeating Ljubojevic in a sharp Sicilian, drawing a hard fought game with Vukic, and then quickly beating Hort.

At the start of the penultimate round he was trailing half a point behind Spassky, when he met the Yugoslav grandmaster Enver Bukic. This was their first and only meeting over the board. Bukic played six games against the champions, drawing twice and losing four times.

Game 49

Anatoly Karpov – Enver Bukic

Bugojno 1978

1.e4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.cxd4 Qf6 5.Oc3 a6 6.e2 e5 7.Oe1 e7

This is the only time Karpov played the move. His most frequent choice was 9.e3, an example of which can be found in Game 65.

He also used 9.g5 against two formidable opponents: 9 ... e6 10.f4 exf4 11.xf4 Oe6 12.Oh1 Be8 (12 ... d5 13.e5 Qe4 14.Od3 f5 15.exf6 Bxf6 16.Oxe4 dxe4 17.Oxe4 Oe4 18.Od6 Bxf1
19.\texttt{c5} \texttt{c8} 20.\texttt{h5} \texttt{g6} 21.\texttt{xg6} \texttt{xg6} 22.\texttt{xg2} \texttt{d7} Black managed to hold his somewhat worse position in Karpov – Anand, Buenos Aires 1994.) 13.\texttt{e1} \texttt{d7} 14.\texttt{d1} \texttt{d5} \texttt{f8} 15.\texttt{d5} \texttt{d7} 17.\texttt{g3} \texttt{c5} 18.\texttt{h4} \texttt{c8} 19.\texttt{c3} \texttt{b5} 20.\texttt{g5} \texttt{b7} 21.\texttt{a5} \texttt{c8} 22.\texttt{d4} \texttt{c6} 23.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6}

24.\texttt{c4}! Karpov went on to convert his slight plus into a win in Karpov – Kavalek, Waddinxveen 1979.

9.\texttt{c6} 10.\texttt{h1}

The king steps aside before the f-pawn moves.

10.\texttt{e6}

Later in the same year Kavalek introduced 10.\texttt{b4}, when play continues 11.\texttt{f4} \texttt{d7} 12.\texttt{e3} \texttt{c6}. Several players followed his example, and overall Black has made an excellent score from this position.

11.\texttt{f4} \texttt{b4} 12.\texttt{f5} \texttt{d7}

After 12...\texttt{xb3} 13.\texttt{xb3} \texttt{d5} 14.\texttt{exd5} \texttt{bxd5} 15.\texttt{f3} \texttt{f6} 16.\texttt{e3} White is a bit better thanks to his strong light-squared bishop.

13.\texttt{g5}!

Karpov does not allow his opponent to free his position. The weaker 13.\texttt{f3}?! allows 13...\texttt{d5}! and after the further 14.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{bxd5} 15.\texttt{c3} \texttt{b6} 16.\texttt{cb4} \texttt{xa4} Black was already better in Parr – Akesson, Gausdal 2001.

13...\texttt{c6} 14.\texttt{f3} \texttt{c8}?! 

Bukic could have played more actively with 14...\texttt{b5} 15.\texttt{axb5} (15.\texttt{e2} \texttt{b6}) 15...\texttt{axb5} 16.\texttt{xa8} \texttt{xa8} 17.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c8} 18.\texttt{d1} \texttt{d7} when Black has a playable position.

15.\texttt{e2}

Karpov wastes no time in taking control over the b5-square.

15...\texttt{h6} 16.\texttt{h4} \texttt{b6}

16...\texttt{b5} was still possible. Objectively the text move is okay, but with hindsight the decision to embark on a slow manoeuvring battle against Karpov was a questionable one. Amazingly, over the entire course of the remaining twenty
six moves of this game, Black not only fails to obtain any counterplay, but does not even make a single pawn move.

17.\texttt{f}d1 \texttt{c}7

18.\texttt{g}3?!

Why does Karpov retreat his bishop to a blocked diagonal where it seemingly has no future? The answer is prophylaxis: he wants to ensure that Black will not be able to free his position with \ldots\texttt{d}5.

18.\texttt{b}7 19.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{d}8 20.\texttt{ad}1

Karpov directs his full force against the \ldots\texttt{d}5 push.

20.\texttt{e}8

21.\texttt{h}4!

Karpov keeps preventing his opponent’s ideas, but at the same time he gains space and builds his position.

21.\texttt{f}6

Black is just waiting.

22.\texttt{f}2

For the first time in a while, Karpov does not play against a particular idea of his opponent, but improves a piece for its own sake.

22.\texttt{d}7 23.\texttt{g}3

A minor improvement is still an improvement.

23.\texttt{f}8

Black continues his policy of waiting. A more enterprising approach was 23.\texttt{b}8?!, intending to double rooks on the c-file and perhaps carry out a thematic exchange sacrifice on c3.

24.\texttt{c}1?

The knight does little on b3, so Karpov relocates it to a better square.

24.\texttt{c}4 25.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{c}7 26.\texttt{g}1

The queen had no future on e1 or e2, so Karpov continues regrouping.
26...\(\texttt{\textit{c5}}\) 27.\(\texttt{\textit{d1e2}}\)

From this square the knight helps to support its partner on c3.

27...\(\texttt{\textit{c6}}\)

The bishop's return to c6 is a clear indication that Black is struggling to find a constructive plan.

28.b3 \(\texttt{\textit{b7}}\) 29.\(\texttt{\textit{g2}}\)

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\caption{Position after 29.\(\texttt{\textit{g2}}\).
\end{figure}

29...\(\texttt{e7}\)

Had Black sensed what was to follow, he might have tried:

29...\(\texttt{e8?!}\)

Preparing to evacuate the king to the centre.

30.g4 \(\texttt{\textit{f6}}\) 31.\(\texttt{\textit{d3}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{b7}}\) 32.\(\texttt{\textit{g1}}\)

The immediate breakthrough fails to deliver:

32.g5 \(\texttt{h5xg5}\) 33.hxg5 \(\texttt{\textit{f2xg5}}\) 34.\(\texttt{\textit{g5xg5}}\) 35.hxg5 \(\texttt{\textit{d7}}\) Black is not worse.

32.\(\texttt{e8}\) 33.\(\texttt{d5?!}\)

After 33.g5 \(\texttt{h5xg5}\) 34.hxg5 \(\texttt{d7}\) Black is very much in the game.

It is possible that Karpov would have continued to play patiently with a move like 33.\(\texttt{\textit{h2}}\), but after 33...\(\texttt{d7}\) we see that Black can also improve his king. The position is unclear.

33...\(\texttt{d5x5}\) 34.\(\texttt{exd5}\) b5 35.axb5 axb5 36.\(\texttt{g3}\)

White is a bit better, but a lot of work will be required if he is to achieve anything serious.
37...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Be6}}}!  
This turns out to be a tricky move for Black.

37...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Be6}}}?!  
Bukic fails to sense the danger associated with the queen on h5.

Expelling the queen with 37...\textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{g6}}}?! was not an ideal solution: 38.\textbf{Wf3} \textcolor{red}{\text{	extit{h5}}} (38...\textbf{Wc7} 39.\textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{fxg6}}+} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textit{fxg6}}} 40.\textbf{h5} opens up Black's kingside) 39.\textbf{g4} \textcolor{red}{\text{	extit{hxg4}}} 40.\textbf{Wxg4} Black is under strong pressure on the kingside.

The best defence was: 37...\textbf{Wc7}! Black prepares to drive the queen away without resorting to weakening pawn moves. 38.\textbf{\textit{d5}}?! White would do better to retreat the queen, but this would mean finding a new angle of attack. 38...\textbf{\textit{xd5}} 39.\textbf{\textit{exd5}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Wf6}}} 40.\textbf{\textbf{Wf3}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{e4}}} 41.\textbf{\textbf{Wf4}} \textbf{\textit{Qbxd5}} 42.\textbf{\textbf{Bxd5}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Qxd5}}} 43.\textbf{\textbf{Wxe4}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Wf6}}} White has some play for the exchange, but I doubt that Karpov would have chosen this route.

38.\textbf{\textit{Qd5}}!  
Though I cannot be sure, I suspect that Karpov intentionally sharpened the position before the time control. If that is the case, the text is not only a strong move in its own right, but also a powerful psychological weapon.

38...\textbf{\textit{Qxd5}}??  
Bukic cannot resist the temptation to exchange the powerful knight, but the clearing of the e4-square proves fatal for him.

Black could have kept himself in the game with 38...a5. The best response is 39.\textbf{c4}!, consolidating White's space advantage on the queenside. (After the hasty 39.\textbf{g4}? \textcolor{red}{\text{\textit{g6}}} 40.\textbf{Wxh6}+ \textbf{\textit{Wxh6}} 41.\textbf{\textit{Wxh6}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Qxh6}}} 42.\textbf{\textit{Qxf6}} \textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{Qxf6}}} 43.\textbf{\textbf{g5}}+ \textbf{Qg7} 44.\textbf{gxg6}+ \textbf{Qxg6} Black has a playable position.) 39...\textbf{\textbf{Wc7}}! (39...\textbf{\textbf{Qxd5}} 40.\textbf{\textbf{exd5}} \textbf{\textit{Qc7}} 41.\textbf{\textbf{Wc4}} resembles the game.) 40.\textbf{\textbf{Qc3}} White's positional advantage extends across the board. He continues to dominate, but Black can survive for a while longer.

39.\textbf{\textbf{exd5}} \textbf{\textit{Qc8}}

40.\textbf{\textbf{Wxe4}}!

Karpov not only brings a piece into the attack, but also prevents any counterplay. The premature 40.\textbf{g4}? allows 40...\textbf{\textbf{e4}}! 41.\textbf{\textbf{g5}} \textbf{\textit{Wc8}} when Black is still in the game.

40...\textbf{\textbf{Wc8}}

40...\textbf{\textbf{Wh8}} 41.\textbf{\textbf{g4}} \textbf{\textbf{Wc7}} 42.\textbf{\textbf{g5}} wins.

41.\textbf{\textbf{Qxc5}}! \textbf{\textbf{Qxc5}} 42.\textbf{\textbf{g4}}

1-0

My guess is that the game was adjourned here, and Black resigned after failing to find a satisfactory defence against White's pawn onslaught. It is remarkable how, after failing to obtain any advantage from the opening, Karpov was able to shut down his opponent's counterplay and gradually improve his position to the point where he seemed to be winning out of nowhere. He developed his attack in imaginative way, with the queen manoeuvre to h5 and subsequent knight jump to d5 in order to clear the e4-square. Overall it was a highly instructive example of outplaying a
somewhat weaker but still tough opponent from a balanced position.

Karpov also won his last round game against Portisch, leading to a final tally of six wins, eight draws and one loss. This was enough to tie for first prize with Spassky. After this warm-up tournament, it was time for the champion of the world to defend his crown.

**World Championship match versus Korchnoi**

The 1978 world championship match took place in Baguio City in the Philippines. The organizer was Florencio Campomanes, the Philippine delegate to FIDE who would later go on to become FIDE President. The rules of the match stipulated that the winner would be the first player to score six wins, draws not counting.

With a rating advantage of 2725 versus 2665, Karpov was the rightful favourite, but at the same time there was every reason to expect the match to be competitive. In March 1978, just three months before the start of the match, Semyon Furman died, which must have come as a hammer blow to Karpov. No-one knew Karpov as well as his long-time trainer, and there is no telling how much he was affected by the loss, not only on a personal level, but also in terms of Furman’s chess experience and expertise.

Karpov’s official seconds for the match were grandmasters Yuri Balashov and Igor Zaitsev. Mikhail Tal was in Baguio, and it was obvious that he was also there to help Karpov.

Korchnoi’s seconds were the English grandmasters Raymond Keene and Michael Stean, and the strong theoretician Jacob Murey, an émigré from the USSR to Israel. The same trio had also helped Korchnoi during his candidate match wins over Polugaevsky and Spassky. The team was later strengthened by the Argentine grandmaster Oscar Panno.

**A Formidable Adversary**

Viktor Korchnoi is one of the greatest players in chess history never to win the world championship. There was never a time when Korchnoi could have been regarded as the world’s strongest player. On the other hand, it is hard to name another grandmaster who consistently finished at or near the top of so many tournaments and remained among the leading players in the world for such a long period.

Overall Korchnoi played 290 games against world champions; the huge number already speaks for itself. He scored fifty one wins, 160 draws and seventy nine losses. His lifetime score against Karpov stands at fourteen wins, sixty two draws and twenty eight losses.

Interestingly, if we remove Korchnoi’s encounters with Karpov and Kasparov, his percentage score against the ‘normal’ world champions reaches almost 50%. (He had a very poor record against Kasparov, with just one win, fourteen draws and fourteen losses.) This figure also includes several defeats against the modern day champions Anand, Kramnik and Topalov, outstanding players who Korchnoi met when he was past his best. Korchnoi made an equal score with Fischer (+2 =4 –2), and was more than competitive against his other rivals including Spassky (+17 =29 –11) and especially Tal, who he dominated convincingly (+12 =23 –4).

At the start of the match, Karpov and Korchnoi had met in thirty five games, with Karpov enjoying a narrow lead of seven wins to six, with twenty two draws. Since the 1974 match they had not met over the board. Korchnoi had defected from the Soviet Union, and the Soviet authorities reacted by boycotting any tournaments to which Korchnoi was invited.

Since his defeat to Karpov in 1974, Korchnoi had notched up a series of tournament successes.
He was extremely effective at defeating average grandmasters. Since his defection he obviously did not play in any Soviet tournaments, so his level of competition may have been slightly lower than Karpov's. On the other hand, in his 1977 candidate matches he had to overcome such distinguished Soviet grandmasters as Petrosian, Polugaevsky and Spassky in order to earn the right to challenge for the title.

Karpov had played magnificently since becoming World Champion. He won nine tournaments outright and finished equal first in one other. Only twice did he fail to finish in first place. Once he was runner up, and in one event he was equal fourth. In addition he performed extremely well at team events.

Although Korchnoi's tournament record between 1974 and 1977 was impressive, it was not at the level of Karpov's. On the other hand, the title of World Champion would be decided by a match, and Korchnoi had more match experience then almost anyone. He had lost in the final candidate match in two previous world championship cycles, before finally winning one in 1977. He had also played a few dozen other matches over the previous two decades, and won most of them.

The Match

The first seven games were drawn. Several were solid affairs, but there was plenty of drama as well. For instance, in the fifth game Korchnoi missed a simple win at one point after the adjournment. He continued pressing, but Karpov managed to get into a theoretically drawn endgame that had been analysed by Averbakh back in the fifties. At 124 moves, the game was the longest ever played in a world championship final.

In the eighth game the deadlock was finally broken, in Karpov's favour. Korchnoi played a rare and risky ...g6 in the Open Spanish, against which Karpov introduced a novelty. Korchnoi snatched a pawn but failed to defend correctly and his position soon collapsed.

A couple of draws ensued, before Korchnoi equalized the match in Game 11. After the opening moves 1.g3 c5 2.d4 g6 3.e4 he transposed into a Sicilian with 3.e4?. He was already clearly better when Karpov blundered and lost an exchange.

Korchnoi was unable to build on this success, and the match soon swung heavily in favour of the champion. In the thirteenth game Korchnoi reached an endgame with two pawns for the exchange and decent winning chances, but then blundered in an extraordinary way, almost allowing his queen to be trapped in an open position. He saved the queen but only at the cost of a fatal weakening of his position, which Karpov quickly exploited. In Game 14 Korchnoi found himself in a passive endgame, and eventually succumbed to the pressure. Because the previous game had been adjourned, the score went from being tied at 1–1 at the start of the day to 3–1 in Karpov's favour by the end of it.

In Game 17 Karpov played rather riskily in a Nimzo-Indian. Korchnoi was better, but under time pressure, with only a few pieces on the board, he allowed a beautiful checkmate in three. Of course Karpov did not miss it. He was much more adept at attacking the enemy king than one might think. After this success, only two more wins were needed.

After a couple more draws, the momentum began to shift back towards the challenger. In Game 20 Korchnoi made some mistakes and found himself in serious trouble, but Karpov failed to capitalize. He did not seal the winning move before the adjournment, and later he made another mistake which allowed Korchnoi to escape with a miraculous draw.
In the very next game Korchnoi played superbly to convert his advantage in the endgame.

A series of draws followed, but then in Game 27 Korchnoi made some mistakes in an equal position and lost a pawn followed by the game. Thus the score rose to 5–2, with Karpov just one more win away from a convincing match victory.

What happened next is remarkable. Karpov – the reigning World Champion, who had built a commanding lead in the match – suffered a near collapse, scoring just half a point out of his next four games. In Game 28 Korchnoi equalized with the Open Spanish then gradually took over the initiative and won a nice endgame. In Game 29 Korchnoi obtained no real advantage with the white pieces, but Karpov made some mistakes after the adjournment and eventually lost. Karpov tried to bounce back in the next game but was unable to make anything of his slight pressure, and had to settle for a draw in a rook ending.

In Game 31 Korchnoi executed a minority attack against the Orthodox Queen’s Gambit Declined. He reached a better endgame, and Karpov eventually succumbed to the pressure after missing some chances to hold. Karpov is one of the greatest endgame players of all time, so it is amazing that he lost three endings in such a short period. Credit must also go to Korchnoi, who played remarkably well.

From the start of Game 28 to the end of Game 31, Korchnoi amazingly clawed his way back from a 5–2 deficit to tying the match at 5–5. Now both players were just a single victory away from ultimate success, but the momentum was firmly on the side of the challenger. Here is the thirty second and decisive game of the match.

**Game 50**

**Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi**

World Championship, Baguio City (32) 1978

1.e4 d6

At the start of this game Korchnoi faced a tough dilemma. One approach would have been to play for a safe draw, intending to press for a win in his next game with the white pieces. On the other hand this might have given the wounded Karpov a chance to recover his energy and composure.

Instead Korchnoi decided to gamble with a provocative choice of opening. He obviously wanted to obtain a complicated position in order to capitalize on the momentum he had obtained with his recent winning streak. Who knows what might have happened had he opted for the former approach?

2.d4 ♞f6 3.♘c3 g6 4.♗f3

Karpov goes for the line that he had played most often.

4...♗g7 5.♗e2 0–0 6.0–0

6...c5?!

With hindsight this was a risky decision,
Despite the fact that Karpov did not have much experience facing it. Previously Korchnoi had used 6...c6 to draw easily with Karpov at the 1973 Leningrad Interzonal tournament.

Another option is 6...g4, although Karpov had faced this move three times in 1977 and won on each occasion.

7.d5!
7.dxc5 dxc5 often results in an exchange of queens, with White enjoying slightly better prospects. Normally one would expect such a scenario to appeal to Karpov, but we should not forget that he has just lost three endings out of the previous four games. Under the circumstances, the text move was definitely the right choice.

7...a6 b4 8.dxe5 9.a4 b6
Korchnoi plays the most common move. Browne had drawn with Karpov in Madrid 1973 with 9...g4, although White maintained a slight edge for most of that game. 9...a6 is another standard move.

10.Ke1

This was probably the best win of Gyula Kluger's career. The Hungarian IM once told me he had a hunch that Tal, who was present in Baguio City, had showed Karpov this game.

10...b7

11.Kc4!
Just like Kluger, Karpov defends the d5-pawn in order to carry out the advance of the e-pawn. For the moment he saves time by omitting h2-h3.

11...h5?! Korchnoi thinks it is worth a tempo to divert the bishop from f4, but it hard to believe that this can be correct.

After the natural 11...w7 12.Ed3, Karpov evaluates the position as very tense, with somewhat better chances for White. A logical continuation would be: 12...a6 (After 12...Ed8 Hort recommends 13.Db5, but 13.a5 also looks strong.) Had this position been reached, it would have been interesting to see whether Karpov would have tried to utilize the presence...
of the bishop on f4 with the direct 13.e5, or instead build his position more patiently with 13.h3 £ad8. In the latter case his most promising idea looks to be 14.£ab1 with the idea of gaining space on the queenside.

12.£g5 £f6

This loss of a tempo does not make a good impression. It was worth considering: 12...h6 13.£e3 (or 13.£h4 g5 14.£d2 £f4 15.£g3 with a complicated game) 13...e6 From this point one game continued 14.£d2 exd5 15.exd5 g5 16.h3 and the draw was agreed in Komarov – Lemmers, Sremic Krsko 1998. It seems to me that White can improve with 14.dxe6, which should suffice for an edge.

13.£d3!

It is quite possible that Karpov knew the Kluger – Tal game, although of course he is more than capable of finding good positional moves on his own.

13...a6 14.£ad1 £b8 15.h3?!

This is unnecessary. Karpov later explained that he felt the pressure of the occasion and did not want to take a risk. He preferred a slight advantage in a stable position, but objectively he had every right to play more ambitiously.

15.e5! was correct: 15...dxe5 16.£xe5 b5 (16...£d6 17.£f3! £be8 18.£f4 £d8 19.£c6 £d7 20.£e5£x e5 17.axb5 axb5 18.£xb5 £cxd5 19.£xd5 £xd5 20.£xd5 £xd5 21.c4 Kasparov says that White’s advantage is huge.

15...£d7 16.£e3

By creating an escape route for his bishop to f1, Karpov stops any counterplay based on ...b5 followed by ...£b6.

Another idea was 16.£f4?? intending to push the e-pawn.

16...£a8

17.£h6!

By exchanging bishops Karpov not only weakens his opponent’s kingside, but also robs the black position of much of its dynamic potential and takes the sting out of a future ...b5.

17...b5 18.£xg7 £xg7 19.£f1 £f6 20.axb5 axb5 21.£e2

Karpov plays rather cautiously. It was worth considering 21.£a1??, occupying the open file.

21...£b7?!

Korchnoi concentrates on carrying out his queenside play. On balance, a more promising approach would have been 21...e6?? to obtain some space in the centre. After the further
22.dxe6 \( \mathbb{Q} x e 6 \) 23.\( \mathbb{Q} g 3 \) \( \mathbb{W} c 7 \) Black's position is playable according to Kasparov.

22.\( \mathbb{Q} g 3 \) \( \mathbb{B} a 8 \) 23.c3 \( \mathbb{B} a 4 \) 24.\( \mathbb{A} d 3 \) \( \mathbb{B} a 8 \)!!

Korchnoi continues to focus on the queenside, but this approach leaves little room for mistakes later in the game. He may have underestimated White's attacking resources.

22.\( \mathbb{D} e 6 \) \( \mathbb{B} e 6 \) 23.\( \mathbb{L} g 3 \) \( \mathbb{F} e 7 \) Black's position is playable according to Kasparov.

22.\( \mathbb{O} g 3 \) \( \mathbb{B} a 8 \) 23.c3 \( \mathbb{B} a 4 \) 24.\( \mathbb{A} d 3 \) \( \mathbb{B} a 8 \)!!

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22.\( \mathbb{D} e 6 \) \( \mathbb{B} e 6 \) 23.\( \mathbb{L} g 3 \) \( \mathbb{F} e 7 \) Black's position is playable according to Kasparov.
answer: 29.\textit{g5}! Maintaining the pressure against both the king and the c5-pawn. (29.c4 \textit{xc5} 30.\textit{xe5} \textit{a5}) 29...\textit{e6} 30.\textit{c4} \textit{f4} (30...\textit{c7} 31.\textit{d6}) 31.\textit{xc5} \textit{a2} (31...\textit{h6} 32.\textit{d6}) 32.\textit{d4} \textit{c8} White is a pawn up but the game is far from over, and Black has chances for counterplay based on ...\textit{g5}.

29.\textit{e2}!?

Despite having just made a threatening move on the kingside, Karpov shows that he has not forgotten about the queenside. With this move he retreats the undefended bishop from b5 and threatens a deadly pin from \textit{f3}. From a psychological perspective, Karpov may also have liked the idea of confronting Korchnoi with what may well have been an unexpected move.

Kasparov mentions that White could also have targeted the c5-pawn directly by means of 29.\textit{e4}! \textit{c7} 30.\textit{d3} \textit{e6} 31.\textit{xc5} and the lonely soldier falls.

29...\textit{e6} 30.\textit{c4} \textit{b4} 31.\textit{xc5}

White’s extra pawn gives him a significant advantage, but the game is still far from over.

31...\textit{b8}

31...\textit{c2} does not achieve much, and after 32.\textit{f3} \textit{b8} 33.\textit{e2} \textit{b4} (33...\textit{c8} 34.\textit{g5}) 34.\textit{g5} \textit{h8} 35.b3 White consolidates his material advantage.

32.\textit{\textit{g}f3} \textit{c8}

Kasparov recommends 32...\textit{h6}, but doubts that it would have saved Korchnoi from ultimate defeat. After 33.\textit{d2} \textit{c8} 34.\textit{e3} \textit{b7} White is a long way from victory, but his extra pawn is secure and he should be able to improve his position gradually.

33.\textit{g5} \textit{h8} 34.\textit{d2} \textit{c6}

34...\textit{xc4} is unsatisfactory: 35.\textit{xc}7! \textit{g8} 36.\textit{xa7} \textit{xa7} 37.\textit{e5} \textit{f6} 38.\textit{c3} \textit{a2} 39.\textit{d4} \textit{xd4} 40.\textit{xd4} And White is a healthy pawn up.

35.\textit{h6}

This is a strong attacking move, and a frightening one to face over the board. The primary threat is \textit{f3-g5}.

35...\textit{g8}?

With just seconds remaining on his clock, Korchnoi defends his king in the most natural way, which turns out to be a mistake as it reduces his influence on the queenside. Two alternatives deserve attention.

35...\textit{g8} 36.\textit{e3} \textit{f6} was a better idea according to Kasparov, who stops his analyses
Here. While this may be an improvement over the game continuation, White can still sail home to victory with the help of a few good moves: 37. \( \text{Q}b3 \) \( \text{Q}a5 \) 38. \( \text{B}a6 \) 39. \( \text{B}c3 \) \( \text{Bxc4} \) (39... \( \text{B}b6 \) 40. \( \text{B}a4 \) 40. \( \text{Bxa5} \) \( \text{Bxf1} \) 41. \( \text{B}c5 \) \( \text{Bxc5} \) 42. \( \text{B}xc5 \)-).

35... \( \text{Q}e5 \)!!

To my knowledge, no other commentator has suggested this move, but according to my analysis it is Black's best chance to resist. The main idea is to stop \( \text{Q}f3 \).

36. \( \text{B}de2 \)

After 36.b3 \( \text{B}b7 \) 37. \( \text{B}e3 \) \( \text{B}c6 \) Black has serious pressure against the queenside pawns.

36... \( \text{B}e5 \)

In the event of 36... \( \text{B}g8 \) 37. \( \text{B}e3 \) \( \text{B}xc4 \) 38. \( \text{B}xe5 \) \( \text{B}xe5 \) 39. \( \text{B}xg6 \) hxg6 40. \( \text{B}xe5 \) \( \text{B}b4 \) 41. \( \text{B}b5 \) \( \text{B}a4 \) 42. \( \text{B}xb4 \) \( \text{B}xb4 \) 43. \( \text{B}e2 \) White's extra pawn gives him good winning chances.

37. \( \text{B}e4 \)

37... \( \text{B}g8 \)!

37... \( \text{B}e4 \)?? is a witty idea, but White has a powerful rebuttal: 38.hxg4 (after 38. \( \text{B}xg6 \) \( \text{B}xg6 \) 39. \( \text{B}xg4 \) \( \text{B}h5 \) 40. \( \text{B}xh5 \) \( \text{B}g4 \) 41. \( \text{B}g3 \) \( \text{B}xh6 \) 42. \( \text{B}xe6 \) \( \text{B}g4 \) Black has chances to hold) 38... \( \text{B}h5 \) (38... \( \text{B}xg4 \) 39. \( \text{B}xg6 \) \( \text{B}xg6 \) 40. \( \text{B}h4 \)--) 39. \( \text{B}e3 ! \) (39. \( \text{B}hxg5 \) \( \text{B}g4 \) 40. \( \text{B}xg6 \) \( \text{B}xg6 \) 41. \( \text{B}g3 \) \( \text{B}xh6 \) 42. \( \text{B}xe6 \) is possible, but the text move is better.)

39... \( \text{B}a8 \) 40. \( \text{B}b5 \) \( \text{B}a5 \) 41. \( \text{B}b6 \) \( \text{B}b7 \)

1–0

The game was adjourned here but Korchnoi saw no point in continuing this hopeless position. Thus Karpov retained his crown for another three years and the Soviet Union narrowly avoided seeing their shining star lose to a defector. Karpov showed great fortitude in recovering from his losing streak near the
end of the match. Nevertheless the overall quality of his play was well below par. This is partially attributable to the loss of Furman, but mainly due to the overwhelming tension surrounding the match. Karpov was the golden boy of Soviet chess, and one can only imagine the pressure on his shoulders to beat – and preferably humiliate – the despised defector. Karpov and Korchnoi had to concern themselves not only with the moves occurring on the board, but also with the numerous antics that took place off the board. Both of the players and their support teams became embroiled in a game of psychological warfare, replete with covert agents, parapsychologists, propaganda and the infamous “yogurt pot” protest.

Nevertheless, in defending his title Karpov solidified his status as the strongest player in the world; or strongest active player, depending on how one estimates Karpov’s strength relative to Fischer at the time. Another thing that became clear was that Karpov did not radiate the same level of charisma as the American. Had he done so, there is a chance that Fischer may even have been tempted out of retirement.

1978 Summary

Bugojno (1st-2nd place): 10/15 (+6 =8 –1)
World Championship Match versus Korchnoi, Baguio City: Won 16½–15½ (+6 =21 –5)

Total 56.4% (+12 =29 –6)
Karpov's first tournament after retaining his title was in Munich. After beating a local player named Dankert in round one, he met his countryman Balashov, who for a long time had been one of his trainers. The Russian grandmaster qualified for many Interzonal tournaments, but never made it through to the candidate matches. I found sixty one games in which Balashov faced the world champions. He performed solidly against them with seven wins, forty four draws and ten losses. Against Karpov the database shows a record of one win, eight draws and four defeats, although the two players were of a similar age so they probably met in several junior events which never made it to the database.

Game 5

Anatoly Karpov – Yuri Balashov

Munich 1979

1.e4 e5 2.df3 d6 3.df5 a6 4.a4 a5 5.0–0 e7 6.d2 b5 7.b3 0–0 8.c3 d6 9.d3 h6

Balashov chooses the Smyslov variation. I think a more appropriate name would be the Smyslov-Gligoric variation as the Yugoslav grandmaster played it much more often. Black's main idea is to bolster the e5-pawn and then decide whether to put his light-squared bishop on b7 or d7. It is not easy to decide on a set-up to play against Karpov in the main line of the Ruy Lopez, as he scored heavily against all of them and never lost a single game with White!

10.d4 e8 11.d2 d8
12.\textit{c}2!
This the most testing move in the position. It sounds strange to say, but it puts Black in a mild form of zugzwang! The point is that Black has played most of his useful regrouping moves and must decide at some point where to develop his light-squared bishop. White will then decide accordingly whether to play on the kingside or the queenside.

12.a4 is not so effective in view of 12...d7! when Black has no problems on the queenside.

On the other hand, if White looks towards the kingside with 12.f1 then 12...b7! is a good answer, as demonstrated by the following encounter between the same players, which took place eight years before the present game: 13.g3 a5 14.c2 c4 15.b3 b6 16.h2 d5 17.dxe5 dxe4 18.wd3 d7 19.f4 h4 20.h1 c5 Black equalized comfortably and a draw was agreed a few moves later, Karpov – Balashov, Moscow 1971.

12...b7
The other main line is 12...d7, when 13.f1 is known to lead to a somewhat better position for White.

The present position can also occur from the Zaitsev variation, although when Karpov played the black side of that line he preferred to play ...g6 or ...b8 instead of the less useful ...h6.

13.d5
Now that Black has committed his bishop to b7, White blocks the long diagonal. 13.f1?! is premature in view of 13...exd4! 14.cxd4 b4 when Black is fine.

The other main line is 13.a4, which also gives White chances to fight for an advantage. Karpov would go on to defend the black side of this position many times after taking up the Zaitsev system.

13...b8 14.b3
Karpov gets ready to bolster the d5-pawn.

14...c6
In previous games Black played for ...c5.

15.c4 b7 16.f1
Having made some pawn moves, it is time for White to complete his development.

16.wc7 17.e3 oc8 18.e1 d8 19.g3 cxd5 20.exd5 g6
The disruptive 20...wa5?? was worth considering, and after 21.a4 bxa4 22.bxa4 g6 Black's position is playable.

21.wd2 h7

22.a4!
Karpov softens the black queenside.

22...c5
Also after 22...bxa4 23.bxa4 c5 24.h1 (24.a5?!?) 24...ab8 25.lb4 White has some pressure on the queenside.

23.axb5 axb5 24.b4 d4 25.d3!
Karpov wastes no time in directing his pieces against the weak b5-pawn.
Karpov plays in his usual prophylactic style. White's main plan involves transferring a knight to b3, a5 and perhaps ultimately to c6. The knight on e2 requires fewer tempos to make this journey, but Karpov prefers to leave this knight where it is in order to guard against an invasion on c3. Therefore he makes room for the f3-knight to make the journey instead.

28...\textit{d}7 29.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}7

It was reasonable to improve the rook first with 29...\textit{c}8.

30.\textit{b}3 \textit{d}8 31.\textit{d}2!

In his last few moves Balashov was focusing on the queenside, but now Karpov switches to the kingside.

31...\textit{g}8

If 31...h5 32.f4 is strong.

32.f4!

Black now faces a dilemma: either he allows White the pleasant choice between fxe5 and f5, or he exchanges on f4 and gives his opponent's pieces the use of the d4-square.

32...\textit{xf}4 33.\textit{xf}4 \textit{b}6†

34.\textit{h}1!

Karpov wants to keep the dark-squared bishops on the board in order to keep Black's position more congested. If 34.\textit{e}3 then 34...\textit{g}5† would lead to exchanges favouring the defender.

34...\textit{f}6 35.\textit{e}3 \textit{d}8 36.\textit{ed}4 \textit{e}8 37.\textit{ec}1 \textit{g}7 38.\textit{f}4!

Just as in a Benoni position, the d6-pawn is vulnerable. In some cases White can consider a central breakthrough with \textit{e}1 and e5 as well.

38...\textit{f}6 39.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}7?!

The Russian grandmaster defends the weak pawn by the queen as he wants to activate his rook, but the queen on e7 will soon be hit by a knight on c6.

39...\textit{a}6 was the lesser evil. The rook move is a bit passive, but it is more reliable than the game continuation. 40.\textit{h}2! (The immediate 40.e5 \textit{x}d5 41.\textit{exe}6 \textit{b}8 is not so clear, so White starts by moving his bishop out of harm's way.) 40...\textit{h}5 41.\textit{e}2 White keeps the upper hand as Black cannot relieve the pressure in a fully satisfactory way. After 41...\textit{e}5 42.\textit{xe}5 \textit{dxe}5 (42...\textit{x}e5 43.\textit{xb}5) 43.\textit{e}2 \textit{a}8 44.\textit{c}5 White remains on top.
40. \textbf{Nh2}!

This is another typical prophylactic move from Karpov. Black no longer can win a tempo with a knight hop to h5.

40...\textbf{Ec8} 41.\textbf{Da5}!

Transferring the knight to c6 drives the queen away and blocks the defence of the b5-pawn as well. At the same time Karpov gives no counterchances at all.

41.\textbf{Exb5} also works for White, but only narrowly. 41...\textbf{Exb5} 42.\textbf{Dxb5} \textbf{Dxe4} 43.\textbf{Dxd6}! \textbf{Dxd6}! 44.\textbf{Dxe4} After the brief tactical fireworks White is a pawn up, but the task of converting his advantage will be harder than in the game.

41.\textbf{Dh5}

41...\textbf{Dg4} is also insufficient: 42.\textbf{Dac6} \textbf{Dxc6} 43.\textbf{Dxc6} \textbf{Dh4} (43...\textbf{Dxc6} 44.\textbf{Dxc6} \textbf{Dc3} [44...\textbf{Dxh2} 45.\textbf{e5} 45.\textbf{De2} wins] 44.\textbf{Dfl}! \textbf{Dxh2} 45.\textbf{Dxh2} \textbf{Dc7} 46.g3! White forces the queen exchange and the b5-pawn falls. 46...\textbf{Dh5} 47.\textbf{Dc2} \textbf{Dg5} 48.\textbf{Dxg5} \textbf{hxg5} 49.\textbf{Dxb5} White should win the endgame.

42.\textbf{Dac6} \textbf{Dxc6} 43.\textbf{Dxc6} \textbf{Dh4} 44.\textbf{Dfl}!

Karpov suddenly threatens to take three different pawns. Black cannot avoid losing material in one way or another.

44...\textbf{Dc3} 45.\textbf{e5} \textbf{Dxd5}

Balashov sacrifices the exchange, hoping to change the course of the game. After 45...\textbf{Dxe5} 46.\textbf{Dxc3} \textbf{Dxe4} 47.\textbf{Dxf7} \textbf{exd3} 48.\textbf{Dxd3} Black is a pawn down with a hopeless position.

46.\textbf{Dxb5} \textbf{Dc7} 47.\textbf{Dxd6} \textbf{Dxb5} 48.\textbf{Dd7} \textbf{Dc8} 49.\textbf{Dd8=xDxd8} 50.\textbf{Dxd8} \textbf{Dc3}
Once again we see Karpov's sharpness in spotting a chance to hurt the opponent's king in the endgame. Giving back the exchange is the simplest practical solution.

56...\(\text{Qf2}\)\text{xf2} 57.\(\text{Qxf2}\)\text{d6 f4} 59.\(\text{Qxf4}\)\text{g5}

59...\(\text{Qf5}\) 60.\(\text{Qc7}\)\text{g8} 61.\(\text{Qh2}\) wins.

After this second victory in Munich Karpov made three draws. Then sadly he had to withdraw after hearing the news that his father had passed away. In a way his father was lucky, as most fathers of world champions died before their sons reached the pinnacle of the chess world. It must have been a special joy to witness Anatoly's many great successes.

Karpov's next event was the Tournament of Stars in Montreal. The name of the event was certainly justified by the distinguished list of participants. Karpov started with a quick draw with the black pieces against Hübner, before facing Timman in round two. Since their 1967 junior games these two great players did not cross swords for nine years. Between 1976 and 1979 they played seven games, with one win apiece and five draws.

Game 52

Anatoly Karpov – Jan Timman

Montreal 1979

1.e4

Interestingly Karpov only made a fifty percent score in twelve games with 1.e4 against Timman. With other first moves he was much more convincing.

1...d6 2.d4 \(\text{Qf6}\) 3.\(\text{c3}\) g6 4.g3

Karpov deviates from their previous game in this opening, in which he put his bishop on e2. Despite his success in the present game, Karpov never used the fianchetto line again.

4...\(\text{Qg7}\) 5.\(\text{Qg2}\) 0–0 6.\(\text{Qge2}\)

Previously Spassky had developed this knight on f3 against Timman.

6...\(\text{e5}\)

The next time Timman faced this variation, he changed his approach and opted for 7...\(\text{Qbd7}\) followed by ...c5.

7.0–0 \(\text{Qa6}\)??

Usually this move is played in conjunction with ...c5 rather than ...e5. Timman had reached the same position a few years earlier, against Van der Vliet at the 1977 Dutch Championship. On that occasion he preferred 7...\(\text{Qbd7}\). Later in the game White advanced his pawn to a4 in order to prevent ...b5. This may have influenced Timman's choice in the present game, as a subsequent a2-a4 will allow the black knight to take up residence on b4.

Karpov anticipates any attacks on the e4-pawn well in advance.
8...c6 9.h3
This typical prophylactic move prevents Black from using the g4-square.

9...Be8 10.g5?
Karpov provokes the following pawn move in order to gain a tempo with Wd2 later.

10...h6
After 10...exd4 11.Qxd4 h6 12.Qf4 g5 13.Qc1 White is somewhat better according to Karpov.

10...w6!? leads to interesting play: 11.Bb1 exd4 (11...Be6??) 12.Qxd4 Qg4?! Black should take action before the weakness of the d6-pawn is felt. (12...Qc5 13.Qb3 is better for White; 12...d5 is more challenging, but after 13.exd5? Qxe1+ 14.Bxe1 Qxd4 15.dxe6 White has nice play for the piece.) 13.hxg4 Qxd4 Black can live with the weak d6-pawn as his pieces are active enough.

11.Qe3 Qc7
Karpov recommends the flexible 11...Qh7, pointing out that this move will have to be made at some point. 12.Qd2 exd4 13.Qxd4 Qc5 14.f3 d5 (The more patient 14...Qc7 15.Qad1 a5 deserves attention.) 15.Bxc6 Qcxe4 (no better is 15...Bxc6 16.Qxe5 dxe4 17.Qxd8 Bxd8 18.fxe4) 16.fxe4 (16.Qxd8? Qxd2 17.Qxf7 Bxe3!!) 16...Bxc6 According to Karpov Black has a good game. However Kasparov points out that White can simply capture the d5-pawn with 17.exd5 cxd5 18.Qxd5, when Black does not have enough compensation.

11...exd4?! is interesting, and could be an improvement for Black compared with the game. 12.Qxd4 (White has to take this way, as 12.Qxd4? Qc5 13.Qf4 Qh5 is awkward for him.) 12...Qc7 (12...Qc5 is well met by 13.e5!) 13.Qf4 Qe6 14.Qe3 White has some pressure against the d6-pawn, but according to Kasparov Black's position remains playable.

12.Qd2 Qh7 13.Qad1 Qd7
It seems more natural to station this bishop on b7. 13...b5? deserved consideration, and after 14.a3 (14.dxe5 dxe5 15.Qd6 Qe6 is okay for Black) 14...Qb7 Black is only slightly worse.

14.g4!
Having brought the last piece into the game, White must decide on a plan. Karpov subsequently explained that he initially looked for opportunities in the centre, but realized that this strategy would not yield anything at this stage and so he found another way to strengthen his position.

14...Qad8 15.Qg3
Now the e4-pawn is securely defended.

15...Qc8 16.f4 b5 17.a3
It is useful to safeguard the position of the knight on c3.

17...b4?!
Timman was probably worried about White's build-up on the kingside, and was anxious to develop counterplay on the opposite
flank. Unfortunately for the Dutchman, he only succeeds in creating weaknesses for himself. Here are a few of the other candidate moves:

17...exd4 Exchanging this pawn is a concession, and Black fails to equalize after 18.exd4 c5 19.\textit{\textit{f}f2}. Black has obtained the c5-square, but his knight is not particularly stable there.

17...\textit{\textit{e}e7} clears the c7-square for the knight, but after 18.\textit{\textit{f}f2} \textit{b7} 19.dxe5 dxe5 20.\textit{\textit{f}f5} White is better.

17...\textit{d7}? was worth considering, with the idea of transferring the knight to b6.

18.axb4 \textit{xb4}

19.\textit{\textit{c}c2}!

Most commentators have called this a prophylactic move, designed to prevent the plan of ...a5 and ...\textit{\textit{a}a6}. While this may have been a part of Karpov's motivation, I suspect that his main idea was to exert pressure against Black's weakened queenside.

19...exd4?

After this exchange the e2-knight becomes active, while Black fails to obtain any significant pressure along the e-file.

19...c5? would have been a huge positional concession, and after 20.fx e5 dxe5 (20...\textit{\textit{c}xd4} allows 21.exf6) 21.\textit{d5} Karpov evaluates Black's position as hopeless.

The best chance was 19...a5! 20.c3 \textit{\textit{a}a6} 21.\textit{\textit{a}a1} when White will develop pressure against the a5-pawn, but his advantage is smaller than in the game. If White instead plays for a kingside attack with 21.\textit{f5}, Black can consider 21...\textit{\textit{f}f4}! 22.\textit{\textit{c}x\textit{d}4} \textit{\textit{b}b4} when he is not without chances.

20.\textit{\textit{d}d4} a5 21.\textit{\textit{c}c3} \textit{\textit{a}a6}

22.\textit{\textit{c}c2}?

Karpov plays a typical prophylactic move, anticipating ...\textit{\textit{c}c5} which could now be met by the simple b4. The idea is nice, but it was not the strongest continuation available.

Interestingly no commentator seems to have mentioned the sweet possibility of 22.\textit{\textit{c}c6}! \textit{\textit{f}f6} (22...\textit{\textit{c}x\textit{g}4} 23.\textit{\textit{d}d8}) 23.e5 \textit{\textit{f}d5} 24.exf6 \textit{\textit{f}x\textit{f}6} 25.\textit{\textit{c}c2} when White has a considerable positional advantage.

22...\textit{d7}?

Timman plans to put the bishop to e8, but blocking the d-file is rather clumsy.

The best chance was 22...\textit{\textit{b}b7}. This keeps
the a6-knight defended, and also guards c6-pawn, which may enable Black to play ...\( \textbf{Q} \text{c}5 \) under better circumstances than in the game. 23.\( \textbf{O} \text{f}3! \) (after 23.\( \textbf{B} \text{a}1 \textbf{Q} \text{c}5 \) 24.\( \textbf{b} \text{b}4 \textbf{a}xb4 \) 25.\( \textbf{c} \text{xb4} \textbf{Q} \text{d}5 \) Black is kicking) 23...\( \textbf{Q} \text{c}5! \) 24.\( \textbf{e} \text{e}5 \textbf{Q} \text{d}5 \) 25.\( \textbf{A} \text{xc}5 \textbf{d}xc5 \) 26.\( \textbf{W} \text{e}4 \textbf{A} \text{d}7 \) White is better, but increasing his advantage will not be easy.

23.\( \textbf{O} \text{f}3! \)
This is a lovely dual purpose move. It fulfils the prophylactic function of preventing ...\( \textbf{Q} \text{c}5 \), while also opening the d-file in order to exert pressure against d6.

23...\( \textbf{A} \text{e}7 \)
After 23...\( \textbf{Q} \text{c}5 \) many strong commentators have given their thoughts on how White should improve the position. After the logical 24.\( \textbf{e} \text{e}5 \textbf{Q} \text{d}5 \) 25.\( \textbf{A} \text{xc}5 \) (25.\( \textbf{A} \text{f}2?!) 25...\( \textbf{d}xc5 \) White has a few tempting ideas.

26.\( \textbf{W} \text{e}4? \) is Kasparov's suggestion, which certainly looks good enough to maintain an edge.

I also like Adianto's 26.\( \textbf{A} \text{h}5? \), as after the natural 26...\( \textbf{A} \text{h}8 \) (26...\( \textbf{A} \text{e}8 \) 27.\( \textbf{A} \text{xe}7 \textbf{A} \text{xe}7 \) 28.\( \textbf{f}5\text{+} \) 27.\( \textbf{A} \text{h}4! \) White has excellent chances on the kingside.

24.\( \textbf{A} \text{f}2! \)

Played in anticipation of Black's next move. The point of the bishop retreat is that a subsequent ...\( \textbf{Q} \text{d}5 \) will no longer attack the bishop. See the note to Black's 25th move below.

If White tries to force matters too soon then he risks losing his advantage, for instance: 24.\( \textbf{W} \text{d}3 \textbf{A} \text{c}8! \) (after 24...\( \textbf{Q} \text{c}5 \) 25.\( \textbf{W} \text{xe}6 \textbf{W} \text{xe}6 \) 26.\( \textbf{A} \text{xe}6 \) 27.\( \textbf{Q} \text{xe}4 \textbf{Q} \text{xe}4 \) 28.\( \textbf{A} \text{d}d1 \) Black has a difficult ending) 25.\( \textbf{g}5 \textbf{h}xg5 \) 26.\( \textbf{A} \text{xe}5 \textbf{A} \text{g}8 \) 27.\( \textbf{e}5 \textbf{Q} \text{d}5 \) 28.\( \textbf{A} \text{xd}5 \textbf{A} \text{xd}5 \) 29.\( \textbf{f}5 \textbf{f}5 \) 30.\( \textbf{W} \text{xd}5 \textbf{A} \text{f}6 \) White has won a pawn, but his e6-pawn is in jeopardy.

24...\( \textbf{A} \text{e}8? \)
This unfortunate move leaves the d8-rook and the a6-knight unprotected.

25.\( \textbf{W} \text{d}3! \)
This is so typical of Karpov's play. After a fine strategic performance, he exploits his tactical opportunities with computer-like efficiency.

25...\( \textbf{A} \text{b}7 \)
Moving the knight loses due to the pin along the d-file: 25...\( \textbf{b}8? \) 26.\( \textbf{e}5! \textbf{Q} \text{d}5 \) 27.\( \textbf{A} \text{xd}6 \textbf{A} \text{xe}1\text{+} \) 28.\( \textbf{A} \text{xe}1 \textbf{W} \text{xe}6 \) 29.\( \textbf{c}4\text{+} \)

26.\( \textbf{A} \text{a}1! \)
26.g5 also wins a pawn after 26...hxg5
27.fxg5 Qd7 28.Wxd6 Qe6 29.Wa3, but Karpov's method is even more effective.

26...Qc7 27.Bxa5
White finally collects the pawn, while retaining a considerable space advantage and total control over the position. Black is simply lost.

27...Qd7 28.b4 Qe6

29.Qe3 c5?!
Timman tries to get some counterplay, but he only succeeds in giving White a passed pawn.

30.f5 Qd8 31.b5
White's position is overwhelming, and the game does not last much longer.

31...Qh8 32.Qf2 Qc7 33.Ba4 Bb8 34.c4 Bc7 35.Qxa7 Bxa7 36.e5 Qxe5 37.Qxe5 Ba2 38.Qxc5
1-0

In round 3 Karpov drew with Larsen, before facing Boris Spassky in round 4. Since their match in 1974 they had played three times. On each occasion Spassky had the white pieces and a quick draw ensued. But now it was Karpov's turn to move first.
Korchnoi. In the first game he played 13...\textit{d}8 and in the second he preferred 13...\textit{b}6. Both games were drawn. Interestingly, in his 1981 match with Korchnoi he reverted back to 13...\textit{d}8 and drew once again.

12.\textit{e}2 \textit{fc}8 13.0–0 \textit{d}8

14.\textit{cxd}5!

Spassky won some great games with an isolated pawn, but on those occasions he was able to attack. Here he is in no position to do so, and will have to defend a slightly worse position.

14...\textit{exd}5

This line has only occurred in one other game, in which Black preferred 14...\textit{xd}5. It would be interesting to know how Karpov was planning to respond. There are two tempting continuations:

a) One idea is to aim for active piece play: 15.\textit{c}4!? \textit{e}8 This was Taborov – Lerner, Yalta 1981. In this position White has a number of ways to maintain some initiative. One somewhat surprising option is 16.\textit{e}4? \textit{xc}3 (after 16...\textit{xf}4 17.\textit{exf}4 \textit{d}8 18.\textit{b}4 White is somewhat better) 17.\textit{bc}3 e5?! 18.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 19.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xa}3 20.\textit{d}3 g6 21.\textit{f}4 Black will have to tread carefully on the kingside.

b) It is more likely that Karpov would have gone for the isolated pawn position with 15.\textit{xd}5 \textit{exd}5 16.\textit{b}1 \textit{e}6 (Getting rid of the isolani with 16...\textit{d}4 leads to problems for Black after 17.\textit{e}4 or 17.\textit{b}4) 17.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}6 18.\textit{e}4 It is possible that Black can live with the pin, but it is hardly surprising that Spassky did not wish to venture down this path without having analysed it beforehand.

15.\textit{b}3!

Of course Karpov blockades the d5-pawn.

15...h6

15...\textit{e}6?!

This could have led to some remarkable tactics.

16.\textit{e}4?!

This is the most ambitious move, and probably the one that Spassky feared. White has some reasonable alternatives available. He can also start exchanging the minor pieces with 16.\textit{g}5 or 16.\textit{e}5, or he can make a small improving move such as 16.\textit{h}3.

16...d4!

This is the soundest reaction.

16...\textit{a}5 does not solve Black's problems:

17.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 18.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 19.\textit{b}4 \textit{xa}3 20.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xb}4 21.\textit{e}4 \textit{xd}5 22.\textit{xd}5 In material terms Black is okay, but his king
will come under fire from White's queen and minor pieces.

16...\texttt{\textbackslash L}xe4? leads to heavy complications:

- 16...\texttt{\textbackslash L}xe4 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}d4! 17.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xd4 (18.\texttt{\textbackslash W}d3 \texttt{dxe4} 19.\texttt{\textbackslash W}xd4 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xf3 20.\texttt{\textbackslash W}xd8+ \texttt{\textbackslash B}xd8 21.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe3 \texttt{\textbackslash W}g5 22.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}c3 \texttt{\textbackslash B}c4 23.\texttt{\textbackslash B}fxe1 \texttt{\textbackslash B}xd1 24.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xd1 \texttt{\textbackslash B}f6 25.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xb7 \texttt{\textbackslash B}e8! 26.b4 \texttt{\textbackslash B}b2 Black is okay.)
- 18...\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xc2 19.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xc2 White has a lot of material for the queen, but the drama is not yet over.

18...g5! 20.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}c1! This precise move keeps the e3-square available for the c2-knight.

- After 20.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e3 \texttt{\textbackslash B}f5 21.\texttt{\textbackslash B}f3 \texttt{g4} 22.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xd5 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xd5 23.\texttt{\textbackslash B}f6+ \texttt{\textbackslash B}xf6 24.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xd5 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}xc2 25.\texttt{\textbackslash W}f3 Black is not far from equalizing.

19...\texttt{\textbackslash B}f5 20.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}f3 \texttt{\textbackslash B}c8 (21...\texttt{\textbackslash B}g4? 22.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e3!!)

22.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e3 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe4 23.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe4 \texttt{\textbackslash B}xe4 24.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xc1 \texttt{\textbackslash B}xe4 25.\texttt{\textbackslash B}f1 White keeps the upper hand, and can look to occupy the seventh rank with his rooks.

17.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e3

The alternative is 17.e5 \texttt{\textbackslash B}d5 18.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xd4 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}xd4 19.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xd4 \texttt{\textbackslash W}a5 20.\texttt{\textbackslash W}e4 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}xc3 21.bxc3 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xc3 22.\texttt{\textbackslash B}fd1 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xa3 and Black gets away with it.

17...\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e5

17...\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe5 18.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe5 \texttt{\textbackslash W}a5 20.\texttt{\textbackslash W}e4 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}xc3 21.bxc3 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xc3 22.\texttt{\textbackslash B}fd1 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xa3 and Black gets away with it.

18.e5 \texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe5! 19.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xe5

19.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xd4 is met by 19...\texttt{\textbackslash B}f4.

19...\texttt{\textbackslash W}c7 20.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xd4 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xd4 21.\texttt{\textbackslash B}xd4 \texttt{\textbackslash W}xe5

White is only fractionally better.

16.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e5! \texttt{\textbackslash B}e6 17.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}xc6!

Karpov adheres to the well known principle that the side playing against the isolated pawn should endeavour to exchange the minor pieces. It was well timed, as Black cannot recapture with the b-pawn due to the reply 18.\texttt{\textbackslash B}a6, winning an exchange.

Apart from these general considerations, the removal of the B-knight also makes way for White's bishop to attack the d-pawn from that square.

17...\texttt{\textbackslash B}xc6 18.\texttt{\textbackslash B}f3 \texttt{\textbackslash W}b6 19.\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e5!

From this square the bishop not only prevents any future ...d4 ideas, but also threatens at any moment to eliminate the knight on f6, a key defender of the d5-pawn.

19...\texttt{\textbackslash Q}e4
Even though exchanges should favour White in principle, Spassky considers it more important to eliminate the knight on c3 in order to relieve the pressure against d5. A couple of other ideas deserved attention:

19...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{e}c8}}

In such positions Black can sometimes give up the d-pawn in return for play on the c-file.

20.\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{w}e2 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{c}c4}}}

20...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}d7} 21.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d4 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{b}b3} (21...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{a}}a5} 22.e4!)}} 22.e4! (The most energetic, although White can also keep an edge by means of 22.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d3 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{c}c4} 23.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{f}fd1}.)}} 22...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}xe4}} 23.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}xe4}} The position opens up in White's favour.}

21.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}xd5 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d5} 22.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d5 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{c}cd5} 23.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{d}xd5 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{d}f6}}}} 23...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{c}c2}} does not work due to 24.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{g}}g4!).}}}

24.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}xf6 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{x}}xf6} 25.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d2}}}}}

Black has no real compensation for the missing pawn, although White's technical task will not be easy.

19...\textit{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}d8!?}} was worth considering. Black is a bit passive, but his position is not easy to crack. 20.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{e}}e2} (20.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{a}}a4 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{c}}c4}}})) 20...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{a}}a5} 21.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d2} (21.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d3 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{f}}f5} 22.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d4 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{e}}e4} =})} 21...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{c}}c8} 22.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}fd1 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{e}}e4} 23.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d3 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{f6} 24.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d4 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{a}}a6}}}}}})

20.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{e}}e2 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{x}}xc3} 21.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{x}}xc3 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d8}}}}})}}}

22.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d3}}

Karpov starts focusing the full power of his heavy pieces against the d5-pawn.

22...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{c}d6} 23.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{f}}fd1 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}}d7} 24.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{b}}1d2 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{b}}b5}}}}}}}

25.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{d}d1}}}

The rooks go in front and the queen goes behind. If it was the other way round then Black would be able to defend more easily.

25...\texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{b}}6 26.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{g}3 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{f}}f8} 27.\texttt{\textcompwordmark{g}2 \texttt{\textcompwordmark{\texttt{\textbackslash \textcompwordmark{c}}c7}}}}}}

Spassky decides not to do anything, and challenges Karpov to find a way to make progress.
A somewhat unpleasant move to meet. Now Black must worry about e4 ideas as the d-pawn is pinned along the fifth rank.

28...a6

Spassky defends the queen; he probably did not feel like calculating whether 28...g5 was an adequate response.

29.h3

Karpov characteristically improves his position in a modest way.

29...c6 30.h2 b5

31.f4!

Black's light-squared bishop is a key defender, so Karpov destabilizes it.

31...f6

The cheeky attempt to play for a pin on the fifth rank with 31...h7? does not work: 32.f5! d4 33.xd4 xd4 34.xd4 xd4 35.xd4 f5 36.xf5+ xf5 37.xb6 And White wins with his extra pawn.

32.d1!!

Karpov creates a subtle threat. 32.e4 would have been premature, and after 32...dxe4 33.xb5 axb5 34.xd7 xd7 35.xd7 xd7 36.xe4 White's advantage is merely symbolic.

32...c6?

Spassky almost certainly saw White's threat and acted against it, but c6 is a dangerous square for the queen.

A quiet move such as 32...h8 would have enabled White to reveal the point behind his last move: 33.d4! With the awkward threat of b3. 33...c5 (After 33...c6 34.c3 b7 35.b3 Black is being pushed back.) 34.b3 c6 35.c3 d6 36.b4 xd4 37.xd4 And White gets closer to the d5-pawn.

A better reaction would have been 32...a5?, preventing b4 and stabilizing the bishop on c5. Play may continue 33.d4 c5 34.b3 c6 35.c3 a4 and Black's position looks steady enough.

33.g4

Unusually for Karpov, he misses a tactical opportunity after outplaying his opponent strategically. The strongest continuation was 33.f5! c7 (33...d5 34.xd5+ wins an exchange) 34.e4 d6 35.exd5 It is not easy to invade Black's position, nevertheless White's extra pawn gives him excellent winning chances.

33...g5?
This is a strange choice; Spassky may have overlooked something, or perhaps he just cracked under the pressure.

Black could have kept himself in the game with 33...a5! as White still does not have the means to win the d5-pawn: 34.f5 (After 34.g,h1 Bd6 Black moves the rook to a protected square.) 34...Af7 35.e4 Ad6†! The check covers the d-file and Black stays alive after 36.g,h1 dxe4 37.Ed4 cd7.

34.Ah1
Another good option was 34.f5 Af7 35.e4, as 35...Ad6† 36.Ah1 dxe4 37.Axf6 wins for White.

34...a5?
This allows White to win a pawn. After 34.gxf4 35.exf4 Af7 36.f5 Black is still clearly worse, but this would have been the lesser evil.

35.f5
Completing the idea that began four moves ago. By driving the bishop away from e6, Karpov weakens the defence of the rook on d7, thus enabling him to win the d-pawn at last.

36.e4! Ag7 37.exd5
It has been twenty three moves since Karpov made the decision to isolate the Black's d-pawn. Finally now he wins it, although 37.e5† was also strong.

37...Ac7 38.Ae2 b5?
Five moves earlier Spassky's defence deteriorated, and now with this blunder it collapses. 38...Ad6! would have enabled Black to resist for a while longer. Had that move been played, Karpov might have tried to invade on the c-file, although an exchange sacrifice with Ae6 may well be the most effective plan.

39.Axe7!
This wins a piece.

39...Axe7 40.d6 Ac4 41.b3
1-0

Karpov followed this victory with three draws. Interestingly, against Hort's Classical Sicilian he played a Rauzer set-up with 6.Ag5, but soon reverted to an English Attack formation, well over a decade before that system would start to become fashionable. Karpov had some advantage, but the most precise attacking methods were not fully understood at the time, and Hort was able to obtain some counterplay. The players agreed a draw in a position with mutual chances.

In rounds 8 and 9 Karpov notched up wins over Ljubojevic and Kavalek. The former was unable to hold an inferior ending, and the latter made an overambitious piece sacrifice. In round 10 Karpov drew with White against Hubner, then destroyed Timman using a prepared line against the English Opening that was intended for use in Baguio City against Korchnoi.

In the next round Karpov overpressed and lost against Larsen, but he recovered with a nice endgame win over Spassky. He drew four
of his last five games, his lone win coming after Ljubojevic became overambitious in a slightly better position.

Karpov’s final tally of seven wins, ten draws and one loss was good enough to share first place with Tal, whose form in the second half of the tournament was inspired. It seems that working together for the Korchnoi match was beneficial to both of them.

After the gruelling tournament in Montreal, Karpov took part in a much shorter event in the Dutch town of Waddinxveen. In the double round robin competition he won both of his games against Sosonko and one against Kavalek, which provided a huge cushion and virtually guaranteed that he would win the tournament. In the last round he was White against Hort. Many players would have taken a quick draw in such a situation, as he was assured of first prize regardless, but Karpov was motivated to do better. Earlier he had drawn with the black pieces against Hort, and he probably wanted to stamp his authority on the tournament by winning all three of the two game mini-matches against his opponents. He achieved his goal by means of a classic exploitation of a small advantage in the endgame, thus finishing on the superb score of 5½/6.

Karpov’s next event was the Spartakiad, a Soviet team event. In the first game he suffered a shocking defeat against Igor Ivanov, who was rated not much above 2400. It seems to me that Karpov had lost touch with the level of an ordinary player and underestimated his opponent, who played extremely well. Karpov quickly regained his composure and scored three wins and three draws from his six remaining games.

Karpov’s last tournament of the year was in Tilburg. In the first round he took on Sosonko in a main line Dragon and won a nice game, as shown in the note to White’s sixth move in Game 46 (a previous Karpov – Sosonko encounter). He drew his next three before meeting Bent Larsen.

The Danish grandmaster was regarded as one of the strongest western players throughout the 1960s and 1970s. He was one of the few players of any nationality who Karpov had not yet managed to dominate; their previous seven meetings had resulted in one win apiece and five draws. This changed as Karpov got stronger and Larsen got older, and their lifetime score ended up at seven wins to Karpov, with nine draws and just two wins to Larsen.

Larsen is a true legend of the game, so it is a pity that his most famous result was his 6–0 defeat to Fischer in their 1971 candidates semi-final match. Although he remained a great player for the next few decades, there is no telling how much this humiliating defeat may have affected him. Larsen played all the world champions from Euwe to Anand, with the sole exception of Kramnik. From his 168 games against them he scored twenty one wins, seventy six draws and seventy one losses.

Game 54

Anatoly Karpov – Bent Larsen

Tilburg 1979

1.e4 c6

Karpov won a total of twenty games against the Caro-Kann, with twelve draws and not a single defeat. It is a remarkable score, and he also played it from Black’s side with considerable success.

2.d4 d5 3.c4

Karpov employed the Panov in a few games, but they all began with the move order 1.e4 c6 2.e4.
3...dxe4 4.dxe4 c6 5.dg3
Karpov knew that after 5.dxf6 Larsen would reply with 5...gx6, so he settles for a less theoretically challenging continuation in order to avoid his opponent's pet system.

5...g6?
Out of many possible moves, Larsen decides to reduce the scope of the knight on g3.

6.d3 c5 0-0 8.0-0 wb6
Larsen was always known for playing creatively, and here he opts for a somewhat unconventional deployment of the queen, with the idea of exerting pressure against b2 and d4.

A more classical continuation would have been 8...bd7 intending ...b6, ...b7 and ...c5, with nice play for Black.

12.h3
Karpov has time to obtain the advantage of the two bishops and consolidate his centre.

12...xf3 13.xf3 ad8 14.wc2 fe8 15.afe1 df8
Intending to attack the d4-pawn from e6.

16.fc4!
Anticipating Larsen's reply.

9.b3 c4
Larsen wants to increase the pressure against d4 by eliminating the defending knight. Two rounds later he deviated: 9...a5!? 10.a4 a6 11.h3 b4 12.fe1 wc7 13.d2 b6 14.b2 b7 15.c3 b5 And Black had a reasonable position, Sax - Larsen, Tilburg 1979.

10.b2 a5 11.a4 b6?
Larsen fails to enforce the strategy dictated by his eighth and ninth moves. By blocking the d-file, he loses the chance to exert any meaningful pressure against the d-pawn.

The more consistent continuation would have been: 11...d8!? 12.h3 (after 12.dg5 xexe2 13.ze2 e6 Black has no problems) 12...xf3 13.xf3 e5 With equal chances, as White's bishop pair is not particularly effective.
16...\texttt{e6}?! 
Objectively this is just about playable, but in practice it was a risky choice. The safer continuation would have been 16...\texttt{d5} 17\texttt{Bad1} (17\texttt{e4 \texttt{d6}}) 17...\texttt{b4} 18\texttt{e4 \texttt{d6}} when Black’s pieces stand well.

17\texttt{Bxe6}!
Larsen must have underestimated this positional sacrifice. In return for his small material investment White increases his domination over the light squares and weakens the enemy kingside. Note that the enemy rooks have limited active prospects, which is often a prerequisite for a successful exchange sacrifice.

17...\texttt{fxe6} 18\texttt{\textit{exe6}+ \texttt{h8}} 19\texttt{\textit{e1}}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
8 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

19...\texttt{b4}
Larsen brings his queen back into play. The idea is sensible, but the most accurate continuation was:
19...\texttt{d5}!
By attacking the d4-pawn Black hopes to upset his opponent’s coordination.

20\texttt{e4}?! 
20\texttt{h4} \texttt{\textit{xd4}} is too slow for White. 
20\texttt{e2} is possible, but after 20...\texttt{b4} Black has a better version of the game as he gains an important tempo by attacking the rook on e1.

20\texttt{e4} \texttt{\textit{b4}} 21\texttt{\textit{h4}} (21\texttt{h4 \textit{d2}}! Compared with the game, this invasion really hurts.) 21...\texttt{f6} and Black is safe. 
The text move looks dangerous, but Black can survive by the skin of his teeth.

20...\texttt{\textit{xd4}}! 21\texttt{\textit{g5}}! \texttt{\textit{xb2}} 22\texttt{\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5}} 23\texttt{\textit{g7}}
It looks as though Black can resign, but he can save the day with the help of a truly magical defence.

23...\texttt{\textit{xf2}?!} 24\texttt{\textit{xf2}}
After 24\texttt{\textit{xf2}?} \texttt{\textit{d4}} 25\texttt{\textit{e3} \textit{g5}} White faces a difficult ending.

24...\texttt{f5}!
The game is likely to end in a draw. Needless to say, this would not have been an easy variation to find over the board.

20\texttt{h4} \texttt{\textit{d6}} 21\texttt{\textit{h3} e6}?! 
From this point on White has the advantage, as it is hard for Black to exchange the active enemy pieces on the kingside. Larsen must have either overestimated his position after the text move, or misevaluated the alternative:
21...\texttt{\textit{d7}} 22\texttt{\textit{e6}} (22\texttt{\textit{h2}?!} \texttt{\textit{g4}}) 22...\texttt{\textit{g8}}
(Also after 22...\texttt{\textit{d5}}? 23\texttt{\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5}} 24\texttt{\textit{h5}} \texttt{\textit{gxh5}} 25\texttt{\textit{e4}} White has decent compensation but Black should not be worse either.) 23\texttt{\textit{e2} \textit{d5}} 24\texttt{\textit{h5} \textit{c7}} 25\texttt{\textit{g4} \textit{gxh5}} 26\texttt{\textit{f5} \textit{f8}}
27\texttt{\textit{f6} e6} 28\texttt{\textit{xf8}+} \texttt{\textit{xf8}} 29\texttt{\textit{d3} \textit{g7}}
30\texttt{\textit{g3}} Black’s pieces are still less than ideally coordinated, but his extra exchange it still a
relevant factor. Overall the position is close to equal.

22.h5!
Karpov softens up the kingside.

22...gxh5 23.Re5 Be7 24.Wh4!
White has time to defend the d4-pawn before taking on h5.

24...f8 25.Qxh5 Qxh5 26.Bxh5 f6

27.e4 f8 28.Bxa5 Qxd4 29.Qc1 f7 30.Bh5 b6?!
It was worth giving back a pawn in order to exchange the dangerous enemy rook. This could have been achieved with 30...Bf5! 31.Qxf5 (or 31.Bh6 Cc5 32.Bxe6 Qxf2)

33.Qf1 Qd4 34.Qh6 Qd5 and Black keeps his position together) 31...exf5 32.Wxf5 Qe5 and Black is not in danger of losing the game.

31.e3
31.Qf4! was slightly more accurate, driving back the enemy queen. Play might continue: 31...Qe7 32.Qe3 Qd6 (or 32...Qg7 33.Bh6 Qd5 34.Qc4 with a promising initiative) 33.Bc5 Qd7 34.Qb6 Qg8 35.g3 White has ongoing pressure in return for a small material deficit.

31...Qd4! 32.Qg5 Qg8 33.Qf1 c5

34.Qc1?!
Karpov misses the opportunity to simplify to a favourable endgame with the witty 34.Qf4! Qe7 35.Qe5+ (35.a5?! is promising, but the text is more straightforward) 35...Qxe5 36.Qxe5+ Qg7 37.Qe4 Qf6 38.Qxc5 and Black faces an uphill struggle to survive.

Judging from Karpov's play over the next few moves, I have a hunch that he may have been trying to play on Larsen's time trouble.

34...Qa6??
It is dangerous to move towards the queenside while the king is under heavy pressure. Instead Black could have stabilized his position with 34...e5 intending ...Qg6.
35.\textit{g1} b5?
Continuing the faulty plan. 35...\textit{d6} was safer.

36.\textit{f4}?
White could have obtained a serious advantage with the help of a small finesse: 36.c3! \textit{f6} (After 36...\textit{x}c3 37.\textit{x}c5 \textit{b4} 38.\textit{e}3 Black's king is dangerously exposed, and it is doubtful that he can survive.) 37.\textit{x}c5 \textit{bxa4} 38.bxa4 With two pawns for the exchange plus a strong initiative, White has excellent winning chances.

36...\textit{bxa4} 37.\textit{e}5?
37.\textit{h}6 is tricky but it looks as though Black can survive: 37...\textit{g}7 38.\textit{e}xe6\textit{f}x\textit{f}4 (38...\textit{xe}6? 39.\textit{xe}6 \textit{e}xf4 40.c3! \textit{xf}3 [40...\textit{x}c3 41.\textit{e}8+ \textit{g}8 42.\textit{e}3] 41.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xb}3 42.\textit{e}8+ \textit{g}8 43.\textit{e}5+ \textit{g}7 44.\textit{d}x\textit{c}5 White has excellent winning chances as Black's rooks are not well placed to stop the c-pawn.) 39.\textit{e}8+ \textit{g}8 40.\textit{xe}8+ \textit{x}e8 41.\textit{xf}4 a3 42.\textit{d}5+ \textit{g}7 White has no more than a perpetual.

The simple 37.bxa4? deserved attention. White simply recaptures and returns the ball to his opponent's court. Black's position remains unpleasant and difficult to defend.

37...\textit{e}5 38.\textit{xe}5+ \textit{g}7

39.\textit{g}5?!
Karpov sets up a primitive back rank checkmate. 39.\textit{h}6 should have been the harder move to meet. The best defence is: 39...\textit{a}7! 40.\textit{e}xe6 (after 40.\textit{x}c4 \textit{c}4 41.\textit{hx}7+ \textit{g}8 42.\textit{x}g7+ \textit{f}7 43.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{f}7 Black seems to escape) 40...\textit{f}8 41.\textit{d}5 \textit{f}7 42.\textit{f}3 \textit{d}7 43.\textit{b}xa4 \textit{xa}4 Black is living dangerously but I see no win for White.

39...\textit{xb}3??
Larsen overlooks the threat - he must have been very short of time. Black could have kept himself in the game with 39...\textit{b}6 40.bxa4 \textit{c}7.

40.\textit{b}8+ 1-0
It is difficult to assess the overall value of this game. In the opening Karpov did not achieve much, but he used the positional exchange sacrifice to strong effect to create problems for the defender. On the other hand, Karpov was noticeably less sharp than usual in noticing tactical finesse. In the end he was slightly lucky as Larsen blundered to allow a simple checkmate.

Karpov's style is often compared with that of Petrosian, and not without reason. Interestingly, Karpov did not utilize the positional exchange sacrifice as much as Petrosian, but the present game demonstrates that this weapon was very much a part of his arsenal.

Karpov drew his next three games in Tilburg. Then against Hort his superb endgame play yielded another victory. In the penultimate round he drew with Timman, before finishing with a win over Smyslov. His total of four wins and seven draws was enough to win first prize, half a point ahead of Romanishin.
1979 Summary

Munich (withdrew after round five): 3½/5 (+2 =3 –0)
Montreal (1st place): 12/18 (+7 =10 –1)
Waddinxveen (1st place): 5/6 (+4 =2 –0)
Spartakiad USSR, Moscow (Board one): 4½/7 (+3 =3 –1)
Tilburg (1st place): 7½/11 (+4 =7 –0)

Total 69.1% (+20 =25 –2)
Karpov's first event of the new decade was the Soviet Team Championship, where he drew all three of his games. He then took part in a double round robin tournament in Bad Kissingen, Germany, against three strong opponents. He won a fine attacking victory over Hübner and drew the return game with the black pieces. He drew twice against Spassky and beat the other German participant, Unzicker, in a nice endgame. Here is his second game against Unzicker.

1. e4 c5
Karpov's choice of opening indicates that he was playing for a win right from the start.

2. d4 d6 3. dxe5 dx e 4. dx e5 e6 5. 0-0 0-0
He had only used the Scheveningen in two previous games, both of which ended in draws.

6. g2
The longstanding German number one only seldom played the Keres Attack.

6... e7 7. 0-0 0-0 8. f4 a6 9. e3
In the latter part of the 1980s 9.a4 became established as the main line.

9...c7 10.e1 b5! 11.f3 b7 12.e5 dxe5 13.fxe5

13...d8!?  
This was a new move at the time, and it has only been repeated a few times subsequently. This knight retreat was more frequently seen without the pawn exchange on e5. Another much more popular approach was 13...d7. Interestingly Unzicker had already encountered this move twice previously. He was successful in 1956 against Golombek, but lost in 1971 against Korchnoi.

14.xb7  
14.g3 looks better. This was played in all four of the subsequent games shown on the database, with White winning three and losing one.

14...xb7 15.f3 d7 16.d1 d8!  
Karpov brings his rook to a good square while concealing his intentions with the d7-knight for the moment.

17.d2 c5  
In the event of 17...b6 18.d4 c4 19.e4 White has a small plus.

18.g5  
The patient 18.a3!? deserved attention.

18...xg5 19.xg5 h6 20.ge4 b4 21.xc5 xc5 22.a4

22...d5!  
Karpov brilliantly senses his chances in the ensuing semi-endgame position. His strategy is based on the slight weakness of the white king. Such an approach requires imagination and ingenuity, and Karpov has plenty of both.

23.xd5?!  
After 23.c4! bxc3 24.xc3 the position is equal.

23...xd5 24.xb4?!  
Unzicker continues down the tempting but ultimately flawed path.

24.xe5  
White has a two pawn majority on the queenside, which could potentially decide the endgame in his favour. For the time being, however, those pawns are far from promotion, and meanwhile White's king is not completely safe. The game continuation shows that it is White who is in more danger.
25.\(\text{c5}\)
Activating the knight with 25.\(\text{c5}\) was a better bet.

25...\(\text{e1}\)
Of course Karpov keeps his queen on the board.

26.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{e4}\) 27.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{e6}\)!
The knight quickly comes closer to White's king.

28.\(\text{c3}\)
Better was 28.\(\text{b3}\) \(\text{d8}\) 29.\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{a5}\) when Black is still at least equal, but White is safer than in the game.

28...\(\text{c2}\) 29.\(\text{b6}\) \(\text{d3}\) 30.\(\text{xa6}\)

30...\(\text{d4}\)!
Karpov goes after White's somewhat deserted king.

31.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{g4}\) 32.\(\text{b3}\)
There is no other decent defence against the check on \(\text{f2}\).

32...\(\text{e3}\) 33.\(\text{b1}\) \(\text{b8}\)!
It is time to bring a third piece into play.

34.\(\text{c6}\) \(\text{xc4}\)

35.\(\text{d1}\)!
This wins a tempo and drives the enemy queen away from the centre, yet it was not the best.
35. \( \text{c7!} \)
White should attack the \( f7 \)-pawn.
35... \( \text{h4} \)
Or 35... \( \text{a8} \) 36. \( \text{f1} \) \( \text{d5} \) 37. \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 38. \( \text{b7} \)
and it is not easy to improve Black's position.
36. \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{f2} \)
36... \( \text{h4} \) 37. \( \text{f1} \) is annoying for Black.

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

37. \( \text{e4!} \)
This is a difficult move to find in advance.
37... \( \text{xb2} \)
After 37... \( \text{f5} \) 38. \( \text{a3!} \) \( \text{d5} \) 39. \( \text{xb4} \) \( \text{xdl} \)
40. \( \text{d8} \) \( \text{h7} \) 41. \( \text{xdl} \) White is not worse in the queen ending.
38. \( \text{d8} \) \( \text{h7} \) 39. \( \text{x7} \) \( \text{b1} \) 40. \( \text{h2} \) \( \text{xe4} \)
41. \( \text{g8} \) \( \text{g6} \) 42. \( \text{e8} \)
Black cannot escape the checks, so the game ends in a draw.

35... \( \text{h4} \) 36. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{e3} \)
Karpov brings the knight closer to Unzicker's king.
37. \( \text{c1} \) \( \text{b5} \) 38. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{b4!} \)
Karpov finds a nice way to bring his rook into the attack. If 38... \( \text{d8} \) 39. \( \text{d1} \) White would be glad to exchange pieces.

39. \( \text{e2} \)
39. \( \text{d5} \) is well met by 39... \( \text{e4!} \) stopping the knight from coming to e3. Play may continue 40. \( \text{h2} \) \( \text{e5} \) 41. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{d8} \) (41... \( \text{e1} \)!!) 42. \( \text{f4} \)

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

39... \( \text{e4!} \) 40. \( \text{g1?} \)
Unzicker prevents ... \( \text{xe2} \), but his kingside remains fatally weak. A more resilient continuation would have been:
40. \( \text{c3} \)!
But even this loses after correct play from Black:
40... \( \text{e1} \) 41. \( \text{g1} \)

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

41... \( \text{g5!!} \)
This wonderful attacking move makes the \( f4 \)-square available for the rook, while also giving the black king some extra breathing room.
42. \( \text{d3} \)
42. \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{g7} \) 43. \( \text{c7} \) (43. \( \text{a5} \) \( \text{f4} \) wins or
43.\texttt{d}d3 \texttt{d}d4 44.\texttt{d}d1 \texttt{xd}1 45.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{xb}3 wins.) 43...\texttt{d}d4 44.\texttt{c}c2 \texttt{e}5! 45.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{h}4 White's king soon will be caught.

42...\texttt{a}4 43.\texttt{d}d1 \texttt{a}5!

Black wins a vital tempo by attacking the a2 pawn.

44.a4 \texttt{a}5! 45.\texttt{c}c1

45.\texttt{c}c3 \texttt{e}d2 46.\texttt{c}c1 \texttt{d}5 wins.

45...\texttt{a}8!

Black utilizes the full dimensions of the board to press home his attack.

46.\texttt{c}c3 \texttt{f}f1†

46...\texttt{b}8

And Black wins. The queen completed a remarkable journey from h4 to b8.

40.\texttt{e}3! 41.\texttt{f}2

41.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{d}8! 42.\texttt{c}c4 \texttt{d}2 wins.

Unzicker resigned as there is no defence against ...\texttt{g}5. Karpov based his strategy on White's somewhat weakened king, and punished his opponent's errors with laser beam accuracy. His final score of 4$\frac{1}{2}$/6 was enough to win the tournament by an impressive one and a half point margin.

Karpov's next event was the European Team Championship in Skara, Sweden. Interestingly this was the first team competition in which the Soviets fielded both Karpov and Kasparov. It is not something that would happen many more times.

In his first game, against Miles, Karpov suffered what would turn out to be one of his most famous losses after the Englishman answered 1.\texttt{e}4 with the astonishing 1...\texttt{a}6. It was an amazing result, especially considering that Karpov had accumulated a heavy plus score in his previous meetings with Miles. Karpov is a confident player, but this reversal seemed to shake him. He only played four more games in the event, all of which ended in draws.

The effects of the loss against Miles seemed to remain with Karpov at the start of his next tournament in Bugojno, where he began with four draws against players he would normally have expected to beat had he been in good form. In round five he finally ended the slump with a good endgame win over Ivkov. He followed this by drawing with Hort and Polugaevsky, then moved up to top gear by beating Tal and Timman.

His next opponent was Kavalek, who he had met nine times since their 1974 encounter which we examined in Game 38. Seven of those games ended in draws, and Karpov won the other two.
The Making of a Champion

Game 56

Anatoly Karpov – Lubomir Kavalek

Bugojno 1980

1.e4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.cxd4 Qc6
5.Qc3 Qc6

Kavalek chooses a surprise weapon; he hardly ever played this particular Sicilian variation.

6.h5 e6 7.d2 Ee7 8.0-0-0 0-0

9.f4

A year earlier Karpov played a different way:
9.Qb3 Bb6 10.Qe3 Qc7 11.B a6 12.g4 b5
13.Bb1 Qd7 14.f4 Qb6 15.Bf2 Bc4 16.Bc2 A7 17.Qg2 Qa8 18.Qe1 B4 19.g5 Bf8
20.h4 Qa5 21.Qxa5 Bxa5 22.Bb3 Qc7 23.h5

And White went on to win, Karpov – Sosonko, Waddinxveen 1979. Presumably he deviated in order to avoid Kavalek’s preparation.

9...h6 10.Qxf6?! 10.Qh4 is more critical. The text move should not be dangerous.

10...Qxf6 11.Qb3

Black also scores well against other moves.

11...e5?! 12.g3!

Karpov refuses to relinquish control over the dark squares.

12...Qg4 13.Qe1


13...a5!

Kavalek continues to play actively. It is important to do so, otherwise the weak d5-square could become a problem.

14.a4

After 14.Qb5 Bb6 Black is doing fine.

14...Bc8?!

This is inaccurate. In other games Black has preferred 14...Qb4!, and after 15.Bb1 both 15...Ee8 and exf4 should be at least equal for the second player.

When a player opts for a new opening variation like Kavalek did in the present game, he takes...
on a certain level of risk. The advantage is that the opponent will be surprised and unprepared. On the other hand, the player who chooses the surprise opening will lack the subtle understanding that comes with years of experience of handling a particular line. It looks like Kavalek suffered from this problem, as his play over this and the next few moves lacks the precision that one would normally expect from a grandmaster of his stature.

15...\text{d}5!

Karpov immediately shows why the knight should have gone to b4 on the previous move.

15...\text{e}6

The strong knight must be eliminated. Kavalek plans to exchange his bishop for it, but it would have been better use the knight instead:

15...\text{b}4! 16.\text{xb}4 \text{axb}4
Black can even consider the cheeky 16...\text{b}6?! 17.\text{d}5 \text{xb}3 18.\text{b}5 \text{a}2 19.c3 \text{e}6 when the position is unclear.

17.\text{b}1!!
After 17.\text{e}2 \text{e}6 18.\text{xb}4 (18.\text{b}1 \text{c}7 19.\text{d}3 \text{c}4 Black has a reasonable position) 18...\text{c}7 19.\text{d}5 d5 Black has a lot of activity for a mere pawn.

17...\text{e}6

17...\text{f}3 can be met by 18.\text{h}3! (18.\text{g}1 \text{d}5) 18...\text{xh}1 19.\text{xc}8 \text{xe}4 20.\text{xe}4 \text{xc}8 21.\text{xb}4 when I prefer White.

18.f5
18.\text{xb}4 is risky, as after 18...\text{c}7 19.\text{d}3 d5 Black is very active.
After 18.\text{b}5 \text{c}7 19.f5 \text{c}4 White has no time to take his opponent's pawns.
18...\text{d}7
18...\text{xb}3? is a positional error, and after 19.\text{cxb}3 White has a firm grip over the light squares.

19.\text{xb}4
19.a5?! could be considered.
19...d5
Black has decent compensation for the pawn.

16.\text{b}1 \text{xd}5?!
16...\text{b}4! is still okay for Black: 17.\text{c}1 (17.\text{xa}5 \text{xc}2 18.\text{bc}1 \text{xd}5 19.\text{xd}5 \text{c}3 20.\text{xc}8 \text{xc}8 21.\text{b}3 \text{e}4 22.\text{g}4 \text{d}5 Black has a free position.) 17...\text{xd}5 18.\text{xd}5
Now both 18...\text{f}5 and 18...\text{d}7 should give Black a reasonable game.

17.\text{exd}5
Now that the centre has been stabilized, Karpov sets about neutralizing Black's queenside play before improving his pieces.

17...\text{b}4 18.c3 \text{a}6 19.\text{b}5
Black should have preferred 19...c7!

Black should have preferred 19...c7!

Karpov wastes no time in improving his knight.

25...h3

25...h3

If 25...c5 26.xc5 bxc5 27.c4 the knight becomes a powerhouse.

26.c4 xh2!!

26.c4 xh2!!

Black has been outplayed, but this move only deepens his troubles. The best chance was: 26...ac8! 27.a2 (After 27.xd6 cc5 28.xb6 xd5 29.e8 dd8 30.g1 White is a pawn up, but he will have to work for the full point.) 27.c5 28.xb6 xd5 29.cc6 cc5 30.xd6 cc8 Black still has problems, but he has more chances than in the game.

25.c2!!

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If 25...c5 26.xc5 bxc5 27.c4 the knight becomes a powerhouse.

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25.d2!!

Karpov wastes no time in improving his knight.

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Karpov wastes no time in improving his knight.

25...h3

25...h3

If 25...c5 26.xc5 bxc5 27.c4 the knight becomes a powerhouse.

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27.\textit{Qxd6}

The game is virtually over, as the d-pawn is a killer.

27...\textit{Ead8} 28.\textit{Qc4} \textit{Eh7} 29.\textit{d6} \textit{Eb3} 30.\textit{Ed1} \textit{Ed7} 31.\textit{Qa2}

Karpov remains true to his style and makes a prophylactic move.

31...\textit{Efd8} 32.\textit{Qc6} h5 33.\textit{Qxb6} \textit{Ee5} 34.\textit{Qxd7} \textit{Exd1} 35.\textit{Qxf6\#} gxf6 36.\textit{Ed4} \textit{Ee2} 37.\textit{d7} \textit{Qg7}

38.\textit{f5}

Maybe Kavalek was in time trouble and had no time to resign.

38...\textit{h4} 39.\textit{Qc7} \textit{Qe7} 40.\textit{Qg4\#} 41.\textit{Qh4} \textit{Qxd7} 42.\textit{Qxd8\#}

1-0

Karpov went on to beat Gligoric in the last round, thus ending the tournament on a four game winning streak. His final total of 8/11, with five wins and six draws, was enough to take sole first place, half a point ahead of Larsen.

Karpov's next event was the Amsterdam IBM, a double round robin tournament. He began with a long endgame win over Van der Wiel. Then he made three quick draws, two of which did not even last twenty moves. Karpov was not averse to taking a few quick draws in long tournaments, unlike Fischer and Kasparov, both of whom played to win almost every game. It should be remembered that over his career Karpov played many more tournament games than both his predecessor and his successor, which goes some way towards explaining this tendency to recharge his batteries on some days.

In round five he faced a rising star in Sergei Dolmatov, a young Russian who had won the World Junior Championship in 1978. This was their first encounter. Altogether they met three times over the board, with Karpov scoring two wins and one draw. Dolmatov played twenty games against the world champions from Smyslov to Topalov, missing only Fischer. He scored a respectable four wins with ten draws and six losses.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Game 57}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textit{Anatoly Karpov – Sergei Dolmatov}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
Amsterdam 1980
\end{center}

1.\textit{e4} \textit{c5} 2.\textit{Qf3} \textit{Qc6} 3.\textit{d4} \textit{cd4} 4.\textit{Qxd4} \textit{Qd6} 5.\textit{Qc3} \textit{e5} 6.\textit{Qd5} \textit{d6}

Dolmatov and Yusupov were among the pioneers of the Sveshnikov variation. Interestingly, over his entire tournament career Karpov reached the present position in only five games (a few of them occurred via the 2...\textit{e6} move order.) Perhaps the formidable reputation of a World Champion discourages opponents from trying certain openings against him. For example, Kasparov went for a period of eighteen years without a single opponent venturing the Grünfeld against him.

7.\textit{Qg5} \textit{a6} 8.\textit{Qa3} \textit{b5}

In Game 64 we will see John Nunn trying a different approach against Karpov.
9. d5 e7 10. a3 a6 11. c3
Karpov unsurprisingly opts for this positional variation.

11...0-0 12. c2 a8
Dolmatov deviates from two of Karpov’s previous games against Sveshnikov in 1973 and Yurtaev in 1979, both of which continued with 12...g5. Karpov was pressing in both games; he eventually drew the former and won the latter.

13. e2 g5 14. 0-0 e6

15. d3 d7?!
According to the database this move was a novelty, but it looks dubious. 15...a5 was and still is the main line here.

16. g3 f6?!
This weakens the light squares and blocks the route of the bishop back to d8, which can sometimes be useful for Black. 16...h6 was preferable.

17. fd1 a5
Dolmatov stops cxb4 but gives a new target. It was worth considering playing an improving move on the kingside first. 17...g6?! is one idea, while Black can also consider 17...h8! 18. c4 or 18. d3 fd8)

18...a5 19. x6 c6 20. g4 f7 when Black’s position remains playable.

18. a3!
Returning to the edge of the board is a splendid idea. Karpov does not want to put the knight on the more conventional e3-square, as this would give Black the opportunity to exchange his bad bishop.

18... a7
On 18...b4 Kasparov recommends 19. c4 with an advantage, while 19. b5 looks promising as well.

18...d8? deserved attention, and could have worked quite well against the plan chosen by Karpov in the game: 19. h3 h8 20. g4 (With the knight on d8 White might be tempted to try 20. ab1! intending b4.) 20...c6? 21. x6 21. x6 (21. d3 b4) 21... x6 Black’s position looks reliable enough as the a3-knight is passive. The second player can look to generate some activity with the plan of...b7, ...h6, ...g6 and...f5.

19. h3!
Karpov wants to exchange the light-squared bishops.

19... h8
20. \( \text{f}\text{g}4 \text{f}\text{c}8?! \)

Dolmatov wants to use the f8-rook, so the king steps off the g-file.

20. \( \text{f}\text{g}4 \text{f}\text{c}8?! \)

Transferring the rook to c5 costs time and does not improve Black's chances. Instead after 20...f5 21.e\text{xf}5 \text{g}\text{xf}5 22.\text{d}c2 \text{f}xg4 (22...\text{d}c6?!)

21. \( \text{f}xg4 \text{f}xg4 24.\text{xh}xg4 \text{d}c6 \) the limited material on the board gives Black reasonable chances to fight for a draw according to Kasparov.

21. \( \text{f}xe6 \text{f}xe6 22.\text{d}d3 \text{c}5?! \)

This only helps White to open files on the queenside. Kasparov suggested 22...g6, improving Black's position on the kingside. In the event of 23.\text{d}c2 \text{g}7 24.b4, the position of Black's rook gives him the option of 24...a4 to keep the queenside closed.

23. \( \text{d}c2! \)

Again Karpov changes the target by switching back with the knight.

23...g6 24.b4!

This strong move enables White to invade on the queenside.

24...axb4 25.\text{d}xb4 \text{b}7

Karpov opens the a-file for the rook.

26...\text{b}xa4 27.\text{b}xa4 f5 28.\text{a}6!

This is an awkward move to meet. It prevents ...\text{d}c6 while also menacing the d6-pawn.

28. \( \text{f}c8 \)

Dolmatov correctly chooses the more passive but safer square for the knight.

28...\text{b}5?!

This attempt to play actively leaves the knight unstable. In the following line Black must work hard to keep his queenside together, which ultimately costs him on the kingside.

29.\text{a}8?!\n
A good alternative is 29.c4 fxe4 (29...\text{d}d4 30.f4!) 30.\text{f}xe4 \text{d}c7 31.\text{d}x\text{c}7 \text{a}xc7 32.\text{d}d5 \text{b}c8 33.\text{b}6 \text{b}c6 34.\text{d}a1 and White is a bit better. The text move is even stronger though.

29...\text{g}7

After 29...\text{c}8 30.\text{d}a1 \text{e}8 31.\text{b}a6 White has some pressure.

30.\text{d}a6! \text{c}6

Or 30...\text{c}8 31.\text{e}xf5 \text{g}xf5 32.\text{b}x\text{c}8 \text{b}xc8 33.\text{b}1 \text{a}7 34.\text{b}x\text{b}5 \text{b}xa6 35.\text{b}b8 and White is better according to Kasparov.

31.\text{b}8 \text{d}7 32.\text{b}b7 \text{b}b7 33.\text{d}a4 fxe4 34.\text{g}3 \text{f}4 35.\text{h}4 g5 36.\text{g}4 \text{e}5 37.\text{g}3

Black must lose a piece. He will get some pawns for it, but not enough.
29.\textit{a}8 \textit{g}7 30.\textit{e}2

According to Karpov's successor 30.\textit{a}6! was even stronger, for instance 30...\textit{d}7 31.\textit{e}xf5 \textit{gx}f5 32.\textit{d}3 followed by \textit{d}a1 when Black is under pressure.

30...\textit{f}xe4?!

Giving White the use of the e4-square is unattractive, although the alternatives were also less than appealing. Waiting with 30...\textit{f}7 was possible, but Dolmatov may have been put off by 31.\textit{ex}f5 \textit{gx}f5 32.\textit{c}4, after which White will swing a rook along the third rank to attack Black's king.

Another idea was 30...\textit{d}e7 31.\textit{xe}7 \textit{xe}7 32.\textit{d}d5 \textit{g}5 when Black's position remains unpleasant, but perhaps with better defensive chances than in the game.

31.\textit{xe}4 \textit{f}5 32.\textit{e}2!

Karpov keeps the queens on the board as Black's king may come under fire.

32...\textit{f}7

32...c4?!

With this active move Black frees the e5-square for the use of his queen. White has to play precisely to keep the advantage.

33.\textit{a}6!

33.c4 \textit{e}5 looks okay for Black.

33...\textit{e}5 34.\textit{c}6! \textit{e}8

35.f4?!

35.\textit{g}4 also leads to some spectacular tactics:

35...\textit{f}6 (35...\textit{e}3? 36.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}2t 37.\textit{f}1!! \textit{xc}6 38.\textit{xf}6 \textit{g}8 39.\textit{d}4 \textit{f}7 40.\textit{f}6t \textit{xf}6 41.\textit{xc}6+-) 36.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6

37.\textit{e}1!! White can sacrifice the knight.

37...\textit{xc}6 38.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}7 39.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 (39...\textit{xe}4 40.\textit{xc}8 \textit{xb}4 41.\textit{xe}8 \textit{xc}4 42.\textit{e}3 \textit{d}5 43.\textit{xd}3 \textit{e}5 Black has chances to hold the ending a pawn down, but it will be tough.) 40.\textit{xc}4 \textit{d}7 41.\textit{xd}7 \textit{xd}7 42.\textit{xc}8 \textit{d}5 43.\textit{f}1 \textit{d}4 44.\textit{c}4 \textit{d}3 45.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}5 The ending is not easy to assess, but I suspect Black should be able to hold it.

35...\textit{xf}4

After 35...\textit{xd}5? 36.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xf}4 37.\textit{e}3 it is not easy for White to convert his extra exchange, but still Black is a long way from a draw.
36.\texttt{Qxf4} \texttt{Bxc6} 37.\texttt{Qe6+}! \texttt{Qg8} 38.\texttt{Bxc6} \texttt{Bxc6} 39.\texttt{Bf1}! \texttt{Bb6}† 40.\texttt{Qh1} \texttt{Bf7}

White wins an exchange.

33.\texttt{c4}

The rook is temporarily passive here, but it best not to commit to any weakening pawn moves at this stage.

34.\texttt{Qe7}?! 

Black's position was already tough, and this move does little to ease the suffering. Dvoretsky calls it a clear positional mistake, pointing out that White's knight on b4 is surplus to requirements. I would add that when one's position contains a weakness, it is often the case that exchanges will only serve to magnify the problem.

What should Black do instead? One idea is 34...\texttt{e4}, but this is well met by a strong idea of Yalovich: 35.\texttt{Ba3}! with the idea of 35...\texttt{g}g5 36.f4! and White is much better.

34...\texttt{g}g5!

This looks like the best chance. White has a number of tries.

a) 35.\texttt{Bf1}

This natural move leads to some remarkable tactics.

34...\texttt{e}4

35...\texttt{e}4 36.\texttt{g3} \texttt{d}d8 37.h4 is evaluated as difficult for Black by Kasparov.

36.\texttt{Bf1}

Another line is 36.\texttt{Bc2} \texttt{w}e5 37.\texttt{Bb1} \texttt{Qe7} 38.\texttt{Bxe8} \texttt{Bxa5} 39.\texttt{Bb7} \texttt{Ba2} 40.g3 \texttt{e}3 41.\texttt{Bxe3} \texttt{Bxc2} 42.\texttt{Bxc2} \texttt{Bxe3} and Black is safe.

36...\texttt{Bx}c4!!

Commentators missed this fantastic tactical shot.

After 36...\texttt{h}4 37.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{d}d8 38.\texttt{Bc2} White is in control.

37.\texttt{Bxc4} \texttt{Bxf2}† 38.\texttt{Bh2} \texttt{Be1} 39.\texttt{Bxc8} 39.\texttt{Bd4}† \texttt{Bh6} 40.\texttt{Qc2} (40.\texttt{Bxc8}?? \texttt{Bf1}) 40...\texttt{Bf1} 41.\texttt{Bxc8} \texttt{Bf4}† 42.\texttt{Bxf4} \texttt{Bxf4}† leads to a perpetual.

After the text move Black's situation
looks desperate, as he is a piece down and threatened with a queen exchange on c3.

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8
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a b c d e f g h
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39...\text{xf}3!!

This provides the justification for Black's 36th move. It resembles the Kramnik - Kasparov draw in the 1999 Linares tournament.

40.\text{xc}7

After 40.\text{xd}4 \text{xf}6! 41.\text{xf}6 \text{g}3 \text{g}1 \text{e}1 White cannot escape the checks.

40...\text{h}6 41.\text{xf}3 \text{f}2

41...\text{xf}3 draws as well.

42.\text{h}1 \text{xf}3 43.\text{g}4 \text{e}1

The game ends in perpetual check.

c) 35.\text{b}8?!

The point of this subtle rook move is to solve the problem of the b4-knight, by preparing \text{c}3 without allowing the reply ...\text{b}6.

35...\text{c}7

Alternatives such as 35...h5 can be met by 36.\text{c}3.

36.\text{xe}7

White can also consider 36.\text{c}3? \text{c}6 37.\text{xc}6 \text{xc}6 38.\text{a}1 with some advantage.

36...\text{xe}7 37.\text{b}6 \text{d}7 38.\text{d}5

38.\text{a}1?! would be weaker on account of 38...\text{h}4. After the text move White retains a stable advantage, but the game goes on.

35.\text{a}6
Earlier Dolmatov played more actively than he should have, but now he plays too passively. He could have obtained good drawing chances by means of:

35...\(\text{cxd5}\) 36.\(\text{cxd5}\) e4!

This is an excellent idea from Kasparov. Black is aiming to reduce the pawns to just one flank.

37.\(\text{exd6}\)

37.g3 \(\text{fxe6}\) 38.\(\text{exd6}\) e5 39.\(\text{e6}\) (39.\(\text{e6}\) \(\text{exd6}\)) 39...\(\text{hxg3}\) 40.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{xe4}\) Black forces the draw.

37...\(\text{e5}\) 38.\(\text{e6}\) \(\text{f4}\) 39.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{g5}\)

40.\(\text{e3}\)

40.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{xf2}\)! This lovely tactical shot equalizes: 41.\(\text{xf2}\) (41.\(\text{xf2}\) \(\text{exe3}\); 41.\(\text{e7}\) \(\text{h8}\)) 41...\(\text{xf5}\) 42.\(\text{g1}\) \(\text{exe3}\) 43.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{d4}\) Black’s problems are behind him.
is that it is more favourable for him to exchange the rook on f7, which defends the black king.

40...\textit{\textbf{Ec5}}

40...\textit{\textbf{e6}} 41.\textit{\textbf{Ef3}} \textit{\textbf{Exf3}} 42.\textit{\textbf{Exf3}} \textit{\textbf{Exc4??}} allows the crushing 43.\textit{\textbf{Ba7}}†.

Perhaps the most resilient defence would have been 40...\textit{\textbf{b7??}}, discouraging 41.\textit{\textbf{Ef3??}} for the time being in view of 41...\textit{\textbf{Exf3}} 42.\textit{\textbf{Exf3}} \textit{\textbf{Exc4}} when Black survives with his extra pawn. Obviously White should play more patiently on move 41, in which case his position would remain clearly superior but not yet winning by force.

41.\textit{\textbf{Ef3}}

Karpov exchanges the key defensive piece in Black’s camp.

41...\textit{\textbf{Exf3}} 42.\textit{\textbf{Exf3}} \textit{\textbf{Ee7}} 43.\textit{\textbf{Gg4}} \textit{\textbf{h5}} 44.\textit{\textbf{Ee4}} \textit{\textbf{Ec8}}

On 44...\textit{\textbf{h7}} Kasparov superbly demonstrated how the attack should be conducted: 45.\textit{\textbf{Ba3!}} \textit{\textbf{g7}} 46.\textit{\textbf{g4}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} 47.\textit{\textbf{Ef3}} And White wins.

45.\textit{\textbf{Ba3!}}

Black faces an unpleasant dilemma: will he allow the rook to hurt him on the f-file or on the seventh rank?

45...\textit{\textbf{Gf5}}

Black chooses the latter. If 45...\textit{\textbf{b8}} 46.\textit{\textbf{Ef3}} \textit{\textbf{b7}} (46...\textit{\textbf{e6}} 47.\textit{\textbf{Gd4??}}) 47.\textit{\textbf{h2}}! \textit{\textbf{b1}} 48.\textit{\textbf{h4}} White will invade with decisive effect.

46.\textit{\textbf{Ba7†}} \textit{\textbf{h6}} 47.\textit{\textbf{Ee3†}}

Forcing a further weakening on the kingside.

47...\textit{\textbf{g5}} 48.\textit{\textbf{Ec2}}

48.\textit{\textbf{b3}} was also good enough: 48...\textit{\textbf{g4}} (48...\textit{\textbf{e8}} 49.\textit{\textbf{Ec3}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 50.\textit{\textbf{h4}}) 49.\textit{\textbf{h4}} \textit{\textbf{Ec5}} 50.\textit{\textbf{Ec3}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 51.\textit{\textbf{b8}} And White wins.

48...\textit{\textbf{b8}}

49.\textit{\textbf{g4!}}

After this further opening of the kingside, Black’s defences will be stretched to their breaking point.

49...\textit{\textbf{hxg4}} 50.\textit{\textbf{hxg4}} \textit{\textbf{b1†}} 51.\textit{\textbf{Gg2}} \textit{\textbf{b7}}

After 51...\textit{\textbf{e4}} White has a few routes to victory, of which the most convincing is: 52.\textit{\textbf{c5!}} \textit{\textbf{b2}} (52...\textit{\textbf{dxc5}} 53.\textit{\textbf{a6†}}; 52...\textit{\textbf{c6d3}} 53.\textit{\textbf{xd3}} \textit{\textbf{exd3}} 54.\textit{\textbf{c6}} \textit{\textbf{d2}} 55.\textit{\textbf{a1+}}=) 53.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{b7}} (53...\textit{\textbf{d3}} 54.\textit{\textbf{c6}} \textit{\textbf{c3xe3}} \textit{\textbf{wins}}) 54.\textit{\textbf{b8}} \textit{\textbf{b8}} 55.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{xa8}} 56.\textit{\textbf{f6†}} \textit{\textbf{h7}} 57.\textit{\textbf{f7†}} \textit{\textbf{h6}} 58.\textit{\textbf{f6}} Black cannot avoid checkmate.

52.\textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{xb7}} 53.\textit{\textbf{Gf1!}}
The struggle is over, as Black is unable to defend his king.

53...\texttt{We}8 54.e6\texttt{W}h7 55.\texttt{W}f7 1-0

Kasparov found it staggering how well Karpov used the whole board in this game. This is quite a compliment as the former has a fantastic ability for combining actions on both flanks.

In the next round Karpov was beaten by Ribli, who played very much in Karpov's style. He bounced back by beating Larsen, and then completed a 2-0 score over Van der Wiel in the double round robin event. In the next four rounds he drew with Timman and Sosonko, defeated Hort then took a quick draw with Dolmatov.

In round 13 Karpov met Ribli with the white pieces, and was obviously keen to avenge his earlier loss. Interestingly, at the start of the present game Karpov had a negative score against Ribli, having won one game, drawn four and lost two. He never lost to the Hungarian grandmaster again, and their lifetime score stands at four wins to Karpov, with twelve draws and two losses.

Ribli faced the world champions seventy eight times. He won seven of those encounters, drew fifty eight and lost thirteen.

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**Game 58**

Anatoly Karpov – Zoltan Ribli

Amsterdam 1980

1.e4

Ribli was a renowned Najdorf specialist, and Karpov only entered that territory against him in one out of nine games with the white pieces.

1...c5 2.\texttt{B}f3 \texttt{g}6 3.d\texttt{c}3 \texttt{d}c6 4.g3 d5 5.e\texttt{d}5 \texttt{Q}xd5 6.\texttt{Q}g2 g6

This is the only time that Karpov faced this particular response to the English Opening.

7.0-0 \texttt{g}7 8.\texttt{Q}xd5 \texttt{W}xd5 9.d3 0-0 10.\texttt{Q}e3 \texttt{Q}d7

In 1983 he played the black side of the same variation against Geller. The older Russian grandmaster deviated with 11.\texttt{Q}d2 and a draw ensued.

11.\texttt{Q}d4

Karpov simplifies the position, hoping to make use of his slight advantage in development.

In 1983 he played the black side of the same variation against Geller. The older Russian grandmaster deviated with 11.\texttt{Q}d2 and a draw ensued.

11...\texttt{Q}d6 12.\texttt{Q}xc6 \texttt{Q}xc6 13.\texttt{Q}xc6 \texttt{Q}xc6 14.\texttt{Q}c1 \texttt{W}e6

After 14...\texttt{Q}xb2 15.\texttt{Q}xc5 \texttt{W}e6 16.d4 White has a small edge.

15.\texttt{Q}xc5 \texttt{Q}xa2 16.\texttt{B}b5

This was a novelty at the time, which Karpov claims to have found over the board.

16...b6

In his next tournament Ribli gave this variation a try from the opposite side against Timman, who held him to a draw: 16...\texttt{Q}a6
17...\texttt{b}6 18.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{fb}8 19.\texttt{a}4 \texttt{b}7 20.\texttt{fa}1 a6 21.\texttt{a}2 a5 22.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{e}5 23.\texttt{e}4 ½–½ Ribli – Timman, Tilburg 1980. Timman later drew with this variation against Andersson in 1997.

17.\texttt{al}! \texttt{xal}?

Black should have retreated with 17...\texttt{e}6, when his disadvantage is not too severe. The long time Hungarian number two has a well attuned positional sense, which unfortunately deserted him when making the decision to exchange queens. In the resulting endgame White has a clear plus, and can exert pressure for a long time without taking any risks.

18.\texttt{xal} \texttt{fb}8 19.\texttt{a}6 \texttt{fl}8!!

Ribli underestimates the danger. His best chance may well have been Ostojic's recommendation of 19...\texttt{b}7?? with the idea of giving up a pawn in order to eliminate all the queenside pawns. After 20.\texttt{xb}6 \texttt{xb}6 21.\texttt{x}b6 \texttt{x}b2 22.\texttt{x}a7 Black has some chances to grovel for a draw, although it will not be much fun for him.

I should add that, at the end of the above line, instead of the immediate capture on a7, Kasparov mentioned the possibility of 22.d4!? e5 23.d5, evaluating the position as extremely unpleasant for Black. But perhaps White is being too clever for his own good here, as the subtle 22...\texttt{b}8! might just rescue Black: 23.\texttt{c}5 (23.\texttt{xa}7 \texttt{b}8) 23...\texttt{d}8! 24.e3 (or 24.\texttt{a}4 e5) 24...e5 Black simplifies to a position with four pawns versus three on the kingside, which should provide good drawing chances.

20.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{e}5 21.\texttt{ba}4!

21.b3! would give Black time to organize his defences: 21...\texttt{c}7 22.\texttt{ba}4 \texttt{b}7 23.\texttt{g}2 White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

21...\texttt{b}5?

Black should take the opportunity to destroy the enemy b-pawn: 21...\texttt{x}b2 22.\texttt{x}b6 \texttt{e}8 23.\texttt{xa}7 \texttt{c}8 24.\texttt{e}3 White is a clear pawn up, but plenty of work remains.

22.\texttt{a}2 \texttt{b}7

23.b3!

Keeping the queenside pawn makes Black's life even harder. 23.\texttt{xa}7 \texttt{xb}2 24.\texttt{x}b2 \texttt{xa}7 25.\texttt{xa}7 \texttt{xa}7 26.\texttt{xb}5 the rook ending with five pawns versus four offers good winning chances, but even that would be too generous to Black at this stage.

23.\texttt{b}8 24.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{e}8 25.\texttt{d}4

Karpov starts gaining space.

25...\texttt{d}7 26.e4 e6 27.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{c}8
Ribli played this game uncharacteristically passively. By this stage there was not much else he can do.

28.d5
Karpov feels his advantage is so large he does not even need to use his king.

28...exd5 29.exd5 Ed7

30.d6!
With a single pawn move Karpov paralyses a rook and a bishop.

30...Ed8 31.Eg2
Having virtually shut down his opponent's entire position, Karpov begins to advance his king.

31...Ed7
Ostojic mentions the line 31...Eb7 32.Ef3 Ee8 33.Ef4 h6 34.h4 when White forces a weakness on the kingside.

Also after 31...Ee8 32.Ef3 Ee6 33.Ea5 Eb7 34.Ef4 h6 35.h4 White wins according to Kasparov.

32.Ee2! Ec8
32...Ee8 is met by 33.Exe8 Exe8 34.Ef3 f5 35.Ef4 and the invasion is decisive.

33.Ee7 Ed7 34.Ea2!
Once again Karpov proves how well he spots his chances against the opponent's king in endgames.

34...a5

35.Ec2!
1–0
Karpov catches his opponent's king once again. This game was a one-sided affair; Ribli was a shadow of his usual self, nevertheless Karpov's endgame display was flawless. He also beat Larsen in the final round, for a total of 10/14, with seven wins, six draws and one loss. Timman finished in second place, a full point behind.

Karpov's next event was Tilburg, also in the Netherlands. Once again he finished in sole first place ahead of a tough field, with a final score of 7½/11. He lost one game against Larsen, but scored several good wins over Ribli (again!), Timman, Hübner, Andersson and Spassky.

His next tournament in Buenos Aires was not so successful: he only won four out of the thirteen games, and suffered losses to both Timman and Olafsson. His final score of 7½/13 was only good enough to share fourth and fifth places.
Karpov was able to put this bad result behind him at his final event of the year, the Malta Olympiad. Incidentally, Karpov was not present at the 1978 Olympiad as he needed a break after his gruelling match with Korchnoi (although it should be mentioned that Korchnoi himself not only played in the Olympiad, but performed extremely well). His absence proved costly to the Soviets, who lost out to Hungary in the race for the gold medal. In 1980 the competition was once again fierce. After winning in round one, Karpov fell ill and rested for the next two matches. His absence was clearly felt by the Soviet team, who dropped points and fell behind the leaders. By round four Karpov was ready to return to action, and he played the final eleven games without taking a single day off. He drew five in a row, but then started winning and only dropped a single draw in his final six rounds. His final total of 9/12 helped the Soviet team to claw their way back to the top, and they eventually took the gold medal on tie break ahead of Hungary.

1980 Summary

Soviet Team Championship: 1⅓/3 (+0 =3 -0)
Bad Kissingen (1st prize): 4⅔/6 (+3 =3 -0)
European Team Championship, Skara (Board one): 2/5 (+0 =4 -1)
Bugojno (1st prize): 8/11 (+5 =6 -0)
Amsterdam (1st prize): 10/14 (+7 =6 -1)
Tilburg (1st prize): 7⅓/11 (+5 =5 -1)
Buenos Aires (4th-5th place): 7½/13 (+4 =7 -2)
Malta Olympiad (Board one): 9/12 (+6 =6 -0)

Total 66.7% (+30 =40 -5)
The world championship candidates cycle had drawn to a close, and 1981 was Karpov's title defence year. Once again his challenger was Korchnoi, although he also found time to play in a few tournaments beforehand.

The first was in Linares, and was the very first 'super tournament' to be held in the southern Spanish town, although other grandmaster tournaments had taken place there over the previous few years. Karpov got off to a flying start, winning a nice ending against Quinteros and beating Portisch in a sharp struggle. (The latter game is mentioned in the note to White's seventh move in Game 76, Afifi – Karpov.) He followed with draws against Larsen and Ribli, then beat Ljubojevic in another powerful endgame display. In round six he used the Austrian Attack against the Pirc to defeat Christiansen, which turned out to be a vital result in the battle for overall first place.

In the next round Karpov faced Guillermo Garcia Gonzales. The Cuban grandmaster played the world champions fifteen times, drawing seven games and losing eight. Against Karpov he lost once at the 1977 October Revolution tournament, and this game was their last.

Game 59

Guillermo Garcia Gonzales – Anatoly Karpov

Linares 1981

1.d4 d6 2.c4 c5 3.g3 b6 4.g2 b7 5.0-0 e6
Karpov seldom played this way, and usually preferred to develop the bishop to g7.

6.d4 cxd4 7.exd4 d6 8.c3 e7 9.d1
One of Karpov's previous games continued: 9.g5 a6 10.xf6 xf6 11.d3 e7 12.d1 a7 13.e4 0-0 14.ea1 a8 15.e3 c6 16.c3 b8 17.d4 c5 18.b3 c8 Black equalized and went on to win in a nice endgame in Grigorian – Karpov, Riga 1975.

9...a6 10.b3 b7 11.b2
Karpov encountered this variation a number of times with the white pieces. One such encounter ended in an early draw: 11.e4 b8 12.b2 0-0 13.e3 c8 14.d4 f8 15.d2 a7 16.e1 c8 17.e2 a8 18.ea1 c8 19.h3 c5 20.e3 c8 21.d2 ½–½ Karpov – Ljubojevic, Manila 1976.
11...0-0 12.e4 \( \text{\textit{\$c7}} \) 13.\( \text{\textit{\$e3}} \) \( \text{\textit{\$e8}} \) 14.\( \text{\textit{\$d4}} \)

In 1986 Karpov reached a similar though not quite identical position against Ribli, and opted for an interesting plan involving \( \text{\textit{\$d2}}, \text{\textit{\$a3}}, \text{\textit{\$b4}} \) and \( \text{\textit{\$b3}} \). See Game 3 of the second volume.

14.\( \text{\textit{\$f8}} \) 15.\( \text{\textit{\$ac1}} \)

The Cuban grandmaster plays all the usual moves for this variation.

15.\( \text{\textit{\$ad8}} \)

In 1977 Karpov won a game with White against Gheorghiu who preferred 15...\( \text{\textit{\$ac8}} \). The text move was used by Ribli to draw with Karpov in the fourth round at Linares.

16.\( \text{\textit{\$e2}} \)

Now that the queen has vacated the c-file, Black can think about playing ...d5.

16...\( \text{\textit{\$b8}} \)

White prepares to meet ...d5 with e5.

17.\( \text{\textit{\$g6}} \)

Karpov transfers the bishop to g7 and creates another quill of the hedgehog. The \( \text{\textit{d6}} \)-pawn has enough protection and is not easy to attack.

18.\( \text{\textit{\$cd1}} \) \( \text{\textit{\$g7}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{\$c2}} \) \( \text{\textit{\$a8}} \)

By vacating the b-file, the bishop makes way for the queen to support a future ...b5 break. White will now be reluctant to move either of his knights.

20.\( \text{\textit{\$b1}} \) \( \text{\textit{\$c5}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\$e2}} \)

21...\( \text{\textit{\$g4}} \)?

Karpov wants to provoke a pawn move on the kingside.

22.b3 \( \text{\textit{\$f6}} \) 23.\( \text{\textit{\$h2}} \)

Garcia Gonzales just waits.

23...h5!

Karpov wants to soften his opponent on the kingside. Suddenly the alignment of the queen on b8 and king on h2 is uncomfortable for White.

24.h4

It may have been safer not to make any more pawn moves on the kingside, but Karpov has already succeeded in making the position double-edged. After 24.\( \text{\textit{\$g1}} \) h4 25.g4 e5 26.\( \text{\textit{\$c2}} \) e6 27.\( \text{\textit{\$b4}} \) e4 the position is complex with mutual chances.

24...\( \text{\textit{\$e8}} \) 25.\( \text{\textit{\$g1}} \) \( \text{\textit{\$g4}} \)

Karpov hopes to provoke another pawn move.
26.f3 \( \text{e}5 \)

Karpov got what he wanted, and now he decides to return to a different square with the knight. 26...\( \text{e}6 \) was also possible.

27.\( \text{e}6 \) \( \text{a}7 \)

Karpov continues to prod his opponent from a safe distance.

28.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 29.\( \text{f}4 \)?

Karpov's waiting strategy prevails, as with this move White weakens his position considerably. It was better to wait with a move like 29.\( \text{h}2 \)!?, when Black must decide what to do. Perhaps the most natural idea would be to play for ...\( \text{b}5 \), for instance: 29...\( \text{b}8 \) 30.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 31.\( \text{e}6 \) \( \text{h}6 \) (after 31...\( \text{b}5 \)?) 32.\( \text{cxb}5 \) \( \text{axb}5 \) 33.\( \text{dxb}5 \) \( \text{xb}5 \) 34.\( \text{x}b5 \) \( \text{xb}5 \) 35.\( \text{xd}6 \) White is better) 32.\( \text{f}2 \) \( \text{f}8 \)?? Black can also look to play on the \( f \)-file, nevertheless White's position remains sound and the first player should be able to maintain equality.

26.e5? In an equal position White sacrifices material to open up Black's king, but it is unjustified. 26...\( \text{dxe}5 \) 27.\( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{xf}4 \) 28.\( \text{xf}4 \) \( \text{e}5 \)! (28...\( \text{xg}5 \)! was winning as well) 29.\( \text{g}6 \) \( \text{hxg}6 \) 30.\( \text{hxg}6 \) \( \text{xf}4 \) 31.\( \text{gxh}7 \) \( \text{h}8 \) 32.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{f}8 \) 33.\( \text{e}4 \) \( \text{e}5 \) 34.\( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{xc}4 \) 0–1 Torre - Karpov, Bad Lauterberg 1977.

Interestingly this was another tournament in which Karpov got the appetite to play the black side of a hedgehog set-up after having faced it with White.

30.\( \text{d}1 \)??

White has occupied too much space with his pawns without proper consolidation. Now he commits a further inaccuracy, but it was already surprisingly hard for him to stay alive. Here are some possibilities:

30.\( \text{f}3 \) is well met by 30...\( \text{b}5 \)!, for instance 31.\( \text{cxb}5 \) \( \text{xc}3 \) 32.\( \text{xc}3 \) \( \text{exe}4 \) and Black wins.

30.\( \text{d}1 \) e5! (30...\( \text{c}7 \) 31.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{h}7 \) 32.\( \text{g}2 \) White has strengthened his defences) 31.\( \text{f}xe5 \) \( \text{dxe}5 \) (after 31...\( \text{exe}5 \) 32.\( \text{e}1 \) White is worse but he is still in the game) 32.\( \text{c}2 \) (or 32.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{xd}2 \) 33.\( \text{xd}2 \) \( \text{b}5 \) and Black takes over) 32...\( \text{xd}2 \) 33.\( \text{xd}2 \) (33.\( \text{xd}2 \)?? loses...
to 33...\(\text{Nd}3\)) White has avoided an instant collapse, nevertheless Black has the initiative and can choose between several promising continuations including 33...\(\text{De}6\), 33...b5 and 33...\(\text{Nh}6\).

30...\(\text{f}3\)! looks like the best chance: 30...e5 (30...\(\text{Ec}7\) 31...\(\text{g}2\)) 31...f5 \(\text{ex}e5\) 32...\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{Bxd}2\) (32...f5 33...\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{Df}7\) 34...\(\text{bd}5\)) 33...\(\text{Bxd}2\) f5 34...\(\text{b}4\) fxe4 35...\(\text{x}g\)x4 hxg4 36...\(\text{b}d\)5 \(\text{Df}7\) 37...\(\text{g}1\) White is living dangerously, but he is still in the game.

30...e5!
With this powerful pawn move Karpov breaks up White's pawn chain and gains space in the centre.

31...\(\text{b}3\)
White has no adequate defence. 31...f5 is even worse: 31...\(\text{xe}5\)! The knight on d1 now blocks the queen from defending the g3-pawn. 32...\(\text{b}4\) This allows the queen to come to the aid of the g-pawn, but loosens White's position on the queenside. 32...\(\text{a}4\)! 33...\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{Bxb}2\) 34...\(\text{Gb}2\) b5! 35...\(\text{xb}5\) d5! 36...\(\text{ex}d\) 3\(\text{xd}5\) White's position has fallen apart.

31...b5?!
Karpov keeps the position complex. 31...\(\text{fxf}4\)? was an alternative route to a large advantage: 32...\(\text{gxf}4\) \(\text{De}6\) 33...\(\text{g}x\)x7 \(\text{g}x\)g7 34...f5 \(\text{gxf}5\) (34...\(\text{f}4\)) 35...\(\text{exf}5\) \(\text{e}4\) White's position is too open.

32...\(\text{xb}5\) \(\text{axb}\)5 33...\(\text{g}5\)
If 33...f5 \(\text{gxf}5\)! 34...\(\text{fxf}5\) \(\text{h}6\) wins.

With this move Karpov secures the position of the knight on c5 while also opening a new angle of attack along the a6-f1 diagonal.

34...\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{b}7\) 35...\(\text{g}4\)
35...\(\text{g}3\) was also unsatisfactory: 35...\(\text{a}6\) 36...\(\text{el}\) \(\text{xf}2\) 37...\(\text{xf}2\) \(\text{xf}4\) 38...\(\text{g}7\) (38...\(\text{g}f\)4 \(\text{c}3\) wins.) 38...\(\text{xf}4\) 39...\(\text{xf}4\) \(\text{e}7\) And White loses the h4-pawn.

35...\(\text{h}3\) also ends in failure: 35...\(\text{fxf}2\) 36...\(\text{xf}2\) f5! (36...f6 37...\(\text{e}6\) \(\text{dxe}6\) 38...\(\text{xe}6\) \(\text{f}e\)3 39...\(\text{h}2\) is not as convincing) 37...\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{xe}4\) 38...\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{xe}4\) 39...\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{fxf}4\) 40...\(\text{xf}4\) \(\text{xb}2\) 41...\(\text{xb}2\) \(\text{e}3\) And Black wins.

35...\(\text{hxg}4\)
Suddenly White faces a new problem: the knight on g5 is in danger of being trapped.

36...f5
Garcia Gonzales closes the position and saves the knight, which allows him to survive for a
little longer. 36.fxe5 was no better: 36...dxe5 37...xd8+ xd8 38...c2 dd3 39...g1 (39...h2 a6) 39...xg1+ (or 39...xa2 40...f7 f8 41...xb7 xb2 and Black wins) 40...xg1xb2 41...xb2 ed1+ 42...f2 a6 43...c2 d6 And Black traps the knight.

36...f6! 37...e6 dxe6 38.fxe6 a6 39.f2

But at this event the American grandmaster Larry Christiansen, who had lost to Karpov in round six, scored an incredible 8/10 against the rest of the field, and the two combatants tied for first.

Karpov's next event was the Moscow super tournament. He started well, beating Balashov and Geller before drawing with Polugaevsky. His next opponent was another Soviet player, Alexander Beliavsky. The grandmaster from Lvov was also a former World Junior Champion. He played a total of 134 games against the world champions, achieving twenty victories, fifty eight draws and fifty six losses. Beliavsky lost fifteen games to Karpov, beat him thrice and drew nine times. At this point of their career they had only met three times, with one win apiece and one draw.

Interestingly in the very next round, against Bellon Lopez, Karpov had to play against the Hedgehog formation, though it arose through a Sicilian this time. He was unable to achieve any advantage and was even a bit worse in the ending, although he managed to draw without any great difficulty. He drew his final three games as well, against Spassky, Kavalek and Gligoric. His final score of 8/11, with five wins and six draws, would usually have been enough to win such a tournament outright.
The queen vacates the d1-square to make way for a rook. A year earlier Beliavsky held a draw with little difficulty after 12...dxe5 dxe5 13...a4 d4 14.exd4 exd4 15...xa4 xa4 16...xa4 dxe2 17...d6 exd1 18...a1 exd1 19...a4 a2 20...xe8 efe8 21...f1 h6 22...xb6 axb6 23.axd1 b6 – Vaganian – Beliavsky, Vienna 1980.

The grandmaster from Lvov wants to exchange the e2-bishop. Another game from the same year continued: 12...b7 13...d1 b8 14...g5 h6 15...h4 aac8 16...b5 Black was under some pressure but he eventually managed to hold a tough endgame, Seirawan – Byrne, South Bend 1981.

Up to this point the players had been following an earlier meeting between Vaganian and Beliavsky from 1977. That game continued 14...a5 15...a3 dxe2† 16...xe2 g4 17...d6 a6 18...xd8 axd8 Black succeeded in holding a draw, although at this stage the queenless position is a bit unpleasant for him.

Later White deviated with 17...d4, which led to an advantage and an eventual victory for him in Gheorghiu – Soylu, Athens 1981. The position is similar to the main game, although the lunge with the a-pawn could easily end up leading to a serious weakening of Black's queenside.

15...dxe2 dxe2 16...d4
Even without the bishop, White maintains some pressure in the centre.

Compromising the opponent's kingside structure would not solve Black's problems: 16...dxe4 17...e5 dxe4 18...xc3 bxc3 19...d1 The d5-pawn is vulnerable.

This clever move not only creates a potentially useful escape square for the white king, but more importantly forces the enemy bishop to choose between two diagonals.

It is safer to protect the isolated pawn.

Karpov fights for control over the c-file.

This innocent looking move has far reaching consequences. This game was the subject of enormous publicity in the USSR, where it was said that weakening one square is enough to causes one's downfall against Karpov.
White is a bit better whatever Black does. For instance, 20...g6 is met by 21...e5 and the bishop heads for d4.

Another interesting line is 20...e8 21.a4! a5 22.b3 c5 23.xe6 xb3 24.xd8 xd8 25.f1 f6 26.c3 c5 27.c7! when White keeps his advantage.

21.a4 xe8 22.axe6 fxe6
   After 22...xe6? 23.a5 xa5 24.xb7 e7 25.a6 White is clearly better.

23.a5 xa5 24.xb7 b6
   24...e7? was better, for instance 25.b5 (25.c6 b6) 25...b6 26.e5 (or 26.e5 d8) 26...e8! and it is not easy for White to increase the pressure.

25.e5 d6?!
   The knight is unstable here. 25...e7 was once again preferable.

26.c6 e7 27.a4!
   Karpov clears the c6-square.

27...e7
   Other moves are not any better. For instance, 27..e8 28.a6? is unpleasant, while after 27..b7 28.a3! e4 29.a6 leaves Black in trouble.

28.xc7 xc7 29.d3 e7
   Black understandably wants to get out of the pin, but it does not save the game.

29...c4 releases the pin, but still loses after 30.d7! xd3 31.xe6+ h7 32.xd6 d4 33.e4 xd2 34.f5+ and Black's king is caught.

29...f8? avoids the fate suffered by Black in the game, but after 30.a3 Black is stuck in a double pin. The continuation might be 30...e7 31.h4 c6 32.b3 (32.h5??) 32...a5 33.e5 c5 34.a4 and Black can hardly move.
Karpov once again demonstrates his deadliness at king-hunting in endgames.

30...\(\text{Qxe6}\) 31.\(\text{Qxe8}\) \(\text{Qh7}\)

Interestingly the earlier \(\text{h7-h6}\) move can be judged in two different ways. Beginning with the positive, it created an escape square for the king.

32.\(\text{Qf4}\)

On the other hand, the chronic weakness of the \(g6\)-square puts Black in serious trouble.

32...\(\text{e5}\)?

Beliavsky covers the \(g6\)-square, but misses an even more powerful threat.

32...\(\text{d4}\)!

This was the best chance, although it is not enough to save the game.

32...\(\text{Qe5}\) allows White to win in fine style:

33.\(\text{Qg6}\) \(\text{Qh8}\) 34.\(\text{Qxe6}\) \(\text{Qxb2}\)

35.\(\text{g4}\)!! Black has no good defence against \(g5\) with mating threats.

33.\(\text{Qg6}\) \(\text{Qg8}\) 34.\(\text{Qxe6}\) \(\text{Qe7}\) 35.\(\text{Qxd4}\)

35.\(\text{exd4}\) \(\text{Qxd4}\) is not so clear.

35...\(\text{Qxd4}\) 36.\(\text{Qd3}\!\) And White wins, as pointed out by Belov.

33.\(\text{Qe6}\) \(\text{Qc5}\) 34.\(\text{Qf7}\)

Black resigned in view of 34...\(\text{Qc7}\) 35.\(\text{Qf5}\) \(\text{Qg8}\) 36.\(\text{Qxe5}\) when White is about to collect a second pawn and will win easily.

After a flying start with three wins from the first four rounds, Karpov slowed down and drew most of his remaining games, although he did register two more wins, against Timman in round eight and Smyslov in round ten. He finished with five wins and nine draws, for a total of 9½/13, thus winning the tournament decisively, a point and a half clear of Polugaevsky, Kasparov and the sixty year old Smyslov.

Karpov’s next tournament, the last before his title defence, took place in Amsterdam. He started with a shocking defeat at the hands of Hort, but then bounced back to defeat Ljubojevic. In the third round he had his one and only clash with Jan Donner. The Dutch grandmaster played forty four games against the world champions. He won three of those games; interestingly all three victories came with the black pieces. He lost to them thirty three times and drew the other eight. Donner had a dismal score against Soviet players and according to the database he only won four games against them, although two of those were against world champions.

**Game 61**

Jan Donner – Anatoly Karpov

Amsterdam 1981

1.\(d4\) \(\text{Qf6}\) 2.\(c4\) \(\text{e6}\) 3.\(\text{Qc3}\) \(\text{b4}\) 4.\(\text{b3}\)

Karpov faced this line numerous times with the black pieces, but he also played it with White from time to time.

4...\(\text{c5}\)

1–0
Amazingly, up until 1994 Karpov did not lose a single game in the 4.c3 Nimzo-Indian. The text move was an unusual one for him, 4...0-0 being his usual choice. Let me show you two of his games against the German grandmaster Gerald Hertneck. 5.d3 (5.a3 is the main line and the most critical, and 5.e4? is also interesting.) 5...c5 6.dxc5 Qa6 Here Hertneck tried two different approaches:

a) 7.g3 Qxc5 8.g2 Qe4 9.0-0 White undertakes a structural weakening, hoping that his active piece play will compensate. 9...Qxc3 10.bxc3 Qe7 11.e4 d6 12.e5 Qxe5 13.Qxe5 Qc7 14.Bc2 d6 15.Qf4

b) In the second game Hertneck played a bit passively: 7.e3 Qxc5 8.d2 b6 9.a3 Qxc3 10.Qxc3 Qb7 11.Qe2 d6 12.b3 e5! Karpov plays against White's dark-squared bishop. 13.0-0 Qc7 14.Bc1 Qb7 15.b4 Qe4 16.Ec1!! Qb7 17.Qb2 Qe6 18.a4 Ea6 19.b5 Qb7 20.a5 h6 21.Ea1 Qc8 22.h3 Qd7 23.Qd2 Qec5 24.axb6 axb6 25.f3 e4 26.fxe4 Qxe4 27.Qxe4 Qxe4 28.Qg3 Qg6 29.Qh2 d5 30.Ec1 Qf6 31.Ef1 Ec5 Karpov soon won the b5-pawn and went on to win this game as well, Hertneck – Karpov, Germany 1994.

5.dxc5 0-0 6.Qf4

This line was already known to be harmless. 6.a3 Qxc5 7.Qf3 is critical.

6...Qa6 7.Qd6

The bishop comes to a nice square, but the manoeuvre costs valuable time.

7.Ee8 8.a3 Ea5 9.Qc1 Qc3† 10.Qxc3 Qxc3† 11.Qxc3 Qe4

Black easily regains his pawn while maintaining a lead in development. It is already White who has to be more careful.

Safer was 15.b4 Qe4 (15...Qa4 16.e3 Qb7 17.Qd3) 16.e3 a5 17.Ed3 when the position is so equal that even a magician like Karpov would have had a hard time conjuring something.
15...a5!
Black may be glad for the opportunity to fix the queenside later.

16.\textit{b}5? \textit{d}8 17.\textit{d}6
It would be easy to criticize White for making so many knight moves, but objectively the idea is not bad.

17...\textit{b}7 18.\textit{x}b7?
But this is a serious mistake. Having spent so many tempos with this piece, he should not have exchanged it so cheaply. Instead after 18.\textit{f}3 a4 19.\textit{e}4 White's position remains quite playable.

When playing through this game I was reminded of a game of Kasparov:

12.\textit{a}4! \textit{c}6 13.\textit{b}6 \textit{d}8 14.\textit{c}4! \textit{e}7 15.\textit{a}5! \textit{c}8 16.\textit{b}4 d5 17.\textit{xc}6! bxc6 18.\textit{b}7 Kasparov - Mchedlishvili, Bled (ol) 2002. Thanks to his extraordinary use of his knight, Kasparov obtained a clear advantage and went on to win. It was a magical idea, even if, as I suspect, it was home preparation all the way.

Donner and Kasparov both invested numerous tempos in order to exchange a knight for an enemy bishop. The difference is in the context: Kasparov was able to create weaknesses and invade with his rook, while Donner has merely lost time without achieving anything special, and he will suffer the consequences.

18...\textit{xb}7 19.e3 \textit{ac}8 20.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}5

21.\textit{e}2?
Donner makes one more unnecessary move, this time with the bishop. He should have preferred:
21.\textit{e}2! a4

21...\textit{xd}3?? 22.\textit{xd}3 d5 23.\textit{hc}1! Donner may have overlooked this important resource. White can hold the position with a pawn sacrifice as his king is well placed in the centre. 23...\textit{xc}4 (23...\textit{xc}4† 24.\textit{e}2 b5 25.b3 White holds.) 24.b3 \textit{xc}2 25.\textit{xc}2 \textit{f}8 26.\textit{c}6 \textit{b}8 27.\textit{c}7 White has enough activity to draw the position a pawn down.

22.\textit{c}3
Also after 22.\textit{d}1 f5 23.\textit{cc}1 \textit{f}7 24.\textit{c}2
\( \text{\#e7} \) 25.h4 Black is in control, but his position is not as dominant as the one he obtains in the game.

22...f5 23.\text{c2}

White could also consider 23.h4!, anticipating the opponent's kingside expansion.

23...\text{f7} 24.\text{b1} g5 25.b4\?! axb3 26.\text{xb3}

Nobody would enjoy playing White's position against Karpov, but it is better than the one he reaches in the game. At least the first player has a target on b6.

21...a4!

This ensures that the knight will have a stable base on c5 for the rest of the game.

22.f3 \text{d3} 23.\text{d5} \text{c5} 24.\text{e2}

White has no time to lose - a sloppy move such as 24.h4? would run into 24...d5!.

24...\text{d8} 25.\text{c3}!

Donner finds the only move to remain in the game.

25...\text{a5} 26.\text{b1} \text{c8} 27.\text{f2}

White is desperately passive, but he might have considered 27.h4?! in anticipation of Black's kingside advance.

27...\text{e7} 28.\text{e2} h6

Karpov is in no hurry, and merely inches his way forwards on the kingside.

29.\text{e1} \text{h5} 30.h3 \text{e5} 31.\text{f2} \text{b3}

32.\text{c2} d6 33.\text{e1} g5 34.g3 \text{e5} 35.\text{f1} f5 36.\text{f2}

36...\text{f8}!

Preparing to open a second front. White cannot easily transfer his pieces to the kingside as he is short of space.

37.\text{g2} f4 38.\text{f1}

It is hard to recommend anything for White, for instance after 38.exf4 gxf4 39.g4 e5 Black also dominates.

38...\text{e5} 39.\text{d3} \text{exe3+} 40.\text{xe3} \text{e5+}

41.\text{e4}
41...\( \text{Qc5} \)!

Karpov keeps torturing his opponent. In practical terms this was the safest way to ensure victory, although Black could also have won by more direct means:

41...\( \text{b5?!} \)

41...\( \text{d5?!} \) would be too hasty, and after 42.\( \text{cx}d5 \) \( \text{exd5} \) 43.\( \text{Bc7}+ \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 44.\( \text{Bc6}+ \) White survives.

42.\( \text{cx}b5 \)

After 42.\( \text{d4} \) Black can even sacrifice an exchange in the style of Petrosian: 42...\( \text{xe}4! \) (There is also 42...\( \text{bxc}4+ \) 43.\( \text{Bxc}4 \) d5 44.\( \text{Bc7}+ \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 45.\( \text{h}7 \) \( \text{Qe}1 \) 46.\( \text{Qa}7 \) \( \text{f5} \) and Black should win.) 43.\( \text{Bxe}4 \) \( \text{bxc}4 \) 44.\( \text{Bf3} \) d5 With a decisive advantage.

42...\( \text{d}5 \) 43.\( \text{Bc7}+ \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 44.\( \text{b}6 \)

White seems to have dangerous counterplay, but it is not quite enough.

44...\( \text{dxe}4 \) 45.\( \text{fxe}4 \) \( \text{Qb}8 \) 46.\( \text{Bf}2+ \) \( \text{Qg}6 \) 47.\( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{Bxb6} \)

48.\( \text{Bf7} \)

48.\( \text{Bc7?} \) \( \text{Qf5}!! \) is a nice touch.

48...\( \text{Qc}5 \) 49.\( \text{Bce}7 \) \( \text{Qa}5 \) 50.\( \text{Bg}7+ \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 51.\( \text{Bgf7}+ \) \( \text{Qe}5 \) 52.\( \text{Qf5}+ \) \( \text{Qd}6 \)

And Black wins. Still, it was hardly worth playing in such a risky fashion over the board. After the game continuation I doubt that White can hold the position, and even if a narrow path to survival does exist, it would be almost impossible to withstand the pressure over the board.

42.\( \text{Bd}4 \) \( \text{Qb}3 \) 43.\( \text{Bd}3 \) \( \text{Qd}7 \) 44.\( \text{Bc}3 \) \( \text{Qc}5 \)

Karpov continues to wear down his opponent.

45.\( \text{Bd}4 \) \( \text{Cc}8 \) 46.\( \text{Bf}2 \) \( \text{Qb}3 \) 47.\( \text{Bd}3 \) \( \text{Cc}7 \)
48.\( \text{Bf}2 \) \( \text{h}5 \) 49.\( \text{Bc}3 \) \( \text{Qc}5 \) 50.\( \text{Bd}4 \)

Finally the time has come for direct action.

50...\( \text{g}4 \)!

Removing the defender of the bishop.

51.\( \text{Bc}3 \)

If 51.\( \text{hx}g4 \) \( \text{hx}g4 \) 52.\( \text{Bh}2 \) \( \text{gxf}3 \) wins.

51...\( \text{gxf}3 \) 52.\( \text{Bxf}3 \) \( \text{Qb}3 \) 53.\( \text{Bd}3? \)

This blunders a piece, although White was lost anyway.

53...\( \text{Bxe}3 \!+ \)

0–1

Over the remainder of the tournament Karpov achieved two more wins and six draws. His overall score of 7/11 was slightly below par for his high standards, and was only good enough to share second place with Portisch, behind the victorious Timman. After Amsterdam it was time for the main event of Karpov's year: defending his title against Korchnoi.
The match began at the start of October, and took place in the town of Merano in northern Italy. Since his narrow defeat in the 1978 match, Viktor the Terrible had maintained a busy tournament schedule, although he was unable to participate in the very best events in the world due to the ongoing boycott from the Soviets. Some of Korchnoi’s tournament triumphs were deeply impressive, while on other occasions he performed disappointingly. Still, in 1980 he defeated his old enemy Petrosian in the candidates quarter-final match, scoring two wins with seven draws and no defeats. He followed that by finishing joint first in the strong Phillips and Drew tournament in London. Then in the semi-final of the candidates matches he narrowly defeated Polugaevsky by a score of 7½–6½, with three wins, two losses and nine draws. In the final he met Hübner and once again won by three wins to two, although this time there were just three draws as the German grandmaster resigned the match with two adjournments left to play.

Even after securing the right to challenge Karpov for the second time, Korchnoi took part in a number of tournaments in 1981. Despite the fact that he had passed the age of fifty, his results were impressive, especially at Lone Pine where he won a very strong open tournament. By the time he met Karpov his rating had risen to an impressive 2695, just five points short of the champion.

Despite Korchnoi’s undoubted status as a worthy contender, the match was strikingly one-sided. Karpov won the first two games, drew the third, then won again in Game Four. Already he was halfway to victory. Korchnoi steadied his ship and drew Game Five, before striking back in Game Six and drawing the next two. But in Game Nine he was out of form, and Karpov punished him instructively. The next three games were drawn. In Game Thirteen Korchnoi beat Karpov nicely in an Orthodox Queen’s Gambit, but Karpov struck right back in the next game after Korchnoi misplayed an Open Spanish.

Just as in the first match, the score line stood at 5–2, but this time Karpov had the benefit of experience and did not let his rival back into the match. After three more draws, he killed off the challenger. Here is the decisive game.

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**Game 62**

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

World Championship, Merano (18) 1981

1.e4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.b5 a6

Karpov won Game Two, his first white game of the match, in the slightly offbeat line 3...d6 4.0–0 dxe4 5.d4 e7. In Game Four Korchnoi switched to a Petroff but lost there too. In Game Six he returned to his tried and tested Open Spanish and won. This led Karpov to avoid the Ruy Lopez by switching to the Italian for two games, and 1.c4 in another. He did not return to the Ruy Lopez until Game Fourteen, after he and his team had prepared some new ideas.

4.a4 d6 5.0–0 dxe4

Over the course of the two world championship matches between these two rivals, the Open Spanish featured in twelve games. Karpov won four games to Korchnoi’s two, and the other six were drawn. Karpov also won one game in their 1972 training match in this opening.

6.d4 b5 7.b3 d5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.bbd2

With three wins, three draws and no losses, Karpov scored much better with this move than with 9.c3.
9...\(\text{bxc5}\) 10.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{d4}\) 11.\(\text{bxe6}\)

Karpov no longer uses 11.\(\text{dxe5}\)!, the revelation of Baguio.

11...\(\text{bxc6}\) 12.\(\text{cxd4}\) \(\text{cxd4}\)

13.\(\text{a4}\)!

Karpov and his team prepared for the match very hard, and this was another new idea. It has stood the test of time, and nearly three decades later it is still regarded as one of White's main tries for an advantage.

The main idea is, unsurprisingly, to capture on b5 at an opportune moment. If Black takes back with the knight then his queenside pawns will be isolated and vulnerable. If he takes with the pawn the queen will be diverted to a8, away from the centre. Black could move his rook to b8, but then White gets the a-file.

13.\(\text{dxe4}\)

Karpov certainly anticipated the Open Spanish, and this was another new idea which he prepared earlier in the match. In Game Fourteen it worked very well, but in the sixteenth Korchnoi neutralized it.

13...\(\text{b7}\) 14.\(\text{c3}\)

Now Black must make the right choice with the knight.

14...\(\text{d5}\)!

14...\(\text{cxf3}\)?? The challenger's initial reaction to the novelty was not the best. 15.\(\text{xf3}\) 0-0 16.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{c8}\) 17.\(\text{c6}\) 18.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 19.\(\text{f5}\) 20.\(\text{c5}\) 21.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{c7}\) 22.\(\text{h5}\) \(\text{e5}\) 23.\(\text{h6}\) \(\text{xb2}\) 24.\(\text{xd7}\)! The champion already had a winning position, Karpov - Korchnoi, Merano (14) 1981.

Two games later, Korchnoi was prepared with a better answer.

15.\(\text{c2}\) 0-0 16.\(\text{g5}\) 17.\(\text{c5}\) 18.\(\text{xe6}\) \(\text{xe6}\) 19.\(\text{c1}\) \(\text{d5}\)

Black was close to equal. Although he later allowed Karpov to develop a bit of pressure, he was able to hold the draw in Karpov - Korchnoi, Merano (16) 1981.

13...\(\text{c7}\)

With so much at stake, Korchnoi makes the safest move. 13...\(\text{c5}\) is riskier after 14.\(\text{d4}\), for instance: 14...0-0?! (It looks as though Anand simply blundered when he played this move. 14...\(\text{b6}\) was better.) 15.\(\text{dxc5}\) \(\text{dxc5}\) 16.\(\text{f3}\) 17.\(\text{c5}\) 18.\(\text{c5}\) \(\text{c1}\) 19.\(\text{d8}\) \(\text{f1}\) 20.\(\text{xf1}\) \(\text{xd8}\) Fortunately for Black, his fortress is not easy to penetrate.

21.\(\text{g3}\) (21.\(\text{d6}\) 22.\(\text{b5}\)!! \(\text{d1}\) 23.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{d4}\) 24.\(\text{h4}\)!! h5 25.\(\text{b4}\)?) After exchanging the last queenside pawn Black held easily in Topalov - Anand, Dos Hermanas 1996. It is surprising that such a great player as Topalov was unable to create any serious winning chances with an
extra queen. Despite the final result, Black's opening was not a success.

14.\( \text{\textit{\textup{d4}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{d4}}} \)

14...\( \text{\textit{\textup{xd4}}} \) was Korchnoi's choice when he repeated the same line fifteen years later:

15.\( \text{\textit{\textup{axb5}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{wxe6}}} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{\textup{bxa6}}} \) 0-0 17.\( \text{\textit{\textup{e4}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{c5}}} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{b8}}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{\textup{a5}}} \) (According to Kasparov 19.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f3}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{e6}}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textup{wxe6}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\textup{a7}}} \) gives a tangible advantage.) 19...\( \text{\textit{\textup{d6}}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textup{e4}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{xe4}}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\textup{xe4}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{b4}}} \) 22.\( \text{\textit{\textup{xb4}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{xb4}}} \) Black was unable to hold this inferior endgame in Topalov - Korchnoi, Madrid 1996.

15.\( \text{\textit{\textup{e6}}} \)

Karpov could have inflicted a slight weakening on the black queenside with 15.\( \text{\textit{\textup{axb5}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{d5}}} \), but he wants more. The game might continue 16.\( \text{\textit{\textup{g4}}} \) (or 16.\( \text{\textit{\textup{c2}}} \) 0-0 17.\( \text{\textit{\textup{a4}}} \)?) 16...0-0 17.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{c8}}} \) when Black is a bit worse, but should be able to live with his disadvantage.

15...\( \text{\textit{\textup{e6}}} \)

Yusupov played 15...0-0 three times in 1989. 16.\( \text{\textit{\textup{axb5}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{d5}}} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\textup{e3}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{c8}}} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\textup{d5}}} \) (In the first two games the Russian held the somewhat worse position after 18.\( \text{\textit{\textup{c2}}} \) against both Adams and Ivanchuk.) 18...\( \text{\textit{\textup{d8}}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{\textup{c6}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{f5}}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{h5}}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\textup{h3}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{a8}}} \) 22.\( \text{\textit{\textup{fxd1}}} \) Once again Black had an inferior position and this time he was unable to hold in Chandler - Yusupov, Hastings 1989.

16.\( \text{\textit{\textup{e3}}} \) 0-0 17.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f4}}} \)

Karpov wants to gain space and drive away the well placed knight.

17.\( \text{\textit{\textup{xd1}}} \)

17...\( \text{\textit{\textup{g6}}} \) would be asking for trouble on the kingside: 18.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f3}}} \) (18.\( \text{\textit{\textup{g4}}} \) is also promising, but hardly necessary) 18...\( \text{\textit{\textup{d4}}} \) (18...\( \text{\textit{\textup{bxa4}}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{\textup{ad1}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{e8}}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f5}}} \) White's attack is too strong) 19.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f3}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{f5}}} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f3}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{b8}}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\textup{c5}}} \) Black has too many weak points in his position without achieving anything in return.

18.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \)

18...\( \text{\textit{\textup{f8}}} \)

Korchnoi is willing to give up material in order to eliminate White's queenside pawns. The idea is sensible enough, except for the fact that there is no time to execute it. In a few subsequent games Black attempted to improve with:

18...\( \text{\textit{\textup{ad8}}} \)

Two other moves have been suggested by commentators:

18...\( \text{\textit{\textup{f5}}} \) Black hopes to obtain some breathing space on the kingside. 19.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{gxf6}}} \) (19...\( \text{\textit{\textup{xf6}}} \)?) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f5}}} \)\( \text{\textit{\textup{xb2}}} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\textup{f6}}} \) is tough for...
Black) 20.f5 \( \text{g7} \) 21.g4 Black is cramped and he is certainly worse, although his position still looks preferable to the game.
18...\( \text{f8} \)?! 19.axb5 axb5 20.axa8 \( \text{xa8} \) 21.f5 \( \text{d8} \) 22.\( \text{Exd8} \) \( \text{Exd8} \) According to Kasparov Black has chances to survive because of the limited material.
19.axb5 axb5 20.f5!

After 20.\( \text{dcl} \) g6 21.\( \text{a5} \) \( \text{d3} \) 22.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{b3} \) 23.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{d8} \) 24.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{b4} \) 25.g3 c5 Black had solved all his problems in Kaiumov – Safin, Tashkent 1992.
20...\( \text{Exd1} \) \( \text{t} \) 21.\( \text{Exd1} \) \( \text{d8} \) 22.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{d4} \) 23.\( \text{f6} \)

23.\( \text{e2} \)\( \text{t} \)

Also after 23...\( \text{xf6} \) 24.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{e2} \)\( \text{t} \) 25.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{xc1} \) 26.\( \text{xc1} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 27.\( \text{xf6} \)\( \text{t} \) Black would face a long and unpleasant defence.
24.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{xc1} \) 25.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{e8} \) 26.\( \text{xc1} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 27.\( \text{f4} \) f6 28.\( \text{e3} \) fxe5 29.\( \text{g3} \)

Adams – Unzicker, Germany 1996. Despite his slight material deficit, White is in control and the English grandmaster eventually squeezed the full point out of the position. I wonder if the German grandmaster would have managed to hold the ending when he was younger and in his prime.

19.\( \text{d7} \)!

Moving the rook to the seventh rank is both natural and powerful.

19...\( \text{a8} \)
23...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}e5!}}}}

Korchnoi fights to relieve the pressure around his king. Black has no time to defend the c-pawn with 23...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{e}c8?}}} as after 24.\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}c1}}} \textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{a}x5}}} 25.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d4}}} White's pieces simply murder Black's king: 25...\textit{\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d8}}} 26.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xc7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}x7}} 27.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xc7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{e}c6}}} 28.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}xg7}}} Black can resign.

24.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xc7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{e}c8}}} 25.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}a1}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xc7}}} 26.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xc7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}d8}}}

27.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{h}3?}}}

Karpov commits an inaccuracy in the endgame, which is rare for him. He must have sensed that he was clearly better, and the pressure of winning the match may have affected him.

The correct continuation was 27.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}f4!}}, driving the knight away and thus preventing Black from contesting the seventh rank. Play may continue 27...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}f7}}} 28.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}c6}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}d4}}} 29.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xc6}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}d8}}} 30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}c7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}x7}}}? 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}xe7}}} and White wins.

27...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{h}6}}}

Korchnoi misses his opportunity for 27...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{e}d7!}}, taking the seventh rank away from Karpov's rook: 28.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}c8}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d1}}} 29.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}f2}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}x6}}} 30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}x6}}} 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{h}xh7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}e7}}} 32.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}c7}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b1}}} 33.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}g5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}x2}}} 34.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}g3}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b3}}} 35.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{h}h2}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}g6}}} Black is still worse but he has chances to draw.

28.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{a}a7}}}

28.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}f2!}}} would have prevented the idea in the next note.

28...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}c4?}}}

28...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d1}}} was Black's last chance to make a fight of the game. 29.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}f2}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b1}}} Targeting the b2-pawn gives Black reasonable chances to survive. 30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}xg7}}} (After 30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xa6}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xb2}}} 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}g3}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b3}}} Black is active enough to hold.) 30...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}xb2}}} 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}f1}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}xg7}}} 32.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{a}xa6}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}c4}}} Black has decent counterplay.

29.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b6!}}}

By forcing the rook to vacate the open file, Karpov prevents any counterplay for a long time. From now on Korchnoi never gets a chance to obtain any active play.

29...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b8}}}

29...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d1}}} leaves the f8-bishop too vulnerable, and 30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}f2}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}b1}}} 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}f7}} wins easily.

30.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}c5!}}}

Karpov exchanges the bishop which holds together the defence of the black king.

30...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{b}x5?}}}

After 30...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}xa5}}} 31.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f}f7}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{h}h7}}} 32.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}xf8}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}xf8}}} 33.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{c}c5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{g}g6}}} 34.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{d}d7!}} White wins.
The Making of a Champion

326

31...\textit{xc}5 \textit{gxf6}

By taking away the d-file from Black's rook, Karpov eliminates any risk of counterplay.

32...\textit{Ed}8 33.\textit{Exa}6 \textit{df7} 34.\textit{Ea}7\uparrow \textit{g6} 35.\textit{Ed}7!

Facing two connected passed pawns, Korchnoi has no chance to survive.

39...\textit{De}5 39.\textit{Eb}7 \textit{Dd}5 40.\textit{Ef}7 \textit{Eh}5 41.\textit{Ef}6

1-0

Korchnoi sealed his 41st move, but resigned his hopeless position without resuming. Thus Karpov won the match by the emphatic score of six wins to two, with ten draws. At thirty years of age, he had not even reached the height of his powers. It became clear that the fifty year old Korchnoi was unlikely to pose a serious threat to Karpov's crown ever again.

\textbf{1981 Summary}

Linares (1st place): 8/11 (+5 =6 -0)
Four Teams, Moscow (Board one): 3½/6 (+1 =5 -0)
Moscow (1st place): 9/13 (+5 =8 -0)
Amsterdam (2nd-3rd place): 7/11 (+4 =6 -1)
World Championship match versus Korchnoi: Won 11-7 (+6 =10 -2)

Total 65.3\% (+21 =35 -3)

- Wins
- Draws
- Losses
Karpov's first tournament of the year was in Mar del Plata, on the coast of northern Argentina. Up to this point he had not achieved much success in Latin America, and the present event was also not one of the high points of his career. He started well enough, with a win over Larsen and three draws, but then he suffered a defeat against Timman. He picked up a win and two draws from the next three, but then lost to Garcia Palermo. After two more draws, Karpov faced Franco Ocampos in round twelve. The Spanish grandmaster faced the world champions eight times, losing three games and drawing five. This was his first encounter with Karpov. They met once more in 1995 and drew.

Game 63

Anatoly Karpov – Zenon Franco Ocampos

Mar del Plata 1982

1.e4 c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qc3 d6 6.Ag5 e6 7.Qd2 a6 8.0–0 h6

The Spaniard had not played this particular move before. Karpov had faced it just once, against Van der Wiel in 1980.

9.Qe3

Karpov tried 9.Qf4 in some later games.

9...Qxd4

Karpov faced a couple of other moves here as well:

9...Qd7 10.f3 Qc7 11.g4 e5 12.h4 b5 13.Qg1 h5 14.g5 Qg8 15.Qe2 Qb8 16.f4 b4 17.Qb1 Qg4 18.Qxa6 g6 19.Qg1 Qxe3 20.Qxe3 Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1980. Black is in trouble due to his undeveloped kingside, and he went on to lose. This game shows how difficult it can be to understand openings. The Dutch grandmaster is a very fine player, yet in the early days of the variation he was unable to find the right plan.

In the next year Timman played the line differently: 9...Qe7 10.f3 Qxd4 11.Qxd4 e5 12.Qe3 Qe6 13.Qd5 Qxd5 14.exd5 Qd7 15.g3?! Qg5 16.f4 Qf6 17.Qd3 Qc7
Karpov finds a novel queen manoeuvre; the lady is heading for the e4-square. 18...b5 19.Re1 b8 20.h4 a5 21.Re4 d8. The fact that Black felt the need to make such an ugly king move indicates that he has real problems, although to Timman's credit, he managed to survive and draw.

10...d4 b5

10...e5 11.e3 c6 is also possible.

11.B

During his world championship reign, Karpov had two disappointing losses in the Rauzer when his opponent played ...a6. In both of those games he put his pawn on f4, but he subsequently switched to a set-up with f3, as we saw in his games against Van der Wiel and Timman in the note to Black's ninth move above. In those days players knew much less about attacking with f3 against the Scheveningen pawn structure. The English Attack only became popular in the second half of the eighties.

11...e7

11...a5 is a reasonable alternative which has been tested by Anand a few times.

12.h4

Karpov starts his pawn storm at once. Later 12.b1 became the main line.

12...b7?!

This is a bit too slow, although it looks natural enough, and the most precise plans had not been worked out at the time. Nowadays the main line is 12...a5! 13.f2 b8 14.b1 b4 15.e2 e5 16.a7 b7 17.c1 e6 with complex play.

13.g4 b4

Black continues with his thematic queenside play, but a surprise awaits.

14.a4!

Karpov switches his attention to the queenside, having picked out the c4-square as an inviting home for his knight.
More than a decade later, even Kasparov, the greatest Scheveningen expert of all time, could also have been threatened by White's strategy of fighting on the queenside. The following position arose in Topalov – Kasparov, Novgorod 1995. At this point White could have obtained an advantage by switching his focus to the d6-pawn and queenside:

![Chessboard diagram]

19...g5!  
White could have obtained an edge with 19...f4 f8 (19...c7 20.d6t) 20.e5 e6 21.e3 intending to eliminate one of Black's valuable bishops, but Karpov is more ambitious.

19...hxg5 20.hxg5 c7 21.hg1  
Karpov makes a semi-waiting move.

21...c3 22.b3 c4  
16...d5  
The Spaniard exchanges the vulnerable d6-pawn, although opening the centre might prove risky for his king.

17.exd5 cxd5 18.e2 g8  
Black technically forfeits the right to castle, although realistically this decision was made several moves back.

23.g4!  
Now if Black wants to exchange bishops, he will have to allow the rook to take up a fine position in the centre.

23...c6 24.e3 a8 25.b1 a5 26.h4  
Planning to put the rook on h7.
26...\textit{a}xd4

To stop it Black finally exchanges the bishop, but allows the rook to come closer to his king.

27.\textit{a}xd4 \textit{g}gd8 28.\textit{c}c4 \textit{g}6

If 28...\textit{d}5 29.\textit{c}e3 \textit{f}f8 30.g6 (or 30.\textit{h}1 \textit{g}6 31.\textit{f}4) 30...fxg6 31.\textit{g}1 Black's king lacks protection.

29.\textit{d}xa5!

Black had to focus so much on the safety of his king that he was unable to keep his queenside together.

29...\textit{e}5 30.\textit{d}d6?!

So far Karpov has outplayed his opponent beautifully, but here in the direct confrontation he commits a slight inaccuracy. Taking the pawn with 30.\textit{b}b4! would have won comfortably, as the a5-knight is poisoned due to some simple tactics.

There was a second convincing route to victory in 30.\textit{d}3! \textit{f}8 31.\textit{c}c4! \textit{e}6 32.\textit{a}xd8 \textit{w}xd8 33.\textit{w}e3 when White wins a second pawn.

30...\textit{c}c5?

After this mistake Black drops the b-pawn. Instead he could have exploited the less than secure placement of the white rook with 30...\textit{h}8! when he can hang onto the b-pawn: 31.\textit{w}xd8 (31.\textit{d}c4? \textit{w}xd6) 31...\textit{w}xd8 32.\textit{c}c4 (another option is 32.\textit{a}4 \textit{w}xd2 33.\textit{a}xd2 \textit{w}h7 34.\textit{c}c4 \textit{x}g5 35.\textit{d}xe5 \textit{e}6 36.\textit{d}d7 \textit{g}8 37.\textit{c}c5+ \textit{e}5 with reasonable winning chances) 32...\textit{w}xd2 33.\textit{a}xd2 \textit{b}b5 34.\textit{a}d6 White has good winning chances, but some work remains.

31.\textit{w}xd8 \textit{w}xd8

If 31...\textit{w}xd8 32.\textit{e}3 \textit{c}c7 White wins with the lovely tactical shot 33.\textit{d}c6!.

32.\textit{w}xb4

Karpov now has three connected passed pawns on the queenside. The win is virtually guaranteed, even though it may take some time to advance the pawns.

32...\textit{w}xd1+ 33.\textit{w}xd1 \textit{d}d6 34.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}d4 35.\textit{c}c4 \textit{e}4 36.\textit{f}xe4 \textit{w}xe4 37.\textit{d}d2 \textit{e}6 38.\textit{b}4+ \textit{c}5 39.\textit{d}d2 \textit{e}6 40.\textit{a}4

Black has no chance to stop the a-pawn without giving up a piece.

40...\textit{g}1+ 41.\textit{h}2 \textit{w}xg5 42.\textit{d}6+ \textit{f}6 43.a5 \textit{c}5 44.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5

1–0

In the last round he also beat Braga to salvage his tournament with a below-par but still somewhat respectable score of 7½/13, with
four wins, two losses and seven draws. This was enough to share second place with Seirawan and Polugaevsky, a point behind Timman who finished first.

Karpov was not in his best form in Buenos Aires. Timman said that he felt that Karpov had not recovered from the Korchnoi match. The match from the outside looked one sided, but as the Dutch grandmaster remarked, a world championship match is never easy.

Karpov's next event was the Phillips and Drew tournament in London. He started with a string of four draws, before picking up his first win in a Dragon against Mestel. Three more draws followed. His tournament then took on an unexpected shift: after drawing in seven of the first eight rounds, Karpov did not draw a single one of his remaining five games. In round nine he defeated Miles in another Dragon, then met John Nunn in round ten.

This was Karpov's first meeting with the strong English grandmaster. Nunn faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Topalov. He scored six wins, twenty one draws and fourteen losses. His lifetime score against Karpov is one win, four draws and five losses.

Game 64

Anatoly Karpov – John Nunn

London 1982

1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{f}\)3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{xd}\)4 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{f}\)6 5.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{c}\)3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{c}\)6

The English grandmaster's main opening was the Najdorf, yet he made a quick draw in the present line against Karpov's second Balashov earlier in the same year.

6.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{db}\)5 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}\)6 7.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)4 e5 8.\(\text{\textit{g}}\)5 a6 9.\(\text{\textit{a}}\)3

9...\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{e}\)6?!

The variation has a reputation for being more passive than the Sveshnikov with 9...b5. The main problem is that White has an easier time improving the offside knight on a3 and solidifying his control over the d5-square.

10.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{c}\)4 \(\text{\textit{f}}\)8 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{x}\)f6

In the aforementioned Balashov – Nunn game, White played the less critical 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{d}\)3 and a draw was agreed a few moves later.

11...\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{x}\)f6

11...\(\text{\textit{g}}\)xf6 12.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{w}}\)b6 has been played more frequently. According to the database the text move was first introduced by Soltis. It has not become as fundamental as his 12...h5 line in the Dragon, but still it has been played in a few hundred games.
12.\(\text{b6}\)

It is not in Karpov's style to grab a hot pawn with 12.\(\text{cxd6}\) \(\text{xd6}\) 13.\(\text{xd6}\). Generally speaking, such pawns should not be taken without the benefit of detailed home preparation.

12...\(\text{b8}\) 13.\(\text{cd5}\) \(\text{d8}\) 14.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{e7}\)

Developing the bishop to the other diagonal with 14...\(\text{g6}\) is risky in view of 15.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{h6}\) 16.\(\text{xa6}\) when Black does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

15.\(\text{c4}\)

This game was one of the earliest for the variation. It says something for Karpov's fine touch that his moves are still regarded as the main line.

15...0–0 16.0–0 \(\text{g5}\) 17.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{h8}\) 18.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{g6}\)

Karpov mentions another interesting possibility in 20.\(\text{ae1}\)!. Play might continue 20...\(\text{f5}\) (Perhaps Black should avoid opening the e-file with 20...\(\text{e7}\)?) 21.\(\text{exf5}\) \(\text{xf5}\) 22.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{e6}\) 23.\(\text{e4}\) and White is somewhat better.

20...\(\text{f5}\)!

This thematic move is misguided, as Black's central pawn mass will be more of a weakness than a strength. Karpov has been looking towards both sides of the board, and Nunn should have adopted the same policy by means of:

20...\(\text{a5}\)!

Karpov is anticipating Black's counterplay with ...\(\text{f5}\).

19.\(\text{h1}\)

It is interesting that Karpov refrains from placing a rook on the d-file, playing against the d6-pawn. It should be mentioned that after 20.\(\text{BAD1}\)!! \(\text{f5}\) 21.\(\text{a2}\) we have transposed to a position from which Van den Doel scored two victories from White's side in the mid-1990s.

19.\(\text{h6}\) 20.\(\text{b4}\)

Closing the queenside leads to some interesting possibilities, but ultimately it turns out that Black is doing fine.

21.\(\text{bxa5}\) may be best: 21...\(\text{cxa5}\) 22.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{f5}\) 23.\(\text{exf5}\) \(\text{xf5}\) 24.\(\text{d1}\) With a complex position, Salai - Kernazhitsky, Olomouc 1999.

21...\(\text{e7}\) 22.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xb6}\) 23.\(\text{e6}\)

23.\(\text{xa2}\) \(\text{be8}\) not an improvement for White.

23...\(\text{f6}\) 24.\(\text{c4}\)

The position resembles the game Groszpeter - Cifuentes, Andorra 1995, except that here White has played \(\text{h1}\) instead of \(\text{d1}\).
In the aforementioned game this idea was unplayable due to the reply 25.\alpha c8! winning the d6-pawn.

Black can also borrow an idea from Cifuentes with 24...\alpha be8!? 25.\alpha x e 6 \alpha d 8 26.\alpha h 3 \alpha x e 7 27.\alpha x h 6 \alpha f 4 28.f 3 \alpha c 8 with decent compensation for the pawn.

25.\alpha c 8 \alpha d 8 26.\alpha a 7 d 5

Black takes the initiative.

21.\alpha x f 5 g x f 5

21...\alpha x f 5 also fails to equalize: 22.\alpha d 3 (22.a 5!? ) 22...\alpha e 6 (Closing the queenside does not solve Black's problems: 22...a 5 23.\alpha x f 5 \alpha x f 5 24.b 5 \alpha e 7 25.\alpha a d 1 Black has no active plan.) 23.a 5 \alpha c 7 24.\alpha e 4 White has consolidated in the centre can start playing against the d6-pawn.

22.f 4!

Karpov starts to put pressure on Black's central pawn chain.

22...\alpha x d 5

Nunn steers the game towards an opposite-coloured bishop position. Had he postponed this exchange, White would have had good chances to exchange his light-squared bishop for its counterpart, for instance: 22...\alpha g 7 23.a 5! Now that the b6-knight is protected, White will be able to recapture on d5 with the bishop. 23.e 4 24.\alpha e 3 \alpha e 7 25.\alpha a d 1 \alpha x d 5 26.\alpha x d 5 \alpha x d 5 27.\alpha x d 5 White has an obvious positional advantage.

23.\alpha x d 5

23...e 4

Nunn keeps the position closed, which makes attacking Black's central pawn chain harder.

23...\alpha e 7??

Black could also have kept his pawns fluid, although he has to walk a narrow path and one can understand Nunn's reluctance to head for a situation in which one mistake could have caused his position to collapse.

24.f x e 5

White is not winning a pawn after this, but he can still exert pressure.
The Making of a Champion

24.\textit{Wh}5?! is not good due to 24...\textit{Qxd5} 25.\textit{Rx}d5 \textit{Rx}f4 26.g3 \textit{Rg}5! and Black gets away.

24.\textit{Rad}1 was a decent alternative though:

24...\textit{Qxd5} 25.\textit{Rx}d5 \textit{Rx}f4 26.g3 \textit{Rg}6 27.\textit{Rfd}1 \textit{Rg}7 28.\textit{Rx}d6 \textit{Rc}7 29.a5! Black's queenside weaknesses are fixed, which makes the position rather unpleasant for him.

24...\textit{Qxd5} 25.\textit{Rx}d5 dxe5 26.\textit{Rxe}6

The trick is 26.\textit{Rx}e5\texttt{??} \textit{Rg}7 27.\textit{Rxe}6\texttt{!!} when White loses material.

24.a5

Karpov fixes Black's queenside pawns. He could have considered undermining Black's pawn structure immediately with: 24.g4? Karpov probably wanted to strengthen the rest of his position before opting for such a committal move, but the idea is promising nevertheless. 24...\textit{fxg}4 (24...\textit{Rx}d7 25.\textit{Rx}d5 \textit{Rxd}5 26.\textit{Rxd}1 \textit{Rbd}8 27.\textit{Rg}2 \textit{Rg}6 [27...\textit{Rg}8 28.\textit{Re}3] 28.\textit{Rh}3 White will take over on the g-file, which gives him a significant advantage.) 25.\textit{Rxd}4 \textit{Rc}8 (25...\textit{Rxe}8 26.\textit{Rae}1) 26.\textit{Rfh}4 \textit{Rg}7 27.\textit{Rg}1 \textit{Rfe}6 28.\textit{Rae}1 Black is living dangerously.

24...\textit{Rg}7 25.\textit{Bac}1

Karpov defends the c3-pawn in advance, before turning his attention to the d-file.

25...\textit{Rce}7 26.\textit{Rfd}1 \textit{Qxd}5 27.\textit{Rx}d5 \textit{Rc}7

28.\textit{Bc}2!

Thanks to Karpov's fine prophylactic play, Nunn has virtually no active plan. Over the next few moves Karpov continues to improve his position, step by step, in a manner that is so characteristic of him.

28...\textit{Rc}7 29.\textit{Re}3 \textit{Bbc}8 30.c4 \textit{Bc}7 31.\textit{g}3!

Karpov very subtly starts to undermine Black's pawn chain in the centre.
31...\textit{E}e8

32...g2!

After making a few moves on the queenside, Karpov turns his attention to the kingside and prepares g4.

32...\textit{E}f6!

Nunn anticipates his opponent’s plan, and prepares to activate his queen to create some counterplay.

33.g4!!

One of Karpov’s remarkable qualities is that once he decides on a plan he almost always follows it through. In the present case he is correct to judge the resulting position as being in his favour, nevertheless there was an even stronger continuation available.

33\ldots \textit{E}b1 was mentioned by Karpov as an interesting alternative, but after 33...\textit{E}c3! Black’s position looks playable, for instance 34.\textit{E}b6 \textit{E}e7 35.b5 \textit{c}3! and Black becomes very active.

White could have taken advantage of the absence of the enemy queen from e7 by playing:

33.\textit{E}b6!

Spedding up the queenside breakthrough.

33...\textit{E}c7 34.b5

There is also 34.\textit{E}c2 \textit{g}6 (34...\textit{E}c8 35.b5 axb5 36.\textit{A}xb5 wins) 35.b5 \textit{g}4 36.\textit{E}f1 \textit{h}3 37.\textit{E}g1 and White's play on the queenside is faster.

34...\textit{E}c3

Both 34...axb5 35.cxb5 and 34...\textit{E}c3 35.\textit{A}xb7 \textit{f}3 36.\textit{E}b1 lead to positions where White's passed pawns are too strong.

35.\textit{E}e2 \textit{E}c3 36.bxa6

Or 36.\textit{A}xb7 \textit{W}c4 37.\textit{A}f3 and White has a nice advantage.

36...bxa6 37.\textit{W}xd6 \textit{W}xa5 38.\textit{A}c6

Black is in trouble.

33...xg4

Taking the pawn is better than trying to exchange queens:

33...\textit{E}c3?! 34.\textit{E}b6!?
34. \textit{xc}3 \textit{xc}3 35. \textit{ xf}5 e3! (35... \textit{xb}? 36. \textit{f}6 wins according to Karpov.) 36. \textit{e}2 (36. \textit{gd}1!! \textit{g}7 37. \textit{e}6) 36... \textit{g}7 37. \textit{e}6 \textit{d}2 38. \textit{g}2 White has some advantage but it is hard to tell whether he will be able to convert his extra pawn.

34... \textit{ce}7 35. \textit{xf}5 e3 36. \textit{e}2 \textit{b}3 37. \textit{gl} 37. \textit{del} can be met by 37... \textit{d}3. 37... \textit{d}3 38. \textit{xd}6 \textit{xf}5 39. c5

White's chances are somewhat better in this complex position. It is worth pointing out the following cute line:

39... \textit{d}7?? 40. \textit{xe}3! \textit{xe}3

40... \textit{xd}6 41. \textit{he}8t leads to mate.

41. \textit{b}8t

And White wins.

34. \textit{xb}4 \textit{c}3 35. \textit{g}3

35... \textit{xb}?!

Nunn avoids some pitfalls. He bravely takes a pawn and gets ready to endure Karpov's initiative on the kingside.

35... \textit{xc}4? is refuted by 36. \textit{e}2! when Black can simply resign.

35... \textit{xe}3?!

Getting rid of the queens leads to a difficult endgame.

36. \textit{xe}3 \textit{ce}7

37. \textit{b}5!

In opposite-coloured bishop endings one often has to play purposefully.

37. \textit{de}1? Winning the pawn at once only leads to a draw: 37... \textit{d}4 38. \textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 39. \textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 40. \textit{xe}4 \textit{c}3 41. \textit{b}5 \textit{xa}5 42. \textit{xb}7 \textit{axb}5 43. \textit{xb}5 White has distant passed pawns, but still Black can hold. 43... \textit{d}2 44. \textit{f}5 \textit{g}7 45. \textit{g}2 \textit{f}6 46. \textit{e}4 \textit{d}5 47. \textit{d}3 \textit{a}5 48. \textit{f}3 \textit{e}5 49. \textit{g}4 \textit{b}6 50. \textit{h}5 \textit{e}3 And Black holds, as pointed out by Karpov.

37... \textit{h}6 38. \textit{f}1 \textit{f}8

38... \textit{b}c8 39. \textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 40. \textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 41. \textit{xb}7 \textit{axb}5 (41... \textit{xf}4 42. \textit{e}1) 42. \textit{f}5 White wins.

39. \textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 40. \textit{xe}4 \textit{xf}4 41. \textit{xf}4 \textit{xf}4 42. \textit{xb}7

This ending is a win, as pointed out by Karpov.
36.\texttt{Bdg1}

White has huge pressure on the g-file. Most of Black's pieces are tied up with defensive duties; it is especially important that his bishop cannot move due to the mate on g8.

36...\texttt{Wb2}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[->] (1.5,1.5) -- (6.5,6.5);
\draw[->] (1.5,7.5) -- (6.5,2.5);
\draw[->] (7.5,1.5) -- (2.5,6.5);
\draw[->] (7.5,7.5) -- (2.5,2.5);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

37.\texttt{Bg5}!

Karpov prepares to transfer the rook to the h-file.

37...\texttt{f6} 38.\texttt{Bgl} \texttt{a1} 39.\texttt{Bg2} \texttt{b2t}

Nunn correctly resists the temptation to grab a pawn with 39...\texttt{xa5}?:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[->] (1.5,1.5) -- (6.5,6.5);
\draw[->] (1.5,7.5) -- (6.5,2.5);
\draw[->] (7.5,1.5) -- (2.5,6.5);
\draw[->] (7.5,7.5) -- (2.5,2.5);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\begin{itemize}
\item \texttt{d}) 40.\texttt{d4}!! This beautiful move provides the answer.
\end{itemize}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[->] (1.5,1.5) -- (6.5,6.5);
\draw[->] (1.5,7.5) -- (6.5,2.5);
\draw[->] (7.5,1.5) -- (2.5,6.5);
\draw[->] (7.5,7.5) -- (2.5,2.5);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

40...\texttt{a2t} (40...\texttt{ee7} 41.\texttt{f6}! \texttt{a2t} 42.\texttt{h3} \texttt{b3t} 43.\texttt{g3} wins.) 41.\texttt{h3}! (41.\texttt{h1} \texttt{b1t} 42.\texttt{g1}?! \texttt{xd4}) 41...\texttt{b3t} 42.\texttt{h4} \texttt{a2} (42...\texttt{c2} 43.\texttt{h3}-- 43.\texttt{h3} \texttt{g8} 44.\texttt{g7}! \texttt{g7} (44...\texttt{g7} 45.\texttt{g}8t--) 45.\texttt{f6} White checkmates in a few moves.

40.\texttt{h3}!

Karpov is not only moving away from the
checks, but also creates the possibility of utilizing his king to support his attack.

Nunn decides to bring the queen back to help the defence but probably missed that Karpov can bring a new piece into the attack. The opposite-coloured bishops make the position so hard to play. Nevertheless there were two ways in which Black could have obtained chances to resist.

41...\texttt{Be}8!?

This move is playable, although Black will have to follow up correctly.

42.\texttt{Wh}g3!

42.\texttt{Wh}h5 \texttt{Be}5 defends.

42.\texttt{Bxe}4 \texttt{Bxe}4 43.\texttt{Bxe}4 \texttt{Be}5 44.\texttt{Bge}2 \texttt{Bc}3† Black gets active.

43.\texttt{Bxd}6!

This simple capture is the strongest move. Others fail to crack Black's defences:

43.\texttt{Bxe}6 \texttt{Bc}1 44.\texttt{f}6 \texttt{hxg}6 Black holds.

43.\texttt{Bh}5 \texttt{Bc}1 44.\texttt{Bxe}4 \texttt{Bxe}4 45.\texttt{Bxh}7† (45.\texttt{Bxg}7 \texttt{Bf}1†) 45...\texttt{Bxh}7 46.\texttt{Bxg}7† \texttt{Bh}8 47.\texttt{Bh}7† White forces a perpetual.

43.\texttt{Bf}4 \texttt{Bf}8 44.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{Bc}7! (44...\texttt{dx}c5? 45.\texttt{f}6! wins.) 45.\texttt{Bh}4 \texttt{Bc}1 46.\texttt{Bhg}4 \texttt{Bxc}5 47.\texttt{Bxg}7 \texttt{Bh}6† 48.\texttt{Bg}2 \texttt{Bc}2† 49.\texttt{Bh}1 \texttt{Bc}1† This time it is Black who forces a perpetual.

43.\texttt{Bh}4 \texttt{Bf}6 44.\texttt{Bg}h5 \texttt{Bh}6!! Black has this beautiful defence based on his passed e-pawn. (44...\texttt{h}6 45.\texttt{Bg}4 wins.) 45.\texttt{Bxh}6 \texttt{Bxf}5† 46.\texttt{Bg}4 \texttt{Bg}7! 47.\texttt{Bf}4 \texttt{Bxg}4† 48.\texttt{Bxg}4 \texttt{Bxg}4 49.\texttt{Bxg}4 e3 White must settle for a draw.
43...\textit{c3}!
43...\textit{e2} 44.\textit{f4}! defends the checks while threatening \textit{f6}.
44.\textit{g3} \textit{c1} 44...\textit{a1} 45.\textit{g1} \textit{c3}! 46.\textit{g}5\textit{g}3 \textit{d4} 47.\textit{f6} wins.
45.\textit{g}1 \textit{e3}! 46.\textit{g}5\textit{g}3 \textit{f2} 47.\textit{e}6 White has decent winning chances.

\textbf{b) 42...f6!} This cleverly combines attack and defence. Black should be able to exchange at least one attacking piece, thus easing the danger.

43.\textit{h}5 \textit{d2}! 44.\textit{x}e4 (44.\textit{f}4 should be met by 44...\textit{c1}!; but not 44...\textit{e}3?? 45.\textit{x}h7\textit{t}! \textit{xh7} 46.\textit{h}4\textit{f} 47.\textit{x}h6\textit{t} \textit{xh6} 48.\textit{g}8\textit{#}) 44...\textit{x}e4 45.\textit{x}e4 \textit{x}a5 Black has eased his position and should be able to survive.

There was a second and perhaps more straightforward defensive idea:

42.\textit{g}2
42.\textit{g}6?? \textit{f}1\textit{t} is embarrassing for White.
42.\textit{h}5 is adequately met by 42...\textit{f}1\textit{t} 43.\textit{g}2 and now either 43...\textit{f}8 or 43...\textit{d}3.
42...\textit{f}8 43.\textit{g}1 \textit{f}6 44.\textit{g}1\textit{g}4 \textit{a}1
I do not see a way for White to inject more power into his attack.

42.\textit{h}5!
Karpov doubles his rooks in order to entice Black's \textit{h}-pawn forwards.
42...\textbf{\textit{Be8}}

42...\textbf{\textit{Ba1?}} 43.\texttt{Bxh7}\texttt{t} leads to mate.

Also insufficient is 42...\textbf{\textit{Bc7}} 43.\textbf{\textit{Bgh4!}} (Simplest, although 43.\textbf{\textit{Bg3}} should also be good enough: 43...\textbf{\textit{Ed7}} [43...\textbf{\textit{Bce7}} 44.\textbf{\textit{Bg6}} \textbf{\textit{Cc3}} 45.\textbf{\textit{Bxc3}} \textbf{\textit{Bxc3}} 46.\texttt{f6+--}] 44.\textbf{\textit{Bgh4!}} [44.\textbf{\textit{Bg6}} \textbf{\textit{Cc3}}] 44...\textbf{\textit{h6}} [44...\textbf{\textit{Bh6}} 45.\textbf{\textit{Bxe4}}] 45.\textbf{\textit{Bg4}} \textbf{\textit{Bf8}} 46.\textbf{\textit{Bg6}} And White wins.) 43...\textbf{\textit{h6}} 44.\textbf{\textit{Bg3!}} Stepping off the \textit{h} file is decisive. (44.\textbf{\textit{Bg4}} \textbf{\textit{Bf5!}}) 44...\textbf{\textit{Bh7}} 45.\textbf{\textit{Bg4}} White is winning as the rook is coming to \textit{g6}.

43.\textbf{\textit{Bgh4!}} \textbf{\textit{h6}} 44.\textbf{\textit{Bg4}} \textbf{\textit{Be5}}

44...\textbf{\textit{Ba1}} is insufficient, as Black’s kingside has already been weakened by the forcing of ...\textbf{\textit{h7-h6}}: 45.\textbf{\textit{Bxe4}} (There is also 45.\textbf{\textit{Bxg2}} \textbf{\textit{Bb2}}t 46.\textbf{\textit{Bh1}} \textbf{\textit{Bh7}} 47.\textbf{\textit{Bg1}} \textbf{\textit{Bxf6}} [47...\textbf{\textit{Bxe8}}? 48.\textbf{\textit{Bxe4}}] 48.\textbf{\textit{Bh4}} \textbf{\textit{Bf8}} 49.\textbf{\textit{Bxe4}} \textbf{\textit{Bxe4}} 50.\textbf{\textit{Bxe4}} and Black has little chance to survive.) 45...\textbf{\textit{Bf1}}t (45...\textbf{\textit{Bd1}} 46.\textbf{\textit{Bhh4}} \textbf{\textit{Bc7}} 47.\textbf{\textit{Bg2+}}) 46.\textbf{\textit{Bxg3}} \textbf{\textit{Bg8}} 47.\textbf{\textit{Bf6}} \textbf{\textit{Bxe4}} 48.\textbf{\textit{Bxe4}} \textbf{\textit{Bxg1}}t 49.\textbf{\textit{Bxg2}} \textbf{\textit{Bxe3}}t 50.\textbf{\textit{Bb3}} \textbf{\textit{Bxf3}}t 51.\textbf{\textit{Bxf3}} \textbf{\textit{Bf8}} 52.\textbf{\textit{Bf7}} And White wins.

45.\textbf{\textit{Bgg5}}

Karpov defends the \textit{f5}-pawn. Despite optical appearances, the rook is absolutely stable on \textit{g5} as Black will never be able to unpin the \textit{h}-pawn.

45...\textbf{\textit{Be8}}?

Nunn wants to take on \textit{d5}, but the idea meets with a beautiful refutation. Black should have tried opening the long diagonal for his queen. There are two ways of doing so:

45...\textbf{\textit{Bf7}}? This is an improvement over the game continuation, but it is still not the best. 46.\textbf{\textit{Bg3}} (46.\textbf{\textit{Bg4}}? \textbf{\textit{Ba1}}) 46...\textbf{\textit{Bf5}} (46...\textbf{\textit{Bf5}}? 47.\textbf{\textit{Bxh6t}}) 47.\textbf{\textit{Bxg2}} \textbf{\textit{Bf7}} 48.\textbf{\textit{Bxg6}} \textbf{\textit{Bb2t}} 49.\textbf{\textit{Bh3}} \textbf{\textit{Bc1}} 50.\textbf{\textit{Bxh6t}} \textbf{\textit{Bxh6t}} 51.\textbf{\textit{Bxh6t}} \textbf{\textit{Bxh6}} 52.\textbf{\textit{Bxd6}} \textbf{\textit{Bh7}} 53.\textbf{\textit{Bxe6}} Black’s king is rather exposed, but he still has some chances to survive.

45...\textbf{\textit{Bee8!}}

This is a better way to open the diagonal for the queen. The difference lies in the fact that the rook on \textit{e8} guards against a mate on \textit{g8} in certain lines.

46.\textbf{\textit{Bg2}}

White has several ways to try and crack his opponent’s position, but I found nothing decisive: 46.\textbf{\textit{Bxb7}} \textbf{\textit{Bxe5}} 47.\textbf{\textit{Bd5}} \textbf{\textit{Bb8}} Black has lost a pawn, but gained an open file for his rook. 48.\textbf{\textit{Bg3}} \textbf{\textit{Bxd5}} 49.\textbf{\textit{Bxd5}} \textbf{\textit{Bb2}} Black is rather active.

46.\textbf{\textit{Bxg6}} \textbf{\textit{Bxg6}} 47.\textbf{\textit{fxg6}} \textbf{\textit{Bf3t}} 48.\textbf{\textit{Bxf3}} \textbf{\textit{Bxf3}} Black has excellent drawing chances, despite being a pawn down. 49.\textbf{\textit{Bxf5}} (49.\textbf{\textit{Bxf3}} \textbf{\textit{Bxe3}} 50.\textbf{\textit{Bg2}} \textbf{\textit{Bf5}} holds) 49...\textbf{\textit{Bf5}} 50.\textbf{\textit{Bxf3}} \textbf{\textit{Bh5t}}
51.\texttt{g2} \texttt{g5} White's advantage is too small.
46...\texttt{w2t} 47.\texttt{h1} \texttt{f6} 48.\texttt{g1} \texttt{e5}
White is better but it is hard to break through.
49.\texttt{xb7} \texttt{xa5} 50.\texttt{c6} \texttt{e7} 51.\texttt{d5}
Black is under some pressure, but he has reasonable chances to hold.

46.\texttt{g4}!!
Karpov uses every last one of his pieces to carry out his assault. The immediate 46.\texttt{g6}?
would have been met by 46...\texttt{w6}, so Karpov defends the rook on h5 first.

46...\texttt{h7} 47.\texttt{g6} \texttt{w8}

48.\texttt{w5}!
The situation on the kingside is absolutely picturesque! The threat of 49.\texttt{g6} \texttt{w6} 50.\texttt{g6} forces Black to shed material. It is a typical story for Karpov: he slowly and patiently brought his pieces closer to the opponent's king, then brutally murdered him.

48...\texttt{w5}!! 49.\texttt{w5} \texttt{w5}
Nunn finds a witty saving attempt, but Karpov has everything under control.

50.\texttt{g7} \texttt{g7} 51.\texttt{f5}
1–0

This game once again underlines how difficult opposite-coloured bishop positions can be to handle; even Karpov's play was not flawless. Nevertheless for the great majority of the game he played superbly, showing great precision as well as imagination when it was needed.

In round eleven Karpov suffered a setback, losing to Seirawan. His next opponent was Portisch. Since their 1975 match they had played twelve times, with Karpov winning three games and drawing nine. Interestingly all three of Karpov's wins had come with the black pieces.
The Making of a Champion

Game 65

Anatoly Karpov – Lajos Portisch

London 1982

1.e4

Karpov switches back to his most frequent starting move. Since their Milan match Karpov had always played 1.d4 or 1.c4 against the Hungarian number one, but never achieved much in the opening and all four games were drawn.

1...c5 2.d3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.axd4 f6

Previously we saw Portisch playing 1...e5, but now he reverts to one of his other main openings, the Najdorf.

6.e2 e5 7.d3 d6 8.0-0 0-0 9.e3

This was the first time Karpov employed the text move. He went on to use it four more times, dropping only half a point in total.

9...e6

Giorgadze tried 9...c7 here, as we will see in the notes to Game 74.

10.d2 bd7

After 10...b5 11.a4 b4 12.d5 exd5 13.dxe7+ fxe7 14.wxb4 f5 White has scored well from this complicated position.

11.a4 ec8

Portisch plays the most natural move, the main line. 11...b6 and 11...f7 are also played, but the main alternative is 11...db6, which was first introduced by Psakhis against Geller in 1980. Play continues: 12.a5 dc4 13.dxyc4 dxec4 14.ed1

Karpov reached this position twice:

a) His first opponent, Quinteros, continued 14...h6 15.c1 ec8 16.d3 ac6 17.db6 ec8 18.f3 ed7 19.e3 f5 20.exf5 ed5 21.db4 ed6 22.dbd5 exd5 23.edx5 f8 24.b3 eb7 25.db6 c6 26.c4 ec7 27.e2 ed8 28.ed5 edx5 29.bxex5 b5 30.axb6 edx6 31.edh1! White had a small advantage and went on to win an endgame masterpiece in Karpov - Quinteros, Lucerne (ol) 1982. I analysed the final phase extensively in my Endgame Virtuoso book.

b) The following year Ostermeyer deviated by means of: 14...eb8 15.c1 fc6 16.a6 eb6 17.f3 h6 18.ed3 ed3 19.ed3 cd4 20.ec3 ec6 21 edx5 ecx5 22.ff1 Karpov had a small edge, but his West German opponent showed great determination and eventually managed to hold the draw after a long endgame in Karpov - Ostermeyer, Hannover 1983.
12...\textit{a5 \textcolor{red}{b}c7} 13.\textit{b}d1!?  
This move is one of Karpov's best novelties. I do know whether the idea came from him or one of his trainers. The rook defends the c2-pawn in order to liberate the knight on c3.

13.\textit{b}d1 was the usual continuation and has remained the most popular choice for White. Interestingly Karpov himself switched to this move against Nunn in 1985, as we will see in Game 74.

13...\textit{c}6  
Portisch embarks on a plan to free his position with \textit{...d5}. The Hungarian grandmaster is a positional player, yet he almost always strives to go forward. Since the early games in the 1980s the whole variation has grown in popularity. Nowadays 13...\textit{c}5!? is regarded as one of the most reliable routes to a safe position for Black. See for instance the game Ivanchuk – Kramnik, Monte Carlo (rapid) 2004.

14.\textit{b}3 \textit{c}4

15.\textit{a}4!  
Karpov utilizes his rook to paralyse Black's queenside in an unusual fashion.

15...\textit{d}d8?!  
Portisch continues with his plan, but it turns out that he is unable to force through his intended \textit{...d5}, and in the resulting position his rook will be misplaced on d8. It shows just how difficult chess can be, when a world class player is unable to react to a subtle change in the position which renders an otherwise promising plan ineffective.

Once the present game became known, most players preferred 15...\textit{b}e8, and after 16.\textit{b}4 \textit{c}7 17.\textit{d}d5 \textit{x}d5 18.exd5 \textit{f}5 Black has done all right. Unlike in the game, 18...\textit{f}6!? is also possible.

16.\textit{b}4!  
This is an unusual but highly effective post for the rook. It stops \textit{...b}5 and defends the b3-knight, which could prove important after \textit{d}d5 is played.

16...\textit{c}7 17.\textit{d}d5  
Since the rook came to c1, it took Karpov four more moves before his knight made its intended jump to d5.

17...\textit{x}d5 18.exd5 \textit{f}5  
18...\textit{f}6 is unplayable as 19.\textit{b}6 wins an exchange.

19.\textit{e}2  
Karpov gets rid of the bishop on c4.
Portisch heads for an inferior position with opposite-coloured bishops. It seems like an odd choice, as the Hungarian grandmaster already suffered a nasty defeat after being outplayed by Karpov in a close to equal opposite-coloured bishop position (see Game 42). Now he chooses to steer the game towards another opposite-coloured bishop position in which he stands clearly worse.

A better choice would have been 19...\(\text{dxd}3\)!

Portisch heads for an inferior position with opposite-coloured bishops. It seems like an odd choice, as the Hungarian grandmaster already suffered a nasty defeat after being outplayed by Karpov in a close to equal opposite-coloured bishop position (see Game 42). Now he chooses to steer the game towards another opposite-coloured bishop position in which he stands clearly worse.

A better choice would have been 19...\(\text{dxe}2\) 20.\(\text{dxe}2\) \(\text{dxc}5\) (or 20...\(\text{d}8\) 21.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{d}6\)) 21.\(\text{c}4\) (21.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{d}7\) 22.\(f3\) is possible, but Black should not be in much trouble here either.) 21...\(\text{dxb}3\) (Or 21...\(\text{d}7\)?? 22.\(f3\) \(\text{d}5\) 23.\(\text{d}xc5\) \(\text{dxc}5\) 24.\(\text{d}b6\) White has a small edge; he can put his queen on the d-file and play for \(b4\).) 22.\(\text{dxb}3\) \(\text{d}8\) 23.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{d}7\) White is only a little better, if at all.

20.\(\text{dxb}3\) \(f4\)?

I have already mentioned that Portisch liked to move forwards. And since he is a true master with the two bishops, he is wary of giving Karpov time to harness the power of the bishop pair against him. Nevertheless the text move is a significant positional concession, and one of the following alternatives should have been preferred.

20...\(\text{d}c5\) would have given Black a better version of the game: 21.\(\text{a}3\)! (Black does all right after 21.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{d}4\) or 21.\(\text{d}xc5\) \(\text{dxc}5\) 22.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{d}d6\).) 21...\(f4\) (After 21...\(\text{d}6\) 22.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{d}7\) 23.\(\text{c}4\) White is clearly better.) 22.\(\text{d}xc5\) \(\text{d}xc5\) There is no doubt that White stands better, but it is equally clear that his rook is less active on \(a3\) than \(b6\).

Black's best chance overall would have been to leave his pawns where they were and settle for a slight disadvantage. For instance: 20...\(\text{e}8\)?? 21.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{d}6\) 22.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{b}8\) 23.\(\text{a}6\) (White also

exert pressure on the queenside by 23.\(\text{b}4\)?)

23...\(\text{d}7\) (23...\(\text{e}8\) 24.\(\text{c}5\) 24.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{d}8\) 25.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{c}8\) 26.\(\text{b}4\) White has some initiative on the queenside, but a tough fight lies ahead.

21.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{dxb}6\) 22.\(\text{a}6\)

White has two significant advantages: his bishop is considerably more active than its counterpart, and his pawn majority is more mobile.

22...\(\text{g}5\)

23.\(\text{g}4\)!

The bishop immediately makes its presence felt. Even if Portisch missed the subtle rook manoeuvre starting on White's next move, it seems strange that he viewed this position as his best chance for survival.

23...\(\text{a}8\) 24.\(\text{e}1\)!

Before advancing his pawns Karpov prevents his opponent from doing the same. If 24.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}4\) Black obtains some chances for counterplay.

24...\(\text{c}5\) 25.\(\text{a}4\)!

Karpov not only prepares \(c4\) but prevents \(\text{d}4\) as well.

25...\(\text{a}8\)
Black is obliged to sit and await his fate, reacting to threats as they appear. From hereon it is difficult to suggest anything constructive for him.

26.b4 c7 27.c4 h8

28.c5!

Karpov has carried out all the necessary preparations, and there is no need to delay the breakthrough.

28...dxc5

28...d8 was no more than a temporary blockade, and after 29.d3 g6 30.c4 Black's position falls apart.

29.d6 d8 30.bxc5 f3

Black creates a bit of play on the kingside, but hardly compensates for his queenside troubles.

31.d5 fxe2 32.xe5 f6 33.f5 a1t
34.xg2 f6 35.d7

I suspect that Portisch was in time trouble and had no time to resign.

35...xa5 36.xb7 x7 37.xb7 d8 38.e6 a5 39.c7 xd7 40.f4
1-0

Karpov finished the event strongly with a fine win over Spassky. His total of five wins, seven draws and one defeat was enough to tie for first prize with Andersson.

Karpov's next tournament was a seven player, double round robin event in Turin. Just as in London, he started slowly and even lost to Ljubojevic in round two, although he got back to an even score with a win over Portisch in round six, and avenged his defeat to Ljubojevic in round nine. His only other 'win' came by default in the final round, as Hübner had withdrawn after the first half of the tournament (he was on a plus one score at the time).

Karpov's total of 7/12 was good enough to share first place with Andersson. It was a decent result by most standards, but it was nothing like as dominant as some of his results from the seventies. It is not clear whether he merely suffered a dip in form, or if there was some other cause. Botvinnik once remarked that a world championship match takes a year off one's life. Perhaps Karpov had not fully recovered his energy, or maybe something happened in his private life.

His next event was an unusual one: a televised tournament in Hamburg, with a semi-rapid time limit of one hour per game. It began with two double round robin qualifying groups. Karpov drew his mini-match with Nunn, and beat Seirawan by 2-0 and Afifi by 1½-½ to win his group with a total of 4½/6. Spassky won the other group, dropping just a single draw.

We will look at Karpov's first game from the final match with Spassky. The overall level of the game betrays the fact that it was conducted under a faster time control. Nevertheless Karpov's play in the middlegame was outstanding. Since their 1979 meeting in Montreal, Karpov had defeated Spassky twice with seven draws.
1.e4 d6
1.e4 d6
The Pirc was not one of Spassky's main
openings, but in 1981 and 1982 he employed
it a few times, so Karpov may have anticipated
it.

2.d4 $f6 3.0-0 g6 4.d3 $g7 5.e2 0-0
2.d4 $f6 3.0-0 g6 4.d3 $g7 5.e2 0-0
6.0-0
6.0-0
Karpov stays faithful to his usual set-up.

6...g4 7...c6
6...g4 7...c6
At Karpov's next tournament Nunn deviated
with 7...$bd7. Play continued: 8.h3 $xf3
9.0-0 e5 10.g3 c6 11..g2 $a5 12.$d2 $e8
9.0-0 e5 10.g3 c6 11..g2 $a5 12.$d2 $e8
13.$d1 b5 14.a3 $b6 (14...exd4! 15.$d4
$ad8 Black is only a bit worse) 15.b3 $fd7
16..a1 $b8? (16...$ad8 was better)

8...$e8
8...$e8
Spassky repeats a somewhat offbeat line
which he employed against Geller a few
months earlier in London. Karpov was also at
that tournament, so he may well have prepared
for it.

9.$f1 a6
9.$f1 a6
Karpov's last move was directed against
9...$xf3 10.$xf3 e5, which runs into 11.d5
$e4? 12.$d4 exd4 13.$b5 when the e-pawn
is securely defended and the d4-pawn falls.

10.$ad1
10.$ad1
Karpov plays the opening classically, and
develops all his pieces.

10...$xf3
10...$xf3
Spassky tries something new. In the
Geller game he preferred 10...e5 and drew
in 45 moves. He probably feared Karpov's
preparation, although in subsequent games
Black scored all right with the pawn move.

11.$xf3 e5 12.dxe5 $xe5?
11.$xf3 e5 12.dxe5 $xe5?
12...$xe5 was preferable. Spassky played
this against Mokry at Reggio Emilia 1983 and
a draw was agreed immediately, although it is
safe to assume that Karpov would have played
on.

8.$d2
8.$d2
This has been Karpov's most frequent choice.
Twice he experimented with 8.$d3, but only
drew both games.
13. \( \text{Qa4!} \)

In a similar position which can arise after 8...\( \text{e5} \) instead of 8...\( \text{e}8 \), White usually plays \( \text{Qb5} \), which is not possible here, so Karpov chooses a different path for the knight.

13. \( \text{Qd5} \) is not dangerous for Black after 13...\( \text{Qxd5} \) 14.\( \text{exd5} \) \( \text{Qd4} \).

13. \( \text{Wc7} \)

Spassky prefers not to defend a slightly worse endgame after 13...\( \text{Qxd2} \) 14.\( \text{Qxd2} \) \( \text{Qf8} \) 15.c3! (after 15.\( \text{Qc5} \) \( \text{Qd4} \) 16.\( \text{Qxd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) Black equalizes). The former champion was considered a universal player, but he was at his best when he had the initiative.

14.c3

Karpov takes away the d4-square from the enemy knight.

14...\( \text{b6} \)

After 14...\( \text{Qed8} \) 15.\( \text{We2} \) \( \text{Qxd1} \) 16.\( \text{Qxd1} \) \( \text{Qd8} \) 17.\( \text{Qc5} \) \( \text{Qxd1} \text{f} \) 18.\( \text{Qxd1} \) \( \text{Qd8} \) 19.b4 White can improve his position with \( \text{Qd3} \) and h3 followed by \( \text{Qd1} \) and \( \text{Qb3} \).

15.\( \text{Wxe6} \)? Black intends to exchange the dark-squared bishops. It is a common idea in such positions, and it is slightly surprising that Spassky never tried to do it in the game. 16.\( \text{h4!} \) (16.\( \text{Wc4} \) \( \text{Qe6} \); 16.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{h6} \) 17.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{Qd8} \) 18.\( \text{Qb2} \) \( \text{Qe6} \) Black obtains some counterplay.) 16...\( \text{Qd8} \) (after 16...\( \text{h6} \) 17.\( \text{g5} \) White keeps an edge) 17.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{Qe6} \) 18.\( \text{Qb2} \) \( \text{h6} \) 19.\( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qxe3} \) 20.\( \text{Qxe3} \) \( \text{Qg7} \) White only has a small advantage.

15.\( \text{Wxe6} \)? Black can also improve the queen first. 16.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{h5} \) (Another line is 16.\( \text{Qf8} \) 17.\( \text{h3} \) \( \text{Qed8} \) 18.\( \text{Qb2} \) \( \text{Qxd1} \) 19.\( \text{Qxd1} \) \( \text{h5} \) 20.\( \text{Qg5} \) \( \text{Qe7} \) 21.\( \text{Qc4} \) \( \text{Qd8} \) when Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.) 17.\( \text{h3} \) \( \text{Qh7} \) 18.\( \text{Qb2} \) \( \text{Qh6} \) 19.\( \text{Qc4} \) \( \text{Qxe3} \) 20.\( \text{Qxe3} \) \( \text{Qe7} \) 21.\( \text{Qd3} \) a5 22.\( \text{Qed1} \) \( \text{Qg7} \) White dominates the d-file, but is not easy for him to achieve anything tangible as Black controls all the entry squares.

By contrast, let me show you an example of a previous game in which Karpov was able to make use of the d-file.

26.\( \text{Qxe6} \)!

Karpov exchanges some minor pieces in order to facilitate his invasion.

26...\( \text{Qxe6} \) 27.\( \text{Qg4} \) \( \text{Qxg4} \) ?!

Black should have taken the opportunity to exchange some pawns on the queenside with 27...\( \text{b5!} \) 28.\( \text{Qxf6} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \) 29.\( \text{Qd7} \) \( \text{Qb6} \) when he can hold the position.
The Making of a Champion

28.hxg4
After 28...d7 w8 29.hxg4 w8 Black will follow up with ...e7.

28...w8?
After 28...e7! Black is worse but still has chances to survive.

29.d7!
The invasion is decisive.

29...w8 30.w2 w7 31.w6 axb4

32.d6!
Karpov catches Black's king.

32...w8 33.w5 w7
33...bxc3 34.gxg6t leads to mate.

34.w6 w8 35.wx6t is the end.

35.axb4 axa4 36.e5
1–0 Karpov – Kirilov, Daugavpils 1971.

Back to the game.

16.b3
Karpov clears the b2-square for the knight.

16...w6?
The knight will not stay long here thanks to Karpov's strong yet predictable play. Better was 16...w7 17.w2 w6 (17...w6) although White keeps an edge with 18.w4!, exchanging a pair of knights in order to get closer to Black's queenside.

17.g3
Karpov prevents ...w4 and prepares to transfer his bishop to h3.

17...h5 18.wb2 b5?
Spassky stops w4, but will pay the price for loosening his queenside.

In his Chess Informant analysis Karpov mentions 18...w7 as an improvement. Against this White should probably leave his knight on b2 for the time being in order to guard against ...a5-a4, and instead improve his position on the kingside with 19.h4 or 19.w2.

Another idea was 18...w7 to prepare the thematic bishop exchange: 19.w3 (After 19.wc4 w5 20.wb4 wa4 21.wc2 b5 22.wb2 wxb2 23.wxb2 wh6 24.wc5 w6 Black is close to equality.) 19...w8 20.wb4 (20.wg5 wh6 21.wxh6 whxh6 22.wb4 a5 23.wd5 wxd5 and now after 24.exd5 wd6 or 24.wx5 wh6 Black is about to equalize.) 20...a5 21.wx5 wxd5 22.wx5 wb7 23.wd2 wb8 24.wd1 we6 White controls the d-file, but Black is still not much worse.

19.w3
Karpov attacks the e5-pawn while aiming at the queenside weaknesses.

19...w8
It is too late to transfer the other knight
19...\(\text{d}7\) 20.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{b}8\) (20...c5? 21.\(\text{c}6\))
21.\(\text{d}5\) White has a huge advantage.

20.\(\text{g}2\) c6
The tenth World Champion strengthens the pawn structure but weakens the b6-square. The alternative was 20...\(\text{b}7\) 21.f3 \(\text{h}7\) (after 21...\(\text{e}d8\) 22.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{e}6\) 23.c4 White opens the queenside) 22.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{h}6\) 23.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{ad}8\) 24.c4 and White softens the enemy pawns.

21.f3!
Karpov defends the e4-pawn in order to prepare \(\text{h}3\).

21...\(\text{b}7\) 22.\(\text{h}3\)
The bishop exerts a great influence from this square.

22...a5
Spassky wants to open the a-file and get some active play.

23.a4!
Karpov separates his opponent’s pawns on the queenside.

23.bxa4
After 23...\(\text{h}7\) 24.axb5 cxb5 25.\(\text{b}2\) b4 26.\(\text{c}4\) White also has the advantage.

24.bxa4 \(\text{h}7\) 25.\(\text{e}2\)
25.\(\text{b}1\) or 25.\(\text{b}2\) also give White better prospects, but Karpov wants to exchange the b7-knight. This piece does not stand especially well, but it does a good job of covering some important invasion squares.

25...\(\text{f}d8\)
Had Spassky covered the c5-square with 25...\(\text{f}8\), Karpov may turned his attention to the open b-file with 26.\(\text{b}1\)!, threatening to take the e5-pawn. After 26...\(\text{d}6\) 27.\(\text{c}5\) \(\text{c}4\) 28.\(\text{b}7\) \(\text{d}8\) 29.\(\text{a}2\) White keeps a slight plus.

26.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{d}6\)

27.\(\text{c}5\)?
Up to this point Karpov’s play has been exemplary, but the text move is a mistake which risks squandering most of his advantage. He should have preferred one of the alternatives:

27.\(\text{b}2\)!? \(\text{g}5\) 28.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{e}6\) 29.\(\text{f}1\) White is somewhat better.

27.\(\text{f}4\) forces Black to defend resolutely: 27...c5! (27...\(\text{f}6\)?! 28.\(\text{a}2\)! \(\text{h}8\) 29.\(\text{c}4\) is very strong; 27...exf4 28.c5 \(\text{x}g3\) 29.\(\text{f}xg3\) \(\text{d}5\) 30.\(\text{g}2\) Black loses the exchange and gets little in return.) 28.\(\text{x}c5\) \(\text{x}c5\) 29.\(\text{x}c5\)
The Making of a Champion

29...\textit{\textit{d}}d8 30.\textit{\textit{e}}e6 White is just a pawn up. 30.\textit{\textit{x}}xa7 \textit{\textit{x}}xa7 31.\textit{\textit{x}}xe5 \textit{\textit{xe}}xe5 32.\textit{\textit{f}}xe5 \textit{\textit{f}}xd1 33.\textit{\textit{f}}xd1 \textit{\textit{g}}g5 34.\textit{\textit{g}}g2 \textit{\textit{c}}c7 Black's active pieces give him reasonable chances to hold the endgame a pawn down.

27...\textit{\textit{g}}g5 28.\textit{\textit{g}}g2 \textit{\textit{e}}e8?

This is a serious mistake, which leads to big troubles as Black will not be able to exchange any piece. Spassky could have reduced his troubles in one of two ways:

28...\textit{\textit{e}}e6 29.\textit{\textit{f}}xe6 \textit{\textit{x}}xd1 30.\textit{\textit{x}}xd1 \textit{\textit{e}}xe6 31.\textit{\textit{b}}b1 White still has an edge thanks to his bishop pair, but Black's troubles are much less severe than in the game.

Even better would have been 28...\textit{\textit{x}}xd1! 29.\textit{\textit{x}}xd1 \textit{\textit{c}}c5 30.\textit{\textit{a}}xc5 \textit{\textit{b}}b7 when the two exchanges have eased Black's position considerably. White's advantage is small, if it exists at all.

29.\textit{\textit{f}}f1!

Karpov avoids exchanges and ensures that Black's pieces will remain tangled.

29...\textit{\textit{d}}d8?

In a difficult position, Spassky commits a further error. The knight blocks a square which was needed by the d6-rook.

29...\textit{\textit{e}}e6 was better, although White has a pleasant choice. 30.\textit{\textit{b}}xb7 (There is also 30.\textit{\textit{e}}e6 \textit{\textit{x}}xe6 31.\textit{\textit{c}}c3 \textit{\textit{c}}c5 32.\textit{\textit{w}}a2 when White's bishops provide him with a lasting initiative.) 30...\textit{\textit{x}}xb7 31.f4 (31.\textit{\textit{c}}c5! \textit{\textit{xb}}b1 32.\textit{\textit{e}}xb1 \textit{\textit{d}}d1f) 31...\textit{\textit{c}}c5 32.\textit{\textit{a}}xc5 \textit{\textit{w}}xb1 33.\textit{\textit{c}}c1 \textit{\textit{d}}d1† 34.\textit{\textit{x}}xd1 \textit{\textit{c}}c5 Despite being a pawn down, Black has chances to hold.

30.f4!

Karpov exploits the fact that the d6-rook has no escape route.

30...\textit{\textit{f}}f6

30...\textit{\textit{g}}g6? 31.fxe5 wins, and 30...\textit{\textit{f}}f4 31.\textit{\textit{g}}xf4 \textit{\textit{g}}g6? 32.\textit{e}5 is no better.

30...\textit{\textit{h}}h7 was not losing immediately, but after 31.\textit{\textit{b}}b3 \textit{\textit{d}}d7 32.f5 Black can hardly move.

31.\textit{\textit{d}}d3 \textit{\textit{f}}f4 32.\textit{g}xf4 \textit{\textit{g}}g6 33.\textit{e}5 \textit{\textit{e}}5

34.\textit{\textit{c}}c4

White wins an exchange for no compensation whatsoever.

34...\textit{\textit{g}}g7 35.\textit{\textit{c}}c5

Karpov exchanges the bishops, bringing himself one step closer to a winning endgame.

35...\textit{\textit{e}}e6 36.\textit{\textit{x}}xb8 \textit{\textit{x}}xb8 37.\textit{\textit{c}}c5 \textit{\textit{c}}c7
Spassky could have resigned here, and probably only played on because of the faster time control.

40...\texttt{xf2} 41.\texttt{xf2} \texttt{gxe6} 42.\texttt{ed6} \texttt{ec8} 43.\texttt{xb6} \texttt{c5} 44.\texttt{bb5} \texttt{ec7} 45.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{bc7} 46.\texttt{ada6} f5 47.\texttt{exe6}\dagger \texttt{xe6} 48.\texttt{ba7} \texttt{ec8} 49.\texttt{a8} \texttt{bc7} 50.\texttt{b5a7} \texttt{bxa7} 51.\texttt{bxa7} g5 52.\texttt{d5} \texttt{ec5} 53.\texttt{xe6} \texttt{axe6} 54.a5 \texttt{d5} 55.\texttt{be7} \texttt{df4} 56.a6 1-0

In the second game Karpov suffered a disaster, first blundering a rook away in an easily winning ending, and then failing to hold a drawn position with a queen versus Spassky's queen and knight. The fast time limit must have taken its toll. In the third game Spassky experimented with what is now known as the Hippo formation, but misplayed the position and was crushed. In the final game Karpov managed to hold a draw from the worse side of a Petroff to secure a 21/2–1½ victory.

Karpov's next tournament was in Tilburg. He won a sharp game against Hübner and then scored what must have been an especially satisfying victory over Petrosian; it was the first and only time he was able to beat the great Armenian. They only played once more, and drew. Altogether Petrosian scored one win and one loss against Karpov, with thirteen draws. There were not many players of that era who were able to boast an even score against Karpov. Sadly the former champion passed away in 1984.

Karpov continued his fine form with a nice win over Torre in round three, but then blundered and lost against Portisch. Out of his remaining seven games he drew five and won the other two against Nunn and Larsen. His final score of 7½/11 was enough to take sole first place, half a point ahead of Timman.

Karpov's last event of the year was the Olympiad in Lucerne, Switzerland. Unlike some of his previous Olympiads, he was rested for a number of matches. It seems he took full advantage of his days off, as he dropped only three draws out of the eight games he played. His list of victims included Hort, Portisch, Quinteros and Gheorghiu.
1982 Summary

Mar del Plata (3rd-5th place): 7½/13 (+4 =7 –2)
London (1st-2nd place): 8½/13 (+5 =7 –1)
Turin (1st-2nd place): 7/12 (+3 =8 –1)
(Hamburg TV games not included)
Tilburg (1st place): 7½/11 (+5 =5 –1)
Lucerne Olympiad (Board one): 6½/8 (+5 =3 –0)

Total 64.9% (+22 =30 –5)
Karpov’s first event of the new year was Linares, where he started with a draw against Andersson after missing a probable win in a knight ending. He drew his next three, then beat Larsen and Sax. But then he lost his momentum and drew his next three, which left him trailing Spassky by half a point. As fate would have it, the two rivals met in the last round. Karpov rolled the dice with a Sicilian but Spassky played solidly with the Closed, and after some simplifications they agreed a draw on move eighteen.

Next was the Soviet Championship. Karpov had missed this tournament a few times in recent years, but he was present for this, the jubilee 50th event. He beat Yusupov in round three, but two rounds later a cold shower was waiting for him as, despite having the white pieces, he was outplayed and beaten by Azmaiparashvili. After a few more draws, he was able to pick up some much needed wins over Romanishin and Geller in rounds eight and nine, and later Lerner and Beliavsky in rounds eleven and thirteen. Karpov’s final score of $9\frac{1}{2}/15$ was not the most dominant result of his career, but it was enough to take the gold medal ahead of Tukmakov who finished half a point behind.

Karpov then played for the Soviet Union at the European Team Championship in Plovdiv. He played four games, beating Mortensen and drawing with Timman, Ljubojevic and Miles.

Karpov followed with another team event, the USSR Spartakiad. He was rested for the first game, then faced Mark Taimanov in round two. Taimanov was a strong and experienced grandmaster who had twice qualified for the world championship candidates cycle. He tied for first place at the Soviet Championship on two occasions. In 1952 he lost the tiebreak to Botvinnik, but in 1956 he prevailed over Spassky and Averbakh. Interestingly, in addition to his accomplishments over the chessboard, Taimanov is also an outstanding pianist.

Taimanov played all the world champions from Euwe to Karpov, defeating six of them – an impressive achievement. His overall score against the champions stands at fourteen wins, sixty three draws and forty four losses. The present game was his last against Karpov. Up to this point they had scored one win apiece, with four draws.
1.e4 c5 2.\(\text{d}f3\) \(\text{d}c6\) 3.d4 cxd4 4.\(\text{d}x\text{d}4\) e6

Taimanov plays the variation that bears his name. According to the database he employed it for the first time in 1960, and continued to do so for more than forty years afterwards. It is interesting that he only made his most famous contribution to opening theory after passing his peak, which occurred between 1946 and 1956, during which he was ranked among the top ten players in the world.

5.\(\text{e}c3\)

This was the first time Karpov played the text move. The two protagonists had debated the 5.\(\text{e}c3\) variation three times previously. In their first meeting Karpov won a remarkable ending in which he caught Taimanov's king superbly, but the other two games resulted in draws. Against most opponents Karpov was successful with the 5.\(\text{e}c4\) variation, so it is testament to the strength of Taimanov that he felt the need to use a different approach in this game.

5...a6 6.\(\text{e}c2\) \(\text{ge}7\) 7.0-0

Karpov chooses a solid line.

7...\(\text{d}x\text{d}4\) 8.\(\text{w}x\text{d}4\) \(\text{e}c6\) 9.\(\text{w}d3\)

This was not a new move – it was first played by Klovans in 1978 against none other than Taimanov himself – but still, there was not much in the way of established theory on it. Nowadays things are different; it is the main line in the position and has been tested in over a hundred games.

9...\(\text{d}b4?!\)

Taimanov repeats the continuation of his previous game, but Karpov is ready for it. Nowadays 9...\(\text{w}c7\) 10.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{d}d6\) has become firmly established as the main line.

10.\(\text{w}d2\!

Karpov improves over the play of Klovans, who retreated to d1.

10...\(\text{e}7\)

11.\(\text{b}3\!\)

The bishop will stand well on the long diagonal, where it menaces the g7-pawn. It is unusual for White to employ a queenside fianchetto in the Open Sicilian, although Karpov had previously used the same idea to defeat Tukmakov in a Scheveningen position:
Anatoly Karpov - Mark Taimanov

Tukmakov later sacrificed a pawn to loosen Karpov's grip, but failed to get enough play and eventually succumbed.

11...0-0 12.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{c}7\) 13.\(\text{ad}1\) \(\text{ad}8\)

Taimanov was persistent, and he later tried to improve with 13...\(\text{b}5\) 14.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{c}6\). In Plovdiv in 1984, Kiril Georgiev played 15.\(\text{e}3\) and beat him. A year later, Taimanov reached the same position and was able to draw after 15.\(\text{b}1\), although his opponent, the Portuguese FM Jorge Guimaraes, was a somewhat less formidable adversary then the previous two. Overall, this sequence of results is not a great advertisement for Black’s opening, and it is hardly surprising that 9...\(\text{h}4?!\) failed to catch on.

14.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 15.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{b}5\)

Transferring the rook to g3 is less effective: 16.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{d}4!\) (16...\(\text{b}7\) 17.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{f}6\) is also playable) 17.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{xe}2\)† (Also after 17...\(\text{f}6\)

16.\(\text{h}1!\)

With this strong precautionary move White prepares to transfer his queen to g3, thus enhancing the power of his bishop on the long diagonal.

18.\(\text{g}4\) \(\text{b}7\) Black’s pieces are active, and White’s attack does not look too dangerous.) 18.\(\text{xe}2\) \(\text{f}6\) White is unlikely to be able to hurt his opponent, and Black’s light-squared bishop is a powerful asset.

16.\(\text{b}7\)

Continuing the plan.

17.\(\text{e}3!\)

Taimanov is an active player and he remains true to his style. It would be interesting to see how Karpov would have continued his play against the enemy king after 17...\(\text{d}6\) 18.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{f}8\). The most natural continuation looks to be 19.\(\text{d}3\).

18.\(\text{b}1\)

After 18.\(\text{xb}4?!\) \(\text{xb}4\) 19.\(\text{ed}2\) \(\text{d}5\) Karpov evaluates the position as clearly better for Black. This seems rather excessive, although Black has certainly solved his problems. It is important to note that the positionally desirable 20.\(\text{e}5?\) (White should settle for approximate equality with 20.\(\text{exd}5\).) loses material after 20...\(\text{d}4!\).

18...\(\text{bxa}3\)

18...\(\text{d}5\) and 18...\(\text{a}5\) are also reasonable moves.
19.\( \text{Qxa3} \) d5 20.\( \text{g3} \)
20.e5 d4 is unclear.

Karpov mentions the line 20.f5 d4 21.\( \text{Wh3} \) exf5 22.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{Af6} \) with balanced play.

20.exd5!? exd5 21.\( \text{Wh3} \) was enough for a small edge. It is possible that Karpov considered the game continuation to be more ambitious; on the other hand he may simply have wanted to keep the position closed against a player with an active style who had beaten him once before by tactical means.

20...\( \text{Af8} \)
Playing against the b2-bishop by means of 20...d4?! 21.\( \text{Qc4} \) \( \text{Ac5} \) was interesting.

21.e5 \( \text{Qe7} \) 22.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{Bac8} \)
Black could also have tried the same plan as in the game without this rook move.

23.\( \text{Wh3} \) \( \text{Qf5} \)
Karpov mentions the possibility of 23...g6??, which may well have transposed to the game after 24.\( \text{Qb1} \) \( \text{Qf5} \).

24.\( \text{Qb1} \)!
The knight has no future on a3, so Karpov improves it.

It is not simple to build the attack without weakening White's king as well. For instance, 24.g4 can be safely met by 24...\( \text{Qh6} \), while after 24.\( \text{Qxf5} \) exf5 25.\( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qxa3} \) 26.\( \text{Qxa3} \) \( \text{Bxc2} \) Karpov prefers Black's position.

24...g6
On 24...a5?! the champion planned 25.\( \text{Qc3} \) intending \( \text{Qb5} \) or \( \text{Qe2} \) when the knight is heading for its ideal home on d4.

25.\( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{Bb6} \)

26.\( \text{Qf3} \)!!
Bringing the knight at once is weaker: 26.\( \text{Qf3} \)?? d4! (not 26...\( \text{Qe3} \)?? 27.\( \text{Qd4} \)--) 27.\( \text{Qxf5} \) \( \text{Qxf5} \) 28.\( \text{Qxf3} \) exf5 Black is not worse, and in fact Karpov evaluated the position as slightly better for him.

By exchanging his strong bishop for the enemy knight, Karpov embarks on a risky but farsighted venture. His motivation is to weaken Black's king. What makes this move so difficult to judge is that it is effectively a double pawn sacrifice: the c2-pawn will not last long, and sooner or later White will have to give up the e5-pawn in order to activate his remaining bishop.

The idea of giving up material for positional gains was far from a new concept for Karpov. In
fact, he had utilized just such a device to good effect in his previous win over Taimanov:

17...Ec4! 18.Wxa7 Ec6 Taimanov – Karpov, Moscow 1973. At the cost of a pawn Black has secured a lasting blockade and a perfect knight outpost on d5. Taimanov ran short on time and went on to lose.

26...Exf5

26...gxg5? is too dangerous: 27.Bb3 Bh8 (27...Bxc2? 28.Bg3† Bh8 29.Wh5 wins as Wg5 is coming) 28.Wh5 Black is in trouble on the kingside.

27.Bb3!

Karpov does not even bother defending the c2-pawn; the initiative is what counts.

28...Cc6

Taimanov decides to control the sixth rank, which looks logical, although it is not clear if it was best.

The greedy 28...Wxb3? neglects the kingside: 29.e6! (29.Wh4! is also strong) 29...f6 (29...fxe6 30.Wh4=) 30.Wh4 Be7 31.Bb1 Wc4 32.Bxf6 And White wins.

However, it was worth considering the following alternative:
28...c7? 29.g5 h6 30.e6!
Karpov stops here, evaluating the position as winning for White. Black's position is certainly precarious, but the fight is far from over.

30...f6! 31.xf6
31.f7 e8 32.xh6 (32.de1 c8)
32.xh6 32.xh6 xe6 34.xg6 (34.fe1 e4 35.xf6 wh7) 34...g7 Black is alive.
31.e8 32.e7 xe7! 33.xe7 xe7 34.e1

34.e2
34.de2 35.f3 is clearly better for White.
34.xf6? is possible: 35.e6 (35.de6 d4)
35.g7 36.f3 d4 Black has some activity for the exchange.
35.f3 e4 36.e5
White has chances to convert his extra exchange, but Black's position is certainly not hopeless.

29.h4!
Having obtained some positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn, Karpov switches to tactics. The text move wins an important tempo by attacking the d8-rook.

The tempting 29.e6 is less strong: 29...fxe6 30.h4 (After 30.fe5? e8 White has nothing on the kingside.) 30.d7 31.g7 32.xg7+ xg7 33.xg7 xe7 34.d4 e6 35.xc6 xe6 With two pawns for the exchange Black is doing all right, and White has no open files available for his rooks.

29.e8
Black has other defensive ideas as well.

29.e7 30.e6 fxe6 (30...xe6? 31.d5++)
31.e5 c7 32.xd7 xd7 33.e1 c7
34.e1 xc1 35.xc1 Black has serious problems, despite having two pawns for the exchange.

The best chance may well have been:
29.d7??
Interestingly Karpov does not mention this move, which defends both the rook and the seventh rank.
30.g5 h5
31...\textit{xf7}!
31...\textit{g4}? is beautiful but not yet decisive:
31...\textit{c5} (31...fxg4? 32.f5 is crushing)
32.gxh5 (32.e6 fxe6 33.gxh5 \textit{xd4} 34.\textit{xd4}
\textit{dc8} Black is likely to escape) 32...\textit{xd4}
33.\textit{xd4} \textit{dc8} 34.\textit{gl} \textit{ec1} Black stays in
the game.
31...\textit{e8}!
31...\textit{xf7}? 32.e6† wins.
31...\textit{e7} 32.\textit{gl} \textit{e8} 33.g4 \textit{b5} 34.\textit{fe1}
Black is in big trouble.
32.\textit{gl} \textit{e7} 33.\textit{g3} \textit{h6} 34.\textit{f3} \textit{h7}
Black is still worse, but he has consolidated
his position and is not about to lose by force.

30.e6!
This second pawn sacrifice was built into
Karpov's superb strategic plan which began
with the minor piece exchange on f5. Karpov
improves his bishop and vacates the e5-square
for his knight. It would be easy for Black to
miss such a move, especially in conjunction
with the follow-up on move 32.

30...\textit{xe6}!
30...\textit{xe6} is worse: 31.\textit{gl} h6 32.\textit{xe6}
\textit{xe6} 33.\textit{de1} \textit{e2} 34.\textit{xe2} (34.\textit{gl} \textit{e4}!
Black blocks the e-file and can continue to resist) 34...\textit{xe2} 35.\textit{gl} Black is forced to
enter a losing endgame.

31.\textit{de5}!
White must avoid 31.\textit{f6}?? when 31...\textit{e5}!
turns the tables.

31...\textit{e7} 32.\textit{g6}!
White regains a pawn and, more importantly,
weakens the enemy kingside severely.
33...\textit{Qe5}!

Karpov keeps both of his strong minor pieces, as well as his blockade over the central dark squares.

33...\textit{We7}!

Taimanov defends well. Karpov made a brief mention of 33...\textit{a5}, which gives some chances to free the bishop. Unfortunately it gives White a valuable tempo with which to build his attack: 34.\textit{Be3}! (better than 34.\textit{Be1}, as given by Karpov) 34...\textit{Ec1} (34...\textit{Eg2}? 35.\textit{Wh5}!! wins as the queens attacks \textit{e8} and defends \textit{d1} at the same time. Also after 34...\textit{Ec6} 35.\textit{Wh3}! \textit{h6} 36.\textit{Eg3} Black faces an overwhelming attack.) 35.\textit{Ec1} \textit{Ec1} 36.\textit{Ec1} \textit{Ec7} 37.\textit{Ec3} White has a lot of firepower close to Black's king.

34.\textit{We3}!

Karpov analysed two alternatives:

34.\textit{Wf5} intends a rook lift along the third rank.

34...\textit{e5}? (Black can also consider 34...\textit{Ec8} 35.\textit{Ec3} \textit{Ec1} with counterplay.) 35.\textit{Wxe5} \textit{Ec1}!

This is the correct move order. (35...\textit{d4}?? Karpov attaches an exclamation mark to this move, but it is actually a losing mistake. If 36.\textit{Eg1} \textit{Ec7} Black is doing well, but 36.\textit{Eg7} wins for White.) 36.\textit{Wxe5} \textit{d4} Now this move brings Black decent play.
34.\texttt{Kf1} Karpov suggested this as the best move, without any further analysis. The idea is indeed very strong and instructive. White prepares \texttt{g3-g3}, meanwhile the queen defends the first rank and prepares to recapture on e5 should Black exchange there. 34...\texttt{Ec8}?! This natural move meets with a beautiful refutation. (34...\texttt{a5} is objectively better, although after 35.\texttt{g3} \texttt{b4} [or 35...\texttt{f6} 36.\texttt{g3}+ \texttt{h6} 37.\texttt{f3}] 36.\texttt{e3} \texttt{Ec7} 37.\texttt{g3} White has a strong attack.) 35.\texttt{g3} \texttt{f6} 36.\texttt{g3}+ \texttt{h8} (36...\texttt{f8} 37.\texttt{d7} should be winning)

35.\texttt{f6} 36.\texttt{g3}t \texttt{h8} (36 ... \texttt{f8} 37.\texttt{d7}t \texttt{h8} is weaker) 36.\texttt{g3} \texttt{h8}

In his \textit{Chess Informant} analysis Karpov suggests the small refinement 37.\texttt{f1}!! \texttt{xg7}?\texttt{f1}! \texttt{xg7} which also leads to a considerable endgame advantage: 38.\texttt{xg7} (38...\texttt{g8} 39.\texttt{f1} \texttt{d7} 40.\texttt{c6} and according to Karpov White is winning.

37.\texttt{f1}!!

37.\texttt{b4}!! White wins. Interestingly, there was even a second beautiful solution in 37.\texttt{g6}!!.

34.\texttt{Ec8}!!

Taimanov switches his rook to a defensive post on c7, but this leaves the e-pawn weak. A better try would have been: 34...\texttt{a5} 35.\texttt{f1}
38...\textbf{Bxe6}?! \textbf{Bxg3} 39.hxg3 \textbf{d4} 40.\textbf{Qh4} was a promising alternative.

38...\textbf{Bxg3} 39.hxg3 \textbf{Bc6} 40.\textbf{Qxe6}

Karpov gives his opponent no time to defend the f5-pawn. If 40.\textbf{Qh2}?! \textbf{Bc8}! 41.\textbf{Qxe6} \textbf{Bc7}! 42.\textbf{Qd4} \textbf{Bc4} it is not easy for White to achieve anything.

40...\textbf{Bc8} 41.\textbf{Qh2}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\t\draw (0,0) -- (1,1) -- (2,2) -- (3,3) -- (4,4) -- (5,5) -- (6,6) -- (7,7) -- (8,8);
\t\foreach \i in {1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8} \t\draw [very thick] (\i,0) -- (\i,8);
\t\foreach \j in {1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8} \t\draw [very thick] (0,\j) -- (8,\j);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

41...\textbf{Bxb3}

Taking a pawn looks natural, but Black will not get a chance to promote his passed a-pawn as his king is too vulnerable.

A better practical chance would have been 41...\textbf{d4}!, giving up the pawn in order to activate the dormant bishop. 42.\textbf{Qxd4}! From this square the knight defends b3, attacks f5 and guards against an invasion on c2. (42.\textbf{Qxd4}? is weaker because of 42...\textbf{Bc2}) 42...\textbf{Bb4} 43.g4! \textbf{Bg8} 44.\textbf{Qxf5}?! Karpov does not mention taking this pawn. (After 44.g5 \textbf{h6} 45.\textbf{Qh1}! \textbf{Bg6}! 46.\textbf{Qg1} \textbf{Bg7} Black is reasonably active.) 44...\textbf{Qxf5} 45.gxf5 \textbf{Bxb3} 46.\textbf{Qd2} White will look to double his rooks on the seventh rank, with excellent winning chances.

42.\textbf{Qd4} \textbf{Bb6}

Another line is 42...\textbf{Bb4} 43.\textbf{Qxf5} \textbf{Bxf5} 44.\textbf{Qd6} (44.\textbf{Qd4}?) 44...\textbf{Qc6} 45.\textbf{Qc1} \textbf{Bb6} 46.\textbf{Qe7} \textbf{Qf6} 47.\textbf{Qf7}+ \textbf{Qg8} 48.\textbf{Qe5} when Black's king is vulnerable on the back rank.

43.\textbf{Qxh5} \textbf{Bf8} 44.\textbf{Qd4} \textbf{Qg8}

If 44...\textbf{Qc8} 45.\textbf{Qe5} \textbf{Bd6} 46.\textbf{Qc1} White's rooks are dominating.

44...\textbf{Qf7} runs into 45.e8\textit{=} \textbf{Qg7} 46.\textbf{Qe1}!! when White constructs a mating net. This was pointed out by Karpov who, as we have seen many times, has a knack for checkmating his opponents in endgames. A possible finish is 46...a5 47.\textbf{Qe6}+ \textbf{Qf6} 48.\textbf{Qg4} \textbf{h6} (48...a4 49.g5+) 49.\textbf{Qh8} and White wins.

45.\textbf{Qe7}+ \textbf{Qg7}

After 45...\textbf{Qc8} 46.\textbf{Qc1} \textbf{Bb7} 47.\textbf{Qe5} Black remains very passive.

46.\textbf{Qe1} \textbf{Bh6}+

Pushing the a-pawn was also not enough to save the game: 46...a5 47.g5 \textbf{a4} 48.\textbf{Bxe6} \textbf{Bxe6} 49.\textbf{Qxe6} \textbf{Bg8}! (49...\textbf{Bxe7} 50.\textbf{Qf5}) 50.\textbf{Bxe7} \textbf{Bxe7} 51.\textbf{Qb5} \textbf{Bc6} 52.\textbf{Qc7} \textbf{Bg8} 53.e8=\textit{=} \textbf{Qxe8} 54.\textbf{Qxe8} White's extra piece should decide the game.

47.\textbf{Qg1} \textbf{Bhg6} 48.\textbf{h5}!

Karpov's f-pawn now grows into a powerhouse.
48...\( \text{\texttt{\textbackslash e}}\text{6} \)

Other moves were no better, for instance 48...\( \text{\texttt{xg3}} \) 49.f6 \( \text{\texttt{xg2}} \) 50.\( \text{\texttt{h1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}} \text{8} \) 51.f7 wins.

In the event of 48...\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{6} \) the clever 49.g4! decides the game. Karpov points out that White must avoid 49.\( \text{\texttt{xg7}} \)? \( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{g7} \) 50.\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{7} \) \( \text{\texttt{f7}} \) 51.\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{6} \) \( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 52.\( \text{\texttt{x}} \text{f7} \) \( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{f7} \) 53.\( \text{\texttt{d}}\text{8} \) \( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 54.\( \text{\texttt{xb7}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xf5}} \) when it is doubtful that he can win.

49.\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{7e6}! \)

Karpov simplifies with enviable precision.

49...\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{xe6} \)

If 49...\( \text{\texttt{b}}\text{4} \) 50.f6 wins.

50.\( \text{\texttt{f}}\text{xe6}! \)

This pawn will cost Black his bishop.

50...\( \text{\texttt{g}}\text{8} \) 51.e7 \( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{8} \) 52.\( \text{\texttt{f}}\text{5} \) \( \text{\texttt{c}}\text{6} \) 53.\( \text{\texttt{d}}\text{6} \) \( \text{\texttt{g}}\text{8} \)

Giving up only the exchange by 53...\( \text{\texttt{g}}\text{7} \) would have been hopeless as well: 54.\( \text{\texttt{exe8}} \) \( \text{\texttt{exe8}} \) 55.\( \text{\texttt{f1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{f7}} \) 56.\( \text{\texttt{f4}} \) a5 57.\( \text{\texttt{f2}} \) a4 58.\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{3} \) a3 59.\( \text{\texttt{d}}\text{4} \) a2 60.\( \text{\texttt{f1}} \) And White wins, as Karpov pointed out.

54.\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{8} \) 55.\( \text{\texttt{exe8}} \) \( \text{\texttt{exe8}} \) 56.\( \text{\texttt{d}}\text{6} \) \( \text{\texttt{g}}\text{5} \)

56...\( \text{\texttt{g}}\text{6} \) would last longer, although of course after 57.\( \text{\texttt{xd5}} \) White is winning easily.

57.\( \text{\texttt{c}}\text{7}! \)

In their first meeting Karpov also checkmated Taimanov's king with a knight and the rook; now he does it a second time.

57...\( \text{\texttt{g}}\text{7} \) 58.\( \text{\texttt{e}}\text{e8} \)

1–0

Karpov played a total of five games in the present Spartakiad. He scored one more win against Giorgadze, and drew the other three.

Karpov's next tournament was in Hannover. In the first round he suffered an incredible upset as he was comprehensively outplayed by a German player named Hartmann who was rated just 2290. Karpov even had the white pieces. In round two he made a quick draw with Kavalek, but then he moved into top gear and only dropped one draw from his next six games. A draw in round nine was followed by a win and two more draws.

In round thirteen Karpov faced Qi Jingxuan of China, who represented his country a few times. This was their first meeting. They played again in 1985; Karpov won that game too. The Chinese player competed regularly until 1987, but according to my database he only played two more tournaments after that year.
Game 68
Qi Jingxuan – Anatoly Karpov
Hannover 1983

1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qc3 a6

Karpov only played the Najdorf five times during his long career. He scored three wins and two draws with it.

6.Ng5

This was the first and only time Karpov faced this move. In the first round of the tournament the Chinese player tried 6.e3 against Giorgadze and lost.

6...e6 7.f4 Qb6 8.Qd2 Qxe2 9.Qb3 Qa3!

Objectively this may not be stronger than 9.Qc6 or 9.Qbd7, but practically it was the best choice as it is less likely to lead to a forced drawing line.

10.Qxf6 gxf6 11.Qc2

White has scored better with 14.Qd1, the most famous example of which came in the 1993 World Championship final: 14...Qc8 15.Qe3 (15.c4 and 15.Qf3 Qb4 16.Qe3 are possible improvements) 15...Qb4 16.c3 Qxe4 (16...Qb6?) 17.Qd3 Qa4 18.Qc4 Qc7 19.Qb6 Qa3 Short – Kasparov, London (4) 1993. At this point Short avoided the repetition but went on to lose.

Interestingly, when the two players met again in 1995, Kasparov decided to develop the knight to d7. That game ended in a draw after a complex fight.

14...Qb4

After 14...Qb2 15.Qc3 several games have resulted in quick draws, but Karpov is playing for more. It is worth adding that attempting to trap the black queen does not lead anywhere.

Spassky in their world championship match. Black effectively forgoes the option of castling short, but he no longer has to deal with the irritating possibility of h5.
for White: 15.a4 (15.a3? $c8 16.$f3 $f5 Lamarche Rodriguez – Wimmer, e-mail 1999) 15...d5! 16.exd5 $b4 17.dxe6 $xe6 Black was on top in Converset – Gueth, e-mail 2002.

Interestingly, in the very first game in which 14.$b1 was played, Fischer also spurned the repetition. It would be interesting to know if the decision was due to his incredible fighting spirit (he was leading the match by the score of 6½–3½ at the time, so in terms of match tactics a draw would have been more than okay), or if he feared getting his queen trapped on b2 (the knight retreat was a new move at the time, and it would not have been easy to calculate and assess all the important lines over the board).

15.$e3

15...$e7!

Karpov improves on Fischer's play. The knight clears a safe path of retreat for the queen, while also blocking the e-file in order to prevent any $c3-d5 ideas.


16.c4

16...$f5?! is well met by 16...$h6.

16.a3 $a4 17.c4 (17.$c3 $c6 18.$a5 $c7 19.$f5 $h4 20.$h3 0–0–0 Black has found a safe shelter for his king) 17...$f5 (17...$h4?! 18.$c3 $c6 18.$c3 $c6 19.$a5 $c7 19.d4 $c5; 19.$xd1 $a7) 19...$g7 20.$f3 $g8 White does not have much to show for the pawn, and Black's bishops are strong.

16...$f5?

It may look risky to open the game, but Black's position is resilient enough to withstand it, and the activation of the dark-squared bishop will help him considerably.

17.a3 $a4 18.$c3 $c6 19.$d4 $c5

White has won a few tempos, nevertheless Black is strong enough in the centre to repel any direct assault.

20.exf5 $g7!

After 20...$xf5? 21.$xf5 $xf5 22.$d5 Black loses material. Instead Karpov concentrates on developing and coordinating his forces.

21.$xe6 $xe6 22.$a5

22...$xd4!

Simplifying to an endgame.
Karpov is not interested in winning a piece as his exposed king would offer White promising compensation: 22...\( \text{Qc6}! \) 23.\( \text{Qe4}! \) \( \text{Ax}d4 \) 24.\( \text{Q}xg3 \) \( \text{Wb6} \) 25.\( \text{Q}xh6t \) \( \text{e7} \) 26.\( \text{Qxe4} \) \( \text{Whg8} \) 27.\( \text{Wh4t} \) \( \text{f8} \) 28.\( \text{Q}xg5 \) Black is in some danger.

23.\( \text{Q}xg4 \text{Q}xg4 \) 24.\( \text{Q}xg4 \)

In the resulting endgame both sides have some weaknesses, and the position should be about equal.

24.\( \text{Qf3} \) 25.\( \text{Qd2} \) \( \text{Cc8} \) 26.\( \text{Bb3} \)

A move like 26.g3? would have allowed 26.b5, so White wisely defends his knight.

It was also worth considering 26.\( \text{Qd3}?! \) \( \text{Bh6} \) (26...b5?! 27.\( \text{Qxf5} \text{exf5} \) 28.\( \text{Qxd6} \) 27.\( \text{Qe1} \) when the position is balanced.

26.\( \text{Qe7} \) 27.\( \text{Qg1} \text{h4} \) 28.\( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Cc5} \)

Karpov has made three of his characteristic little improving moves.

The further opening of the position only helps Black.

A better way to simplify the position was: 30.\( \text{Qe4}! \) d5 (30...\( \text{Qc6} \) 31.\( \text{Qxd6} \) \( \text{xf3} \) [or 31...\( \text{xc5} \) 32.\( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Id8} \) 33.\( \text{Qed3} \) 32.\( \text{Qxf5t} \) will result in a draw] 31.\( \text{Qxd5} \) \( \text{Qf5} \) 32.\( \text{Qc5} \) \( \text{Cc6} \) 33.\( \text{Qb3} \) is a double-edged endgame) 32.\( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qxd2} \) 33.\( \text{Qxd2} \) \( \text{Cc6} \) With such a limited amount of material remaining, the most likely result is a draw.

30...\( \text{Qxf4} \) 31.\( \text{Qxd6} \)

Also after 31.c5 d5 32.\( \text{Qxd5} \) \( \text{Cc6} \) Black's bishop dominates.

32.c5

It was worth considering 32.\( \text{Qb6d4} \) to exchange a pair of rooks, although Black is still on top after 32...\( \text{Qhf8} \).

32.\( \text{Qb8} \)

Checkmate in one is not a trivial matter, but that is not the only problem White has to face.

33.\( \text{b3} \)

33.\( \text{Qd1} \) \( \text{Cc4} \) 34.\( \text{Qf6d3} \) \( \text{Qxc5} \) wins.
Six moves ago it was not easy to tell which king was more vulnerable, but by now White is on the verge of being mated.

35.\text{\cref{35.d6d3}}

It is not uncommon for a pair of rooks on the first or eighth rank to deliver these kinds of mating threats. As I recall, it was a strong Hungarian IM named Navarowsky who first showed me this motif. Later I saw him win what should have been a lost position with this very idea. I will always remember the slight smile on his face. His opponent was not so happy with the lesson he received.

36.\text{\cref{36.d6d1}} e5!

White is paralysed by the need to defend the knight, so Karpov simply advances his passed pawn.

37.\text{\cref{37.d6f2}} Kg1 38.\text{\cref{38.d6d1}} Ke1 39.\text{\cref{39.d6d6}} e4 40.\text{\cref{40.d6d4}}

Did Karpov want to push the pawn closer to the promotion square, or was he merely setting up a zugzwang? Either way, he must have enjoyed inflicting such severe paralysis over his opponent's position; even world champions do not manage to achieve this level of domination very often.

40...\text{\cref{40...d6a5}}

White did not even have a chance to sacrifice his knight for the e-pawn in view of the mating threats.

41.\text{\cref{41.d6d2}} e3 42.\text{\cref{d6e6h4}}

Finally White relieved himself of the torture. Yet again Karpov caught his opponent's king in the endgame.
The Making of a Champion

In the penultimate round Karpov faced the Georgian grandmaster Tamaz Giorgadze, who was half a point ahead of him at the time. Giorgadze played sixteen games against the world champions, starting with Tal and finishing with Kasparov. He won one game, drew seven and lost the other eight. He had met Karpov twice before this game, drawing the first and losing the second (at the Spartakiad, the event before the present one). This was their final encounter.

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**Game 69**

*Anatoly Karpov – Tamaz Giorgadze*

Hannover 1983

1. d4  e5 2. c4  e6 3. d3  d5 4.  f3  e7
5. g5 0-0 6.c3  h6 7.  f6

This was the first time Karpov exchanged in this position. He went on to score highly with both the text move and 7.  h4.

7...  f6 8.  d2

Korchnoi introduced this move, which prepares long castling. Later Karpov beat Kasparov twice with 8.  c2 in their first world championship match, before subsequently turning to 8.  c1.

8...  c6

8...  dxc4? 9.  xc4  d7 10.0-0  c5 11.  d1  b6 12.  e2  xd4 13.  xd4  d7 14.  f3  b8 15.  e4  xd4 16.  xd4  a4 Black had equalized and a draw was agreed eleven moves later, Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (6) 1985.

9.  c1

9.0-0-0 has been played with some success by Korchnoi amongst others, but this is not Karpov's style. In Hungarian chess circles it is said that when Soviet grandmasters analysed a Karpov game and someone suggested a

sharp and unclear move, he would always follow it by saying, “But Tolya doesn’t play like this”

9...  a6 10.  e2

10.h3 may be a little more accurate, as White can save a tempo with his bishop while the pawn move should be of some use. Nevertheless White did not achieve much in the following encounter: 10...  dxc4 11.  xc4  e5 12.d5  a7 13.0-0 (13.  c2??) 13...  b5 14.  xb5  axb5 15.b3  e4 16.d4  e5 17.c2  e8 18.f4  d6 19.e2 ½–½ Timman – Olafsson, Reykjavik 1987.

10...  dxc4 11.  xc4  e5

Black wants to liberate the c8-bishop, but must pay the price in terms of the slight weakening of the c7-pawn.

12.d5  e7

12...  a7 has been played more frequently, but White has scored well after 13.  c2.

9..  c6

Karpov begins to clear the c-file in order to get closer to the c7-pawn.

13.  e4!

Karpov begins to clear the c-file in order to get closer to the c7-pawn.

13...  f5

After 13...  g6 the knight is in danger of being sidelined. 14.d6  xd6 15.  xd6
The strong knight makes Black's life unpleasant. 16...e4 17.d4 exd4 18.exd4 d5 19.g3 d6 20.d5 d4 21.d2 d5 22.dxe4 Black improved his knight but lost a pawn and was unable to hold the endgame in Groszpeter – Boensch, Sochi 1984.

13...f5!? is interesting; so far nobody has dared to accept the doubled f-pawns. 14.xf6 gxf6 Black's kingside is ugly, but he might be able to get some play against the d5-pawn.

14.e2!

Karpov continues to focus on the c-file. He may already have sensed that he would need to defend his king.

14...d6 15.xf6 xf6 16.0–0!

Taking the pawn at once was weaker as Black regains the d5 pawn: 16.xc7 e4 17.d4 g5 18.g3 xxd5 White has no significant advantage.

16.e4 17.d4

Correct was 17...g5! 18.d1 (after 18.f3 xxd5 19.xc7 g5 20.xh1 White is just a little better) 18...xd5 19.b3 xg5 20.xc7 xe8 and White only has a small plus.

18.xc7 g5 19.f1 e3 20.f1 g4

21.b4!

Karpov correctly judges that he can afford to move his queen away from the kingside, as Black does not have enough firepower to damage him there. One of the keys to the position is the black knight, which is singlehandedly holding the black queenside together while blockading White's extra pawn. Karpov has found a nice way to undermine this important piece.

21...ad8 22.b6!

From this outpost the queen menaces both the rook on d8 and the knight on d6, thus tying up the black pieces.

22.h5

If 22...xd5?? 23.xc5 traps the queen.

23.a4 h4

23...xd5 was still inadvisable, even though it no longer loses the queen: 24.b3 xg8 25.h3 xg8 26.xh5 White restores his material advantage while remaining in full control of the position.
24...\text{e}7\text{c}5

Now Karpov consolidates the pawn advantage. He has assessed the position accurately and judged that Black is too tied up to attack successfully.

24...\text{h}6

24...\text{h}3 was worth considering, as such a pawn can often cause trouble, although in the present position the black rooks have no way of getting to the first rank. 25.g3 \text{\textit{f}f}6 26.b4 \text{\textit{e}5} 27.b5 White will soon remove the blockading knight, after which he should press home his advantage.

25.b4 \text{\textit{e}5} 26.h3 \text{\textit{c}8}

27.b5!

Karpov continues his plan of undermining the enemy knight. The way in which he carried out his plan was beautiful to watch.

27...\text{a}xb5 28.\text{d}xb5 \text{\textit{h}7} 29.\text{d}4

This move in conjunction with White's 31st suggests that Karpov was probably in time trouble. He could have crowned his previous fine play in one of two ways:

29.\text{c}1\text{c}2! This eliminates all counterplay.

29...\text{a}5 30.\text{h}2 (30.\text{h}1??) 30...\text{e}5† 31.\text{h}1 Black is in big trouble.

There was also a sharp tactical solution: 29.\text{a}xd6! \text{e}xd6 30.\text{b}1! \text{\textit{f}5} 31.\text{xb}7 \text{\textit{h}3} 32.\text{c}6 And White is winning.

29...\text{e}8 30.\text{\textit{c}2}! \text{g}5

31.\text{d}6?

After playing a great game Karpov commits a serious tactical error. Once again, there was more than one route to victory:

31.\text{h}1 \text{\textit{d}7} 32.a5 \text{\textit{e}5} 33.\text{c}7 and White invades. This would have been the sensible choice if White was short of time.

The sharper 31.\text{b}5?? was also good enough, although accurate calculation was required:

31...\text{h}3 32.\text{\textit{e}d}6 \text{f}3

33.\text{\textit{f}4}! \text{\textit{g}2}† 34.\text{h}1! And White wins.
31...\texttt{\textit{x}}xe6 32.dxe6

32.\texttt{\textit{x}}xd6 can be met by 32...\texttt{\textit{d}}d8!. Maybe this strong intermediate move is what Karpov missed. 33.\texttt{\textit{b}}b6 \texttt{\textit{x}}xd5 34.\texttt{\textit{x}}xf6 gxf6 Black should be able to live with the doubled pawns.

32...\texttt{\textit{x}}xe6 33.\texttt{\textit{x}}g5

Once the rooks are exchanged Black has virtually no chance to hurt White's king.

33...\texttt{\textit{x}}g5 34.\texttt{\textit{b}}4

Due to his recent mistakes, Karpov virtually has to win the game all over again. Fortunately for him, he is still somewhat better as the b7- and e4-pawns are vulnerable, while the knight on d6 is unstable and requires constant protection.

Let us not forget the tournament situation: Karpov was trailing Giorgadze by half a point with just one game remaining after this one, so he desperately needed to win.

34.g6 35.\texttt{\textit{c}}e2 \texttt{\textit{e}}7 36.\texttt{\textit{g}}4 \texttt{\textit{f}}5

After 36...\texttt{\textit{e}}e8 37.\texttt{\textit{b}}b3 \texttt{\textit{a}}6 38.\texttt{\textit{c}}e2 \texttt{\textit{a}}5 39.\texttt{\textit{b}}5 Black's position has worsened.

37.\texttt{\textit{b}}5 \texttt{\textit{d}}6 38.\texttt{\textit{b}}6 \texttt{\textit{f}}5 39.\texttt{\textit{b}}5 \texttt{\textit{d}}6 40.\texttt{\textit{d}}5 \texttt{\textit{e}}e5 41.\texttt{\textit{d}}4

41...\texttt{\textit{e}}8

41...\texttt{\textit{a}}5 42.\texttt{\textit{d}}2 \texttt{\textit{f}}5

42...\texttt{\textit{a}}6 43.a5 \texttt{\textit{c}}7 44.\texttt{\textit{e}}2 \texttt{\textit{e}}6 45.\texttt{\textit{d}}5 White keeps up the pressure.

43.\texttt{\textit{c}}4 \texttt{\textit{e}}8 44.\texttt{\textit{f}}xf5 \texttt{\textit{x}}f5

44...\texttt{\textit{f}}xf5? 45.\texttt{\textit{c}}7! Black is in trouble. 45.\texttt{\textit{d}}4

45...b5

Black can reduce the pawns to one side, but this does not guarantee a draw. If 45...\texttt{\textit{e}}e5 46.\texttt{\textit{c}}7 \texttt{\textit{e}}7 47.\texttt{\textit{f}}4 White wins a pawn.

46.\texttt{\textit{c}}c2 \texttt{\textit{b}}xa4 47.\texttt{\textit{e}}xe4 \texttt{\textit{d}}d8 48.\texttt{\textit{a}}xa4 \texttt{\textit{g}}5

We have reached an unusual ending with four versus three on the kingside. Such a scenario would normally offer excellent drawing chances, but in the present position the black king is rather exposed, which will complicate his defensive task.

42.\texttt{\textit{b}}2

After its sixth consecutive move, the queen settles on a good square.
42...f5?!

This move is not the direct cause of Black’s demise, but it was a step in the wrong direction as the seventh rank is weakened.

A better option was 42...d6, for instance: 43.e8?! (White’s position has not ripened enough for him to go for a direct win. Karpov would probably have played more patiently with 43.e2! with a small but persistent advantage.) 43...a5 44.c4 d8 45.b1 d5 46.e1 b6 47.b7 d3 Black has improved his position considerably.

Black could also have considered waiting with 42...d6?! or 42...d5?! In both cases he maintains reasonable defensive chances.

43.e2 g7?

Black probably wanted to transfer the knight to c5, but he never even gets close to fulfilling this objective.

A better idea was 43.d5! to improve the rook. 44.e1 (Also after 44.e8 g7 45.a8 [45.b8 d1!] 45...g7 Black must be careful but his position looks defensible.) 44...f6 45.b1 d7 46.c1 White keeps a slight advantage, but Black should be able to hold with careful defence.

44.e8!

This move paralyses the knight completely. Maybe Giorgadze missed the trouble brewing on h8 as the diagonal is presently being covered by two pieces, yet they are not enough.

44...d7?

This loses by force. 44...e5 was better, although after 45.b8 e7 46.a5 Black can hardly move.

45.xe5

45.b8?? e7 46.d6 was also convincing.

45...xc8 46.e7

Winning the h-pawn.

46.e1 f1+ 47.b1 a1 48.eh4+ g8 49.d8+

Karpov quickly and efficiently improves his pieces, but his task is no longer difficult.

49...h7 50.d7

The pin ensures that the knight will not move.

50...b1

51.g3!

After releasing the opponent’s pin, White will easily free his bishop and catch the enemy king. The rest is easy.
Karpov never played 3...\texttt{d6} in a regular game. Altogether he scored only 50\% from eight games in the Italian.

4.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{d}vd}6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 0-0 7.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}5 a6 8.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}b3 h6

A year earlier – coincidentally, at the Hamburg TV event – Karpov preferred 8...\texttt{\texttt{d}d}a7 and equalized against Nunn: 9.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}bd2 \texttt{\texttt{d}c}e7 10.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}c4 \texttt{\texttt{d}g}6 11.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}h4 \texttt{\texttt{d}g}4 12.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}xf6 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}xf6 13.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}xg4 \texttt{\texttt{d}h}4 14.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}xh4 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}xh4 15.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}ad1 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}g6 16.g3 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}h8 17.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}e3 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}e7 18.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}xd5 \texttt{\texttt{d}d}xd5 19.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}xd5 c6 Nunn – Karpov, Hamburg TV 1982. The players fought for a long time, but neither of them obtained any winning chances and they eventually split the point.

9.\texttt{\texttt{d}d}h4

Karpov breaks the pin and hopes to isolate the enemy bishop.

9...g5?

Karpov breaks the pin and hopes to isolate the enemy bishop.
So far nobody seems to have ventured the knight sacrifice, and indeed after 10.\(\textit{c}xg5\)! \(hxg5\) 11.\(\textit{c}xg5\) \(\textit{e}6\) White's compensation is in doubt: 12.\(\textit{h}1\) (Or 12.\(\textit{d}5\) \(\textit{g}7\) 13.\(\textit{f}3\) \(\textit{g}6\) 14.\(\textit{h}4\) [14.\(\textit{h}4\) \(\textit{h}8\)] 14...\(\textit{g}4\) 15.\(\textit{x}f6\) \(\textit{w}d7\) and Black is safe.) 12...\(\textit{g}7\) 13.\(\textit{f}3\) (13.\(\textit{f}4\) \(\textit{e}3\)) 13...\(\textit{e}7\) Black will soon escape the pin.

10...\(\textit{a}7\)

The bishop retreats out of harm's way. 10...\(\textit{g}4\) is a valid alternative, which could transpose to the game.

11.\(\textit{b}d2\) \(\textit{g}4\)

This was a novelty at the time, although it has since been repeated several times. A year earlier Donner preferred 11...\(\textit{g}7\) and drew with Kuijf.

12.\(\textit{h}1\)!

Chandler probably expected ...\(\textit{h}5\) soon, and may have wanted to meet ...\(\textit{x}g3\) with \(f\textit{g}3\).

12.\(\textit{h}3\) was more purposeful, when Black has to decide where to put his bishop. 12...\(\textit{h}5\) (12...\(\textit{e}6\) 13.\(\textit{w}e2\) \(\textit{w}e7\) is also reasonable) 13.\(\textit{c}4\) \(\textit{g}6\) (there is also 13...\(\textit{d}7\) 14.\(\textit{e}3\) \(\textit{c}5\) 15.\(\textit{c}2\) \(\textit{e}6\) 16.\(\textit{w}e2\) \(\textit{e}7\) 17.\(\textit{h}2\) \(\textit{d}4\) with complex play) 14.\(\textit{e}3\) \(\textit{g}7\) (14...\(\textit{h}5\)?)

15.\(\textit{h}2\) \(\textit{f}4\) 15.\(\textit{w}d2\) \(\textit{h}5\) 16.\(\textit{h}2\) \(\textit{f}4\) 17.\(\textit{c}2\) \(\textit{f}6\) With complex play and mutual chances.

12...\(\textit{h}5\)!

Karpov anticipates a knight manoeuvre to \(e3\) and retreats his bishop to a more secure location where it also helps to safeguard his kingside. The \(g5\)-pawn will not be a weakness, but rather a healthy pawn which secures space and provides attacking possibilities on the kingside.

13.\(\textit{w}e1\)!

Chandler probably overestimated the pin – there was no need to escape it just yet. A more logical continuation was 13.\(\textit{c}4\) \(\textit{g}7\) 14.\(\textit{e}3\) \(\textit{g}6\) 15.\(\textit{h}3\) \(\textit{w}d7\) 16.\(\textit{h}2\) when Black can choose between 16...\(\textit{a}e8\) and 16...\(\textit{d}8\), with a decent position in both cases.

13...\(\textit{g}7\)

Karpov improves his king a bit and hints that he may play on the kingside.

14.\(\textit{d}1\) \(\textit{g}6\)

A bishop exchange would not be in Black's interests. Instead Karpov vacates the \(h5\)-square and turns his attention to the centre. If Black can arrange to play ...\(d5\) then the bishop could become powerful.
Karpov brings another piece into play while continuing to strengthen his centre.

Attacking the g5-pawn was dangerous for White: 17.h4?! Hh5 (17...g4 is also strong; 18.Hh2 d5 19.Hd2 dxe4 20.dxe4 Hh5 Black's position is preferable.) 18.Hh2 (18.Hxg5?! Hxg5 19.Hxg5 Hxg5 20.He3 gives Black a pleasant choice between 20...d5 and 20...Hh8† 21.Hxh8 Hh5, with an obvious advantage in both cases.) 18...g4 19.Hd2 Hf5 20.exf5 Hxf5 21.He3 Hxe6 Black has some advantage.

White should have preferred 17.He3! in order to keep an eye on the d5-square. 17...Hd8!? (Or 17...d5 18.Hd1 Had8 19.Hd2 Hf5 [19...He7?!] 20.Hb3 and the position is balanced.) 18.Hd1 Hd6 19.h3 Hf4 Black is just a bit better in this complex position.

17...Had8!

Karpov mentions the possibility of 17...b5 intending immediate action in the centre, but why take the risk when it is possible to continue strengthening the position slowly and smoothly? Play continues 18.He3 d5 19.Hxd5 Hxd5 20.exd5 Hxd5 21.Ha4 Had8 22.axb5 axb5 23.Hxe5 (23.Hd1 Hf6) 23...Bxe5 24.Hxe5† Hxe5 25.d4 Hd6 26.f4 and the position is rather unclear.

18.a4

This move is directed against ...b5. It may not prevent it outright, but it certainly renders the conditions less favourable for Black.

If 18.He3 d5 Black is better.

18...Hh5!

Karpov improves the knight and makes ...f5 a real possibility.
19.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qe3}}} was the best chance. 19...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{xexe3}}} (After 19...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qe7}}} 20.d4 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qg8}}} 21.dxe5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxg3}}} 22.hxg3 dxe5 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qe2}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{f6}}} 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qad1}}} White is not worse.) 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe3}}} d5! (Also after 20...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f5}}}!? 21.exf5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{xf5}}} Black has a freer position.) 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Bf1}}} f6 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qad1}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qf4}}} 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qc5}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{We7}}} Black's advantage is beyond doubt, but White still has good chances to resist.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

19...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{d5}}}!

Karpov executes the obvious strike in the centre, and White's position quickly collapses.

20.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{exd5}}}

Maybe Chandler had been planning 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}}, but only now realized that 20...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f6}}}! would cost him a piece after 21.exd5 \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}}.

20...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxd5}}}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

21.\textit{\texttt{Bb5}}?

Chandler tries to stir up complications, but this approach is doomed to fail. 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}} was also hopeless due to 21...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe3}}} 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe3}}} when Black has a winning advantage after 22...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f5}}} or 22...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxd3}}}.

21.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}}? was the best chance. White gives up two pieces for a rook and a pawn, but manages to exchange some pieces and achieve some stability in the centre. 21...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}} 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Bxe5}}} 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe5}}} 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxc2}}} 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxc2}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qd5}}} 26.\textit{\texttt{Qxe1}} Black still has to work for the full point, nevertheless he should be able to achieve it.

21...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{e4}}}!

Karpov opens up the centre, where he has two extra rooks in play. White's situation is already hopeless.

22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qe3}}}

Alternatives also fall flat: 22.\textit{\texttt{Qxe4}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxc4}}}; 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxc7}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{exf3}}} 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{g4}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxc4}}}; or 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{bxc6}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxf3}}} 23.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qd6}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxf3}}}; 24.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{g1}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxg3}}} 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{hxg3}}} \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qg3}}}; and White is toast.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

22...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Qxe3}}!}

Usually one would be reluctant to exchange such a bishop, but Karpov has seen that he is winning by force.
23.\textit{fxe3} \textit{fxg3}t 24.\textit{hxg3} \textit{exf3}
24...exd3 was winning as well.

25.\textit{bxc6}

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\begin{itemize}
\item 25...\textit{exf3}!
This puts an end to White’s resistance.
\item 26.\textit{fxe3}
If 26.\textit{f2} \textit{fxg2}t 27.\textit{hxg2} \textit{gxg3} Black wins.
\end{itemize}

26.\textit{fxg2}t 27.\textit{h2} \textit{gxf1}\text{=Q}t
Chess players rarely get a chance to underpromote, and Karpov does not pass up the opportunity. It looks like he did it for amusement, as the normal promotion to a queen would have led to the same result.

28.\textit{exf1} \textit{exe6}
Black has emerged from the fireworks with two extra pawns and a completely winning position.

29.\textit{e5}t \textit{g8} 30.\textit{f2} \textit{e8}
0–1
It was not one of Chandler’s better games, but the way Karpov carried out his central strategy was exemplary.

Karpov suffered a setback in the final and lost to Miles. Only one game appears on the database, a 5...\textit{gxf6} Caro Kann in which Black eventually prevailed after a highly complex struggle. It would be surprising if they only played a single game (Karpov and Spassky played four games in the final of the Hamburg TV event) but I was unable to track down any others.
1983 Summary

Linares (2nd-3rd place): 6/10 (+2 =8 -0)
USSR Championship, Moscow (1st place): 9½/15 (+5 =9 -1)
European Team Championship, Plovdiv (Board one): 2½/4 (+1 =3 -0)
Spartakiad USSR, Moscow (Board one) 3½/5 (+2 =3 -0)
Hannover (1st place) 11/15 (+8 =6 -1)
Tilburg (1st place): 7/11 (+3 =8 -0)
(Bath TV games not included)

Total 65.8% (+21 =37 -2)
This was the third year since Karpov's last title defence against Korchnoi, which meant that the time had come for him to battle the next challenger for his crown: Garry Kasparov. The match did not start until September, so there was time for him to fit in a few other events.

In April, Karpov took part in the strong Phillips and Drew tournament in London. He ripped through the field, scoring four wins and two draws from his first six games. After one more draw he met his old rival Korchnoi in round eight. This was their first encounter since the 1981 World Championship final. Korchnoi had already been defeated by Kasparov in the semi-final of the latest candidates cycle, so it was clear that he would not be challenging for the crown again. This may have reduced the tension slightly, but there was still a huge amount of pride at stake.

Game 71

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

London 1984

1.\(d3\) \(d6\) 2.\(c4\) \(g6\) 3.\(d3\) 4.d4 \(g7\)

Korchnoi regularly played the Grünfeld, and he only lost a few games with it. This was the first and only time he ever played it against Karpov.

5.\(g5\)

At this stage in his career Karpov had hardly ever faced the Grünfeld, although he once beat Adorjan with this variation.

5...\(e4\) 6.\(cxd5\) \(\text{xg5}\) 7.\(\text{xg5}\) \(e6\)
Karpov deviates from the aforementioned game, which continued as follows: 8.\texttt{d4} h6 9.\texttt{g3} exd5 10.\texttt{h4} 0-0 11.\texttt{g3} \texttt{c6} 12.\texttt{e3} \texttt{c7} 13.\texttt{g2} c5? Black bases his play on dynamism. (13...c6 was more solid.) 14.\texttt{dxc5} d4 15.\texttt{d1} (After 15.0-0-0? \texttt{g4} 16.\texttt{exd4} \texttt{xd1} 17.\texttt{xd1} White has two pawns and decent play for the exchange.) 15...dxe3 16.\texttt{dxe3} \texttt{xd2}t 17.\texttt{xd2} \texttt{xb2} 18.\texttt{ab1}

Karpov takes over on the queenside and went on to win, Karpov - Adorjan, Budapest 1973.

Karpov handles the position in the natural way. Two years later Seirawan tried the radical 9\texttt{b4}! but did not achieve much: 9...\texttt{d6} 10.a3 0-0 11.e3 c6 12.\texttt{e2} \texttt{f5} 13.0-0 \texttt{d7} 14.\texttt{a4} a5 15.\texttt{w3} b5 16.\texttt{c5} a4 17.\texttt{c3} \texttt{b6} 18.\texttt{d2} \texttt{a8} 19.\texttt{e1} \texttt{e7} 20.\texttt{b3} \texttt{e8} Black was in control although he later went wrong and lost in Seirawan - Kasparov, Dubai (ol) 1986.

Korchnoi plays the main line. Some players have experimented with moves like 9...\texttt{d6}? and 9...a5, both of which aim to restrain White's pawn advance on the queenside.

Korchnoi has a tendency to get into time trouble, and I wonder how long he spent considering the consequences of advancing the f-pawn.
13...f4!?
This could lead to some long and extremely complex variations.

14.exf4!?
In his Chess Informant notes Karpov only mentioned 14.e4 with a slight plus for White, so this would probably have been his choice had Korchnoi played 13...f4 in the game. The text move is much more fun to analyse though!

14...gxf4 15.a6!
It is not difficult to see this far ahead, but the fun is only just beginning.

15...g4! 16.d2

16...h6!
16...xf3 17.xb7 f7 (17...xc3 18.xa8 a3 19.xd5+ h8 20.b3 White is better.)
18.xa8 xxa8 19.f3 f5 20.g4 Black will have some compensation for his material deficit, but still White’s chances are higher.
17.xb7 xf3 18.xa8 xg2! 19.e3!
From this square the queen combines attack and defence. It would have been hard to calculate this far in advance, and there are still many more difficult moves ahead.

19...e4!
This nice move closes the e-file and threatens a deadly rook check.
The feeble 19...xa8? loses after 20.e6+ f7 21.xg2.
After 19...g5 20.g3 g4 21.xg2 White’s rooks will be stronger than Black’s queen.
20.xh3! g5 21.f1 g4 22.xd5!
After 22.ad1 f6 White has problems.
22...xd5 23.xd5 g1+ 24.e2 xd2+
25.f3 xe1 26.xe1 xe1 27.xd7 h1+ 28.e2 e4! 29.e3 f6

Black has good chances to hold this endgame.

30.d5+ xd5 31.xd5 xh2 32.e7+ f7 33.c6 e6 34.a4 d5
Black should be able to draw thanks to his active king.
14.\textit{Be}1 $\textit{h}8$

This is partly a waiting move, although it does have the specific purpose of creating a retreat square on g8 for the bishop. Several other moves also deserved consideration.

14...$\textit{We}7$ 15.$\textit{Cb}5$ $g^4$ 16.$\textit{Cd}2$ $c^6$ 17.$\textit{Cc}7$ $\textit{Eac}8$ 18.$\textit{Dxe}6$ $\textit{Wxe}6$ White is just fractionally better.

14...$a^5$ seems a little overambitious: 15.$\textit{Bb}5$ $g^4$ 16.$\textit{Cd}2$ $\textit{Be}8$ 17.$\textit{Wc}2$ $\textit{Af}8$ (17...$f^4$ 18.$\textit{Cd}3$) 18.$\textit{Cd}3$ $\textit{Wg}5$ (18...$\textit{Wf}6$ 19.$\textit{De}2$) 19.$\textit{De}2$ $\textit{Ae}6$ 20.$\textit{Qb}3$ White's play on the queenside is more powerful than Black's on the kingside.

In a couple of subsequent games Black opted for queenside prophylaxis with 14...$a^6$. Here is one example: 15.$\textit{Da}4$ $c^6$ 16.$\textit{Cc}5$ $\textit{De}5$ 17.$\textit{Bxc}5$ $\textit{We}7$ 18.$\textit{Ab}3$ $\textit{Ba}8$ 19.$\textit{Eb}1$ $\textit{Ac}8$ 20.$\textit{Cc}2$ $\textit{Wf}6$ The position is double-edged, but in Meyer – Doncevic, Germany 1986, White self-destructed with 21.$g^4$? and lost in another six moves.

17.$\textit{Cd}3$ $c^6$

Korchnoi finally plays the move he had been postponing. He was probably right to avoid 15...$g^4$, as after 16.$\textit{Cd}2$ $\textit{Af}6$ White can play 17.$\textit{De}2$ to take advantage of the outpost on f4.

15...$a^6$?

It would have been interesting to see how Karpov would have responded to this move. Here is a plausible line:

16.$\textit{Cc}2$?!  

White could consider improving the c3-knight at once by means of 16.$\textit{Da}4$ or 16.$\textit{De}2$, but it looks logical to avoid revealing his intentions for a bit longer.

16...$\textit{We}7$ 17.$h^4$?!  

This interesting pawn sacrifice enables White to fight for the initiative. Black has been quick to seize space on the kingside, but his pieces are not ideally placed to back up the pawns.

17.$\textit{De}2$ $c^6$ 18.$\textit{Dg}3$ is a more sedate alternative.

17...$g^xh^4$

17...$g^4$ 18.$\textit{Dg}5$ is good for White.

17...$h^6$ 18.$hxg^5$ $hxg^5$ 19.$g^3$! White will take over the initiative on the kingside after $\textit{g}^2$ and $\textit{h}^1$.

18.$\textit{De}2$ $c^6$ 19.$\textit{Df}4$

White has lovely positional compensation for the pawn.

16.$b^5$

Karpov wastes no time in chipping away at Black's pawn structure.

16...$g^4$
17. \( \text{d}2 \)

Karpov decides not to insert the exchange on c6, preferring to play the IQP position with the b-pawns on the board.

17. \( \text{bxc}6 \)

Objectively this is probably no better or worse than the game continuation.

17...\( \text{bxc}6 \)

17...\( \text{gxf}3 \)\( ! \) does not equalize: 18.\( \text{cxd}7 \) \( \text{fxg}2 \) 19.\( \text{\#f}3 \)! The g2-pawn shields the king, so White should not be in a hurry to take it. Instead he stabilizes his position on the kingside first. 19.\( \text{\#xd}7 \) 20.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{h}6 \) 21.\( \text{f}4 \) White has a nice positional advantage thanks to his strong knight and Black's passive light-squared bishop.

18.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{c}5 \)

19.\( \text{\#e}4 \)\

This looks like the most natural move. By avoiding the knight exchange, Black makes his weaknesses harder to attack. (Obviously

22.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{b}6 \) Black has good chances to eliminate the b3-pawn, after which it will be tough for White to prove anything.

19...\( \text{e}8 \)

19...\( \text{g}8 \) 20.\( \text{dxc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 21.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{c}8 \) is also reasonable.

20.\( \text{xd}7 \)

20.\( \text{a}4 \) is met by 20...\( \text{e}7 \).

20...\( \text{\#d}7 \) 21.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{c}4 \) 22.\( \text{c}5 \) \( \text{c}6 \)

In this somewhat unusual position Black should not be worse.

17...\( \text{c}5 \) 18.\( \text{dxc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 19.\( \text{b}3 \)

19...\( \text{xb}3 \)

It is interesting that Korchnoi decided to exchange minor pieces, which goes against the conventional wisdom when one has an isolated pawn. He did something similar in Baguio when playing the black side of a French Tarrasch.

If 19...\( \text{c}8 \) 20.\( \text{dxc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 21.\( \text{e}2 \) White does not have a huge advantage, but his position is easy to play and his knight has a couple of attractive squares available.

19...\( \text{e}4 \)!

This looks like the most natural move. By avoiding the knight exchange, Black makes his weaknesses harder to attack. (Obviously
White could exchange the knight on e4, but that would improve Black’s pawn structure considerably.)

20.\textit{c}d4 1\textit{b}6 21.\textit{f}b3 1\textit{x}d4

There is also 21...\textit{g}8 22.\textit{c}e2 \textit{e}5 when Black has a decent grip on the centre.

22.\textit{e}x\textit{d}4 \textit{b}c8

Black’s pieces have achieved a reasonable level of harmony.

23.\textit{d}e2

23.g3? loses material after 23.\textit{d}2.

After 23.\textit{c}c2 \textit{g}7 24.\textit{e}c1 \textit{b}6 Black’s position is solid enough.

23.\textit{e}c1 24.\textit{e}c1 \textit{f}4

Black has counterplay.

20.\textit{a}xb3 \textit{b}c8 21.\textit{f}e2

21.\textit{e}x\textit{c}1

Black can also try: 21...\textit{d}6 22.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}5 23.g3 \textit{g}7 (23...\textit{e}c1 24.\textit{e}c1 \textit{b}c8 25.\textit{e}c8+ \textit{b}x\textit{c}8 With no rooks the f5 pawn is more vulnerable, while the passivity of Black’s light-squared bishop is also harder to live with. 26.\textit{d}d4 \textit{x}d4 27.\textit{e}x\textit{d}4 Black has chances to hold, but it will not be much fun for him.) 24.\textit{f}4 \textit{f}x\textit{f} 25.\textit{e}f\textit{e} 26.\textit{e}c1 \textit{f}6 27.\textit{e}c1 White keeps the upper hand.

22.\textit{e}x\textit{c}1 \textit{b}6

With this natural move Korchnoi prepares to advance and exchange his isolani.

22...\textit{a}5? This interesting move aims to disrupt White’s coordination. 23.\textit{d}1! (After 23.\textit{f}1 \textit{b}6 Black has a better version of the game, as after ...\textit{d}4 the white rook will be passively placed. Another possibility is 23.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}8 24.\textit{e}c2 \textit{e}8 25.\textit{b}1 \textit{b}4 26.\textit{a}f5 \textit{b}c3 when Black has counterchances.) 23...\textit{b}4 24.\textit{c}c2 \textit{e}5 25.\textit{g}3 and Black should be all right, although he still has to be careful.

23.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}8 24.\textit{g}3 \textit{d}4?

Korchnoi decides to take action before Karpov can start attacking his vulnerable pawns.

24...\textit{a}6 is a bit slow, and after 25.\textit{h}5 \textit{e}5 26.\textit{a}3 \textit{f}7 27.\textit{a}6 \textit{a}6 28.\textit{e}c1 Black is in danger.

If 24...\textit{d}6 25.\textit{c}2 \textit{d}7 26.\textit{d}1 White begins to target the d5-pawn, and Black faces a long squeeze.

25.\textit{c}4!

After the light-squared bishops are exchanged, Black’s king will become noticeably more vulnerable.

Undermining the g4-pawn with 25.e4 was also attractive: 25...\textit{e}4 26.\textit{b}x\textit{b}3 (26...\textit{d}6 27.\textit{d}1; 26...\textit{a}5 27.\textit{d}1 \textit{c}3 28.\textit{e}6 \textit{a}6
29.\texttt{Bxe6} White has excellent winning chances in this opposite-coloured bishop position. In Game 75 we will see Karpov beating Kasparov from a not dissimilar situation.) 27.\texttt{Be7} 28.\texttt{Be8} 29.\texttt{Bd7} 30.\texttt{Bxg4} Black’s problems persist.

25...\texttt{Be8}

It is worth considering a couple of alternatives.

25...\texttt{dxe3} 26.\texttt{Bxe3}!

Karpov correctly gave this move in his \textit{Chess Informant} analysis. White should keep the queens on the board as Black’s king is vulnerable. 26.\texttt{Bxe3} sets some problems as well, but Black should be able to hold the ending: 26...\texttt{Bxe3} 27.\texttt{Bxe3} \texttt{Bh6} (27...\texttt{Bf6}? Passive defence also gives Black good drawing chances.) 28.\texttt{Be7} \texttt{Bxf4} 29.\texttt{Bxf4} \texttt{Bxc4} 30.\texttt{Bxc4} \texttt{Bc8} 31.\texttt{Bxb7} \texttt{Bxc4} 32.\texttt{Bxa7} \texttt{Bb4}? Black escapes to a drawn rook ending.

26...\texttt{Bd4}

After 26...\texttt{Bc5} 27.\texttt{Bd2} \texttt{Bxc4} 28.\texttt{Bxc4} \texttt{Bxc4} 29.\texttt{Bxe6} \texttt{Bc8} 30.\texttt{Bd7} Black is caught.

27.\texttt{Bxe2}

Karpov ends his analysis here, saying that White will continue with \texttt{Be1} with a big advantage. He is correct, but it is worth taking the analysis a bit further:

27...\texttt{Bc5}

After 27...\texttt{Bc5} 28.\texttt{Be1} a6 29.\texttt{Bxa6} \texttt{Bxa6} 30.\texttt{Bxe6} \texttt{Bf6} 31.\texttt{Bd2} Black faces huge problems.

28.\texttt{Bxe6} \texttt{Bxc4} 29.\texttt{Bxc4} \texttt{Bxc4} 30.\texttt{Bb7}

The rook is tremendously powerful on the seventh rank, and it is doubtful that Black will survive.

Black’s best option was probably 25...a6?, as in certain endgames it can be useful to have exchanged a pair of queenside pawns. Nevertheless after 26.\texttt{Bxa6} \texttt{Bxa6} 27.\texttt{Bxg8} 28.\texttt{Bxd4} \texttt{Bxd4} (28...\texttt{Bxd4} 29.\texttt{Bc2}) 29.\texttt{Bb1} \texttt{Bc3} 30.\texttt{Bc2} \texttt{Bc1} 31.\texttt{Bxc1} \texttt{Bxa1} 32.\texttt{Bd7} White bags a pawn, and has good winning chances.

26.\texttt{Bbl}!

Karpov escapes the pin and targets the vulnerable f5-pawn.

26...\texttt{Bxe3}!

Korchnoi opens the position voluntarily, which only helps his opponent. He should have tried:

26...\texttt{Be5} 27.\texttt{Bxd4}

27.e4? may be even stronger.

27...\texttt{Bxd4} 28.\texttt{Bc2} a6 29.\texttt{Bxa6}

29.\texttt{Bxe6} \texttt{Bxe6} 30.\texttt{Bxe6} \texttt{Bxb5} is not so convincing.

29...\texttt{Bxa6}
30. \textit{Bb}e1!

If 30. \textit{Bd}e6 \textit{Bxe}6 31. \textit{Bxe}6 \textit{Bf}8 Black is still alive.

30. \textit{Bxc}4 31. \textit{Bxc}4 \textit{Bxc}4 32. \textit{Dxe}8+ \textit{Bxe}8
33. \textit{Dxe}8+ \textit{Dg}8
33... \textit{Dg}7?? 34. \textit{Dxe}6+ \textit{Df}6 35. \textit{Dh}8+ wins.
34. \textit{Dd}7 \textit{Dc}5 35. \textit{Dd}3!

After 35. \textit{Dxf}5 \textit{Dxf}5 36. \textit{Df}6+ \textit{Dg}7 37. \textit{Dxf}4
\textit{h}5 Black is likely to hold.
35... \textit{Dg}7 36. \textit{Dxf}5

Despite having the theoretically superior minor piece, Black faces a tough defence due to his vulnerable king.

27. \textit{Dxe}3 \textit{Dc}5

After 27... \textit{Df}6 28. \textit{Dxe}8 \textit{Dxe}8 29. \textit{Dc}2! White avoids the queen exchange and his knight will soon dominate the game from \textit{e}6.

28. \textit{Dc}1

Karpov plays pragmatically. He wants to attack the \textit{f}5-pawn, but does so in a way that also defends his \textit{c}-pawn.

31. \textit{Dc}8 32. \textit{Dc}2 \textit{Dg}7 33. \textit{Dd}3!

Now the queen aims for the seventh rank.

33. \textit{Dd}4

Korchnoi prevents the immediate queen invasion, but it costs him the \textit{f}5-pawn. Other moves were losing as well, for instance 33... \textit{a}5 34. \textit{Dd}7 \textit{Df}8 (34... \textit{b}6 35. \textit{Dc}6)
34...\text{fxf5} \text{xf4}

35...\text{dxe7}

The rook on the seventh rank is simply a killer.

35...\text{a6} 36...\text{e6} \text{xc4} 37...\text{xf8} \text{xf8} 38...\text{e7} and White wins.

34...\text{e7}

This allows a cute finish, but 37...\text{g8} was also hopeless due to 38...\text{xg7} \text{g7} 39...\text{xg7}+ \text{xg7} 40...\text{e6}+ winning a piece.

38...\text{g6}+!

1-0

This was a subtle game; it is hard to pinpoint exactly where Black's position went from worse to losing. Karpov maintained the pressure with great skill, and showed good judgement in opening the position despite the fact that Korchnoi had the two bishops.

In round nine Karpov drew with Seirawan. His next opponent was Jonathan Mestel. The English grandmaster played twelve games against world champions. He drew four and lost the other eight. Karpov had beaten him once before, and this was the last time they played.
24.\text{\texttt{exa}6} \text{\texttt{exa}6} 25.f5! White went on to win convincingly, Karpov – Ljubojevic, Brussels 1986.

6...\text{\texttt{ec}6}

Karpov once faced the sideline 6...b6 towards the end of his junior years. 7.\text{\texttt{e2}} a5 8.\text{\texttt{xb}5} \text{\texttt{a}6} 9.a4 \text{\texttt{c}8} 10.f4 \text{\texttt{cxd}4} 11.\text{\texttt{cxd}4} \text{\texttt{ec}6} 12.\text{\texttt{gg}3} \text{\texttt{xb}5} 13.\text{\texttt{axb}5} It is interesting that he accepted the same kind of doubled pawns as Ljubojevic. One might joke that Karpov wins from whichever side of the board he chooses. As with many jokes, it contains more than a grain of truth. 13...\text{\texttt{b4}} 14.0-0 \text{\texttt{ae}7} 15.\text{\texttt{f2}} \text{\texttt{e}7} 16.\text{\texttt{d1}} 0-0 17.\text{\texttt{d2}} \text{\texttt{c}7} 18.\text{\texttt{xb}4} \text{\texttt{xb}4} 19.f5 f6 20.\text{\texttt{fxe}6} \text{\texttt{b8}} 21.\text{\texttt{e}3} White obtained a dominating position and went on to win, Karpov – Shestakov, Kuibyshev 1970.

7.\text{\texttt{de}2} \text{\texttt{cxd}4} 8.\text{\texttt{cxd}4} f6 9.\text{\texttt{exf}6} \text{\texttt{xf}6} 10.0-0 \text{\texttt{ad}6} 11.\text{\texttt{de}3} \text{\texttt{wc}7}

Both players are happy to follow the main line. It is slightly surprising that Mestel opted for a defensive set-up which involved a bad light-squared bishop, a backward e-pawn and a potential outpost for White on e5. Although Black's position is objectively sound, Karpov was a master at exploiting those kinds of positional factors.

12.\text{\texttt{cc}3} a6 13.\text{\texttt{gg}5} 0-0

14.\text{\texttt{hh}4}

Exchanging the dark-squared bishops was a favourite plan of Karpov – he had won two previous games from the same position.

14...\text{\texttt{dh}5}

Mestel plays the most common move in the position. Karpov's previous victims opted for different paths:

14...\text{\texttt{d7}} 15.\text{\texttt{e}1} \text{\texttt{ae}8} 16.\text{\texttt{cc}1} \text{\texttt{wb}8} 17.\text{\texttt{bb}1} \text{\texttt{dh}8} (Black scores better with 17...\text{\texttt{e}7}) 18.a3 Karpov postpones the bishop exchange in order to make another slight improvement. 18.\text{\texttt{f4}} 19.\text{\texttt{cc}2} \text{\texttt{dg}4} 20.h3 \text{\texttt{dh}6} 21.\text{\texttt{gg}5} Karpov exchanges in order to occupy the e5-square. He follows through his plan with remarkable purposefulness. 21...\text{\texttt{f5}} 22.\text{\texttt{xf}4} \text{\texttt{xf}4} 23.\text{\texttt{de}2} \text{\texttt{d}6} 24.\text{\texttt{dd}2} \text{\texttt{f}6} 25.\text{\texttt{cc}3} \text{\texttt{ef}8} 26.\text{\texttt{cc}5} \text{\texttt{e}8} 27.\text{\texttt{xc}6} \text{\texttt{xc}6} 28.\text{\texttt{we}2} \text{\texttt{ff}4} 29.\text{\texttt{xf}5} Now Karpov has a classic good knight versus a bad bishop. 29...\text{\texttt{xf}5} 30.\text{\texttt{cc}3} \text{\texttt{we}4} 31.\text{\texttt{cc}3} \text{\texttt{f}6} 32.\text{\texttt{d1}} \text{\texttt{xf}4} 33.\text{\texttt{e}5} \text{\texttt{h}6} 34.\text{\texttt{de}3} \text{\texttt{dd}7} 35.\text{\texttt{gg}4} \text{\texttt{wd}8} 36.\text{\texttt{ee}3} \text{\texttt{a}5} 37.\text{\texttt{cc}3} \text{\texttt{ee}8} 38.\text{\texttt{ee}5} White achieved his desired positional domination and went on to convert his advantage, Karpov – Ostos, Malta (ol) 1980.

When Karpov encountered this line for the second time his opponent offered less resistance. 14...\text{\texttt{ff}4} 15.\text{\texttt{e}5} \text{\texttt{eh}8} 16.\text{\texttt{gg}3} \text{\texttt{h}5} 17.\text{\texttt{de}2} \text{\texttt{dxg}3} 18.\text{\texttt{xf}4} \text{\texttt{de}4} 19.g3 \text{\texttt{xf}4} The exchange sacrifice does not work because Black's queenside is underdeveloped. 20.gxf4 \text{\texttt{xf}4} 21.\text{\texttt{xe}4} \text{\texttt{dx}4} 22.\text{\texttt{de}5} Black did not last much longer, Karpov – Chen De, Hannover 1983.

15.\text{\texttt{e}1} g6 16.\text{\texttt{cc}1} \text{\texttt{wg}7} 17.\text{\texttt{ff}1!}

With a pawn on g6 there is no point in leaving the bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal, so Karpov prepares a new home for it.

17.\text{\texttt{dd}7}
In view of what follows, it was worth considering 17...h6? in order to prevent White's plan.

18.\textit{\textbf{Qg}5!}
Karpov's mind is flexible enough for him to re-route his other bishop to the \textit{c1-h6} diagonal. Now he can safely play \textit{g3} as the bishop will not get trapped.

18...
After 18...
After 18...f5!? 19.g3 \textit{Qaf8} the pressure on the \textit{f-file} restricts White's pieces to some extent. Nevertheless after 20.\textit{Qg}2 \textit{Qf7} 21.\textit{Qh}6 \textit{Qg}7 22.\textit{Qe}3 \textit{Qh}5 23.\textit{Qx}g7 \textit{Qx}g7 White keeps a small edge, and may turn his attention to the queenside with 24.\textit{Qa}4 next.

19.\textit{Qe}3 \textit{Qf}7 20.g3 \textit{Qaf}8 21.\textit{Qg}2 \textit{Qf}6

22.\textit{h}3!
Thanks to some clever prophylactic moves, Karpov has taken most of the good squares away from Mestel's pieces.

22...\textit{g}5
Black's pieces cannot be improved, so Mestel advances a pawn. If Black just waits with a move like 22...\textit{Qh}7 then White can slowly advance, one possible plan being 23.a3 followed by \textit{b}4, \textit{Qd}3 and \textit{b}5.

23.\textit{Qh}2 \textit{Qh}8?!
This is a waste of a tempo. There was no reason to delay the plan which he carries out in the game: 23...\textit{Qe}8 24.\textit{Qa}4 \textit{Qe}7 25.\textit{Qc}5 \textit{Qx}c5 26.\textit{Qxc}5 \textit{Qg}6 Black's disadvantage is not too severe.

24.\textit{Qa}4?!
Karpov has stabilized the kingside, so now he turns his attention to the queenside. The text move relies on a tactical justification.

24...\textit{Qe}7
Mestel decides to try to improve the "French bishop". There were two critical alternatives:

24...\textit{Qb}4? 25.\textit{Qc}5 \textit{Qx}c5 (If 25...\textit{Qx}a2 26.\textit{Qb}1 \textit{Qb}4 27.\textit{Qxb}7 White regains the pawn with advantage.) 26.\textit{dxc}5 (Also after 26.\textit{Qxc}5 \textit{Qe}4 27.\textit{x}xe4 \textit{dxe}4 28.\textit{Qg}4 \textit{Qd}3 29.\textit{Qe}5 \textit{Qxe}1 30.\textit{Qxf}7+ \textit{Qxf}7 31.\textit{Qxe}1 White has a slight plus.) 26...\textit{Qh}7 (26...\textit{Qxa}2 27.\textit{Qa}1 \textit{Qb}4 28.\textit{Qb}3 White wins back the pawn and keeps the advantage.) 27.\textit{Qd}4 \textit{Qd}3 28.\textit{Qg}4 \textit{Qxe}1 29.\textit{Qxe}1 White wins back the exchange, and in the resulting position his better pawn structure offers him a slight edge.

The best option may well have been: 24...\textit{Qe}4? 25.\textit{Qxe}4 (After 25.\textit{Qe}2 \textit{Qe}7 or 25.\textit{Qg}4 \textit{h}5 the
position is complicated.) 25...dxe4 26.c3 g6 27.c2 h5 28.xe4 b4 29.e2 xh3 30.ed1 If White has any advantage, it is very small.

25.c5 e8 26.d2
26.g4 also offers White a slight plus.

(8)

26...d7
Mesrel decides to get rid of the strong knight by exchanging it.

26...b6!
This pawn sacrifice was playable, albeit somewhat risky.

27.xa6!
I would guess that Karpov would have snatched this pawn. His strategic play was always backed up by precise calculation, and he was not afraid of entering complications when the situation at the board demanded it. Retreating the knight would be less ambitious:

27.d3 d4 28.e2 xd4 29.xd4 xh3 30.xe4 dxe4 31.xe4 xe4 32.xe4 e5 33.g4 Black's active pieces give him an equal game.

27.a4? b4 28.c3 (28.xb6 xxa2 29.c5 b7 is highly unclear) 28.g6 29.h4 (29.f1 h7 Black has a good grip on the position) 29...d3 30.hxg5 hxg5 31.xg5 White certainly has compensation for the exchange, but it is hard to tell how dangerous it really is.

27...a7 28.d3 b7?
If 28...d7 29.a3 a8 30.b4 xb4 31.axb4 xb4 32.d2 Black has regained his pawn, but the minor piece exchanges have served White's interests.

(31)

29.b4!
It is a nice way to rescue the knight.
29...h7
If 29...xa6!! 30.b5 a2 31.xc6 xc6 32.g6 White's attack is very dangerous. Another idea is 29...g7?? 30.b5 b4 31.axb4 xb4 32.e2 a3 33.b1 when White keeps his extra pawn, but Black has some compensation.

30.xh7+ xh7 31.b5 d4 32.xb4 32.f1?? is also possible.

32.axb4 33.e2
Black may be able to live with the pawn deficit, but it would be rough to defend the position against a technical wizard like Karpov.

27.xd7
The disappearance of a pair of minor pieces means that White is a step closer to conquering the e5-square.

27.xd7 28.a3 rdf7 29.g4 f5
30.b4!
Karpov continued to make small improvements on both sides of the board.

30...b8??
The English grandmaster probably overlooked Karpov's next move. A couple of other ideas deserved attention.

30...g6 31.f1?!
If 31.e5 dx e5 32.dxe5 dx e5 33.c5 c8
White has some compensation, but Black should be all right.
After the text move the critical line is:
31...h5 32.e5! h4
If 32...dx e5 33.dx e5 dx e5 34.c5 c8 35.c5 White wins.
And after 32...dx e5 33.dxe5 dxe5 34.e2 the combination of White's bishop pair and Black's airy kingside gives the first player promising compensation for the pawn.

31.dxe5
Karpov exploits some tactical motifs to occupy the main outpost in the enemy position.

31...dx e5?!
Mestel was probably relieved to open the path for his light-squared bishop, and underestimated the strength of the pawn on e5. The most resilient defence was:
31.e7! Black wishes to tie his opponent to the defence of the d4-pawn. It also sets up a nasty threat of ...dx e5 followed by ...d4 winning material.
32.xc6
32.d3 dx d4 is a safe pawn grab. If 32.f4 gxf4 33.gxf4 c5 Black has active play.
32...x c6 33.e3
33.e f1 e5! liberates Black's position.
33...b5 34.f1
Or 34.e c1 e4.
34...xf1 35.x f1 d f7
White is a fraction better, but to squeeze a win from his position would have been a great challenge, even for such a positional wizard as the twelfth World Champion.

32.dxe5 b b5
If 32...dx e5? 33.c5 d f7? 34.x e5! White wins.

It was worth considering stepping aside from the diagonal with 30...g8??, and if 31.f1 then 31...h5 can be played.
In the event of 32...\(g\)6 the black queenside would have been short of defenders, and after 33.\(d\)4 \(g\)g8 (33...h5? 34.\(x\)d5!) 34.a4 h5 35.b5 White has the initiative.

32...\(g\)g8 With this move Black decides to wait and see where to put his bishop, but his problems persist here as well: 33.\(c\)c5 \(f\)f7 34.g4 \(f\)f4 (34...\(x\)e5 35.\(d\)d4) 35.\(e\)e3 Black has to sacrifice an exchange with 35...\(x\)e5 36.\(x\)d5! is strong.

33.\(e\)e5!

The bishop is heading for d4, but Karpov takes the opportunity to win a tempo first.

33...\(f\)f7 34.\(d\)d4 \(f\)f8 35.\(c\)c3

Karpov intends to improve his light-squared bishop.

There was a decent alternative in the form of 35.\(x\)d5?! \(d\)d7 36.\(c\)c4 \(x\)f2 37.\(x\)f2 (37.\(c\)c3 \(a\)2) 37...\(x\)f2 38.\(x\)f2 \(g\)g7 White's two rooks should be somewhat better than Black's queen, but this did not satisfy the champion.

35...\(g\)g8

Mestel sensibly removes his king from the enemy bishop's line of fire. Now the \(x\)d5 trick is unlikely to happen.

36.\(d\)1 \(f\)f7
36...\(x\)e5?! 37.\(x\)e5 \(x\)e5 38.\(e\)e3 \(x\)f5 39.\(a\)al wins.

36...\(c\)c4

This allows White to transfer his bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal.

37.\(e\)e4!

37.\(f\)f3 Improving the bishop in this way allows Black to take the e5-pawn: 37...\(x\)e5 38.\(x\)e5 \(x\)e5 39.\(g\)g4 (39.\(e\)e3 \(x\)x3) 39...\(x\)e7 Black is in the game.

37...\(d\)xe5?! is too risky: 38.\(x\)e5 b5 39.\(c\)c2!

It is important to keep the first rank open.

39...\(d\)d6 40.\(a\)al Black is in trouble.

If 37...\(f\)f7 38.\(b\)b1 \(c\)c7 39.\(g\)g4 \(c\)c6 40.a4 Black's position is loose.

38.\(x\)e4 \(x\)e5 39.\(c\)c5

Another idea is 39.\(x\)e5 \(x\)e5 40.\(x\)e4 \(x\)e4 41.\(x\)e4 \(f\)f6 42.\(x\)e2.

39...\(x\)e7 40.\(h\)h5

White will soon take both of Black's e-pawns.

37.\(c\)c2 \(c\)c4

Black's task is not easy. His pieces do not stand badly, but it is hard to improve any of them without leaving a weakness somewhere. His main problem is his slightly weakened kingside.
37...\textit{g7}

Black can try to direct his forces against the \textit{e5}-pawn. It ties White up, yet he still has enough available strength to improve his position. I have no doubt that Karpov would have found the right way to do it.

38.a4!

In the event of 38.\textit{c8}!, trying to exchange in order to invade, Black can keep his position together with 38...\textit{d7}!. (Instead 38...\textit{c4} allows the promising sacrifice 39.\textit{xc4}?! dxc4 40.\textit{xc4} when Black faces an unpleasant defence, although he should still be able to survive.)

38...\textit{d7}

After 38...\textit{c4} 39.\textit{e4}! \textit{f5}7 40.\textit{c5} (40.\textit{xc4}?) 40...\textit{e8} 41.\textit{g6} Black is pushed back.

39.\textit{f1}!

White returns the bishop to the \textit{bl-h7} diagonal, where it will be at its most effective.

39.\textit{d1} \textit{f7} is okay for Black.

39...\textit{g4}

39...\textit{xe5}?! 40.\textit{xe5} wins.

40.\textit{h4} \textit{h5}

Now White can choose between 41.\textit{b5} and 41.\textit{d3}. In both cases he has improved his position considerably. Note that Black is still unable to \textit{take} the \textit{e}-pawn, as after 41...\textit{xe5}? 42.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 43.\textit{g2} the pin is unbearable.

38.\textit{f3}!

Karpov sacrifices the bishop for several passed pawns.

Interestingly, there was also a second strong bishop move: 38.\textit{e4}! \textit{dxe4} 39.\textit{xe4} \textit{xe5} 40.\textit{c5} (Stronger than 40.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 41.\textit{c7} [41.\textit{xe4} \textit{f5}5] 41...\textit{g5} 42.\textit{g4} \textit{f4} 43.\textit{xe7} \textit{d5} when Black is worse but he is still alive.) 40...\textit{e3} 41.\textit{xe3} \textit{d6} And White is clearly better. Karpov’s move is even more ambitious, although we will see that it may give Black a narrow path to survival.

38...\textit{xf3}

If 38...\textit{h5} 39.\textit{e4}! White obtains an improved version of the previous note, as Black’s kingside will be weaker.

39.\textit{xf3} \textit{xf3} 40.\textit{g6}+ \textit{h8} 41.\textit{xe6}+ \textit{g8} 42.\textit{g6}+ \textit{h8} 43.\textit{xe6} \textit{g7}!

Black has no time for anything else. If White was able to move his queen and unleash his bishop with \textit{e6}+, the game would be over.

44.\textit{e7}+

White will soon pick up the \textit{g5}-pawn to restore approximate material parity. Black faces a difficult defensive mask; not only is his king vulnerable, but many endgames will also be losing thanks to White’s four connected passed pawns.
44...\textit{gf7!}

44...\textit{gf7!} was a stronger defence, although in order to play it Black would have had to find some tricky tactics in advance. 45...\textit{fg7}

In this position White must decide how best to utilize his advantage.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[	extit{a})] 46...\textit{fg4t} \textit{df8} 47...\textit{dh2} Black seems to be facing a deadly attack, but his resources are far from exhausted: 47...\textit{ic7t}! 48...\textit{d6t} (White can change tack and play for an ending with 48...\textit{h6t}; Alternatively 48...\textit{e6} looks dangerous, but Black can save himself by means of 48...\textit{d6t}! 49...\textit{exf1t} \textit{xg3t}! 50...\textit{fxg3t} \textit{xf1t} followed by a perpetual.) 48...\textit{d6t}! This leads to a spectacular drawing sequence: 49...\textit{e6t} \textit{exg3t}!!

50...\textit{h1t} \textit{e5!!} After this brilliant move White has no choice but to take a perpetual with 51...\textit{d8t} \textit{h7} 52...\textit{h4t}.

\item[	extit{b})] 46...\textit{d3t} White heads for an endgame, relying on his armada of pawns. 46...\textit{f7} (46...\textit{dxe3} 47...\textit{dxe3} only helps White) 47...\textit{d6} (47...\textit{xf3} \textit{xf3} 48...\textit{e6} \textit{e8} 49...\textit{g2} \textit{d6t}!) 47...\textit{dxe3} 48...\textit{6e7} 49...\textit{f4} \textit{g6} 50...\textit{f2} \textit{a2}! The transfer of this bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal is a key resource for Black. 51...\textit{f3} \textit{b1!!} 52...\textit{d4t} Now White will have to make another sacrifice: 53...\textit{x4t} \textit{dxe4t} 54...\textit{d3t}

White's pawns appear devastating, but Black can sacrifice his bishop for two of them: 54...\textit{xf4t}! 55...\textit{xf4} \textit{exe6} Black can probably hold this ending.
\end{enumerate}

45...\textit{xf5t} \textit{d6e6} 46...\textit{d5gt}

This kind of small improving move was typical for Karpov, but on this occasion he could have won more convincingly using the direct approach: 46...\textit{d3t} 47...\textit{f4t}
1984 Anatoly Karpov – Jonathan Mestel 395

\[ 47.f3! \]
Karpov takes away the e4-square from the bishop and slowly starts pushing his kingside pawns.

\[ 47...\text{g6} \]
If \[ 47...\text{c8} 48.\text{c1 c4} 49.\text{e3} \] White is ready to push the g-pawn.

\[ 48.g4! \text{c7} 49.\text{h4}?? \]
It was better to bring the queen to the centre at once with \[ 49.\text{e3}! \].

\[ 49...\text{g8} 50.\text{g3}?? \]
Once again the queen should have been centralized with \[ 50.\text{e2} \].

\[ 50...\text{c6} \]
Maybe Black would have done better to open a queenside file: \[ 50...\text{a5} 51.\text{h4} \]

\[ 51.\text{f2} \text{e4} 52.\text{e3} \text{f6?} \]
This is too passive. A better chance would have been:

\[ 52...\text{h6}! \]

The combined power of Black's queen, rook and bishops will make it hard for White to advance his kingside pawns. Even if there is some way to it, it will require considerable skill and a lot of preparation.

\[ 53.\text{e2} \]
White does not achieve much with \[ 53.\text{c3} \text{b8} 54.\text{e2} \text{b1} \].

\[ 53...\text{h7} 54.\text{c3} \text{b8} \]
After \[ 54...\text{f4}?? 55.\text{e3} \text{xe3} 56.\text{xe3 f7} 57.\text{g3 e6} 58.\text{f4} \] the pawns start to move.

\[ 55.\text{e3} \text{xe3} 56.\text{xe3 c8} 57.\text{e3} \]
\[ 57.\text{c5 c6} 58.\text{g3 b6!} \] This pawn sacrifice creates counterplay. \[ 59.\text{d4 c4} 60.\text{xb6 d4} \] Black is kicking as well.

\[ 57...\text{xc3} 58.\text{xc3 a7} 59.\text{d2 f7} 60.\text{f4 e4} 61.\text{g3 e6} 62.h4 d4 \]
White is of course better with his four connected passed pawns, nevertheless it is not at all clear if he can win this endgame.

\[ 53.\text{e1 g6} 54.\text{c3} \]
54...\textit{Bf4}??
Close to the time control, Mestel commits a fatal error.

54...\textit{b}b8 was one improvement, although after 55.\textit{Be}3 \textit{h}h7 56.\textit{B}g5 White probably still has enough to win.

54...\textit{d}d8!
This would have been much more resilient. The bishop helps to fight against the kingside pawns, and it is not clear if White can achieve anything substantial.

55.\textit{B}c1
The queen helps the rook to get to the c8-square. If 55.\textit{h}4 \textit{h}h7 56.\textit{h}5 \textit{g}5 Black stabilizes the kingside.
Also after 55.\textit{Be}3 \textit{f}7 56.\textit{B}g3 (56.\textit{h}2 \textit{h}7) 56...\textit{B}g7 57.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}4 Black is very much in the game.

55...\textit{a}5?!
After 55...\textit{h}7 56.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}8 57.\textit{h}2 \textit{e}4 White can enter an opposite-coloured bishop endgame, should he wish it: 58.\textit{f}5 \textit{xf}5 59.\textit{xc}7 60.\textit{xc}7+ \textit{g}7 61.\textit{xg}7+ \textit{g}8 62.\textit{g}x5 \textit{xf}5 White has some winning chances connected with a king march to b6.
56.\textit{h}5 \textit{h}7 57.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}4+ 58.\textit{h}2 \textit{g}8 59.\textit{e}3 \textit{g}6 60.\textit{c}8
White is pressing but Black still has chances to hold.

55.\textit{B}xc7
Once again, Karpov's rook will play a decisive role on the seventh rank.

55...\textit{xd}4 56.\textit{e}3!
The queen joins the attack, which spells big trouble for Black.

56.\textit{c}4 57.\textit{xb}7 \textit{d}4 58.\textit{h}6 \textit{c}2+ 59.\textit{g}1 \textit{f}7 60.\textit{b}8+ \textit{e}8

61.\textit{xe}6
1–0
Black resigned, as White has too many pawns for the bishop to cope with. This win took Karpov to a remarkable score of plus six after ten rounds. His play in this tournament,
and the year 1984 in general, took on a sharper character than normal. He probably decided to change his style in order to prepare for the tense and complex situations that were certain to occur in his championship match with Kasparov.

In the next round Karpov’s ambitious play with the black pieces backfired, and Torre got the better of him. In the last two rounds he toned down his aggressiveness, and coasted in with two draws to finish in first place with a score of 9/13 ahead of Polugaevsky and Chandler.

Karpov only played in one other tournament in 1984, in Oslo. He drew six of his nine games, but wins over Hort, Miles and the young Agdestein were enough to secure first place ahead of Miles and Makarychev.

Karpov took part in one other event before his world title defence: a USSR – Rest of the World contest in London. Karpov’s opponent was the solid Swedish grandmaster Ulf Andersson. Their four-game match was not hugely eventful; Karpov managed to grind out an endgame win in the first game, and the other three were fairly quick draws.

World Championship match versus Kasparov

It goes without saying that this match was the chess highlight of the year. Any world championship match generates great interest amongst chess players and fans around the world. The present match, featuring two outstanding players with contrasting styles and personalities, was one of the most hotly anticipated clashes in chess history. The only way it could have been more exciting is if one of the players had been American!

Kasparov seemed destined for greatness from an early age. When he was just eleven years old, Botvinnik famously remarked that “The future of chess lies in the hands of this young man.” He first won the Soviet Junior Championship in 1976 at the age of thirteen. Two years later he became the youngest player ever to qualify for the Soviet Championship, and also won the prestigious Sokolsky Memorial in Minsk. In 1979 he won his first international tournament by an astonishing three point margin ahead of Smejkal, Andersson and Petrosian. Amazingly, he only participated thanks to an error on the part of the Russian Chess Federation, as it was believed the tournament was for juniors. As it turned out, it was the young Kasparov who made his opponents look like juniors.

In 1980 Kasparov won the World Junior Championship, and in both 1981 and 1982 he tied for first at the Soviet Championship. His first victory at an elite tournament came in 1982 at Bugojno, where he finished a point and a half clear of the field.

Kasparov’s journey to the championship final was just as impressive as his previous achievements. After a relatively slow start he won the Moscow Interzonal tournament by one and a half points. In the candidates quarter-final match he defeated Beliavsky by four wins to one, with four draws. He won the 1983 Niksic super-tournament by two points, then defeated Korchnoi in the candidates semi-final by four wins to one, with six draws. In the final Garry faced the sixty three year old Smyslov, and won by an equally impressive margin with four wins, nine draws and no defeats. By the start of the championship match, Kasparov had even overtaken Karpov on the rating list by a few points.

Karpov and Kasparov had played each other three times before the match. All three games were drawn, although in two of them Karpov was in trouble but managed to save himself in the middlegame. Since 1981 they had avoided playing each other; it was as though they
already sensed the bitter rivalry that would ensue.

The match took place in Moscow. Karpov’s official seconds were Igor Zaitsev and Yuri Balashov, although Geller, Polugaevsky, Makarychev, Giorgadze, Mikhailchishin, Vaganian, Ubilava and Podgaets also helped the champion. Kasparov’s main helpers were Alexander Nikitin, Alexander Shakarov and Gennady Timoschenko, and he was also assisted by Adorjan and Dorfman. This list shows how much the Soviets cared about chess; no western player could ever have dreamed of receiving so much support.

Just as in Karpov’s previous two championship matches with Korchnoi, the first player to score six wins would be declared the World Champion. Due to the controversial way in which the present match ended (more on this later), it was the last time this scoring system was ever used in a major chess event.

The first game took place on 10 September 1984. Karpov was White, and the game was drawn without major incident. Game 2 was also drawn, but it was a violent affair in which Karpov missed a win. The deadlock was broken in Game 3; Kasparov played a somewhat dubious novelty and then failed to defend his inferior position. In Game 4 Kasparov got some advantage in an opposite-coloured bishop middlegame, but was unable to do anything with it. One gets the impression that Karpov was the better middlegame player at this point in time. In Game 5 Karpov was unable to achieve anything against his opponent’s Scheveningen and a draw ensued.

Here is the sixth game.

<table>
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<th>Game 73</th>
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**Garry Kasparov – Anatoly Karpov**

Moscow (6) 1984

1.d4  df6 2.c4  e6 3.  d3  b6 4.g3  a6?

Karpov first started playing this variation of his favourite Queen’s Indian in 1980. It gradually became his first choice.

In the second game of the match he played his old favourite 4...  b7, when play continued: 5.g2  e7 6.0–0 0–0 7.d5?! True to his style, Kasparov opts for a dynamic pawn sacrifice. The idea was fashionable in the early eighties, but nowadays it is not considered dangerous as the best defensive methods have been worked out. 7...exd5 8.h4  c6 9.xd5  xd5 10.xf5  c7 11.c3 d5 (Karpov was not interested in finding out how Kasparov would play against 11...e8, which he had used against Timman at the previous year’s Tilburg tournament.) 12.e4  f6 13.f4  c8? Kasparov did not consider this move in his home analysis. 14.g4!  ba6 15.e1 With double-edged play, Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (2) 1984. The game was eventually drawn after huge complications. Interestingly, after this game Karpov never repeated 4...  b7 against Kasparov.

5.b3  b4† 6.d2  e7 7.g2 0–0

Karpov deviates from the fourth game of the match, which continued: 7...  b7 8.c3 d5 9.xd5 exd5 (Later the players repeated this line from both sides of the board; Games 14 and 15 both resulted in draws after 9...exd5.) 10.0–0 0–0 11.f4  a6 12.e2 c5 13.fd1  c8 14.e5  d8 15.ac1  e4 16.cb2  e6?! 17.db5  f8 18.f4  e8 19.a4 White obtained a slight plus but Black held the draw, Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (4) 1984.
Later 7...c6 became the main line and Karpov's number one choice.

8.0-0 d5 9.\(\text{\text{\text{e}}}\text{e}5\)

In this game Kasparov decides not to play against hanging pawns.

9...c6 10.\(\text{c}\text{c}3\) \(\text{\text{f}}\text{d}7\)

Karpov opts for the most solid approach. In Gheorghiu – Karpov, Lucerne (ol) 1982, he preferred 10...\(\text{b}7\) and eventually squeezed a win out of almost nothing. I analysed the endgame in depth in my Endgame Virtuoso book.

11.\(\text{\text{\text{e}}}\text{d}7\) \(\text{\text{\text{d}}}\text{d}7\) 12.\(\text{d}\text{d}2\) \(\text{\text{e}}\text{c}8\)

This was the first time Karpov had reached the present position. He repeated it several times, and occasionally played 12...\(\text{f}6\) as well.

Black can also change the character of the game with 12...f5, but most of the time Karpov avoided stonewall structures.

13.e4

More ambitious than 13.\(\text{\text{e}}\text{e}1\) c5 14.exd5 exd5 15.e4 cxd4 16.\(\text{\text{e}}\text{d}4\) dxe4 17.\(\text{\text{d}}\text{e}4\) \(\text{\text{f}}\text{6}\) 18.h4 \(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}\) Vyzhmanavin – Karpov, Tilburg 1993.

13...b5

This game was played in the early days of the variation; according to the database, the present position had only occurred three times prior to the present encounter. By undermining White’s centre, Karpov shows that he is not merely looking to equalize, but is willing to take risks and fight for the win, which he rarely did with the black pieces.

13...c5

This is the other main move. Recently, in Bacrot – Karpov, Ajaccio (blitz) 2007, Black preferred 13...dxe4 but went on to lose.

14.exd5 exd5 15.dxc5 dxc4 16.c6 cxb3 17.\(\text{e}\text{e}1\)

Karpov played this position with both colours. Black has two serious options available:
The Making of a Champion

a) 17...b5 18.axb5 a6 19.c6 Rxc6 20.Rxa7
White keeps a slight initiative in the simplified position.
20...Rc6 21.f4 Qc5
After 21...Rxc3 22.Rxd7 Qf6 23.Rxe4 Black was under pressure and did not manage to hold the position in Kamsky – Karpov, Elista (16) 1996.
22.Rxd8 Rd8 23.Rf6
Even this far into the game, Karpov could still be found on either side of the board!
23...gx6!
Worse is 23...Rxf6 24.b4 Qe6 25.Qxb6 Qg5 26.Rd7 Qf3† 27.Qf1 Rb8 28.Qxd1 Qf8 29.Rd5 and White successfully converted his advantage in Karpov – Beliavsky, Linares 1993.
24.Qe3 Qxb3 25.f5 Qc1 26.Qc1 Qxc1 27.Rb7 b5

28.Qg2!
White avoids the simplifications which would have occurred after 28.Qxb5 Qe2† 29.Qg2 Qd4.
28...h5 29.Rb5 Qd3 30.Rb6 Qc5 31.Qxf6 Qe4 32.Qh6† Qg7 33.Qxf7 Qd5!
Karpov carried out an ingenious defensive strategy by trapping White's knight. He went on to draw the game Van Wely – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 1996.

b) 17...b2 18.Qxb2 Qc5 19.Qc4

The other main moves are 19.Qb3 and 19.Qa3.
19.Qg4 is not dangerous: 19...Qf6 20.Qxf6 Qxf6 21.Qe4?? Qxc6 22.Qxc5 Qxc5 23.Qa4 Qb5 24.Qxa7?? Qc7 The queen it trapped, and if White saves her he succumbs to a mating attack: 25.Qb7 Qxb7! 26.Qxb7 Qc6 0–1 Van der Sterren – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998.
19...Qxc4 20.Qg4

20...Qg6!!
Karpov comes up with a new idea, but the choice is an unfortunate one.
The main line is 20...Qg5 21.Qxc4 Qd3.
21.Qxf6 Qxf6 22.Qxc4 Qxd8 23.Qxd1 Qxd1 24.Qxd1
Black faced a difficult defence and eventually went down in Leko – Karpov, Miskolc (rapid) (3) 2006.

20...Qg6!!
Karpov comes up with a new idea, but the choice is an unfortunate one.
The main line is 20...Qg5 21.Qxc4 Qd3.
21.Qxf6 Qxf6 22.Qxc4 Qxd8 23.Qxd1 Qxd1 24.Qxd1
Black faced a difficult defence and eventually went down in Leko – Karpov, Miskolc (rapid) (3) 2006.
14.\textit{Be}1

Karpov reached this position in several subsequent games, but always from the opposite side of the board.

14...\textit{dx}c4

The other two available pawn captures have also been tested extensively.

15.bxc4  2b6!

Karpov wants to battle. Kasparov wrote that the move came as a surprise for him, and that he was unable to work out what was wrong with it.

The main line is 15...bxc4 16.2a4 2b5 17.2c2 2e8 18.a4 2a6 19.2f1 with complex play. Black has scored all right from here.

16.\textit{cb}5?

This increases the scope of Black's queenside pieces, but Kasparov is seduced by the prospect of a d4-d5 breakthrough. He had utilized the same motif to score some brilliant wins before this game. One can imagine Karpov anticipating that his rival would play like this.

16.c5! was stronger, when the positioning of both the rook on c8 and the bishop on a6 is called into question. 16...2a4 (After 16...b4 17.2b2 2c4 18.2xc4 2xc4 19.2c2 2b5 20.a3 2xa3 21.2xa3 Black's position is passive.) 17.2c2 e5 (17...2d7 is met by 18.e5! when the knight is heading for d6.) 18.2b3 (Kasparov's suggestion of 18.2f3! exd4 19.2xd4 is more convincing.) 18...b4 19.2xb4 exd4 20.2h3 d3 21.2c1 2a8 22.2d2 White went on to win this complicated position in Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1987.

16...\textit{cb}5

Now the c8-rook has come alive.

17.2c1 2a3

Karpov begins a remarkable build-up on the a-file. A reasonable alternative was 17...b4 18.2a1 2d7 followed by ...2a4 or ...2a4 with good play for Black.

18.2c2

\textit{Qa}4?

Karpov continues to line up his pieces on the edge of the board, just as he sometimes did in his childhood (see for instance Game 10, Karpov – Moles). It is an interesting strategy, albeit one that carries a good deal of risk.

A safer continuation would have been 18...2c7, exploiting the pin on the c-file. Play might continue 19.d5 2b4! This subtle move stops the sacrifice on g7. 20.2xb4 (If 20.2e3
The Making of a Champion

\[ \text{\small \textcolor{red}{21. \text{a1} \text{bxc2} 20. \text{wxc2 \text{a5}?}}} \]

Karpov puts yet another piece on the a-file in order to accelerate his queenside play. It is risky, though not objectively bad.

20...\text{e7} 21.\text{d3} also results in a roughly balanced position.

\[ \text{21.\text{d1}!} \]

With this excellent move Kasparov prepares to transfer his queen to the kingside. In the meantime she also helps to support the d5 break.

\[ \text{21...\text{c8}?!} \]

Karpov plays consistently; indeed, his tendency to choose a plan and pursue it relentlessly has been noted several times throughout the book. On this occasion, however, he does not pay enough attention to White's possibilities.

Kasparov pointed out that after 21...\text{c3} 22.\text{xc3 \text{xc3} 23.\text{b1 \text{a5} 24.\text{xa3 \text{xa3} 25.\text{d2 White has an edge thanks to his strong d-pawn.}}} \]

The safest continuation looks to be 21...\text{b2!} to neutralize the powerful bishop. After 22.\text{b3 \text{c3} 23.\text{e3 \text{c7} 24.\text{xb2 \text{xb2 25.\text{e1 \text{c4 the position is roughly balanced.}}} \]

\[ \text{22.\text{b3 \text{b4}?!}} \]

22...\text{c7} would have enabled Black to retain some stability in the centre: 23.d5 e5 24.\text{h3 \text{d8} 25.\text{e2 \text{b6 26.\text{c2 \text{c4 And according to Kasparov, Black holds.}}} \]

\[ \text{23.\text{d5!}} \]

This strong move is a natural choice, especially for a super-dynamic player like Kasparov. Now the bishop on a1 gains a lot of power.

\[ \text{23...\text{exd5?}} \]

Karpov does not want to live with a weakness on e6, but after his chosen move White's rook and light-squared bishop suddenly enjoy a far better view of the board than before.

Blocking the long diagonal was objectively better. After 23...\text{c3 24.\text{xc3 \text{xc3} (24...\text{xc3 25.dxe6 fxe6 26.\text{e2} 25.dxe6 fxe6 26.\text{h3 \text{e8 Black is surviving, although he will be on the defensive for some time to come.}}} \]

8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
a b c d e f g h
Black could also use the bishop for the same function: 23...\texttt{b}2 24.\texttt{x}xb2 \texttt{x}xb2 25.\texttt{a}1 \texttt{c}4 26.\texttt{x}e6 \texttt{f}xe6 27.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{e}8 28.\texttt{d}1 Once again Black is under some pressure.

24.\texttt{e}xd5 \texttt{c}3 25.\texttt{d}4?

Unusually for him, Kasparov misses a golden opportunity to decide the game with a kingside attack.

25.\texttt{h}5!

If followed up correctly, this strong move would have punished Karpov for neglecting his kingside.

25...\texttt{c}a2

Taking the a-pawn is critical. Kasparov must have been reluctant to sacrifice it without having a definite follow-up in mind. Other moves fail to halt White’s initiative:

25...\texttt{d}x\texttt{d}5? 26.\texttt{e}4 wins.

25...\texttt{f}8 26.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{e}7 27.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{a}2 (27...\texttt{b}4 28.\texttt{d}6) 28.\texttt{x}g7! \texttt{xf}7 29.\texttt{e}8+ \texttt{f}8 30.\texttt{d}6 White wins, as Kasparov pointed out.

26.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{f}8

26...\texttt{e}3 27.\texttt{h}3! is crushing.

26...\texttt{f}6 27.\texttt{e}6+ \texttt{h}8 28.\texttt{x}f6 demolishes Black’s kingside.

27.\texttt{e}4!

This is the detail that I suspect both players missed. Suddenly \texttt{f}5 becomes a huge threat.

27...\texttt{h}8 28.\texttt{h}5! \texttt{g}8 29.\texttt{a}5 \texttt{d}8 30.\texttt{g}5! \texttt{xf}8 31.\texttt{d}2!++

With Black’s queen and rook huddled in the corner, White wins material on the opposite flank.

25...\texttt{d}x\texttt{d}4 26.\texttt{x}d4 \texttt{a}2

Taking a pawn is useful; besides, it is good to relieve the black rook from the burden of defending the knight. Despite White’s previous inaccuracy, his pieces are extremely active and his d-pawn is dangerous.

If 26...\texttt{f}8 27.\texttt{d}6! \texttt{xd}6 28.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{c}4 29.\texttt{e}8+ \texttt{f}8 30.\texttt{d}6! \texttt{c}8 31.\texttt{xf}8+ \texttt{xf}8 32.\texttt{x}f8 White wins.

27.\texttt{c}6?

Kasparov chooses the wrong square for the knight.

27.\texttt{f}5!

This is not only a stronger move, it is also more consistent with Kasparov’s style. The main differences are that the knight attacks the g7-pawn and, even more importantly, helps White to play d6.

27...\texttt{b}4!

This intermediate move is the one that forces White to play most precisely. Instead after 27...\texttt{c}1 28.\texttt{xc}1 \texttt{xc}1 29.\texttt{d}6 \texttt{g}5 30.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{c}8 31.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{x}f5 32.\texttt{hxg}5 White wins a piece.

28.\texttt{e}2!
It is vital that White wins a tempo by attacking the knight.

28...\( \text{c1} \)

This second tempo-gaining move enables White to push his d-pawn with deadly effect.

29...\( \text{d3} \)

29...\( \text{b3} \) 30...\( \text{b2}! \) wins, as the d-pawn is too strong.

30...\( \text{g7} \)

Yusupov's 30...\( \text{f1} \) is also good enough.

28...\( \text{h3}?! \)

Kasparov is playing too optimistically. After 28...\( \text{e7} \) 29...\( \text{xe7} \) Black would still have had to work for a draw. He can achieve it by means of 29...\( \text{b4} \) 30...\( \text{h4} \) (30...\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{c3} \) 31...\( \text{xa7} \) \( \text{c4} \) 32...\( \text{d6} \) \( \text{d5} \) 30...\( \text{c3} \) 31...\( \text{d6} \) \( \text{d8} \) 32...\( \text{xa7} \) \( \text{d3} \) 33...\( \text{b7} \) \( \text{f6} \) 34...\( \text{xb4} \) \( \text{e2} \) 35...\( \text{h2} \) \( \text{xd6} \).

28...\( \text{a8}! \)

There was only one other square available to the rook, but Kasparov knows he needs \( \text{f8} \) for his king.

29...\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 30...\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{f8} \)

The king approaches the strong passed pawn.

31...\( \text{d6} \)

Karpov wants to battle it out. The safe approach was 31...\( \text{d8} \) 32...\( \text{d7} \) \( \text{b7} \) 33...\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{c6} \) 34...\( \text{xa7} \) \( \text{xd7} \) when the disappearance of the queenside pawns ensures that the game will end in a draw.

32...\( \text{c6}?! \)

With little time remaining, Karpov finds an important move. The bishop defends the a7-pawn while maintaining its control over the d6- and e7-squares.
Karpov’s gamble pays off – the next move loses an important tempo. White should have preferred one of the following alternatives:

The simplest route to a draw is 32.\textit{g}2, which wins the b5-pawn: 32...\textit{d}8 33.\textit{c}6 \textit{c}8 34.\textit{xb}5 With equality.

32.d7 wins a piece for two pawns, but Black should not be worse in the resulting position: 32...\textit{b}7 33.\textit{f}5 \textit{d}8 34.\textit{e}8\textit{xe}8 35.\textit{f}xe8\textit{xe}8 36.\textit{d}6\textit{d}8 37.\textit{xb}7\textit{c}7 Black's king will support the passed pawns, and if anything it is White who will have to be careful.

32.\textit{e}3!? As far as I am aware, other commentators have not mentioned this interesting \textit{zwischenzug}. 32...\textit{b}4 33.\textit{c}6 \textit{b}5 (33...\textit{d}5? 34.\textit{es} \textit{f}6 [34...\textit{b} 6 35.d7] 35.d7 Black drops a piece without obtaining sufficient compensation.) 34.\textit{g}2 (After 34.\textit{xb}4 \textit{a}4 Black is okay.) It looks like Black is in big trouble, but he can rescue himself with a tactical sequence:

32...\textit{e}2\textit{t} 33.\textit{h}1 \textit{b}3! 36.\textit{xb}3 \textit{xc}6 37.\textit{xc}6 \textit{d}4 and Black is safe. In fact, after 38.\textit{xc}3 \textit{xc}6 39.\textit{xc}6 \textit{a}5 (39...\textit{e}8 40.\textit{a}6=) Black is just one tempo away from reaching a winning ending, but after 40.d7 he has to give up his a-pawn for White's d-pawn, leading to a dead draw.

32...\textit{b}7!

After remaining stationary for twenty eight moves, the bishop finally vacates its rather uninspiring post on the edge of the board.

32...\textit{b}4 only leads to a draw after 33.d7 \textit{b}3 34.\textit{d}8\textit{xe}8 35.\textit{xd}8 \textit{d}3 when Black's b-pawn will enable him to win back the rook.

33.\textit{g}2 \textit{e}8!

It is important to challenge White's well placed rook.

Although Black has the advantage, the position was still double-edged. For instance, after 33...\textit{b}4? Averbakh found a study-like win for White: 34.d7 \textit{b}3 35.\textit{b}8!! \textit{xb}8 36.\textit{xb}7 and White wins after 36...\textit{b}2 37.\textit{c}8 or 36...\textit{d}8 37.\textit{c}6.

34.\textit{e}5

According to Yusupov 34.\textit{a}1 would have given better chance to survive, but after 34...\textit{xc}6 35.\textit{xc}6 \textit{e}6 36.\textit{xa}7 \textit{xd}6 Black is a clear pawn up, and his knight dominates the enemy bishop.

34...\textit{f}6!

This is an only move but it wins.

35.d7
Kasparov offered a draw here, but his position is lost. Yusupov mentions the line 35...d7† e7 36.axb7 axg2 37.xg2 e6 and Black wins, while 35.axb7 ex5 36.axa7 b3 also leads to the same result.

35...d8 36.axb7 fx e5 37.e6 e7?
Karpov blunders in time trouble. After the correct 37...e4! 38.e1 e7! 39.axa7 d6 40.e6 c7 Black wins by pushing his b-pawn.

38.axb5 dxb5
With little time remaining, Karpov understandably goes for the simplest continuation.

In view of the drawing continuation given in the note to White's 41st move below, it may well have been objectively better to play 38...d6! 39.d3 exd7! 40.eh7 a5 with a clear advantage, as suggested by Yusupov.

39.ee5† exd7 40.eb5 e6
This is the last move before the time control. Black cannot justify giving up both kingside pawns with 40...a8?, as after 41.e7† e6 42.xg7 a5 43.eh7 a4 44.ea7 a3 45.a1 a2 46.ea1 d5 47.h4 d4 48.a2 b3 49.g4 b2 50.a1 White holds without difficulty.

41.eh5?
This move makes little sense - White simply forces one of the enemy pawns onto a less vulnerable square. Perhaps Kasparov was hoping to capture the h6-pawn with check, but it is hard to find a concrete variation in which this is of any benefit.

41.e5!
This obvious improvement enables the rook to target Black's kingside pawns in the most efficient way possible. It has been suggested by several commentators, including Timman and Yusupov.

41...a8 42.ee6†
42.ea1 a5 43.ee2 a4 44.d3 a3 45.ea1 a2 46.ea1 d5 wins.

42...e5 43.ee7 a5 44.xg7
Yusupov ends his analysis here, evaluating the position as slightly better for Black. Since the plans for both sides are clear, we can analyse further.

44...a4 45.eh7
If 45.e7† b4 46.a2 (46.a1† a5 47.eh7 a3 48.e7 a2 49.eal b8 wins) 46...a3 47.ea1 a2 48.ea1 c3 49.f4 b2 Black wins.

45...a3 46.e7† b4 47.e7†
47.ea1 a2 48.eal b3 49.a2 transposes to the main line.

47...a4 48.eb1 a2 49.a1 b3
When I analysed this endgame I overlooked this great move. It is a superb example of shouldering with the king.

50.\( \text{g2} \)!!

When I analysed this endgame I overlooked this great move. It is a superb example of shouldering with the king.

50.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{b2} \) 51.\( \text{e1} \) (51.\( \text{xa2} \) \( \text{xa2} \) 52.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{c3} \) 53.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{d4} \) 54.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{e5} \) 55.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{a3} \) 56.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{f6} \rightarrow ) \) 51...\( \text{al} = \) 52.\( \text{xa1} \) \( \text{xa1} \) 53.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{c3} \) With the help of modern tools one can prove that the position is winning for Black, by just one tempo.

50...\( \text{b2} \) 51.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{al} = \) 52.\( \text{xa1} \) \( \text{xa1} \) 53.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{c3} \) 54.\( \text{e4} \)!

The white king successfully blocks his counterpart from reaching the scene of the action. This instructive drawing line was pointed out by Kasparov.

41...\( \text{h6} \)

Black must keep his h-pawn.

42.\( \text{e5} \)
49...\(\texttt{Ba}4\)!

After this move Black will soon win the rook, after which it looks as though he is just quick enough in the race.

49...\(\texttt{Bc}3\) is the wrong direction. 50.\(\texttt{Bc}7\)!

(50.\(\texttt{Bb}2\) is not good enough; the main line runs as follows: 50...\(\texttt{a}2\) 51.\(\texttt{Ba}1\) \(\texttt{Bb}2\) 52.\(\texttt{Bf}1\) \(\texttt{Ba}1\) [53...\(\texttt{Bx}a1\) should also win] 54.\(\texttt{Bf}3\) \(\texttt{Ba}4\)! And Black is winning.)

50...\(\texttt{Bd}3\)? (Black should correct his mistake and head back towards the a4-square, hoping to transpose to the main line below.) 51.\(\texttt{Bc}1\) \(\texttt{a}2\) 52.\(\texttt{Ba}1\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) 53.\(\texttt{g}5\)! \(\texttt{hx}g5\) 54.\(\texttt{hx}g5\) \(\texttt{Bx}g5\) 55.\(\texttt{Bf}1\) \(\texttt{Ba}5\) 56.\(\texttt{Bf}2\) White holds.

50.\(\texttt{Bb}1\) \(\texttt{a}2\) 51.\(\texttt{Ba}1\) \(\texttt{Bb}3\)

52.\(\texttt{Bf}3\)

52.\(\texttt{g}5\)!! \(\texttt{hx}g5\) 53.\(\texttt{hx}g5\) \(\texttt{Bx}g5\) is winning for Black.

52.\(\texttt{h}5\) is a better try, but ultimately this is also insufficient: 52...\(\texttt{Bb}2\) 53.\(\texttt{Be}1\) \(\texttt{a}1\) \(\texttt{Bf}2\) 54.\(\texttt{Bx}a1\) \(\texttt{Ba}1\) 55.\(\texttt{Bf}3\) (55.\(\texttt{Bd}4\) 56.\(\texttt{f}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}3\) 57.\(\texttt{g}5\) \(\texttt{Bx}g5\) 58.\(\texttt{Bf}5\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) 59.\(\texttt{Bc}3\) 60.\(\texttt{Bf}3\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) 61.\(\texttt{Bf}2\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) 62.\(\texttt{Bc}3\) \(\texttt{Bf}1\) 63.\(\texttt{Bc}3\) \(\texttt{Bc}3\) should also be good enough) 57.\(\texttt{f}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) 58.\(\texttt{f}5\) (58.\(\texttt{Bf}5\) \(\texttt{Bx}g5\) 59.\(\texttt{Bc}5\) \(\texttt{Bc}5\) 60.\(\texttt{Bf}6\) (60.\(\texttt{Bc}1\) \(\texttt{Bd}5\) 61.\(\texttt{Bf}6\) 62.\(\texttt{Bx}g5\) 63.\(\texttt{Bc}4\) 64.\(\texttt{Bc}4\)) 60.\(\texttt{Bc}6\) 61.\(\texttt{Bc}6\) \(\texttt{Bc}1\) 62.\(\texttt{Bx}g5\) 63.\(\texttt{Bc}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}4\) And Black wins.

52...\(\texttt{Bb}2\) 53.\(\texttt{Bc}2\)\(\texttt{t}\)

Or 53.\(\texttt{Bf}1\) \(\texttt{a}1\) \(\texttt{Bf}2\) 54.\(\texttt{Bx}a1\) \(\texttt{Ba}1\) 55.\(\texttt{Bc}4\) \(\texttt{Bc}3\) 56.\(\texttt{g}5\) \(\texttt{Bx}a4\) 57.\(\texttt{Bf}5\) \(\texttt{Bx}h4\) and Black wins.

53...\(\texttt{Bx}a2\)

Regardless of the final evaluation, it would have been impractical for Karpov to commit to such a narrow path on his sealed move.

43.\(\texttt{Ba}5\)

The rook adopts a passive role, but White had no choice. With the black pawn on \(\texttt{h}6\) instead of \(\texttt{h}7\), there was no time for him to collect both of the kingside pawns:
43. \textbf{Be}6\texttt{t} \textbf{c}c5 44. \textbf{Bg}6 a5 45. \textbf{Bx}g7 a4 46. \textbf{Ac}7\texttt{t} \textbf{b}4 47. \textbf{Bb}7\texttt{t} \textbf{a}5 48. \textbf{g}4 a3 49. \textbf{Bb}1 a2 50. \textbf{Ba}1 \textbf{b}4 51. \textbf{f}4 \textbf{b}3

The surviving h6-pawn makes all the difference, but the race is still tight.

52. g5?!

After 52. \textbf{f}f2 \textbf{b}2 White is losing the race:
53. \textbf{Bxa}2\texttt{t} (if 53. \textbf{Be}1 a1=\textbf{w} 54. \textbf{Bxa}1 \textbf{Bxa}1 55. \textbf{Be}3 \textbf{c}c3 56. \textbf{h}h4 \textbf{h}h1 57. \textbf{g}g5 h5 Black wins – Timman) 53... \textbf{Bxa}2 54. \textbf{Be}3 \textbf{c}c3 55. \textbf{h}h4 \textbf{h}h2 56. \textbf{h}h5 \textbf{h}h4 57. \textbf{g}g5 \textbf{g}xh5 58. \textbf{g}g6 \textbf{g}h4! 59. \textbf{f}f5 (59. \textbf{f}f3 h5) 59... \textbf{Bg}4 Black wins, as pointed out by Yusupov.

52... \textbf{hx}g5 53. \textbf{fx}g5 \textbf{Bxa}5! 54. \textbf{f}f2!

This is the best practical chance.

Yusupov only mentions 54. \textbf{h}h4 \textbf{Bxa}4 55. \textbf{g}g2 \textbf{Bx}h4 when Black wins without difficulty.

54... \textbf{Bx}g5 55. \textbf{h}h3

55. \textbf{h}h4? \textbf{Bg}4 wins instantly.

56. \textbf{g}g3 \textbf{Bb}2 57. \textbf{Bxa}2\texttt{t} \textbf{xa}2

The black king will just get to the kingside in time to seal the win.
58. \textbf{h}h4 \textbf{Bb}3 59. \textbf{Bg}4 \textbf{Bh}8 60. \textbf{h}h5 \textbf{Bc}4 61. \textbf{g}g5 \textbf{d}d5 62. \textbf{g}g6 \textbf{e}e6 63. \textbf{h}h6 \textbf{Bg}8\texttt{t} 64. \textbf{h}h7 \textbf{h}h5 65. \textbf{h}h6 \textbf{h}h8 (But not 65... \textbf{B}g1?? 66. \textbf{h}h6=) 66. \textbf{h}h6 \textbf{B}g6–+

64... \textbf{g}g5 65. \textbf{h}h8 \textbf{Bf}6

Black forces mate in a few more moves.

66. \textbf{h}h7

66... \textbf{f}f7 67. \textbf{h}h8 \textbf{Bb}5 68. \textbf{h}h7 \textbf{Bh}5 69. \textbf{h}h8 \textbf{Bx}h6#

43. \textbf{Bb}6

The rook endgame is reminiscent of that which occurred in the very last game of the Capablanca – Alekhine match of 1927 in Buenos Aires. On that occasion Alekhine, playing with the white pieces, had an extra passed a-pawn, with three pawns versus three on the kingside, but the black king was able to blockade it from a6. White was able to utilize the a-pawn as a distraction to force a breakthrough on the kingside, winning the game and the match.

44. \textbf{Bxa}2!

The best chance. Kasparov plans to use his king to block the a-pawn so that the rook can defend the kingside.
44...a5 45.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)f1

From here Black must demonstrate great precision to secure the victory.

59...\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)h1!

59...\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)a4? is not good enough: 60.g5 (Simplest, although 60.h5 should also hold.)

60...\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)a3† (After 60...h5?? 61.f5! Black even loses!) 61.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)e4 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)h3 62.gxh6 White is safe.

60.g5

60.h5 also leads to an instructive finish:

60...\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)h4! (If 60...\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c3 61.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)e4 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)h4 62.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)f5 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)d4 63.g5 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)xh5 64.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)g6 hxg5 65.fxg5 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)h1 66.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)f6 White holds.) 61.g5 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)xh5 (61...hxg5 62.fxg5 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)xh5 63.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)f4 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c3 64.g6 draws.)

62.gxh6 (62.g6 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)h4–+)

62...\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c3! Black's top priority must be to improve his king. He should postpone the capture on h6 until the last possible moment. (62.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)xh6 allows White to draw with 63.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)d4! or 63.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)e4!) 63.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)e4 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c4! 64.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c5! 65.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c5 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c6! 66.\(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)e6 \(\text{\textcopyright{}}\)c7! 67.f6 (After
67...fxe6 Qxh6† both 68.e7 and 68.g7 are met by 68...Rh1→ 67...d8 68.f7 Qxh6 69.g7 Rhl White can resign.

60...h5!
Black must keep his h-pawn.
After 60...Rxh4? 61.gxh6 Black only draws.
Compared with the previous note, the position of the rook on h4 instead of h5 makes all the difference, as the white king can move to the fifth rank unhindered.

61.f5 Rhl†!
This intermediate check wins a vital tempo.

62.e2
Or 62.e4 Rxh4† 63.e5 g5 64.g6 h4 65.f6 (65.f6 g5†!) 65...h3 66.g7 h2 67.f7 h1=Q winning.

62...Rxh4 63.f6 Rf4 64.e3 Bf1! 65.e4 h4 66.e5 h3 67.g6 h2 68.g7 Bg1
And Black wins.

53...Bd2!
With this strong move Black threatens ...Bd3.

After 53...g5 54.c1 gx4f 55.gxf4 Bxf4 56.d1 White draws comfortably.

53...f5 also fails to achieve anything after
54. $a7 g5 55. $a4 $g2 56. $e3 $g4 57. $c1 when the white king is close enough.

54. $a6

Here is an interesting point: if Kasparov had not forced the move ... $h6 earlier, he would still have been able to survive by means of 54. $a7. In the present position this move does not help him, thanks to 54...g5! 55. $h7 (55.fxg5 hxg5++) 55...g4 56. $xh6 $g2 57. $e6t $f3 58. $f5 $xg3 and Black wins.

54... $f5 55. $a7 g5 56. $a6

56...g4!

Karpov plays subtly, even sacrificing a pawn temporarily, in order to advance his g-pawn closer to the promotion square.

Nevertheless the prosaic 56...$h2!? was also good enough: 57. $c1 (57.fxg5 hxg5++) 57...$g4 58. $g6! $h3! 59. $d2 (59.fxg5 hxg5++) 59...$xg3 60. $xh6 $xf4!

Commentators at the time thought this position was drawn, but tablebases reveal that Black is winning after 61. $e2 $a3 or 61. $f6t $g4 62. $e2 $h3!.

57. $xb6

On 57. $a5t Kasparov demonstrates a nice win: 57... $e4 58. $a4t $f3 59. $a3t $e2 60. $a2 (60. $a5 $d3 61. $h5 $xg3 62. $xh6 $f3 -->) 60...h5 61. $f5 $h4 62. $xd2t $xd2 63. $f6 $xg3 64. $f7 $g2 65. $b8= $g1= $f7 The queen ending is winning, as the white king is badly placed.

57...$g2 58. $h5t
58. $c1 $xg3 59. $d2 $f3 60. $e2 $xf4! 61. $f6t $g3 wins.

58... $e4 59. $f5

59... $b2!? Black could also have won with the more direct 59...$xg3 60. $f6 $b5 61. $h4 $f4 62. $f7 (62.$c2 $g5) 62...$g3--.

60. $c1 $b5 61. $d1

61.f6? This would have posed more problems, although I have no doubt that Karpov would have handled the position properly. It is not impossible that he was still following his adjournment analysis, as both sides have played logically since that time.

61...$xg3 62. $h6 $g2!

The only move to win.

Yusupov mentions the line 62...$f3? 63. $d2 $f2 64. $h2t $g1 65. $h6 drawing, and his assessment has withstood the scrutiny of modern computers.

63. $d1 $g3 64. $g6
64...\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f1}}}} Remarkably, it was Black to move in this position, only $...\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g2}}}}$ would win. 65.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g6}}}}$ $g2$ This is a mutual zugzwang position. 66.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{h6}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f5}}}}$ 67.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e2}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e5}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f3}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f1}}}}$ 69.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g6}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e6}}}}$! And Black wins. 64 $...\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f5}}}}$ 65.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e2}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e5}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f3}}}}$! 67.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{d3}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{d3}}}}$! 67.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f7}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f5}}}}$ 68.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g7}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g7}}}}$ wins in a similar manner to the main line.

\begin{center}
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67 $...\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{h5}}}}$!! 68.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f7}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f5}}}}$ 69.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g7}}}}$ $g2$

We have reached another mutual zugzwang.

70.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{d3}}}}$

70.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{c4}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f2}}}}$\rightarrow

70 $...\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f4}}}}$

And Black wins. Yusupov credits this lovely piece of analysis to Sergey Dolmatov.

61...$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{xg3}}}}$ 62.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e1}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g2}}}}$

This is the only winning move, but it is not difficult to find.

63.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g5}}}}$ $g3$ 64.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{h5}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f4}}}}$ 65.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e2}}}}$

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
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65 $...\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e4}}}}$!!

Another only move.

66.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{d3}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f3}}}}$ 67.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{h1}}}}$ $g2$ 68.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{h3}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{g4}}}}$

69.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{h8}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{f4}}}}$ 70.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{e2}}}}$ $\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{xf5}}}}$

0–1

Kasparov resigned, as he has ended up on the losing side of the well known Lucena position, which will be recognized as a trivial finish by any player who has picked up a book on rook endings.

One might argue that this game was not especially strategic, but of the five wins achieved by Karpov in the present match, this was the one that best suited the theme of the present book. Had the game taken place at a normal tournament, it would probably not have made the final cut. But a world championship match is such a monumental event, it would have been a greater crime not to include any game from it. In strategic terms, Karpov's decision to place four out of his five remaining pieces on the a-file, followed by the rook on the c-file, was incredibly bold, even if it was not entirely correct. And following the mutual errors before the time control, his endgame technique was once again sublime.

After the above game Kasparov's troubles continued. Karpov switched to 1.$\textit{\bf{\textcolor{red}{\text{d4}}}}$ and scored another victory after Kasparov misplayed a reasonable position he obtained through a Tarrasch Defence. After a quick draw in Game Eight, Karpov scored another win over Kasparov's Tarrasch. (It became one of the most heavily analysed endgames in chess history.) Thus Karpov assumed a commanding 4–0 lead after only nine games – a remarkable feat considering the unquestionable brilliance of his challenger.

Around that time, the English grandmaster Jonathan Speelman commented that the world
had not yet understood just how strong a player Karpov really was. Even his most optimistic fan could scarcely have dreamed that he would open up such a lead over Kasparov. Although the challenger had dominated his opponents on his way to challenging for the title, Karpov was by far the most formidable adversary he had ever faced, and it seems as though it took some time for him to raise his game to the level of the champion.

By the end of Game Nine Kasparov was, not surprisingly, visibly shaken. To his great credit, he kept his composure and altered his match strategy. From this point on, for a long time to come, he played safely and solidly in order to draw as many games as possible and thus prolong the match.

A long series of draws ensued. In Game Fifteen Karpov was pressing for a long time, but was unable to convert his advantage. In the very next game it was Kasparov who missed a golden opportunity to score his first win. After his narrow escape Karpov became more cautious, and the next eleven games were all drawn without much drama. Although the majority of those games lasted between twenty and twenty five moves, they still contributed a lot to opening theory.

Game twenty seven looked to be heading for another quick draw, but Karpov had other ideas. We will review the game briefly.

1.Øf3 d5 2.d4 Øf6 3.c4 e6 4.Qc3 Qe7 5.Qg5 h6 6.Qxh6 Qxh6 7.e3 0-0 8.Wc2 c5 9.dxc5 dxc5 10.Qxc5 Wa5 11.0-0 Qxc3 12.Wxc3 Wxc3 13.bxc3 Qd7 14.c6 bxc6

White’s advantage appears insignificant, but over the next ten or so moves Karpov totally outplays Kasparov. It was a remarkable achievement from such an innocent-looking position.

15.Qa1 Qb6 16.Qe2 c5 17.Qc1!

With this farsighted move Karpov avoids exchanges on the d-file and defends the c-pawn in advance.

17...Qb7?!

17...Qd7! was better.

18.Øf1 Qd5?!

18...Qc6! would have prevented White’s next.

19.Qb5!

Karpov deploys his rook on a square where it attacks both of Black’s weak pawns.

19...Qd7 20.Qa5 Qb8?

20...Qc8! was necessary to bolster the c-pawn.

21.c4 Qc6

22.Qel!

Karpov brings the knight closer to the weak c5-pawn.

22...Qb4 23.Qd1!

Preventing the exchange of his strong rook.
After some truly brilliant play White has won a pawn. At this level it should have been enough to win comfortably, but Karpov became tense and allowed Black to develop counterplay. At one point Kasparov had a very difficult draw, but he was unable to find it and Karpov went on to win.

28...d6 29.e2 e7 30 xd1 xd1 31.xd1 d6 32.e5 f5 33.e2 h5 34.e4 fxe4 35.fxe4 xe4 36.xg5 f5 37.e3 h4 38.xd4 e5 39.c3 b1 40.a3 e7 41.g4 h3 42.g3 xe8 43.g7 g8 44.xa7 xa7 45.b4 xh2 46.c5 c6 47.a4 d5 48.d7 e4 49.c6 b2 50.a5 b8 51.c7 b8 52.xb8 xe3 53.ad6 h2 54.g4 d8 55.ed1 a2 56.ed1 c4 57.d4 g3 58.xe5 xg4 59.e2

1-0 Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (27) 1984.

Kasparov seemed to learn an important lesson from this game, and he seldom lost in this fashion for the rest of his career. Interestingly, Karpov managed to inflict a similar defeat on him in a rapid match almost twenty years later:

1.d4 f6 2.c4 g6 3.d3 d5 4.f3 g7 5.f4 dxc4 6.e1 0-0 7.e3 dbd7 8.xc4 c5 9.dxc5 xc5 10.0-0 e6 11.xe6 xxe6 12.e5 xd1 13.xxd1 xd8 Once again White has no more than a tiny advantage, but Karpov makes it count.

14.f1 d7 15.axg7 xg7 16.d5 db6 17.xb6 axb6 18.a3 xxd1+ 19.xd1 ec8 20.xe2 ed6 21.e1 xc4 22.xd7 oc5 23.rc7 b5 24.fb e5 25.b4 da4 26.xb7 ec6 27.e4 ec6 28.h4 h5 29.bd3 ec2+ 30.e3 f5 31.g3 fxe4 32.fxe4 xg2 33.xb5 xg3+ 34.ed2 eg2+ 35.ed1 ec3 36.xb6 ec7 37.xc5 ea2 38.f1 xe4 39.xg6+ ef7 40.xf2 ed5 41.ec6 xab4 42.axb4 xab4 43.ed5 eg7 44.xc4 eb5 45.xd3 ef6 46.xc5 1-0 Karpov – Kasparov, New York (rapid) (3) 2002.

There is no doubt that, at his peak, Kasparov's overall chess ability was at a higher level than Karpov's ever was. But despite Kasparov's genius, he never reached Karpov's level in endgames and simplified positions such as the above.

Let us return to the subject of the match. With a 5-0 lead, it seemed to be only a matter of time before Karpov would close out the match. The next four games were drawn, but then in Game 32 Kasparov scored his first win after utilizing his middlegame initiative to secure an extra pawn, which decided the game. It was his first ever victory over Karpov. Not surprisingly, Karpov still holds the record amongst world champions for holding the longest undefeated streak against his successor. The next four games were drawn, although in the last of them Karpov was under pressure and did well to survive. That game, the 36th of the match, took place on 28 December and was the last one Karpov played in the year 1984. The match continued on 2 January 1985, and we will rejoin it shortly.

1984 was Karpov's last year as the dominant force in the chess world. He won two tournaments and took a 5-1 lead against a super-strong challenger. He benefitted from the rub of the green in the early part of the match, and the 5-0 lead was not a true
The Making of a Champion

reflection of the relative strength of the combatants. Nevertheless the result left no doubt as to who was the stronger player at the time – especially when it came to endgames and simplified positions. Karpov deservedly won the Chess Oscar, although the margin was surprisingly narrow: he got 1390 votes to Kasparov's 1360. In any event, 1984 was a great year for Karpov: his last as the world champion and the strongest player in the world.

1984 Summary

London (1st place): 9/13 (+6 =6 −1)
Oslo (1st place): 6/9 (+3 =6 −0)
USSR – Rest of the World match, London (Board one versus Andersson): 21/4 (+1 =3 −0)
World Championship match versus Kasparov, Moscow: 20/36 (+5 =30 −1)

Total 60.5% (+15 =45 −2)

Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses
Karpov had little time to celebrate the New Year, as its second day saw the continuation of
the marathon match. Although on paper Karpov held what looked like a commanding lead,
Kasparov had managed to stabilize his play and had won the last decided game, and in the last
few drawn games he was also closer to winning than Karpov.

The first three games of the new year were drawn. Then in Game 40 Kasparov won a pawn and
was very close to winning, but Karpov narrowly managed to survive in 70 moves. Game 41 was
Karpov’s last serious chance to end the match in his favour. Kasparov tried the Petroff and Karpov
won a pawn, but he missed a forced win in the endgame and eventually had to settle for a draw.

The next five games were also drawn, although in the last of them Karpov played well below his
usual level and Kasparov should have done better.

In Game 47 Karpov’s play really went downhill. Playing with the white pieces, he turned down
a draw in the early stages of a queenless middlegame, but played poorly and Kasparov punished
him in impressive style. In Game 48 Kasparov scored his third win after his energetic attacking
play forced the win of a pawn, which he successfully converted in a rook ending. In the space of
two games, the score had shifted from 5–1 to 5–3. Karpov was still leading, but he had lost ten
kilos in weight, he was mentally and physically exhausted, and the momentum was firmly with
the challenger.

At this point the FIDE President, Florencio Campomanes, intervened and announced that the
match would be terminated. He proposed that the title be settled by means of a new match later
in the year, with a fixed limit of twenty four games. It was a hugely controversial move, and
Kasparov was furious, but nevertheless the decision stood.

After taking a much needed break to regain his strength, Karpov took the opportunity to
compete in a double round robin tournament in Amsterdam. It must have come as a relief to sit
across the board from someone other than Kasparov. His opponent in the first round was John
Nunn. Since their 1982 London game Karpov had scored one win and one draw against the
Englishman.
1.e4 c5 2.d4 d6

Having lost to Karpov with both the Sveshnikov and the Pirc, Nunn reverts to his main defence to 1.e4.

3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 a6 6...e2

Karpov employs his favourite variation. Obviously he had to think carefully about revealing his ideas before the march with Kasparov, who also plays the Najdorf.

6...e5

Nunn had also played 6...Nbd7, but on this occasion he sticks to the main line.

7.Nb3 Ne7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Ba3 Be6

Two years previously, Karpov faced a different set-up. It is worth giving the whole game, as Karpov played brilliantly.

9...Bc7 10.Bd2 Be8 11.a4 b6

Black guards against the possible fixing of his queenside with a4-a5.

12.Nb3 Ne6

Black has handled the position in a somewhat unorthodox fashion, making no attempt to free himself with ...d5.

13.Nc1!

Since ...d5 is not on the agenda, White does not need to play Bfd1, so Karpov immediately sets about improving his knight.

13...Nc6

This prevents the knight from coming to b4, so Karpov alters his plan.

14.Qd5 Bxd5 15.exd5 Qa5 16.b3 Qc8 17.Ba2!

The rook defends the c2-pawn securely, and later it will develop along the second rank.

17...Nb7 17...Bab8 18.c4 is good for White.

18.d1 Qc5 19.We1 Bb7 20.g3 Bd7

Black seems content to wait and see what happens. If he tries to embark on an active plan, he may risk opening the position for White's bishop pair.

21.Qg2 h6?!

21...Qg4? was a better idea.

22.a5!

With this subtle move Karpov plans to install his knight on the c6-square.

22...b5

Perhaps Black could have considered 22...d8?!

23.Bxc5!

Karpov shows great strategic vision. It is worth 'sacrificing' the bishop for a knight in order to help the knight along its journey.

23...Bxc5 24.Qd3 Bc8 25.Qb4 Be8
The alternative was 25...\(\text{bxc5}\) 26.\(\text{Cc6}\) \(\text{Be8}\) 27.\(\text{c4}\)? (It is stronger to open the queenside than to win an exchange: 27.b4 \(\text{Cc4}\) 28.c3 e4 29.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{Exc6}\) 30.\(\text{dx.c6}\) White is only a bit better.) 27...\(\text{bxc4}\) 28.b4 \(\text{b.b5}\) 29.\(\text{Cc2}\) and White has obtained the initiative on the queenside.

\[\text{Diagram} 1\]

26.\(\text{Cc6}\)

The knight is not attacking anything, yet it is highly effective as takes away several important squares from the enemy pieces.

26...\(\text{f8}\)

After 26...\(\text{c7}\) 27.b4 White will soon open the c-file, thus embarrassing the black queen.

27.\(\text{Cc2}\) e4 28.c4! \(\text{bxc4}\) 29.\(\text{Exc4}\) \(\text{f5}\)?

The best chance was 29...\(\text{e3}\)! 30.\(\text{fxe3}\) \(\text{Exe3}\) 31.\(\text{Cc2}\) when White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

30.\(\text{Cc2}\)

Thirteen moves after it came to the second rank, the rook makes its long awaited jump to the centre.

30...\(\text{h5}\) 31.\(\text{fde1}\)

Black's centre falls apart. The whole scenario is typical of Karpov's games: after building an initiative on one side of the board, the opponent lunges forward in another part of the board in an effort to obtain counterplay, only for Karpov to switch his attention back and hurt the opponent in the area where he is trying to become more active.

\[\text{Diagram 2}\]

31...\(\text{xd5}\) 32.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 33.\(\text{Cc4}\) \(\text{Cc7}\) 34.\(\text{Cc7}\)!

A cute way to seal the victory.

34...\(\text{Exe7}\) 35.\(\text{xa8}\) \(\text{Exe2}\) 36.\(\text{Exe2}\) \(\text{xa8}\)

Black is temporarily up on material, but his knight finds itself rather unfortunately placed.

37.\(\text{Cc2}\)

1–0 Karpov – Giorgadze, Moscow 1983.

\[\text{Diagram 3}\]

10.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{bd7}\) 11.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{Cc8}\)

Nunn follows in Portisch's footsteps. He had previously played 11...\(\text{b6}\) and drawn in Liang Jinrong – Nunn, Lucerne (ol) 1982. Karpov had also faced that move twice, beating Quinteros in 1982 and drawing with Ostermeyer in 1983.

12.\(\text{a5}\) \(\text{Cc7}\) 13.\(\text{f6d1}\)

Karpov deviates from his own novelty of
13...\texttt{Bf}c1, which brought him a fine victory over Portisch as we saw in Game 65. The reason is obvious: Nunn had surely prepared an improvement over that game.

13...\texttt{Bf}d8

This move later grew to become the established main line, although at the time of the game there was not much theory on the present position.

14.\texttt{Wh}e1？

According to Igor Zaitsev this was a novelty. It is possible that Karpov and his team prepared it for use against Kasparov. It is generally helpful for White to remove his queen from the watchful gaze of the black rook, while in certain cases White may wish to double his own rooks on the d-file.

14...\texttt{Wc}6

The other main lines are 14...\texttt{Qc}5? 15.\texttt{Qxc}5 dxc5 and 14...h6 15.\texttt{Qd}2.

15.\texttt{Qb}3 \texttt{Qc}4

In the light of this and other games, Black came up with new ways to handle the position.

15...h6 is the main move, and Black scores highly with it. Apart from being a useful waiting move, Black also prepares ...\texttt{Qh}7-g5.

There is also 15...\texttt{Wc}7?, an interesting idea of Huzman. White cannot easily carry out the knight manoeuvre to b4, as \texttt{Qc}1-a2 would drop the a5-pawn while \texttt{Qc}1-d3 allows ...d5.

16.\texttt{Qc}1!

Karpov starts improving the knight.

16...h6

16...b5 does not equalize either: 17.axb6 (There is also 17.\texttt{Qa}2?! \texttt{Qxa}2 18.\texttt{Qxa}2 \texttt{Qb}7 19.\texttt{Qb}4 and Black is somewhat passive, Wornacka - Goehler, East Berlin 1986.) 17...\texttt{Wb}7 18.b3 \texttt{Qe}6 19.\texttt{Qe}2 \texttt{Qa}8 20.\texttt{Qf}3 (20.\texttt{Qf}1??) 20...\texttt{Qxb}6 21.\texttt{Qd}3 Black's pawn structure on the queenside is a bit vulnerable.

17.\texttt{Qa}2 \texttt{Qc}5
18.\textit{\text{b}4}

Karpov completed his manoeuvre and now enjoys solid control over the d5-square. Black can still cover it, but the fact that he is forced to pay attention to this weak square hampers his ability to generate any active play of his own.

18...\textit{\text{e}8}

19.\textit{\text{g}3}!

Karpov makes room around his king, but more importantly he prepares to deploy his bishop on the more secure g2-square. Later this piece might switch to h3.

19...\textit{\text{c}7} 20.\textit{\text{g}2} \textit{\text{de}8} 21.\textit{\text{b}3} \textit{\text{e}6} 22.\textit{\text{cd}5}

Karpov can find no further improving moves, so finally he occupies the key outpost.

22...\textit{\text{d}x}d5 23.\textit{\text{d}x}d5

This poses a dilemma for Black. The knight on d5 is tough to live with, but if he eliminates it then his light squares will become weaker.

23...\textit{\text{d}x}d5

After 23...\textit{\text{c}6} White can begin tightening the screw with 24.\textit{\text{b}6} (24.\textit{\text{b}4} is also good) 24...\textit{\text{b}8} 25.\textit{\text{e}2} with a comfortable advantage.

24.\textit{\text{x}d}5 \textit{\text{c}6} 25.\textit{\text{ad}1}

Zaitsev recommends 25.\textit{\text{h}4}? to take away the g5-square from the black bishop. This would have prevented the pawn sacrifice which shortly occurs in the game; on the other hand, that did not ease Black's suffering so it is probably just a matter of taste.

25...\textit{\text{d}e}6 26.\textit{\text{c}4} \textit{\text{g}5}?

27.\textit{\text{a}7}?

27.\textit{\text{x}d}6 would also have given White a nice advantage, but Karpov prefers not to allow the exchange of Black's bad bishop.

27...\textit{\text{a}8}

Karpov's last move had the effect of drawing the black rook onto a passive square.

28.\textit{\text{b}6} \textit{\text{d}8} 29.\textit{\text{e}3} \textit{\text{c}7}

Now if 29...\textit{\text{g}5}, Karpov presumably intended to take the pawn with 30.\textit{\text{x}d}6. Nunn obviously found this prospect less appealing with his rook on a8 instead of c8, so he elects to defend the pawn instead.

30.\textit{\text{e}2}!

Karpov makes another small improving move, defending the c4-pawn and thus preparing b4.
30...b6
The liberation of Black's queenside is a good idea, but it has arrived too late.

31.b4! bxa5 32.b5!
Karpov sacrifices a pawn in order to create a mighty passed pawn.

32...axb5 33.cxb5 Ec5?
This exchange sacrifice fails to generate enough counterplay.

33...Ec3 was necessary. Black is under pressure here as well, but at least he avoids a quick collapse. 34.b6 d8 (34...b8? 35.b7 wins the rook) 35.Exd6 (If 35.Exb2 Exe3 36.fxe3 Exb8 37.Exd6 d7 White will have a hard time winning.) 35...g5 36.h3 Exe3 37.fxe3 g5 38.d7 White is clearly better but the game goes on.

34.Exc5 Exc5 35.Af1!
The bishop is heading for c4, where it will restrain the a-pawn as well as targeting the f7-pawn.

35.a4 Ec2 a3 37.Ac4 Ec6?
With little time remaining, Nunn mistakenly tries to improve his knight. He could have offered sterner resistance by waiting, although White should be able to win eventually.

For instance: 37...Ec7 38.Ac2 (After the inaccurate 38.Ed1?! Ab6 39.Ac2 Black can only now play 39...d6! with some chances.) 38...Ab8 39.Ed5 b7 40.f3 a8 41.Ed1 After some further prophylactic moves White can eliminate the a3-pawn to reach a winning position.
to continue using the Scheveningen in their return match later in the year.

In round four Karpov got back on track, defeating Miles in a nice endgame which I analysed in the Endgame Virtuoso book. Next he drew with Timman in a long and complicated Scotch, then beat Nunn from the black side of an Anti-Marshall Ruy Lopez. In round seven Karpov played for a win but was unable to make any headway against Sunye Neto, and in the final three games he coasted home with three short draws. His final score of 7/10 was enough to secure first place, half a point ahead of Timman, with whom he drew in the final round.

Second World Championship match versus Kasparov

The second "K - K" match was held in Moscow, just like the first. The rules had been changed in order to prevent the match from dragging on for an inordinate amount of time: this time there was a fixed duration of twenty four games, with Karpov retaining his title in the event of a 12–12 tie. The first game took place on 3 September, so the players had about half a year to prepare. During this time Karpov played just the one tournament, as we have seen, while Kasparov won two short training matches, against Andersson by a score of 4–2 and Hübner by 4½–½.

Once again both players were assisted by formidable teams of analysts. Karpov’s seconds included Sergei Makarychev, Igor Zaitsev, Efim Geller and Evgeni Vasiukov, while Kasparov was supported by Alexander Nikitin, Gennady Timoschenko, Alexander Shakarov, Josif Dorfman, Yuri Razuvaev and Evgeny Vladimirov.

In the first game Kasparov showed that he had been hard at work preparing a new opening variation: 4...c5 5.g3 Karpov did not manage to equalize, and after a few subsequent inaccuracies he found himself in a lost endgame which Kasparov easily converted. Considering that his three prior losses to Kasparov all came in the later stages of their marathon match, when Karpov was clearly fatigued, one could make the slightly exaggerated argument that this was the first time Kasparov had defeated him under normal conditions. It was the first time Karpov had trailed in a match since losing the first game of his 1974 candidates semi-final match against Spassky.

In Game Two Karpov could have obtained an advantage against Kasparov’s Scheveningen, but failed to make the most of his position. Soon afterwards Kasparov took over the initiative and had excellent chances to win, but made an error on the sealed move and Karpov eventually managed to draw. Game Three was drawn quickly, but then in Game Four Karpov produced a masterful display in an opposite-coloured bishop middlegame.

![Game 75](Image)

Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov

World Championship, Moscow (4) 1985

1.d4

In his first white game Karpov struggled against his opponent’s favourite Scheveningen, so this time he goes for something different. Later in the match he switched back to 1.e4, but without much success.

1...d5 2.c4 e6 3.Qc3 Qe7

It is interesting that against 1.e4 Kasparov opted for a dynamic counterattacking opening, but against 1.d4 he strived for solidity.

4.Qb
Karpov repeated this line twice more in the match, but only drew. Later he switched to 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Qf4, drawing one game and winning the second.

4...Qb6 5.Qg5 h6 6.Qxf6

Karpov chooses the variation that brought him a win and two draws against Kasparov in their first world championship match.

6...Qxf6 7.e3 0–0 8.Qc2

Karpov repeats the move that brought him his last win in the first match. Prior to that, he had drawn two games with Kasparov after 8.Qd2. Later he switched to 8.Qc1 and defeated both Spassky and Short.

8...Qa6

This was not technically a novelty, but it had hardly ever been tried, and was obviously prepared by Kasparov especially for this match.

8...e5 is the main line, but Kasparov probably still had bad memories after Game 27 of their previous match, which was featured on page 415.

9.Ed1

It unlikely that Karpov had paid much attention to Kasparov’s chosen move in his preparation, and his response is safe and sensible.

Ribli later used 9.a3 to score a win and a draw against Beliavsky, but generally speaking the whole variation does not pose many problems to Black.

9...c5 10.dxc5 Qa5 11.cxd5 Qxc5

12.Qd2

Karpov ensures that he slows down Kasparov’s dynamic play.

In a few subsequent games White tried the block Black’s play in the centre with 12.Qd4, but this did not turn out to be dangerous either.

Taking the pawn is possible, although it is doubtful that Karpov considered it for long, as he knew Kasparov would have prepared for it in detail. Nevertheless after 12.dxe6 Qxe6 13.Qd4 Bac8 (13...Qd5 14.Ed2) 14.Qe2 Qd5 15.0–0 Qe4 16.Ed3 Black is not guaranteed a draw according to Kasparov.

12...Qd8 13.Qd4 exd5

Kasparov settles for an IQP position in which his active pieces should give him decent play.
14.\textit{e}2

Karpov must finish his development before undertaking anything else. The position is objectively equal, although the playing styles of the players should also be taken into consideration. So far, Kasparov had not enjoyed much success when defending IQP positions against Karpov.

20.\textit{d}d2 $\textit{d}c8$?

Later Kasparov recommended the apparently anti-positional 20...$\textit{a}x\textit{d}$4!? 21.$\textit{a}x\textit{d}$4 $\textit{d}c8$ 22.$\textit{a}d$3 $\textit{a}c5$ when Black should be able to defend. It will be hard for White to organize a successful attack on the d-pawn, as he also has to keep the c2-square defended.

21.$\textit{a}xe6$!

Karpov realizes that he will not be able to mount a significant attack on the d-pawn without making some other concession such as allowing the black rooks to invade on c2. Therefore he puts his faith in the somewhat advantageous opposite-coloured bishop position.

21...$\textit{f}x\textit{e}6$?

Kasparov makes the natural decision to support the d5 pawn.

21...$\textit{a}xe6$? was worth considering too. In the resulting position, the worst case scenario for Black would involve sacrificing his d-pawn with ...d4, after which he would still have reasonable chances of blockading on d6.

22.$\textit{g}4$

Karpov ensures that the enemy queen will be tied to the defence of the e6-pawn. Here is a bit of advice: whenever you reach an opposite-
coloured bishop middlegame, be sure to give it your full concentration as these types of position are often difficult to assess properly. Typically the player with the initiative will look to dominate the game by focusing their attack on whichever colour of squares their bishop controls. If your opponent’s position contains a weakness, then you should play against it with purpose and conviction.

That being said, one must also keep an eye on the opponent’s active possibilities. For instance, the premature attempt to set up a queen and bishop battery with 22.\texttt{\textit{g6}}? allows 22...\texttt{\textit{b4}}! 23.\texttt{\textit{fd1}} \texttt{\textit{c1}} when Black takes over the initiative on the queenside.

22...\texttt{\textit{c4}} 23.\texttt{\textit{h3}} \texttt{\textit{c6}} 24.\texttt{\textit{d3}}

It is hard to anticipate what Karpov is doing. One can hardly blame Kasparov for the subtle errors which start to creep into his play during the following phase of the game.

24...\texttt{\textit{h8}}?!

This is unnecessary. Kasparov recommends 24...\texttt{\textit{a5}}! with the idea of pushing the pawn as far as possible without delay.

25.\texttt{\textit{fd1}} \texttt{\textit{a5}} 26.\texttt{\textit{b3}} \texttt{\textit{c3}}

26...\texttt{\textit{b4}}? was worth considering, as the rook can help to support Black’s queenside play. If White plays 27.\texttt{\textit{g6}} than both 27...\texttt{\textit{a4}} and 27...\texttt{\textit{e8}} appear satisfactory.

27.\texttt{\textit{e2}} \texttt{\textit{f8}}

Kasparov decides he does not have much use for a second rook on the c-file, so he transfers it to the f-file instead.

One interesting alternative involved bringing the king to the centre with 27...\texttt{\textit{d6}} 28.\texttt{\textit{h5}} \texttt{\textit{g8}}, when play might continue 29.\texttt{\textit{g4}} \texttt{\textit{f8}} 30.\texttt{\textit{g6}} \texttt{\textit{c3}}. Objectively Black should be okay here, although it would still not be easy to defend the position against Karpov.

28.\texttt{\textit{b5}}!

Over the last six moves Karpov has made some small improvements to his position, but his intention all along has been to build an attack along the b1-h7 diagonal. With this move he prepares to put his bishop on the key diagonal.

28...\texttt{\textit{b5}}

28...\texttt{\textit{d8}}? was another idea, intending to put the queen on d6 and bishop on c7.

29.\texttt{\textit{g6}} \texttt{\textit{d8}} 30.\texttt{\textit{d3}} \texttt{\textit{b4}} 31.\texttt{\textit{g4}}!

White’s attacking chances are becoming more and more real.
31...\textbf{We}8
Black cannot allow the queen to come to g6 unhindered.

32.e4!
This is a great move. The subsequent pawn exchange will give White more available squares on the long diagonal, which will increase his chances of posting his queen there. Furthermore, one or more of his rooks might make use of the e-file.

32...\textbf{Ag}5
Another idea was:
32...\textbf{Ab}6
Black hopes to exploit the absence of a white pawn on e3.
33.exd5 exd5 34.\textbf{Af}5
Kasparov mentioned that this was the move which scared him.
Another possibility is 34.\textbf{Ah}1 \textbf{Af}2 35.\textbf{Ag}6 \textbf{Ac}6 36.\textbf{Ax}d5 \textbf{Ag}3 37.\textbf{Af}5 \textbf{Ac}5 38.\textbf{Af}7 and at the end of this sharp line the position is balanced.
34...\textbf{Ae}3!
Another line is 34...\textbf{Af}6 35.\textbf{Ax}d5 g6 36.\textbf{Ad}3 \textbf{Af}2 37.\textbf{Ah}1 \textbf{Ac}6 when Black is okay.
35.\textbf{Ae}3
1f 35.\textbf{Ax}d5? \textbf{Ae}1 † 36.\textbf{Ah}1 \textbf{Af}2 White's king is in danger.
35...\textbf{Ae}3† 36.\textbf{Ah}1 \textbf{Ax}d2 37.\textbf{Ae}6 \textbf{Ag}5

38.\textbf{Axd}5 \textbf{Af}4
Black is not worse.

33.\textbf{Ag}2!
Karpov avoids the trap of 33.\textbf{Ae}2?? \textbf{Af}4 when his queen is lost.

33...\textbf{Ax}c2?
This move is hard to understand. Black gives up his outpost and also relinquishes control over the c2- and d3-squares, thus increasing White's chances of getting his queen to the long diagonal. It seems that even world champions are not immune from the desire to exchange pieces when playing for a draw.

Kasparov later proposed 33...d4 34.e5 \textbf{Af}4 35.\textbf{Ae}2 \textbf{Ac}6 with a playable position.

33...\textbf{Af}7 34.\textbf{Ae}2 \textbf{Ad}8 would also have been acceptable for Black.

34.\textbf{Ax}c2 \textbf{Ac}6 35.\textbf{Ae}2 \textbf{Ac}5 36.\textbf{Ae}1
The rook temporarily takes up a passive position in order to free the queen.

36...\textbf{Ac}3
Kasparov prevents the enemy queen from occupying the long diagonal, but only temporarily.
Almost twenty moves after entering the opposite-coloured bishop position, Karpov finally achieves the desired alignment of queen and bishop on the key diagonal.

37. exd5 exd5 38. Ab1 Ad2

Karpov should have continued playing his “symphony” for even longer with 39. We6! He may have been concerned about the counterattack with 39...Ah4?!, but this turns out to be too slow. (Objectively Black should prefer 39...Af6, but after 40. Ah1 he faces an unpleasant defensive task.) 40. We6 White can safely ignore the attack on the f-pawn. 40...Af2+ 41. Ah1 Ag8 42. Wh7+ Af7 43. Ag6+ Af6 44. Ah5 White’s attack breaks through. It is fitting that all of White’s moves in this variation took place on light squares as well.

39. We5?! 

Amazingly, Karpov’s last eighteen moves all took place on light squares. Ashot Nadanian told me that Taimanov, who was a world class pianist as well as a top chess player, referred to this game as the “Light Square Symphony.”

39...Ae6?

By releasing the pressure on the f-file, Kasparov opens the door for the white rook to join in the attack. 39...Af6 40. Af5 Ag8 was more stubborn, although Black’s position is still difficult.

40. Af5!
48.g3!
Finally another move on a dark square, and this time it is a good one. Typically for Karpov, he tidies up his king position and drives the black bishop away.

48...h8 49.g2 f6 50.h7 f7 51.h4 d2
Having obtained the ideal kingside formation, the time has come for White to improve his rook.

52.d1! c3 53.d3
The inclusion of the rook in the attack spells the end for Black.

53...d6
After 53...f6 54.e3 g8 55.g6 f7 56.g4 d4 57.f3 White will soon break in.

54.f3!
Karpov finishes the attack with precision. 54.e3?? would have allowed Black to continue fighting: 54...g5! 55.exc3 bxc3 56.h8+ e7 57.e5+ e6 58.exc6 exc6 59.exc3 White is a pawn up but the game continues.

54...e7
54...f6 55.e3 wins, as the black rook blocks the long diagonal, thus preventing the defence seen in the previous note.

55.h8 d4 56.c8
The black king is being attacked from all sides. Note the uselessness of his bishop, which contributes nothing to the defence.

56...f6 57.c5+ e8 58.f4 b7+ 59.e4+ d7
The cheeky 59...e6? allows a neat finish in 60.c4! xe4 61.g8+ winning the queen. Kasparov probably saw this and decided he did not want this game to appear in puzzle books as well.

60.c4+ d8

61.h7! f7 62.e6 d7 63.e5 1–0
It is slightly ironic that the move which caused Black's resignation occurred on a dark square. The finish might have been 63...d8 64.c5+ e7 65.f4+ e8 66.c6+ d7 67.a8+ with mate to follow. Karpov is one of the best players of all time in positions with opposite-coloured bishops, and this was one of his finest performances.

In Game 5 Karpov's success continued, as he outplayed Kasparov on the black side of a main line Ruy Lopez to take the lead in the match. The next five games were drawn, although they were all fighting encounters and both players
missed chances along the way. Then in Game 11 Karpov made a terrible blunder as early as move 22, and had to resign just three moves later. The score was even.

In Game 12 Kasparov uncorked a surprise pawn sacrifice in the Taimanov Sicilian, known as the Dely Gambit. Karpov opted for safety and a short draw ensued. In the next two games both players came under some pressure with the black pieces, but both managed to defend. In Game 15 Karpov used the Petroff for the first time in the match, and drew quickly.

Game 16 was one of the defining moments of the match. Kasparov risked the Dely Gambit again. Having analysed it with his team, Karpov came up with a more ambitious counter than before, but it was still not the right medicine. Kasparov remained a pawn down but installed a monstrous knight on d3, and went on to win brilliantly. The game was voted the best of all time by the readers of Chess Informant.

After two more draws, Kasparov then doubled his lead after Karpov mishandled what should have been a playable position against the Fianchetto Nimzo-Indian. The champion had just five games in which to claw back a two point deficit. In Game 20 Karpov made a good attempt to press for a win from an equal endgame, but eventually had to settle for a draw on move 85. In the next game he was on the defensive, but managed to draw after Kasparov failed to find the most incisive continuation. Just three games remained, but Karpov had White in two of them.

Game 22 was a must-win for Karpov, and he managed to do just that, driving his kingside pawns up the board in a queenless semi-endgame position. Kasparov did not find the best defensive moves, and Karpov kept his hopes alive. In Kasparov’s final game with the white pieces he went for the win, but Karpov defended well.

The situation heading into the final game was a spectator’s dream: Kasparov was leading by one point, but Karpov had the white pieces, and needed to win to tie the match 12-12, in which case the rules stipulated that he would retain his title. He opened with 1.e4, and Kasparov responded with his trusty Scheveningen. It was probably the most famous game of all time featuring that particular opening. Karpov introduced a novelty on move 17 and proceeded to mass his pieces on the kingside in the hope of executing a deadly attack, but Kasparov played some excellent prophylactic moves and later began counterattacking. Karpov lost his way in the complications and resigned on move 42 after blundering in time trouble.

The End of an Era

It took Kasparov seventy-two world championship games to fulfill his dream. He struggled in the early stages of the first match, but succeeded in raising his game and adjusting to Karpov’s play. He became more adept at holding slightly worse endgames and simplified middlegame positions.

Karpov’s biggest problem was the opening. In the second match he only achieved an even score with the white pieces, winning two games, drawing eight and losing two (although the final loss can partially be attributed to playing riskily when he needed to win at all costs). His score of minus two against the Sicilian was catastrophic. With the black pieces Karpov scored one win, eight draws and three losses. The defeats all occurred in the Nimzo-Indian. On more than one occasion he overestimated Kasparov’s novelties and played too passively.

Kasparov is widely regarded as the greatest opening player of all time. His opening prowess can be attributed to a number of factors, including his exceptional chess talent, tireless
work ethic and his methods of organizing and motivating his team. Karpov was obviously not a slouch in the opening, but he was nowhere near Kasparov’s level. His opening difficulties in the second match may be partially attributable to the level of exhaustion he suffered during their first match: he may have taken months to recover, which would have meant less time to prepare for the next match. Nevertheless, I believe that the root cause of his opening difficulties lay much deeper.

When Karpov became World Champion, he was head and shoulders above his nearest rivals. In the great majority of his tournaments, all he needed to do was reach playable positions in each of his games, after which his tremendous middlegame and endgame skill would ensure that he would win enough games to finish at the top. It was a successful formula, as evidenced by his unparalleled record of tournament victories, which exceeds even that of Kasparov. But for nine years, Karpov lacked a serious rival who would push him towards the limits of his potential. Had the Fischer – Karpov match taken place, there is no question that Karpov would have become a stronger player, both in the openings and his overall game.

One can only speculate about how the hypothetical Fischer – Karpov match(es) would have affected the outcome of the various “K – K” matches. Kasparov possessed such phenomenal talent and skill that he would surely have won the title eventually, but I estimate that it would have taken him until approximately 1990 to accomplish it.

Before the end of the year Karpov took part in one more event, representing the USSR in the first World Team Championship in Lucerne, Switzerland. Kasparov chose not to participate, so Karpov played on the top board. He was clearly impressed with Kasparov’s handling of the g3 Nimzo-Indian, as he played it himself in rounds one and five, but only managed to draw against Suba and Portisch respectively. In between those games he defeated Xi Jingxuan and Spassky, before resting in round four.

In round six Karpov faced Assem Afifi. The Egyptian IM once drew against Spassky, which was his only other encounter with a world champion.

### Game 76

**Assem Afifi – Anatoly Karpov**

*World Team Championship, Lucerne 1985*

1. c4 e5

Out of the 128 games in which he faced 1. c4, Karpov only responded with 1...e5 twenty eight times. It is surprising that he did not play it more often, as he made a huge score with it. From his first twelve games, he only drew two and won the other ten! His victims included Ribli, Olafsson, Portisch and Kasparov (in a subsequent world championship match); only a few of the wins occurred in junior events. Altogether after 1. c4 e5 Karpov won seventeen games, drew nine and lost only two; a remarkable score, even for a player at Karpov’s level. Sometimes he began with 1...d6 and played ...e5 on the second move; he did excellently with that move order as well, defeating Timman and Korchnoi amongst others.

2. d3 d6 3. g3 d5

Interesting, Karpov employed the reversed Sicilian only twice. Of course he also faced the Dragon many times with White, and usually did well against it.

4. cxd5 dxd5 5. a2 d6 6. d3 c6 7. 0–0

Afifi was probably familiar with Karpov’s
previous game in the variation and deviates from Portisch's play.

7.d3

The Hungarian grandmaster held back castling in favour of gaining space on the queenside.

7...e7 8.a3 e6 9.b4 a6 10.b2?! It is more usual for this bishop to develop on the other diagonal; indeed, in the present game it fails to make much of an impact.

Not long after this game, Portisch deviated with 10.0-0 against Groszpeter at the 1981 Hungarian Championship.

10...d7?!

In reaction to his opponent's last move, Karpov changes his mind and decides to castle long.

11.e4 f6 12.c2

12.d4?! does not work due to 12...c4!.

12...h3

Karpov weakens the white kingside.

13.0-0 xg2 14.xg2

14...g5!

Karpov does not stop d4, but instead allows it under his own terms.

If 14...0-0-0 15.d4! exd4 16.fd1 White wins back the pawn and reaches a decent position.

15.d4

Possibly better was 15.fd1! g4 (15...0-0-0?! 16.d4) 16.h4 d4 (After 16...d5?! 17.d4 0-0-0 18.f5 White has the upper hand.) 17.xd4 exd4 18.f4 f5 with a complicated position.

15...g4 16.h4 exd4 17.f5?!

This tempting but incorrect move will soon allow Black to exchange his weakest piece.

Better was 17.fc1 0-0-0 18.fc1 fb8 19.dc5 dx5 20.bxc5 dd5 with unclear play.

17...0-0-0 18.fc1

18...c4!

Karpov not only gets rid of his problem piece, but also keeps his extra pawn.

19.xe7+ xe7 20.c5 xb2 21.xb2 h5!

Having outplayed his opponent in the centre, Karpov starts an attack which eventually led to victory in Portisch - Karpov, Linares 1981.
White cannot take on e5. Generally speaking, in this line Black either plays ...\(a5\) or does not move the a-pawn at all.

10.d3 0–0 11.\(\text{Bb}1\) 

Karpov gains space and stops \(\text{De}4\).

12.\(\text{Be}3\) \(\text{Wh}8\) 13.\(\text{Cc}2\)!

This rather invites Black's next move.

13.\(\text{Cc}1\) was better; Black often plays such a move in the Classical Dragon with reversed colours. 13...\(\text{Af}6\) (After 13...h6 14.\(\text{Ed}1\) \(\text{Af}6\) 15.\(\text{Cc}5\) \(\text{Ec}8\) 16.e4 the position is unclear.) 14.\(\text{Dg}5\)?! (White can also consider 14.\(\text{Dg}5\) when the bishop exchange helps to relieve any congestion in his position.) 14...\(\text{Gg}8\) 15.\(\text{Xc}6?\) \(\text{Bxc}6\) 16.\(\text{Df}3\) The position holds chances for both sides.

13...\(\text{Dd}4!\)

Karpov gains space and gets rid of the slight weakness on e5.

14.\(\text{Xd}4\) \(\text{exd}4\) 15.\(\text{Da}4\) \(\text{Dxa}4\)

Black does not want the knight to arrive on c5.

16.\(\text{Dxa}4\) \(\text{Dd}5\)

White is not yet objectively worse, nevertheless Karpov has made some achievements and has plenty of scope to improve his position further.

17.\(\text{Df}1\) c6 18.\(\text{Dc}2\)

With this simple and strong move, Karpov prepares to build up on the e-file.

19.\(\text{Dc}1\) \(\text{Af}6\) 20.\(\text{Dd}2\) \(\text{Dxg}2\) 21.\(\text{Dxg}2\) \(\text{Ec}8\)

In the next phase of the game Karpov improves his position a bit with each move. He also makes it harder for White to play b5.

22.a4 g6
This is a completely unnecessary weakening of White's position, which also takes away the f3-square from his knight. The position would have been more or less equal after 23.\textit{b}3 or 23.\textit{c}4.

23...\textit{e}5 24.\textit{c}4 \textit{d}5 25.\textit{b}2

25...\textit{e}7

Over the last few moves Karpov switches his attention to the queenside. Now White must take into consideration the idea of ...b5, fixing his b-pawn on the same colour square as Black's bishop.

26.\textit{eb}1 \textit{g}7

Karpov improves his king a bit.

27.\textit{b}5

White has had enough of waiting, and he elects to do something.

Closing the queenside with 27.a5 would have been rather passive, and after 27...\textit{b}5 28.\textit{b}6 \textit{c}7 29.\textit{c}4 \textit{d}6 Black can build his position by means of ...\textit{d}8, ...\textit{e}7 and ...\textit{c}7.

27...\textit{xb}5 28.\textit{axb}5 a5!

White's b-pawn is a long-term weakness, so Karpov wisely leaves it on the board. By keeping the queenside files closed, he also restricts the enemy rooks.

29.\textit{b}6

In almost thirty moves Afifi will lose this pawn. Still, leaving it on the b5-square would also have been problematic for White.

After 29.\textit{b}3 \textit{cc}5 Black can improve his position with ...b6 followed by a bishop transfer to d8 and c7. There is also a second strong plan available in 29...\textit{dc}5 30.\textit{a}2 b6. Now after 31.\textit{c}2 Black can switch his attention to the kingside with 31...\textit{f}4 or 31...h5. And if White plays 31.\textit{f}4, Black keeps an edge with 31...\textit{d}5† 32.\textit{f}2 \textit{e}6.

29...\textit{b}4!

With this move Karpov defends the a5-pawn, cuts off White's heavy pieces from the defence of the b6-pawn, and clears the e-file.

30.\textit{a}2 \textit{f}6 31.\textit{f}4 \textit{h}6 32.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}7 33.\textit{d}1 \textit{g}6 34.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}6!

From this ideal square the rook exerts pressure against both of White's weak pawns.

35.\textit{b}3 \textit{e}5

Karpov was probably already planning an eventual exchange sacrifice, although there is no need to rush into it yet as White is not threatening to do anything.

36.\textit{f}1
36.\texttt{\textgreek{f}2} could be met by 36...\textgreek{c}3.

The position is closed, so Black can afford to advance his king like this. Perhaps Karpov was hoping to provoke his opponent into an unsound attacking attempt.

36...\textgreek{f}6!?

Karpov cannot improve any of his pieces, so he exchanges one of his opponent's best ones. With no queens on the board Black will be much freer to use his king.

43.\textgreek{xd}5

White could also have considered waiting for Black to exchange on f3 with a view to recapturing with the e-pawn. This would have enabled his king to utilize the e2-square to get to the queenside. On the other hand his pawn structure would be compromised, and in the event of a future exchange sacrifice on c4, Black will benefit from having a passed d-pawn.

43...\textgreek{xd}5 44.\textgreek{a}4

The rook is passive here, but at least it prevents the black a-pawn from advancing. It is hard to suggest anything else for it to do in this position.

44...\textgreek{b}5 45.\textgreek{ca}2

If 45.\textgreek{a}a2 \textgreek{c}3 46.\textgreek{f}3 \textgreek{cc}5 47.e4 \textgreek{b}1 the rook invades and Black continues to press.

45...\textgreek{cc}5 46.\textgreek{f}3 \textgreek{dd}5 47.\textgreek{f}2 \textgreek{ee}6 48.\textgreek{f}3 \textgreek{dd}c5 49.\textgreek{f}2

49...\textgreek{d}5
Karpov centralizes his king, and the exchange sacrifice becomes more and more tempting.

50.\texttt{Rc2} bxc6! 51.\texttt{Bb6} Bbc5!
Now Black really is ready to take on c4.

52.e3?
White tries to take measures against the coming sacrifice, but in doing so he worsens his position as the black pieces now have additional lines along which to invade.

The best chance was: 52.\texttt{Rc2} Bxc4 53.dxc4† \texttt{Bc5}! By keeping his remaining rook on the board, Black obtains excellent winning chances. (Instead after 53...\texttt{Bxc4?!} 54.\texttt{Bb5} Bc6 55.e4 dxe3 57.\texttt{Ba3} Bxb6 Black is better but White should be able to hold.) 54.\texttt{Bxc5} Bxc5 55.\texttt{Rxe3} Bxb6 56.\texttt{Rb5} Bc5 57.\texttt{Bd2} Bb7 58.\texttt{Bf4} Bb2 White is in trouble.

52...dxe3 53.\texttt{Bxe3} Be6† 54.\texttt{Bb3}

54...\texttt{Bd4}!
The king has become the most dominant piece on the board.

55.\texttt{Bc2} Bxe2 56.\texttt{Bxe2} Bc3 57.\texttt{Ba1} Bc8 58.Bc1† \texttt{Bd4} 59.\texttt{Ba1} Be8† 60.\texttt{Bb3} Ba8 61.\texttt{Bc2}

61...\texttt{a4}!
White was able to stop the enemy king from becoming too powerful, but the addition of the advancing a-pawn is too much for the defence to bear.

62.\texttt{Ba3} \texttt{Be8}
Karpov simplifies to a winning rook ending. Another route to victory was 62...\texttt{Bc3} 63.\texttt{Bc2}† \texttt{Bc5} 64.\texttt{Ba2} \texttt{Bxb6} winning.

62...\texttt{Bc3} was also good enough: 63.\texttt{Bd1}† (63.\texttt{Bc1}† \texttt{Bb3}) 63...\texttt{Bc2} 64.\texttt{Ba2}† \texttt{Bb3} 65.\texttt{Bb2}† \texttt{Bc3} 66.\texttt{Ba2} (66.\texttt{Bc1}† \texttt{Bc3}) 66...\texttt{Bc2} And Black wins easily.

63.\texttt{Bc4} \texttt{Bxe3†} 64.\texttt{Bf2} \texttt{Bxh3} 65.\texttt{Bxb4†} \texttt{Bc5} 66.\texttt{Bb1} \texttt{Bd6} 67.\texttt{Bc3} \texttt{Be6†} 68.\texttt{Bc3} \texttt{Bxb6}
Such rook endings with a spare queenside pawn can sometimes prove difficult to win, but in this one Black's task is simple. All he has to do is put his rook on d6, where it cuts off the white king while also guarding the g6-pawn, and then advance his b-pawn.

69.\textit{\textbd{c}}1+ \textit{\textbd{d}}d6 70.\textit{\textbd{d}}d1+ \textit{\textbd{c}}c7

0-1

Afifi obviously understood what was coming and saw no reason to prolong his suffering. Karpov drew his final two games to finish on 5/7; a good result, if not a spectacular one.

Despite losing his title, the quality of Karpov's play in 1985 was as high as ever. The only problem was that Kasparov had risen to a whole new level. They played a total of thirty six games in 1985, including the final twelve of their first match. In total Karpov only scored three wins to Kasparov's seven, so it is hard to argue with the fact that the latter had taken over as the strongest player in the world.
1985 Summary

First World Championship match versus Kasparov, Moscow (part 2): 5/12 (+0 =10 -2)
Amsterdam (1st place): 7/10 (+4 =6 =0)
Second World Championship match versus Kasparov, Moscow: lost 11–13 (+3 =16 -5)
World Team Championship, Lucerne (Board one): 5/7 (+3 =4 -0)

Total 52.8% (+10 =36 -7)
Epilogue

Although Karpov had lost his title and was no longer the best player in the world, in a sense his career was only just beginning, as he finally had a rival who would push him beyond his limits. Fortunately for the game of chess, and ultimately for Kasparov himself, Karpov had no intention of letting the new king rest on his throne. Karpov could easily have stopped working on his game, enjoyed the life of a millionaire and still continued to achieve better tournament results than most professionals could ever dream of. Instead he worked harder than ever before and made it his mission to reclaim his title from Kasparov. The battle was over, but the war was just beginning...
Classification

There are many themes that can influence the course of a chess game. In the following list you can find the game numbers in which each element can be found. A bolded number indicates that the theme was especially relevant in that game.

Attacking the king 12, 14, 15, 17, 29, 45, 50, 57, 64, 67, 71, 75
Attacking on the a- or h-file 13, 22, 24, 25, 29

Back rank 11, 40
Bishop on the long diagonal 15, 22, 33, 67
Bishop pair 5, 15, 30, 32, 34, 66
Blockade 21, 36, 37
Breakthrough 30, 51

Checkmating in the endgame 14, 25, 51, 54, 58, 60, 68, 71
Connected passed pawns 15, 30, 72

Delaying castling 68
Dominating bishop versus knight 33, 45, 68, 69, 76
Dominating knight versus bishop 3, 22, 46, 56, 57, 60, 61, 71
Doubled pawns 6, 13, 18, 23, 36

Exchanging a key defensive piece 2, 17, 21, 23, 28, 37, 61, 71

Fixing a weakness 12, 52, 59
Fortress 41, 43

Good knight 17, 20, 46, 47, 48, 51, 60

Isolated pawn 16, 27, 31, 32, 41, 47, 53, 60, 71, 75

King activation 14, 16, 25, 26, 38, 43, 64, 73, 76
Kingside play 14, 15, 31, 49

Manoeuvre (king) 14, 29, 31, 36
Manoeuvre (knight) 1, 2, 6, 17, 35, 49, 51, 59, 60, 68, 74
Manoeuvre (rook) 11, 17, 27, 34, 56, 63, 65, 75
Material advantage 10, 11, 16, 23, 24, 31, 39, 41, 47
Material imbalance 34, 41
Minority attack 71

Open file 2, 3, 21, 22, 31, 35, 37, 63, 64
Opposite-coloured bishops 12, 25, 28, 38, 42, 43, 64, 65, 75
Paralysing one of the opponent's pieces 11, 36
Passed pawn (central) 15, 40, 55, 56, 58, 68, 69
Passed pawn (distant) 8, 9, 19, 20, 33, 41, 43, 63, 73, 76
Pawns versus pieces 72
Playing on both flanks 4, 15, 26, 28, 29, 35, 37, 42, 44, 47, 57, 59, 64, 72
Pin 2, 4, 8, 53
Positional sacrifice (pawn) 8, 45, 63, 67, 74
Positional sacrifice (exchange) 40, 54

Queenside play 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 23, 24, 26, 33, 52, 58, 73, 74, 76

Rook(s) on seventh or second rank 4, 7, 21, 31, 32, 44, 62, 71

Space gaining 4, 9, 29, 37, 40, 42, 49, 52, 53, 55, 62, 65
Space advantage 17, 29, 30, 37, 51
Symmetrical pawn structure 2, 26, 66

Trapping a piece 1, 36
Games Index by Page Number

Games in bold indicate main games. All others indicate reference games.

Dvoretsky – Biriuikov, USSR 1973
Karpov – Gaimaletdinov, Zlatoust 1961
Karpov – Piskunov, Zlatoust 1962
Gratvol – Hartl, Frohnleiten 1999
Korotnbaev – Karpov, Zlatoust 1963
Karpov – Fedin, Vladimir 1964
Hampyuk – Karpov, Tula 1965
Timoscenko – Karpov, Moscow 1966
Karpov – Arbakov, Vladimir 1966
Haflebakk – Karpov, Stockholm 1966
Kudisheivich – Karpov, Vladimir 1966
Alt – Karpov, Riga 1970
Avetisian – Karpov, Leningrad 1967
Glienke – Karpov, Hannover 1983
Karpov – Moles, Groningen 1967
Karpov – Timman, Groningen 1967
Vybornov – Karpov, Moscow 1968
Nisman – Karpov, Riga 1968
Karpov – Mikliaev, Riga 1968
Karpov – Spassky, Bugojno 1986
Karpov – Steinberg, Leningrad 1969
Kasparov – Anand, Amsterdam 1996
Karpov – Tserdakh, Leningrad 1969
Keres – Botvinnik, The Hague/Moscow 1948
Karpov – Andersson, Stockholm 1969
Lengyel Honfi, Kecskemet 1981
Kasparov – Grischuk, Cannes 2001
Botvinnik – Capablanca, AVRO 1938
Botvinnik – Flohr, Moscow 1936
Urzica – Karpov, Stockholm 1969
Chandler – Karpov, Reykjavik 1991
Barcza – Karpov, Caracas 1970
Kasparov – Karpov, Seville (8) 1987
Karpov – Stein, Leningrad 1971
Karpov – Bagirov, Riga 1970
Lein – Vukic, Vrsac 1979
Hracek – Jansa, Czech Republic 1994
Doroshkievich – Karpov, Riga 1970
Sigurjonsson – Karpov, Munich 1979
Bareev – Karpov, Cap d’Agde 2002
Adianto – Karpov, Jakarta 1997 107
Lautier – Karpov, Linares 1995 107
Karpov – Cu. Hansen, Wijk aan Zee 1998 108
Sinaikov – Karpov, Leningrad 1971 111
R. Byrne – Karpov, Moscow 1971 112
Lengyel – Karpov, Moscow 1971 115
Karpov – Bronstein, Moscow 1971 117
Kaplan – Saidy, San Antonio 1972 117
Karpov – Gheorghiu, Moscow 1971 117
Sigurjonsson – Portisch, Buenos Aires 1978 118
Karpov – Stoica, Graz 1972 118
Geller – Fischer, Curacao 1962 118
Kononenko – Pasko, Alushta 2004 118
Karpov – Mecking, Hastings 1971 121
Karpov – Smyslov, Moscow 1972 125
Bisguier – Karpov, Skopje (ol) 1972 129
Saidy – Karpov, San Antonio 1972 132
Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow 1973 132
Kotov – Bovvinik, Moscow 1955 135
Karpov – Gligoric, San Antonio 1972 136
Karpov – Spassky, Moscow 1973 137
Karpov – Sax, Budapest 1973 143
I. Sokolov – Miles, Sarajevo 1987 144
Karpov – Kuzmin, Leningrad 1973 146
Karpov – Uhlmann, Madrid 1973 147
Karpov – Polugaevsky, Moscow 1974 149
Uhlmann – Karpov, Leningrad 1973 151
Timman – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998 151
Karpov – Andersson, Madrid 1973 154
Karpov – Polugaevsky, Moscow (8) 1974 159
Karpov – Spassky, Leningrad (9) 1974 163
Karpov – Dzindzichashvili, USSR 1971 164
Bouaziz – Karpov, Hamburg 1982 166
Williams – Karpov, Nice (ol) 1974 168
Yusupov – Karpov, Baden-Baden 1995 169
Karpov – Unzicker, Nice (ol) 1974 171
Karpov – Unzicker, Milan 1975 171
Karpov – Spassky, Moscow 1973 172
Spassky – Korchnoi, Kiev (1) 1968 172
Karpov – Kavalek, Nice (ol) 1974 175
Karpov – Korchnoi, Moscow (24) 1974 191
Osterman – Karpov, Portoroz/Ljubljana 1975 196
Petrosian – Karpov, Moscow 1973 196
Karpov – Spassky, Riga 1975 199
Aronian – Grischuk, Moscow 2006
Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow (21) 1974
Ribli – Unzicker, Germany 1988
Karpov – Portisch, Milan 1975
Karpov – Westerinen, Nice (ol) 1974
Browne – Portisch, Milan 1975
Kurajica – Karpov, Skopje 1976
Karpov – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976
Timman – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976
Vaganian – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976
Grahn – Bielczyk, Slupsk 1978
Fraguela Gil – Karpov, Montilla 1976
Karpov – Sosonko, Bad Lauterberg 1977
Karpov – Karpov, Moscow 1977
Karpov – Garcia Martinez, Ljubljan 1975
Karpov – Whiteley, Bath 1973
Karpov – Miles, Bad Lauterberg 1977
Karpov – Martin Gonzalez, Las Palmas 1977
Karpov – Hernandez, Las Palmas 1977
Ljubojevic – Karpov, Moscow 1977
Portisch – Karpov, Tilburg 1979
Gelfand – Karpov, Vienna 1996
Petrosian – Furman, Gorky 1950
Karpov – Miles, Las Palmas 1977
Karpov – Biel 1992
Karpov – Miles, Bugojno 1978
Karpov – Bukic, Bugojno 1978
Karpov – Anand, Buenos Aires 1994
Karpov – Kavalek, Waddinxveen 1979
Parr – Akesson, Gausdal 2001
Karpov – Karpov, Baguio City (32) 1978
Karpov – Tal, Kislovodsk 1964
Komarov – Lemmers, Sremic Krsko 1998
Karpov – Balashov, Munich 1979
Karpov – Balashov, Moscow 1971
Karpov – Timman, Montreal 1979
Karpov – Spassky, Montreal 1979
Taborov – Lerner, Yalta 1981
Karpov – Larsen, Tilburg 1979
Sax – Larsen, Tilburg 1979
Unzicker – Karpov, Bad Kissingen 1980
Karpov – Kavalek, Bugojno 1980
Karpov – Sosonko, Waddinxveen 1979
Karpov – Dolmatov, Amsterdam 1980
Karpov – Ribli, Amsterdam 1980
Ribli – Timman, Tilburg 1981
Garcia Gonzales – Karpov, Linares 1981
Grigorian – Karpov, Riga 1975
Karpov – Ljubojevic, Manila 1976
Torre – Karpov, Bad Lautenberg 1977
Karpov – Beliavsky, Moscow 1981
Vaganian – Beliavsky, Vienna 1980
Seirawan – Byrne, South Bend 1981
Gheorghiu – Soylu, Athens 1981
Donner – Karpov, Amsterdam 1981
Hertneck – Karpov, Baden-Baden 1992
Hertneck – Karpov, Germany 1994
Kasparov – Mchedlishvili, Bled 2002
Karpov – Korchnoi, Merano (18) 1981
Karpov – Korchnoi, Merano (14) 1981
Karpov – Korchnoi, Merano (16) 1981
Topalov – Anand, Dos Hermanas 1996
Topalov – Korchnoi, Madrid 1996
Chandler – Yusupov, Hastings 1989
Kaiumov – Safin, Tashkent 1992
Adams – Unzicker, Germany 1996
Karpov – Franco Ocampos, Mar del Plata 1982
Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1980
Karpov – Timman, Linares 1983
Topalov – Kasparov, Novgorod 1995
Karpov – Nunn, London 1982
Salai – Kernazhitsky, Olomouc 1999
Karpov – Portisch, London 1982
Karpov – Quinteros, Lucerne (ol) 1982
Karpov – Ostermeyer, Hannover 1983
Karpov – Spassky, Hamburg 1982
Karpov – Nunn, Tilburg 1982
Karpov – Kirilov, Daugavpils 1971
Karpov – Taimanov, USSR 1983
Karpov – Tukmakov, Leningrad 1971
Taimanov – Karpov, Moscow 1973
Qi Jingxuan – Karpov, Hannover 1983
Tal – Portisch, Biel 1976
Short – Kasparov, London (4) 1993
Lamarche Rodriguez – Wimmer, e-mail 2002
Converset – Gueth, e-mail 2002
Spassky – Fischer, Reykjavik (11) 1972
Karpov – Giorgadze, Hannover 1983
Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (6) 1985
Timman – Olafsson, Reykjavik 1987
Groszpeter – Boensch, Sochi 1984
Chandler – Karpov, Bath 1983
Nunn – Karpov, Hamburg 1982
Karpov – Korchnoi, London 1984
Karpov – Adorjan, Budapest 1973
Seirawan – Kasparov, Dubai 1986
Meyer – Doricevic, Germany 1986
Karpov – Mestel, London 1984
Karpov – Ljubojevic, Brussels 1986
Karpov – Shestakov, Kuibyshev 1970
Karpov – Ostos, Malta (ol) 1980
Karpov – Chen De, Hannover 1983
Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (6) 1984
Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (2) 1984
Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (4) 1984
Gheorghiu – Karpov, Lucerne (ol) 1982
Vyzhmanavin – Karpov, Tilburg 1993
Bacrot – Karpov, Ajaccio 2007
Kamsky – Karpov, Elista (16) 1996
Karpov – Beliavsky, Linares 1993
Van Wely – Karpov, Cap d’Agde 1996
Van der Sterren – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998
Leko – Karpov, Miskolc (3) 2006
Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1987
Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (27) 1984
Karpov – Kasparov, New York (3) 2002
Karpov – Nunn, Amsterdam 1985
Karpov – Giorgadze, Moscow 1983
Liang Jinrong – Nunn, Lucerne (ol) 1982
Womacka – Goehler, East Berlin 1986
Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (4) 1985
Vaganian – Tal, Naestved 1985
Afifi – Karpov, Lucerne 1985
Portisch – Karpov, Linares 1981
Game Index by Karpov's Opponents

Names in bold indicate main games.

Adianto, Jakarta 1997 107
Adorjan, Budapest 1973 380
Afifi, Lucerne 1985 46
Alt, Riga 1970 256
Anand, Buenos Aires 1994 154
Andersson, Stockholm 1969 85
Andersson, Madrid 1973 36
Arbakov, Vladimir 1966 45
Avetisian, Leningrad 1967 399
Bacrot, Ajaccio 2007 107
Bagirov, Riga 1970 102
Balashov, Munich 1979 269
Balashov, Moscow 1971 270
Barcaza, Caracas 1970 97
Bareev, Cap d'Agde 2002 107
Beliavsky, Moscow 1981 313
Beliavsky, Linares 1993 400
Bisguier, Skopje (ol) 1972 129
Bouaziz, Hamburg 1982 166
Bronstein, Moscow 1971 117
Bukic, Bugojno 1978 255
Byrne, Moscow 1971 112
Chandler, Reykjavik 1991 92
Chandler, Bath 1983 373
Chen De, Hannover 1983 388
Dolmatov, Amsterdam 1980 297
Donner, Amsterdam 1981 316
Doroshkievich, Riga 1970 107
Dzindzichashvili, USSR 1971 164
Fedir, Vladimir 1964 25
Fragueta Gil, Montilla 1976 230
Franco Ocampo, Mar del Plata 1982 327
Gaimard, Zlatoust 1961 7
Garcia Gonzales, Linares 1981 309
Garcia Martinez, Ljubljana 1975 235
Gelfand, Vienna 1996 241
Gheorghiu, Moscow 1971 117
Gheorghiu, Lucerne (ol) 1982 399
Giorgadze, Hannover 1983 368
Giorgadze, Moscow 1983 419
Glienke, Hannover 1983 46
Gligoric, San Antonio 1972 136
Grigorian, Riga 1975 309
Hampik, Tula 1965 29
Hansen, Wijk aan Zee 1998 108
Hattlebakk, Stockholm 1966 39
Hernandez, Las Palmas 1977 237
Hertneck, Baden-Baden 1992 317
Hertneck, Germany 1994 317
Kamsky, Elista (16) 1996 400
Kasparov, Moscow (2) 1984 398
Kasparov, Moscow (4) 1984 398
Kasparov, Moscow (6) 1984 398
Kasparov, Moscow (27) 1984 415
Kasparov, Moscow (4) 1985 423
Kasparov, Moscow (6) 1985 368
Kasparov, Seville (8) 1987 99
Kasparov, New York (3) 2002 415
Kavalek, Nice (ol) 1974 175
Kavalek, Waddinxveen 1979 256
Kavalek, Bugojno 1980 294
Kirilov, Daugavpils 1971 348
Korchnoi, Moscow 1973 132
Korchnoi, Moscow (21) 1974 199
Korchnoi, Moscow (24) 1974 191
Korchnoi, Baguio City (32) 1978 262
Korchnoi, Merano (14) 1981 322
Korchnoi, Merano (16) 1981 322
Korchnoi, Merano (18) 1981 321
Korchnoi, London 1984 379
Korotae, Zlatoust 1963 21
Kudischevich, Vladimir 1966 39
Kurajica, Skopje 1976 213
Kuzmin, Leningrad 1973 146
Larsen, Tilburg 1979 283
Lautier, Linares 1995 107
Leko, Miskolc (3) 2006 400
Leagod, Moscow 1971 115
Ljubojevic, Manila 1976 309
Ljubojevic, Moscow 1977 240
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ljubojevic</td>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>1986</td>
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<td>Las Palmas</td>
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<td>Miles, Bugojno</td>
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<td>1967</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td>Petrocian</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piskunov, Zlatoust</td>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>Polugaevskiy, Moscow (4)</td>
<td>1974</td>
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<td>Polugaevsky, Moscow (8)</td>
<td>1974</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>Qi Jingxuan</td>
<td>Hannover</td>
<td>1983</td>
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<td>Quinteros, Lucerne (ol)</td>
<td>1982</td>
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<td>Ribli</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td>Saidy</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1972</td>
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<td>Sax</td>
<td>Budapest</td>
<td>1973</td>
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<td>Shestakov, Kuibyshev</td>
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<td>Sigurjonsson, Munich</td>
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<td>Sofrevski, Skopje</td>
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<td>Sosonko, Bad Lauterberg</td>
<td></td>
<td>1977</td>
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<td>Sosonko, Tilburg</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Making of a Champion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sosonko, Waddinxveen</td>
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<td>1979</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Spassky, Riga</td>
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<td>Spassky, Hamburg (1)</td>
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<td>1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spassky, Bugojno</td>
<td></td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stein, Leningrad</td>
<td></td>
<td>1971</td>
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<td>Steinberg, Leningrad</td>
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<td>1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stoica, Graz</td>
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<td>1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taimanov, Moscow</td>
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<td>1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taimanov, USSR</td>
<td></td>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timman, Groningen</td>
<td></td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timman, Montreal</td>
<td></td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timman, Linares</td>
<td></td>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timman, Wijk aan Zee</td>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timoschenko, Moscow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torre, Bad Lauterberg</td>
<td></td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tserdak, Leningrad</td>
<td></td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukmakov, Leningrad</td>
<td></td>
<td>1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uhlmann, Madrid</td>
<td></td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uhlmann, Leningrad</td>
<td></td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unzicker, Nice (ol)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unzicker, Milan</td>
<td></td>
<td>1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unzicker, Bad Kissingen</td>
<td></td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urzica, Stockholm</td>
<td></td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van der Sterren, Wijk aan Zee</td>
<td></td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van der Wiel, Amsterdam</td>
<td></td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van der Wiel, Amsterdam</td>
<td></td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Wely, Cap d’Agde</td>
<td></td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vybornov, Moscow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyzhmanavin, Tilburg</td>
<td></td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteley, Bath</td>
<td></td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams, Nice (ol)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yusupov, Baden-Baden</td>
<td></td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alphabetical Game Index – Non-Karpov Games

Adams – Unzicker, Germany 1996 324
Aronian – Grischuk, Moscow 2006 199
Botvinnik – Capablanca, AVRO 1938 91
Botvinnik – Flohr, Moscow 1936 91
Browne – Portisch, Milan 1975 205
Chandler – Yusupov, Hastings 1989 323
Converset – Gueth, e-mail 2002 365
Dvoretsky – Biriukov, USSR 1973 7
Geller – Fischer, Curacao 1962 118
Gheorghiu – Soylu, Athens 1981 314
Grahn – Bielczyk, Slupsk 1978 227
Gratvol – Hatzl, Frohnleiten 1999 19
Groszpeter – Boensch, Sochi 1984 369
Hracek – Jansa, Czech Republic 1994 103
Kaiumov – Safin, Tashkent 1992 324
Kaplan – Saidy, San Antonio 1972 11
Kasparov – Anand, Amsterdam 1996 79
Kasparov – Grischuk, Cannes 2001 87
Kasparov – Mchedlishvili, Bled 2002 318
Keres – Botvinnik, The Hague/Moscow 1948 82
Kluger – Tal, Kislovodsk 1964 263
Komarov – Lemmens, Sremic Krsko 1998 264
Kononenko – Pasko, Alushta 2004 118
Kotov – Botvinnik, Moscow 1955 135
Lamarche Rodriguez – Wimmer, e-mail 2002 365
Lein – Vukic, Vrsac 1979 103
Lengyel – Honfi, Kecskemet 1981 86
Liang Jinrong – Nunn, Lucerne (ol) 1982 419
Meyer – Doncevic, Germany 1986 382
Parr – Akesson, Gausdal 2001 256
Petrosian – Furman, Gorky 1950 247
Ribli – Timman, Tilburg 1981 306
Ribli – Unzicker, Germany 1988 200
Salai – Kernazhitsky, Olomouc 1999 332
Sax – Larsen, Tilburg 1979 284
Seirawan – Byrne, South Bend 1981 314
Seirawan – Kasparov, Dubai (ol) 1986 380
Short – Kasparov, London (4) 1993 364
Sigurjonsson – Portisch, Buenos Aires (ol) 1978 118
Sokolov, I – Miles, Sarajevo 1987 144
Spassky – Fischer, Reykjavik (11) 1972 365
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spassky – Korchnoi, Kiev (1)</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taborov – Lerner, Yalta</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tal – Portisch, Biel</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timman – Olafsson, Reykjavik</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timman – Sofrevski, Skopje</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topalov – Anand, Dos Hermanas</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topalov – Kasparov, Novgorod</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topalov – Korchnoi, Madrid</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaganian – Beliavsky, Vienna</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaganian – Sofrevski, Skopje</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaganian – Tal, Naestved</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Womacka – Goehler, East Berlin</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This index indicates the pages upon which a person is mentioned. It does not record repeated mentioning on the same page, nor does it include names when used to describe openings. Finally, as the name Karpov figures on almost every page in this book, it has been omitted from the index.

### A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>323, 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adianto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adorjan</td>
<td>94, 146, 253, 379, 380, 398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agdestein</td>
<td>309, 345, 431, 434, 437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akesson</td>
<td>277, 397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alburt</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alekhine</td>
<td>97, 195, 409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alt</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anand</td>
<td>54, 79, 136, 143, 151, 159, 204, 240, 248, 256, 260, 283, 322, 331, 373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anikaev</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aplin</td>
<td>5, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arakhamia</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbakov</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aronian</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averbakh</td>
<td>261, 353, 405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avetisian</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azebajparashvili</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bacrot</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagirov</td>
<td>102, 103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balashov</td>
<td>233, 234, 253, 255, 260, 269, 270, 272, 313, 331, 398</td>
</tr>
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<td>Barcza</td>
<td>97, 98, 100, 102</td>
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<td>Barczay</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barev</td>
<td>107</td>
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<td>Belavsky</td>
<td>199, 253, 313, 314, 316, 353, 397, 400, 424</td>
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<td>Bellon Lopez</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benko</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bielczyk</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biriukov</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisguier</td>
<td>128, 129, 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boenshch</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botvinnik</td>
<td>7, 21, 25, 82, 90, 91, 117, 135, 151, 159, 195, 204, 246, 345, 353, 397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bouazziz</td>
<td>166, 373</td>
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<td>Braga</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronstein</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browne</td>
<td>136, 160, 176, 240, 253, 263, 373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukic</td>
<td>255, 259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byrne</td>
<td>112, 118, 136, 314</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dankert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dolmatov</td>
<td>297, 299, 300, 303, 305, 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doncevic</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donner</td>
<td>316, 318, 319, 374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorfman</td>
<td>233, 398, 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doroshkievich</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dvoirys</td>
<td>18, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dvoretsky</td>
<td>7, 177, 180, 181, 182, 183, 185, 301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dydyshko</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzindzicashvili</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Making of a Champion

E
Euwe 128, 136, 171, 204, 283, 353
Evrosimovsky 81

F
Fedin 25
Flohri 91
Florian 159, 163
Fraguela Gil 230
Franco Ocamps 327
Furman 84, 85, 110, 156, 239, 240, 246, 247, 260, 268

G
Gaimaletdinov 7
Gaprindashvili 236
Garcia 156
Garcia Gonzales 253, 309, 310, 312
Garcia Martinez 235
Garcia Padron 240
Garcia Palermo 327
Gelfand 241
Geller 87, 102, 118, 146, 159, 233, 305, 313, 342, 346, 353, 398, 423
Georgadze 199
Georgiev 128, 355
Georgievski 230
Gerusel 239
Gheorghiu 117, 190, 246, 253, 310, 314, 351, 399
Giel 90
Gioragadze 342, 363, 364, 368, 371, 372, 373, 398, 419
Glienke 46
Gligoric 39, 136, 138, 140, 149, 198, 297, 313
Goehler 420
Golombek 290
Grahn 227
Graham 46
Greet 178
Grigorian 199, 234, 309

Grischuk 86, 87, 199
Groszpetzer 223, 332, 369, 432
Gueth 365
Guimaraes 355
Gulko 234

H
Hampyuk 29
Hansen 108
Hartmann 363
Hartston 170
Hatebakk 39
Hatzl 19
Hebden 49
Hecht 143
Hermann 239
Hernandez 237, 253
Hertneck 317
Honfi 86
Hort 117, 131, 143, 170, 198, 253, 255, 263, 282, 283, 287, 293, 305, 316, 351, 397
Hrcake 103
Hüblner 240, 253, 273, 282, 289, 307, 321, 345, 351, 423
Huzman 420

I
Inarkiev 185
Ivanchuk 323, 343
Ivanov 283
Ivanovic 220
Ivkov 102, 293

J
Jacobsen 61
Jancev 230
Jansa 103

K
Kaiumov 324
Kamsky 400
Kaplan 117, 156
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lavoralek</td>
<td>102, 164, 175, 177, 189, 215, 233, 253, 256, 282, 283, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 313, 363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kernazhitsky</td>
<td>39, 82, 131, 141, 195</td>
</tr>
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<td>King</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirilov</td>
<td>252</td>
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<td>263, 264</td>
</tr>
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<td>240</td>
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<td>Komarov</td>
<td>264</td>
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<td>81</td>
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<td>118</td>
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<td>Korotaev</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Kotov</td>
<td>135, 152</td>
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<td>36, 39</td>
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<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupka</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kupreichik</td>
<td>43, 199, 233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurajic</td>
<td>213, 214, 221, 223, 225, 226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzmin</td>
<td>146, 150, 154, 159, 253</td>
</tr>
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</table>

L

<table>
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<td>Lamarche Rodriguez</td>
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<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lein</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leko</td>
<td>17, 225, 252, 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemmers</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lengyel</td>
<td>86, 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lerner</td>
<td>278, 353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levy</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liang Jinrong</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberzon</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lukacs</td>
<td>86</td>
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</tbody>
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M

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makarychev</td>
<td>397, 398, 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maninang</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marin</td>
<td>97, 123, 177, 186, 187, 188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariotti</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markland</td>
<td>123</td>
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<td>Maroczy</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Gonzalez</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
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<td>422</td>
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<td>135</td>
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<td>318</td>
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<td>87, 121, 164</td>
</tr>
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<td>331, 387, 389, 390, 391, 392, 395, 396</td>
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<td>Meyer</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikenas</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikhailchishin</td>
<td>313, 398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikhaiaev</td>
<td>66, 67, 68, 72, 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles</td>
<td>64, 144, 237, 239, 247, 248, 249, 250, 252, 253, 255, 293, 331, 353, 377, 397, 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mokry</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moles</td>
<td>48, 401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morozhevich</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortensen</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motylev</td>
<td>180, 181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murey</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Making of a Champion

N
Nadanian 14, 33, 428
Navarovsky 367
Nikitin 398, 423
Nisman 64

O
O’Connell 216
Olafsson 253, 307, 368, 431
Osterman 196, 198
Ostermeyer 342, 419
Ostojic 306
Ostos 388

P
Padevski 128
Panchenko 18, 19
Panno 102, 260
Parr 256
Pasko 118
Petrosian 21, 29, 33, 77, 117, 131, 141, 154, 196, 199, 204, 212, 233, 234, 247, 255, 261, 287, 321, 351, 397
Petursson 175
Pfleger 233
Piesina 66
Piskunov 13, 19
Planinc 156
Podgaets 398
Polgar 17
Polugaevsky 102, 121, 149, 154, 159, 160, 161, 162, 177, 194, 234, 260, 261, 293, 313, 316, 321, 331, 373, 397, 398
Pomar 154, 190
Portisch 98, 118, 131, 133, 141, 196, 198, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 212, 240, 246, 260, 309, 320, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 351, 364, 373, 419, 420, 431, 432
Psakhis 342

Q
Qi Jingxuan 363, 364
Quinteros 150, 309, 342, 351, 419

R
Radovici 103
Radulov 190
Rashkovsky 154
Razuvaev 66, 196, 236, 423
Reshevsky 176, 230
Robatsch 364
Rogers 373
Romanishin 66, 67, 230, 287, 353
Rubinstein 195

S
Safin 324
Saidy 117, 131, 133, 134, 135, 332
Salai 121
Sax 143, 284, 353
Seirawan 277, 314, 331, 341, 345, 373, 380, 387
Shakarov 33, 398, 423
Shestakov 388
Shirov 5
Short 36, 364, 424
Shumiakina 18, 19
Sigurjonsson 107, 118
Sinakov 111
Smejkal 43, 153, 240, 253, 255, 397
Smirnov 16
Smith 141
Smyslov 54, 102, 121, 125, 128, 143, 146, 151, 235, 240, 248, 287, 297, 316, 331, 373, 397
Sofrevski 226
Sokolov, I. 144
Solis 331
Sosonko 164, 235, 283, 294, 305
Soylu 314
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stein</td>
<td>233, 260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinberg</td>
<td>101, 102, 121, 128, 77, 81, 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steinitz</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepanovich</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoica</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suba</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunye Neto</td>
<td>422, 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sveshnikov</td>
<td>18, 19, 233, 298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Szilagyi</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tal</td>
<td>128, 146, 253, 353, 354, 355, 357, 359, 360, 361, 363, 428</td>
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<td>54, 136, 146, 248, 260, 297, 322, 323, 329, 331, 373</td>
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<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tseschkovsky</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukmakov</td>
<td>156, 353, 354, 355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaganian</td>
<td>66, 77, 81, 82, 95, 146, 213, 226, 234, 314, 398, 425</td>
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<td>135</td>
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<td>332</td>
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<td>Van der Vliet</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
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<td>Van der Wiel</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Wely</td>
<td>297, 305, 327, 328, 373, 401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vasiukov</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velimirovic</td>
<td>198, 213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vladimirov</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vukic</td>
<td>103, 255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyzhmanavin</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westerinen</td>
<td>190, 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiteley</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams</td>
<td>168, 170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wimmer</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wockenfuss</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Womacka</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xi Jingxuan</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yurtsaev</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yusupov</td>
<td>168, 169, 297, 323, 353, 404, 405, 406, 407, 409, 410, 412, 413</td>
</tr>
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<td>Z</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaitsev</td>
<td>36, 260, 398, 420, 421, 423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zakharov</td>
<td>64, 233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubilava</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uhlmann</td>
<td>147, 150, 153, 156, 230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unzicker</td>
<td>170, 171, 172, 200, 289, 290, 292, 293, 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urzica</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statistics

Karpov’s results as World Champion are as follows.

1975: 66.3% (+15 =27 -1)
1976: 72.0% (+28 =29 -2)
1977: 77.0% (+36 =25 -2)
1978: 56.4% (+12 =29 -6)
1979: 69.1% (+20 =25 -2)
1980: 66.7% (+30 =40 -5)
1981: 65.3% (+21 =35 -3)
1982: 64.9% (+22 =30 -5)
1983: 65.8% (+21 =37 -2)
1984: 60.5% (+15 =45 -2)
1985: 50.0% (+7 =32 -7)

Total 65.4% (+227 =354 -37)

Total score with White: 71.9% (+156 =144 -17)
Total score with Black: 58.5% (+71 =210 -20)

Karpov’s championship matches took place in the years 1975, 1978, 1981, 1984 and 1985. It is natural that these events would have pulled his percentage down, as can be most clearly seen in 1985 when 37 of his 46 games came against Kasparov. Even so, there were only two years in which his score dipped below 60%.
### Scores against Individual Opponents

Karpov’s results as World Champion are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>Games</th>
<th>Win</th>
<th>Draw</th>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50% (+8 =59 –8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korchnoi</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>54.9% (+12 =32 –7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timman</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1% (+7 =18 –3)</td>
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<td>Portisch</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>63.5% (+8 =17 –1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andersson</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57.5% (+4 =15 –1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ljubojevic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70% (+9 =10 –1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hort</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>66.7% (+7 =10 –1)</td>
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<td>Kavalek</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60% (+3 =12 –0)</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>60% (+2 =8 –0)</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>72.2% (+4 =5 –0)</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>72.2% (+4 =5 –0)</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>62.5% (+2 =6 –0)</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50% (+2 =3 –2)</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Gligoric</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>66.7% (+2 =4 –0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olafsson</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66.7% (+3 =2 –1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinteros</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>83.3% (+4 =2 –0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliavsky</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60% (+2 =2 –1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geller</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60% (+2 =2 –1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gheorghiu</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>80% (+3 =2 –0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunn</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90% (+4 =1 –0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tournament Record

While World Champion, Karpov won outright first place in twenty five tournaments:

1975 Ljubljana/Portoroz, Milan
1976 Skopje, Amsterdam, Montilla, USSR Championship
1977 Bad Lauterberg, Las Palmas, Tilburg
1979 Waddinxveen, Tilburg
1980 Bad Kissingen, Bugojno, Amsterdam, Tilburg, Buenos Aires
1981 Linares, Moscow
1982 Tilburg
1983 USSR Championship, Hannover, Tilburg
1984 London, Oslo
1985 Amsterdam

In addition, he shared first place with a single rival in four other events:

1978 Bugojno
1979 Montreal
1982 London, Turin


Tournament Summary

During his reign as World Champion, Karpov won 85.3% of his tournaments (29/34). No other world champion won as many individual tournaments during his title reign, both in terms of the outright number and as a percentage. Kasparov tended to win tournaments by wider margins, but slightly less often.
Karpov’s Strategic Wins 1:
The Making of a Champion 1961-1985

Anatoly Karpov was World Champion from 1975 to 1985 and is universally regarded as one of the greatest players of all time. Award-winning author Tibor Károlyi explains Karpov’s genius with a particular focus on Karpov’s unrivalled grasp of strategy. Károlyi has selected Karpov’s most entertaining and instructive strategic wins from 1961-1985 as the Russian star proved he was a worthy successor to Bobby Fischer.

The book starts with Karpov as a precocious youngster and tells the story of the making of a champion. It concludes with Karpov losing his title to his nemesis, Garry Kasparov.

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