

Peter Zhdanov

David VS Goliath



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David vs Goliath
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KEY TO SYMBOLS

=	Equality or equal chances
±	White has a slight advantage
∓	Black has a slight advantage
±	White is better
∓	Black is better
+ -	White has a decisive advantage
- +	Black has a decisive advantage
∞	unclear
∞̄	with compensation
↔	with counterplay
↑	with initiative
→	with an attack
Δ	with the idea
□	only move
N	novelty
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
+	check
#	mate

FOREWORD

The current book *David vs Goliath* focuses on an interesting psychological topic, one which most professional players have to deal with on a regular basis when playing in Open events: games against much-weaker opponents, where any result other than a full point is nothing other than a disaster!

Under which circumstances can a much-weaker player beat a far-stronger one in chess? Well, from my own experience I can say that there are many! First of all, we all play with the same pieces; a GM doesn't have an extra almighty piece! So when a lower-rated player is playing well, suffering no time-trouble or making any other major mistakes, the game is usually pretty unclear.

From experience I can also say that not many amateur players actually believe that they can beat a Grandmaster, and of course this lack of confidence stops them from going for a full point — even when the win is very close. There are an enormous number of cases where a GM offers a draw in a completely lost position and the draw offer is actually accepted!

On the other hand, most of the wins by the clear underdog occur when the GM overextends his position, doesn't take the opponent seriously enough or even thinks that basically “any move” is good enough to win the game.

A short example on this: Let's say I am playing in the first round of an open tournament, where it is clear that it is very important to win the first 3 rounds to at least be able to fight for the top prizes, but the position is just equal. What should I do now?

In the event that I do nothing “special”, the game will most likely end in a draw — which would ruin my whole event from the very beginning. In this type of situation it is clear that a GM has to take all and any kind of risk to destabilize the position. In most cases the GM wins at the very end — but there are cases when the amateur player finishes with a big smile and says “Thank You”.

In general I do believe that in chess — when the range is not over 400 ELO points — surprises are to be expected, and that the main reason they happen relatively rarely is that most lower-rated players do not believe in their own capabilities of winning a game against a much-stronger opponent. I am absolutely sure that it is possible!

In the current book, Peter Zhdanov displays a collection of the biggest upsets which I think should clearly add a lot of motivation and self-esteem for your future games! Yes, it is possible to beat a much stronger opponent, and even the best players in the world are not immortal!

*GM Arkadij Naiditsch
Baku, Azerbaijan
August 2016*

INTRODUCTION

Where did the concept of this book come from? For quite a while I had been writing “David vs. Goliath” columns for Pogonina.com and Chess Evolution’s Top GM Secrets magazine. The idea was to feature the greatest chess upsets of each week, paying special attention to statistics such as the difference between the ratings of the players; number of moves; number of games won by White/Black, etc. Also, the readers were encouraged to send me their David vs. Goliath stories and see them published.

At a certain point I felt like the format could benefit from more chess analysis and decided to create a spin-off project: a book featuring all the games lost by 2700+ players to opponents rated 300 points or more below themselves. Moreover, this time I had two new important goals in mind:

- ◆ Provide the readers with informative annotations to the games.
- ◆ Offer them opportunities to test their solving skills by finding the optimal continuations in games played by top GMs against less-renowned opponents.

The following resources turned out to be highly useful during the process of allocating and analyzing the games:

- ◆ ChessBase Mega Database 2016 with Mega Updates 1–50
- ◆ ChessBase Correspondence Database 2015
- ◆ Stockfish 7
- ◆ Komodo 9
- ◆ Hiarcs 14q Opening Book
- ◆ Player profiles at ChessGames.com

In the book “Yearbook of Chess Wisdom” I dedicated two columns to the topic of how lower-rated players should approach their games against rating favorites and vice-versa. For the sake of not repeating myself, here I would offer only a brief classification of the main reasons why Goliaths lose to Davids:

- ◆ Overpressing. Quite often the higher-rated player tries too hard to win and doesn’t respect his opponent enough, which sometimes results in a painful defeat.
- ◆ Losing the theoretical battle. Nowadays if someone has prepared extensively with a strong coach assisted by an engine/database, the per-

son may have a chance to pretty much win the game before it has even started.

- ◆ Collapsing under pressure. Most players, especially amateurs, are better at attacking than at defending. Hence, if the David manages to put pressure on the Goliath, he is more likely to succeed than if he timidly starts playing for a draw from move one.
- ◆ Getting psyched out. There are all sorts of dirty psychological tricks in chess.
- ◆ Having a bad day. Anyone might be tired, distracted, sick, make a weird blunder, etc. Also, sometimes your opponent plays “the game of their life” and performs a few hundred points above thier normal strength.
- ◆ Cheating. Hopefully, the games featured in this book have nothing to do with this topic.

The book itself is structured in the following way:

- ◆ Classical chess: annotated games of standard time control games lost by 2700+ GMs to opponents rated 300 points or more lower.
- ◆ Rapid chess: chess puzzles from rapid chess games lost by 2700+ GMs to opponents rated 300 points or more lower.
- ◆ Blitz chess: chess puzzles originating from blitz games lost by 2700+ GMs to...you know who.
- ◆ Simuls: chess puzzles taken from simultaneous exhibition games lost by 2700+ GMs.

The puzzles in the book cover multiple aspects of game play, including:

- ◆ Opening: knowledge/understanding of some of the popular lines.
- ◆ Calculation/tactics: being able to accurately calculate and assess variations and to spot tactical blows for yourself and for your opponent.
- ◆ Endgame: evaluating endgames and coming up with the correct plan.

It is advisable to solve all the puzzles dedicated to a certain game before checking out the solutions at the end of the book. Please note that the annotations provided for the puzzle section are by no means exhaustive and do not attempt to cover the games move by move. Instead, they emphasize certain important critical moments which the author deemed worthy of highlighting.

CLASSICAL CHESS

1

▷ L. Karlsson [2405]

▶ M. Tal [2705] [A30]

EU-chT (Men) 07th Skara [3.2],
01.1980

At the European Team Championship–1980 in Skara, Sweden, IM Lars Karlsson (born 1955) from the host team managed to beat ex-World Chess Champion Mikhail Tal. Nevertheless, the USSR defeated Sweden 6–2. At the very same tournament Anthony Miles played his notorious 1...a6! against Anatoly Karpov’s 1.e4 and prevailed! Returning to the story about our “David”: a few years later Lars became a GM and peaked at FIDE 2550 and #34 in the world in 1985. He still plays chess competitively to this day.

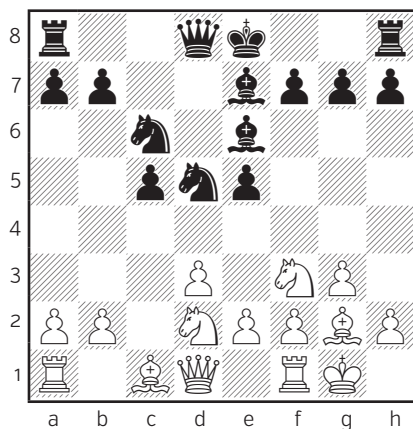
1. ♘f3 ♘f6 2. g3 d5 3. ♙g2 c5 4. 0–0
♘c6 5. c4 e5

After a transposition we have a position from the English opening. 5...d4 is the trendiest option for Black at the time of writing; 5...e6 is another popular variation and 5...g6 with all sorts of setups are possible in this position.

6. cxd5 ♘xd5 7. d3

7. ♘c3 this natural move is the main continuation. Black is fine after 7... ♘c7 (7... ♙e6!?)

7... ♙e7 8. ♘bd2 ♙e6

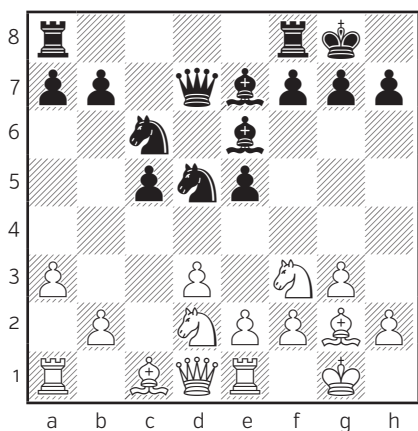


9. ♖e1

Back then this was a novelty. 9. ♘c4 is more typical, for example, 9... f6 10. a4 0–0 ♖0–1 (51) Lozanov, M (2350)-Bukal, V (2405) Pernik 1977

9... 0–0 10. a3 ♙d7

White has played the opening somewhat passively, ending up in a slightly inferior position. I guess the idea was to prevent Tal from starting his trademark ‘fireworks magic’. Still, any GM would be happy with such a positional advantage as the one Black enjoys here.



11. b3 f6 12. ♖b2 ♜fd8 13. ♜c1 ♜ac8

Black's pieces are perfectly coordinated and centralized and White is on the defensive already. The position reminds one of the 'Maroczy bind' with reversed colors. Tal was ready for this, because a year earlier Karlsson employed White's setup when playing Black against GM Michael Stean and won. Seemingly he thought, why not try it with an extra tempo?

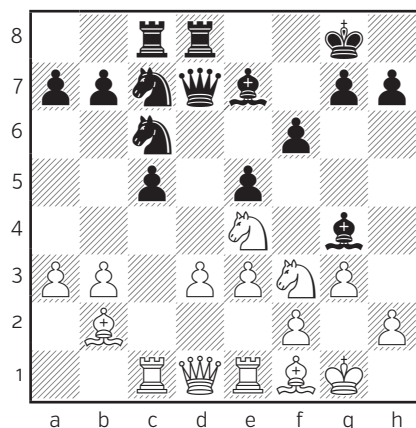
14. e3

White is preparing ♗c2-♘e4 and possibly d4 at some point. However, after this move the d3 pawn becomes a permanent weakness. Tal's knight maneuver immediately underscores it.

14... ♘c7 15. ♙f1 ♙f5 16. ♘e4

[16.e4?! ♙g4♣ and as compared to the move in the game, the knight on d2 is more restricted.

16... ♙g4



17. h3!?

Complicating the position and trying to gain some sort of counter-play. 17. ♘xc5? White's greediness is punished by 17... ♙xc5 18. ♜xc5 e4!-+ winning a piece. 17. ♙e2 looks rather reasonable 17... b6♣

a) 17... ♘e6♣;

b) 17... ♙xf3?! trying to win a pawn is not advisable for Black though because of 18. ♙xf3 ♗xd3 19. ♗xd3 ♜xd3 and here comes the stellar move 20. ♙e2! (20. ♘xc5?! ♙xc5 21. ♜xc5 ♜xb3♣) 20... ♜dd8 (20... ♜xb3?? 21. ♙c4+- is hanging a rook) 21. ♙g4± White will regain the pawn on c5 and, having the two active bishops, clearly has a positional edge here.

17... ♙xh3 18. ♘xc5 ♙xc5 19. ♙xh3

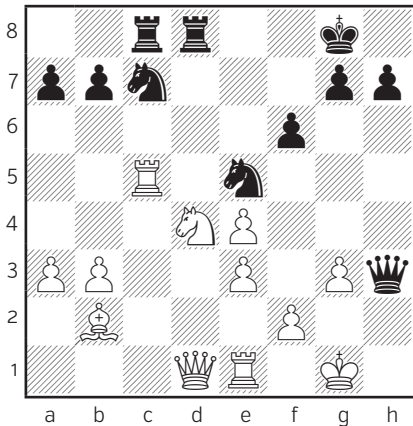
19. ♜xc5? ♙xf1 20. ♙xf1 ♗xd3+ 21. ♗xd3 ♜xd3-+ loses a pawn on the spot.

19... ♖xh3 20. ♜xc5 e4?!

A premature attempt to open up the position. 20... ♖e6! transferring the knight to the centre and winning a tempo. Now White has to react precisely in order not to lose right away. 21. ♜c4 ♘ (21. ♜b5? a6 22. ♜xb7 ♖c5 23. ♜b6 ♖xd3-+ White's position collapses.) 21...b5 22. ♜h4 ♖f5 23.d4 e4 24. ♖d2 ♖g5+ and Black remains in the driver's seat;

20... ♖d7!? a move suggested by Tal in his annotations for the game published in a Swedish chess magazine. 21.d4 e4 22. ♖d2 and here it is probably even stronger to play 22... ♖e6+ (22...f5 with a slight advantage for Black, according to Tal.)

21. ♖d4 ♖e5 22.dxe4

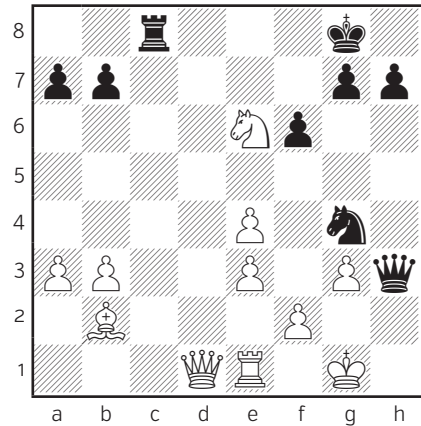


22... ♖e6?

Tal goes for ... ♖e6 a bit too late... 22... ♖g4! 23. ♖f3 ♖h2+ 24. ♖f1 ♖e5 25. ♜xe5! (25. ♖d1 b6 26. ♜c3 ♜d7 27. ♖c2 ♖g4 28. ♖f3 ♖h1+ 29. ♖e2 ♖g2 30. ♜f1 ♜cd8! 31. ♜xc7 ♜d1! 32. ♖xd1 ♜xd1 33. ♜c8+ ♖f7 34. ♜c7+ ♖e8

35. ♜c8+ ♖d7 36. ♜xd1+ ♖xc8 37. ♜f1 ♖h2 38. ♖xh2 ♖xh2 and Black gets an endgame "for two results": White either holds or loses.) 25...fxe5 26. ♖f5 ♜d7 27. ♖xe5 ♖e6 28. ♖g2 ♖xg2+ 29. ♖xg2 when White has a decent compensation for the exchange.

23. ♜xc8 ♜xc8 24. ♖xe6 ♖g4



a principled reaction: Black sacrifices a piece for the sake of developing an attack on the opponent's king. 24... ♖xe6 25. ♖xe5 ♖xe5± is probably objectively stronger for Black than the move in the game, although Tal was clearly not initiating these complications just for the sake of ending in an inferior endgame!

25. ♖d2!

The star move of the game which Tal missed. It is the one and only continuation that allows White to emerge on top. Something superficial such as 25. ♖f3? quickly leads to a disaster, viz. 25... ♖h2+ this check is even stronger than ♜c2: 26. ♖f1 ♜c2 27. ♜e2 (27. ♖g2?? ♜xf2+ 28. ♖xf2

♙xf2#) 27...♙h3+ 28.♚e1 (28.♙g2 ♙xg2+ 29.♚xg2 ♜xe2-+) 28...♞e5! this deflection is justified by the white bishop and queen being overloaded 29.♞xe5 ♜c1+ 30.♚d2 ♙f1 31.♚d3 ♙d1+ 32.♞d2 ♙xf3-+

25...♙h2+

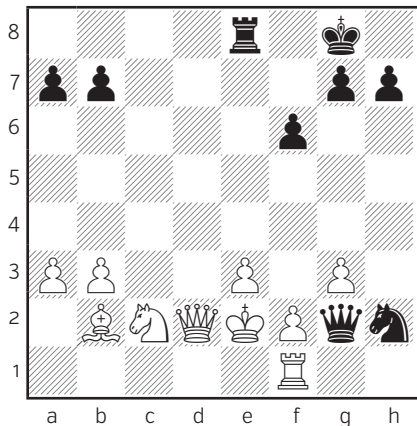
Unfortunately for Tal, there are no superior alternatives. 25...♞h2? trying to checkmate White with ♞f3 26.♞d4! (26.♙e2?? ♜c2! Black is winning thanks to this simple shot.) 26...♞d8 threatening a sacrifice on d4 27.♙e2+- and Black's attack fizzles out.

26.♚f1 ♙h1+ 27.♚e2 ♙xe4 28.♞d4+-

A piece is a piece, although Black still retains some threats.

28...♙g2 29.♙f1 ♜e8 threatening to capture on e3.

30.♞c2 ♞h2



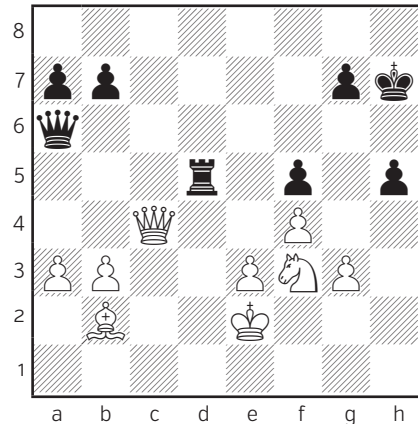
31.♙d1□

Lars is doing a great job defending. 31.♙c1? ♜c8 32.♞d1 ♞g4 and White is suddenly struggling. 33.♞d2 (33.♞f1? ♙e4-+) 33...♙xf2+ 34.♚d3 ♙f3+ with a strong attack for Black. 31.♙e1? ♙f3+ 32.♚d2 ♙g2 33.♚e2= the game ends in a draw by repetition.

31...♞xf1

31...♙xf1+ 32.♙xf1 ♞xf1 33.♚xf1+- results in a technically winning endgame for White.

32.♙xf1 ♙e4 33.♞d4 h5 34.♚d2 ♜e5 35.♙c4+ ♞d5 36.♚e2 ♚h7 37.f3 ♙e5 38.♙c2+ f5 39.f4 ♙f6 40.♞f3 ♙a6+ 41.♙c4



forcing a liquidation into a winning endgame. Black resigned. An attempt to keep the queens on board doesn't work out well:

41...♙d6 42.e4! fxe4 43.♙xe4+ ♚h6 44.♞e5 ♙a6+ 45.♚e1

with a decisive attack for White.

2

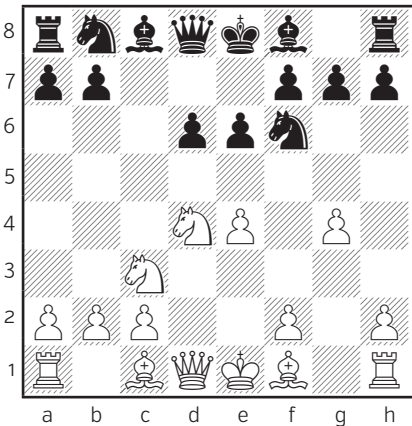
▷ **A. Karpov [2710]**

▷ **W. Hartmann[2290] [B81]**

FRG-ch open Hannover [1], 1983

Wolfram Hartmann (born 1956 in Germany) probably reached the pinnacle of his chess career by beating the reigning World Chess Champion Anatoly Karpov back in 1983. At that time Anatoly hardly ever lost to anybody, not to mention being defeated as White by an untitled player! Later Wolfram became an FM and peaked at FIDE 2315 and #1317 in the world in 1985.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4
♘f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.g4



Karpov goes for the sharp Keres Attack. Black has many possible continuations here, including

6...a6

Black has choices here: 6...h6 — the main line; 6...♘c6; 6...e5; 6...♙e7 and a few others.

7.g5 ♘fd7 8.♙g2

a number of other setups deserve attention, for example 8.♙e3; 8.h4; 8.f4

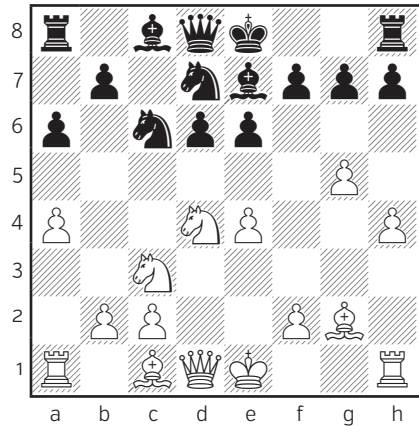
8...♘c6 9.a4

This was Karpov's trademark weapon of choice here. He employed the move in 1976 and 1989. 9.f4!? is one of the two main ways of fighting for an opening advantage according to modern chess theory, 9.h4!? being the second path.

9...♙e7

9...♘de5?! 10.♘b3?! ♙c7 1-0 (37) was Karpov,A (2695)-Anikaev,Y (2435) Tbilisi 1976

10.h4



10...h6?!

an interesting pawn sacrifice, although it is not clear whether such desperate measures are called for. 10...♙b6 11.♘de2 (11.♘b3!?) 11...♘de5= 1/2 (28) Karpov,A (2750)-Hakulinen,E Jyvaskyla 1989;

10...o-oN 11.f4 d5! with this brave-but-typical Sicilian breakthrough in the centre Black gets serious counter-play. For example, after the straightforward 12.exd5 (12.h5!?) 12...exd5 13.♖xd5 ♕c5 Black has a menacing attack against the unsettled white king.

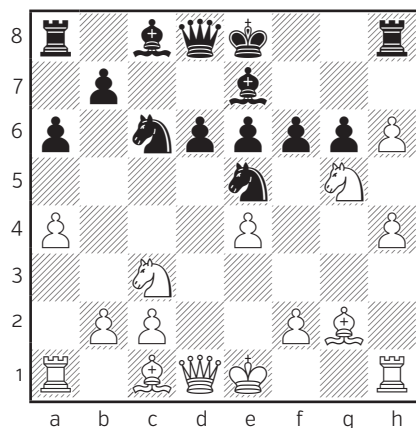
11.gxh6 g6 12.♖f3 ♖de5 13.♖g5

a cunning maneuver which is so typical of Karpov 13.♕g5 looks natural: 13...♖xf3+ 14.♕xf3 ♕xg5 15.hxg5 ♖xg5 16.♖xd6 ♕d7 (16...♖xh6? Black tries to instantly regain a pawn. The following more-or-less forced line occurs: 17.♖xh6 ♖xh6 18.e5! ♕d7 19.♖d1 o-o-o 20.♕xc6 bxc6 21.♖d4 ♖f8 (21...♖h1+? 22.♖e2 ♖h5+ 23.♖d3 ♖f3+ 24.♖c4+- White's king is threatening to pay his colleague a visit while escaping from the pursuit of the black queen) 22.♖e4 ♖xd6 23.♖xd6+ ♖c7 24.♖xf7+- White is up a pawn, has more active pieces and a better pawn structure.) 17.♖d1 ♖d8 18.e5! ♖xe5+ 19.♖xe5 ♖xe5 20.♕xb7 ♖b8 21.♕xa6 ♖xb2 22.♖d2± White is clearly better here. Also, it is hard for Black to recover the material. For example, 22...♖g4?! 23.f3! ♖xh6 24.♕b5 ♕xb5 25.axb5+- leaves Black tied-up and lost. e.g. 25...♖b4 26.♖a1 ♖d4+ 27.♖e2 ♖e7 28.b6 ♖b4 29.♖e4 ♖xb6 30.♖a7+ ♖f8 31.♖a8+ ♖g7 32.♖xh8 ♖xh8 33.♖xh6+ winning a piece.

13.♖xe5 ♖xe5 14.♕f4± also looks sensible.

13...f6!

kicking the knight back.



14.♖h3!

14.♖f3 o-o suits Black better than the line in the actual game, although even here White still has some tricks thanks to the h6 pawn.

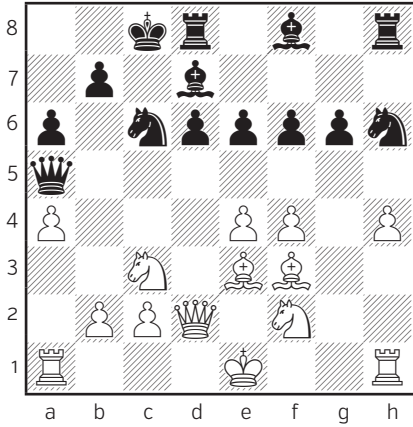
14...♕f8 15.f4 ♖f7 16.♕e3 ♖a5 17.♖d2 ♖xh6

17...♕xh6 18.o-o-o ♕d7 19.♖b1 o-o-o 20.♖f2± as Black has a lot of weaknesses...

18.♖f2

18.♕f3!? ♕d7 19.o-o-o seems to pose more problems for Black than the continuation in the game.

18... ♔d7 19. ♕f3 0-0-0



The position is actually extremely tough to evaluate accurately.

20.0-0-0

20. ♖e2!? Why did Karpov not grind the game out in the endgame in his usual inimitable way? 20... ♖xd2+ 21. ♗xd2 ♕e7 22.h5;

20.h5 starting wild complications. 20...gxf5 21. ♖xf5 f5 22.exf5 ♕e8 23. ♖xh6! (23. ♖h1 d5 24. ♖e2 ♖xf5 25. ♖xh8 ♖xe3 26.c3 ♕c5) 23... ♕xh6 24.fxe6 ♕h5;

20. ♖d3! looks like the strongest continuation to me 20...d5 21. ♖f2 d4 A sad necessity because of the ♕b6 threat. 22. ♕xd4 ♖xd4 23. ♖xd4 ♕e7 24. ♖a7 ♕c6 25.0-0-0± and White has an extra pawn in a better position.

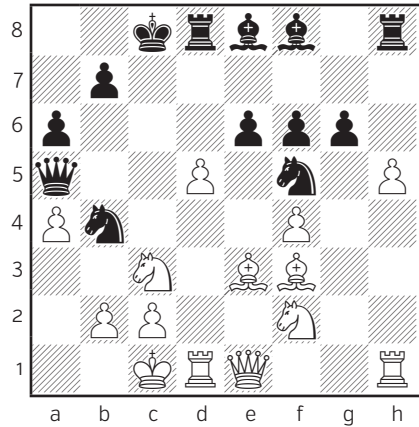
20... ♕e8 21.h5 d5?!

Once again, Black sacrifices a pawn in brave fashion, but there is probably a better option available. 21...gxf5 22. ♖e2 f5]

22.exd5 ♖f5 23. ♖e1

23.hxg6 ♖xh1 24. ♕xh1 ♕xg6 25. ♖e2 exd5 26. ♖xd5 ♖xd5 27. ♕xd5 ♖xe3 28. ♖xe3 ♖c5 29. ♖g3±; 23. ♖g4!± extreme precision is required from both players here.

23... ♖b4?



23...exd5 doesn't solve Black's problems completely, but should probably be played anyway. 24. ♖xd5 ♖xd5 25. ♕xd5 ♖xe3 26. ♖xe3 ♕c5 27. ♖g3±

24.dxe6

24. ♕a7!+- a remarkable move which both restricts the black king and lets the white queen target e6. 24... ♕xa4 25. ♖d3!! (25. ♖xe6+?! ♕d7 26. ♖e4 gxf5 27. ♖c4+ ♖c7 28.b3 and Black is hanging on somehow) 25...e5 (25... ♕xc2? 26. ♖xe6+ ♖c7 27. ♖xb4 ♕xd1 28. ♖xd1 ♕xb4 29.d6+ ♖xd6 30. ♖xd6 ♖xd6 31. ♖d5+- and Black has to give up the queen. 25... ♖xd3+? 26. ♖xd3+-; 25... ♖xc2? 26. ♖xe6+ ♕d7 27. ♕b6! ♖a1+ 28. ♖xc2 ♖xd1+ 29. ♖xd1 ♕xe6 30. ♕xd8 ♖xd8 31.dxe6+-; 25... ♕d7 26. ♖b1 exd5

27. ♖xb4 ♕xb4 28. ♖xd5+- with a decisive attack.) 26. ♖xb4 ♕xb4 27. fxe5 fxe5 28. ♖xe5+-;

24. hxg6 ♖xh1 25. ♕xh1 ♕xg6 26. ♕a7 ♖g7 27. ♕e4 ♕xe4 28. ♖fxe4+- is also winning for White.

24... ♖xd1+ 25. ♕xd1?

Probably not the best of the available recaptures. 25. ♖fxd1!? seems to be the strongest option here 25...gxh5 26. ♖f2 ♖xe3 27. ♖xe3 ♕c5 28. ♖d2↑

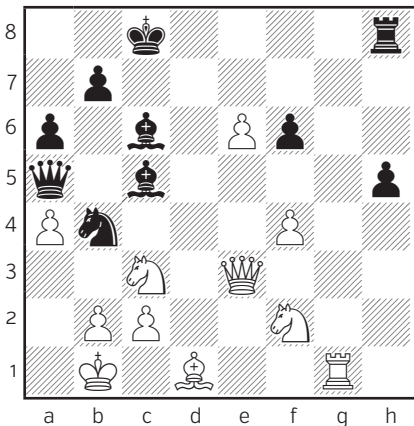
25... ♕c6

25...gxh5!?!± why not just grab the pawn if there is no immediate punishment in sight?

26. ♖g1?

White has made three inaccurate moves in a row, squandering all of his advantage. 26. ♖fe4 gxh5 27. ♕f2± looks better

26...gxh5 27. ♖b1 ♖xe3 28. ♖xe3 ♕c5



29. ♖e1?!

too passive, although Karpov is well-known for his like of placing pieces on the back rank, Steinitz-style. It was probably better to retreat to g3 or e2.

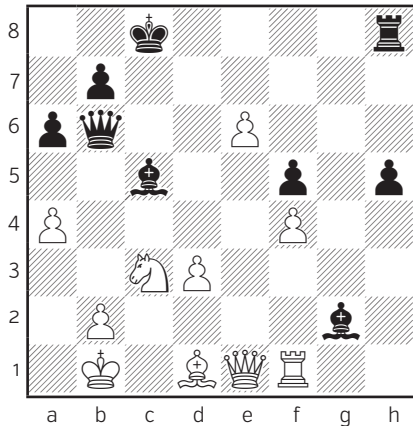
29... ♖b6 30. ♖f1 f5?!

30... ♕g2 31. a5 ♖xa5 32. e7 ♖e8 33. ♖e6+ ♖b8 34. ♕xh5 ♕d5 35. ♖xd5 ♖a2+ 36. ♖c1 ♖xd5 37. ♕xe8 ♖a1+ 38. ♖d2 ♖xf1 39. ♖xd5 ♖xf2+ 40. ♖c3 ♖e3+ 41. ♖c4 ♕xe7 objectively the game should probably end in a draw, although such variations are hard to calculate over the board just before the time control. 30... ♕d4!→ threatening to play ...♖d5, putting additional pressure on White was good here.

31. ♖d3?

31. e7! ♖c7 32. ♖e6+ ♖b8 33. ♖f6 ♖e8 34. ♖xf5 and all the three results are possible once again.

31... ♖xd3 32. cxd3 ♕g2



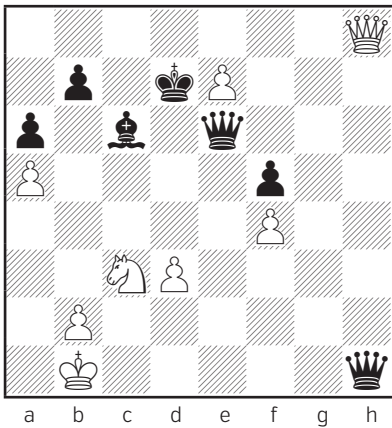
33.a5?

The decisive mistake. 33.d4 maybe the best practical chance for White 33... ♖xd4 (33... ♖xf1 34.dxc5 ♖d3+ 35.♔a1 ♜xc5 36.♖xh5 ♖e4 37.♗xe4 fxe4 38.♖g6 e3 39.e7 ♖d7 (39... ♜xe7?? 40.♜c3+-) 40.e8♜+ ♖xe8 41.♜d1+ ♖e7 42.♖xe8 ♖xe8 43.♖b1♠ and White might be able to save this endgame) 34.e7 ♖e8 35.♖xh5 ♖e4+ 36.♖a2 ♖xe7 37.♜d2♠ and Black still has decent winning chances, although White is not losing on the spot by any means.

33... ♜d6 34.♜f2 ♖xf2 35.♜xf2 ♖c6 36.♖b3 h4 37.♜a7

White's position is lost, so he might as well go down in flames and try out all his chances.

37...h3 38.e7 h2 39.♖e6+ ♜xe6 40.♜a8+ ♖d7 41.♜xh8 h1♜+



A hard-fought battle and a fantastic achievement by Wolfram Hartmann!

O-1

3

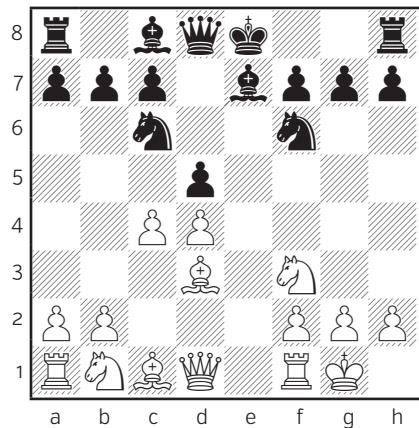
▷ **V. Anand [2770]**

▶ **O. Touzane [2368] [C42]**

FIDE-Wch k.o. Moscow [1.1],
27.11.2001

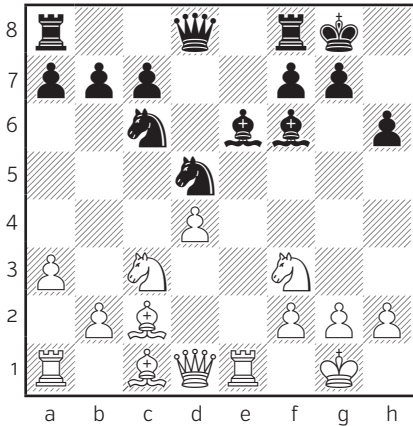
From July 1995 to January 1996 Olivier Touzane (born 1973, France) managed to accumulate a whopping 250 rating points, shooting his rating up to FIDE 2500 and #371 in the world. This moment of glory was short-lived though; he failed to earn the GM norms required for applying for the title and quickly plummeted back to the 2300s. However, in the year 2001 the French IM sensationally defeated Viswanathan Anand as Black in the first round of the knockout World Chess Championship. Nevertheless, Anand pulled himself together and went on to win the match 2.5-1.5.

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗f6 3.♗xe5 d6 4.♗f3 ♗xe4 5.d4 d5 6.♖d3 ♗c6 7.o-o ♖e7 8.c4 ♗f6



8... ♖b4 is by far the main line in the Petroff nowadays

9. ♘c3 0-0 10. ♖e1 ♙e6 11. cxd5 ♘xd5
12. a3 ♙f6 13. ♙e4 h6 14. ♙c2



14... ♘xc3?

A positional mistake: White's center becomes much stronger now. 14... ♘de7 15. ♙e3 ♙g4?! (15... ♘f5 16. ♙xf5 ♙xf5 17. d5 ♘e5 18. ♘xe5 ♙xe5=) 16. h3 1/2 (46) Huebner, R (2635) — Jussupow, A (2655) Nussloch 1996;

14... ♘ce7?! 15. ♘e5 (15. ♖xe6!? fxe6 16. ♖d3 →) 15... ♙f5 (15... c5!?) 16. ♙b3 ♙e6 17. ♘e4 ♙xe5 18. dxe5 b6 19. ♖f3 c6 20. ♙c2 ♘f5 21. ♖d1 (21. ♖d3!? ♖h4 22. ♘g3 g6 23. ♖d2±) 21... ♖h4 22. b4 ♖ad8 23. ♙b2 ♖f4 24. ♖e2 ♖h4 and White decided to take a draw in this complicated position 25. ♖f3 (25. g3!?) 25. ♘d6!? ♘xd6 26. exd6 ♘f4 27. ♖f3∞) 25... ♖f4 26. ♖e2 ♖h4 27. ♖f3 1/2 (27) Hracek, Z (2650) — Jussupow, A (2655) Nussloch 1996

15. bxc3 ♙c4

15... ♘e7 16. ♖xe6 fxe6 17. ♖d3 →

16. ♘d2 ♙d5 17. ♖b1

17. ♘e4 ♖e8 (17... ♙e7? 18. ♘g3+- White has too many threats for Black to defend against, such as ♙xh6, ♖d3, ♘f5, etc.; 17... ♙xe4 18. ♙xe4±) 18. ♖d3± and White has a dominant position here;

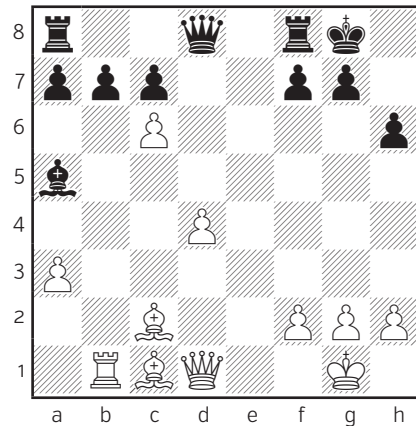
17. ♖h5!? ♖d7 18. ♘e4↑;

17. c4? ♘xd4±

17... ♙g5

17... ♘a5 18. ♘e4±

18. c4! ♙xd2 19. cxd5 ♙xe1 20. dxc6 ♙a5?



It is time to deliver the knock-out blow (pun intended). 20... ♙xf2+ 21. ♙xf2 bxc6 22. ♙g1+-;

20... ♖e8 21. cxb7 ♖b8 22. ♖d3+-

21. ♖d3?!

Not bad, but there were stronger options available, e.g. 21. cxb7! ♖b8 22. ♖h5! f5 (22... ♙b6 23. ♙xh6 g6 (23... ♖xd4 24. ♙h7+! ♙xh7 25. ♙e3+-; 23... g6 24. ♖f5 ♖e8 25. ♖h7+ ♙f8 26. ♖xh6+ ♙g8 27. ♙h7+ ♙h8 28. ♙g6+ ♙g8 29. ♖h7+ ♙f8 30. ♖xf7#)