

THE CHESS HEROES SERIES

GAMES

BOOK 2

RICHARD JAMES

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This is one of a series of books written for those who have mastered the basics of the game and would like to be able to take part in competitions, as well as for chess teachers working at this level. It assumes students already have the knowledge and skills presented in the *Chess Heroes Checkmates, Tactics, Openings and Endings* books. If you've completed *Chess Heroes Games Book 1* and *Chess Heroes Puzzles Books 1* and *2* it will also help. For more information on the Chess Heroes project visit www.chessforheroes.uk.

Who are these books for?

1. They're for parents working at home with their children who are looking for coaching resources and advice on how to help their children fulfil their potential.
2. They're for chess tutors working with individual students who can use the puzzles either as part of a lesson or as activities to do at home between lessons
3. They're for chess teachers working within centres of excellence who can use the puzzles in this book to develop children's tactical skills.
4. They're for schoolteachers running secondary school chess clubs who can use the puzzles as either formal or informal group activities.
5. They're for older children who have learnt the basics at primary school, want to play competitively or improve their rating, and have the ability and maturity to teach themselves.
6. They're, most of all, for adults who might have played when they were younger or learnt the basics online, and now want to start playing competitive chess or improve their rating.

The introductory book will take beginners up to about 500 strength. The next four books will take you up towards club standard: 1000 or perhaps a bit higher. The Puzzles and Games books will take you beyond that to at least 1500 standard, although some of the material will be challenging for anyone up to 2000 strength.

In this book you're presented with a series of 34 games. In each game you sit alongside one of the greatest players in chess history, trying to guess the best move. If you select a good move you'll be rewarded with some points.

HOW THIS BOOK IS STRUCTURED

I believe that learning about chess culture and history is very important for many reasons.

This book shows you some of the most famous games ever played, including examples of the play of all official world champions.

We start in 1834, with a match between the leading players of Britain and France, demonstrate the immortal games of Anderssen and Morphy, through the early world champions: Steinitz, Lasker, Capablanca and Alekhine. Then you'll be able to match your skills against Fischer, Karpov, Kasparov and Judit Polgár before moving into the 21st century, meeting Magnus Carlsen and his successors up to the time of publication in 2026.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

If you're reading this book for your own use, cover the page with a card or sheet of paper and, when you're asked for a move, make your choice. Then check your answer and, if you want to play along, make a note of your score on that move. To gain full benefit, repeat each lesson twice, or as often as you need until you understand every move. You could also reinforce your opening knowledge by playing some games with the opening moves.

If you're using the book as a teaching aid for a one-to-one or small group lesson, play the moves out on the board and invite your students to select their next move when requested to do so. At lower levels you might want to give a few hints. There's an answer sheet at the end of each game which can be copied and distributed to your students.

For larger groups, this method will take too long. You can ask your students to raise their hands to provide an answer, choose a student in turn or at random: your choice will depend on your teaching style. Alternatively, you can split your class into teams and select a team to answer each question.

If you want to use the scoring system, it will make it more fun and provide an incentive for younger pupils. In general, I award 5 points for the best move, or for moves of equal value, with fewer points for other reasonable moves. Moves that are particularly brilliant or hard to find are awarded 10 points. It's not possible to mention all good moves in most positions, so feel free to award points as you see fit for other moves which seem reasonable. It might be a good idea for teachers, especially if they're not

very strong players themselves, to have the game running on an engine in the background to ensure that the move selected isn't a blunder.

If you want to use your own scoring system instead, feel free to do so. Neither the scores themselves nor the ratings after each game should be taken too seriously.

There are 34 games in total, so you could, if you want, use it as a year's course. Or you can pick and choose the openings you want to encourage your students to learn and play.

The lessons were written over several years so you may well notice some stylistic inconsistencies: I hope these, along with the inevitable typos and notation errors (let me know if you find any) will not inconvenience you too much.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks are due first and foremost to the incomparable and unforgettable Mike Fox (1933-2005), without whom Richmond Junior Chess Club wouldn't have existed, and without whom my life, and the lives of many others, would have been immeasurably poorer.

Secondly, my thanks to all the parents and children who supported Richmond Junior Chess Club between 1975 and 2006. Thank you all for coming, and for believing in what we were doing. You were, and are, the inspiration behind the Chess Heroes books.

My thanks also to all the coaches, simul givers and other helpers at Richmond Junior Club during that period, especially to IM Gavin Wall (1968-2025) and Ray Cannon, who played an enormous role in making the club so successful. Ray also provided an invaluable service in checking through the analysis of the earlier Chess Heroes books.

The covers for the print versions of the Chess Heroes books were designed by Jamie Jones (jamiejonesdesign.myportfolio.com).

GAME 1

The year 1834 witnessed the beginning of modern international chess. The champions of Britain, Alexander McDonnell, originally from Belfast but living in London, and France, Louis-Charles Mahé de la Bourdonnais, played 85 games against each other. The Frenchman won 45 games and lost 27, with 13 draws.

This is the most famous game of the match, with la Bourdonnais playing Black. I'll show you the start of the game, but then it's your chance to guess his last few moves.

1. e4 c5

Black plays the Sicilian Defence. This is now the most popular reply to 1. e4 above beginner level, but in the 19th century it wasn't so well known.

2. Nf3 Nc6

3. d4 cxd4

4. Nxd4 e5

This move, gaining time and space at the expense of creating weaknesses on the d-file, is still played today.

5. Nxc6

Although this move is often played by inexperienced players, it's not the best choice, giving Black another central pawn and control of the vital d5 square. The only move to present problems is 5. Nb5, when Black can choose between d6 and a6.

5... bxc6

6. Bc4 Nf6

7. Bg5 Be7

8. Qe2 d5

Black's quickly managed to play d5 and obtain two pawns in the centre.

9. Bxf6

Again not a move a modern player would choose. There's no reason to trade a bishop for a knight here.

9... Bxf6

10. Bb3 o-o

11. o-o a5

12. exd5 cxd5

13. Rd1 d4

14. c4

Helping Black by giving him a PASSED PAWN.

14... Qb6

15. Bc2 Bb7

Black carefully avoids White's trap. 15... Qxb2 would have lost the queen to Bxh7+.

16. Nd2 Rae8

17. Ne4 Bd8

Black is planning f5 to get his pawns rolling, but e7 might have been a more useful square for the bishop.

18. c5 Qc6

19. f3 Be7

20. Rac1 f5

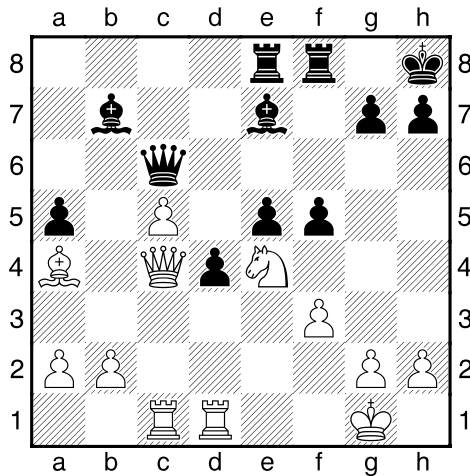
Very tempting but losing most of his advantage. It would have been better to play Ba6 to prevent White's next move.

21. Qc4+ Kh8

22. Ba4

It wasn't so easy to spot the best move here: 22. Nd6 Bxd6 23. Ba4 Qxc5 24. Qxc5 Bxc5 25. Rxc5, regaining the pawn with active play.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

22... Qh6

5 points for this, the only good move. The queen has ideas of coming to e3 at some point. 2 points for Qc7.

23. Bxe8

Choose a move for Black.

23... fxe4

5 points for this move, nothing for anything else. The black pawns will become very strong.

24. c6

Choose a move for Black.

24... exf3

The only good move again, and 10 points this time. You can have 5 points for Qe3+, Bc8 or Ba8.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play if White played 25. cxb7?

Answer: 5 points for 25... Qe3+ 26. Kh1 fxe2+, forcing mate.

25. Rc2

Choose a move for Black.

25... Qe3+

5 points for this move. You can also have 5 points for d3, e4, fxe2, Ba8 or Bc8, all of which should lead to an equal position. But if you found the amazing Ba6 award yourself 10 points: it's a very complicated position with lots of possibilities, and this move, briefly diverting the white queen, is very hard to find.

Bonus Question 2: If the game continued 25... Ba6 26. Qxa6, what would you play next?

Answer: 5 points for e4 – again not an easy move when there are so many choices, but your computer will tell you it's the only way for Black to gain an advantage.

26. Kh1

Choose a move for Black.

26... Bc8

5 points for this move, for Ba8 or for d3, and 3 points for f2. White's last move was an understandable mistake: Rf2 gives equal chances according to the computer.

27. Bd7

Choose a move for Black.

27... f2

5 points for this move, for e4 or for d3. The pawns are advancing down the board and you can choose which one you prefer to push at this point.

28. Rf1

Choose a move for Black.

28... d3

No choice here: you have to prevent Re2. 5 points for this, but nothing for anything else.

29. Rc3

Choose a move for Black.

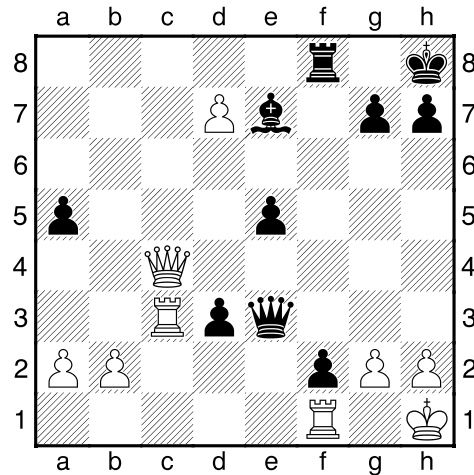
29... Bxd7

5 points for this well-timed exchange. You can score 4 points for Qe2 or Qe1, both of which are also strong.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play if White replied with 30. Rxd3?

Answer: There are two good moves here: Qe2 and Be6 so you can score 5 points for either of them, but nothing for 30... Qe1 when 31. Rxd7 turns the tables.

30. cxd7



Choose a move for Black.

30... e4

5 points for finding the only winning move. You have to defend the d-pawn here.

31. Qc8

Choose a move for Black.

31... Bd8

You have a choice here. 5 points for this move, Rd8 or Rg8.

32. Qc4

Choose a move for Black.

32... Qe1

From here onwards there are many winning moves. 5 points for this move which is the quickest and most obvious way to proceed.

33. Rc1

Choose a move for Black.

33... d2

5 points for this, clearly the fastest way to win. The pawns are going through.

34. Qc5

Choose a move for Black.

34... Rg8

5 points for this move, or for Rf7, Rf6, Rf4 or Kg8.

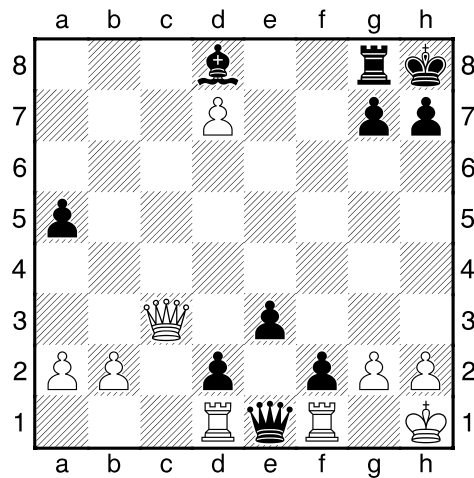
35. Rd1

Choose a move for Black.

35... e3

Another 5 points – the quickest and prettiest move. Other moves don't deserve any credit.

36. Qc3



Choose a move for Black.

36... Qxd1

10 points for this queen sacrifice. 5 points for the immediate e2, Rf8 or Bf6, which also force mate, but take longer.

37. Rxd1

Choose a move for Black.

37... e2

5 points for this move, creating one of the most beautiful positions in the history of chess. White resigned here as he'll be mated in a few moves time.

0-1

This game was played almost 200 years ago, when the best players were much less strong than their modern counterparts. Even so, I think La Bourdonnais did very well to find some difficult moves in this game. Did you do as well as him?

The main lesson, as in so many games, is the importance of the centre of the board and the strength of centre pawns in the middlegame. White played some rather poor moves in the opening (his 5th, 9th and 14th moves), which a grandmaster would never consider today.

It's fascinating to see how the leading players played chess so long ago and, if you're interested, you might want to look at some of the other games between these two players.

Sadly, McDonnell died of kidney disease only a year later, at the age of 37, and La Bourdonnais died in London in poverty in 1840. They're buried close to each other in Kensal Green Cemetery.

GAME 1 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 22nd move_____

Black's 30th move_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Black's 31st move_____

Black's 24th move_____

Black's 32nd move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Black's 33rd move_____

Black's 25th move_____

Black's 34th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Black's 35th move_____

Black's 26th move_____

Black's 36th move_____

Black's 27th move_____

Black's 37th move_____

Black's 28th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 105)

Black's 29th move_____

Your rating:

90-110: Grandmaster

65-89: International Master

45-64: National Master

Below 45: Candidate Master

Bonus Question 3_____

GAME 2

In 1851 Europe's greatest chess players have gathered in London for the world's first ever international chess tournament. The winner was German maths teacher Adolf Anderssen: you might have seen one of the games in *CHESS HEROES: GAMES BOOK 1*. Here's a friendly game played AT, but not IN the tournament, with Anderssen playing White against Lionel Kieseritzky, who had been born in what is now Estonia, but was then living in Paris. This game became so famous that it became known as the Immortal Game. Can you achieve immortality by sitting alongside Anderssen and trying to predict his brilliant moves?

1. e4 e5
2. f4

White plays the King's Gambit, which was very popular in the 19th century and is still sometimes played today, even though Black has quite a few good ways to play against it. You might have read about it in *CHESS HEROES: OPENINGS* and seen some games in *CHESS HEROES: GAMES BOOK 1*.

- 2... exf4
3. Bc4

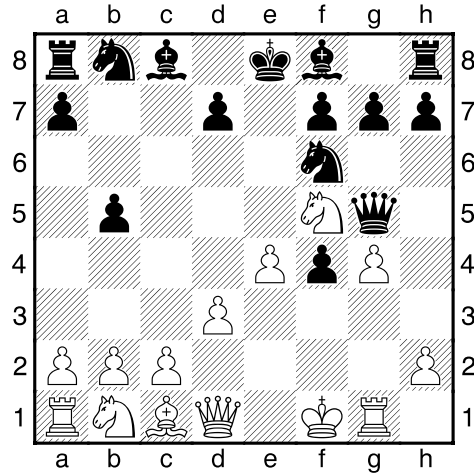
The most popular move is 3. Nf3, but this move is also interesting. Black's reply stops White castling, but if he's not careful he might get behind in development and his queen might end up in trouble later on.

- 3... Qh4+
4. Kf1 b5

Black returns the pawn to deflect White's bishop from the dangerous a2-g8 diagonal, but it doesn't really help his development. There were probably better moves, though, such as d5, d6 or Nf6.

5. Bxb5 Nf6
6. Nf3 Qh6
7. d3 Nh5
8. Nh4 Qg5
9. Nf5 c6
10. g4 Nf6
11. Rg1 cxb5

After some rather strange moves we've reached a very unusual position. Black greedily captured the bishop last move when he would have done much better to play h5 instead, preventing White's plan.



The test starts here. Can you play as well as Anderssen?

Choose a move for White.

12. h4

5 points for this move, attacking the black queen. No points for anything else.

12... Qg6

Choose a move for White.

13. h5

5 points for this move, leaving the queen in danger of getting trapped. Again, nothing else scores.

13... Qg5

Choose a move for White.

14. Qf3

Again the only good move, scoring 5 points and threatening to win the Black queen. Black has no easy way out.

14... Ng8

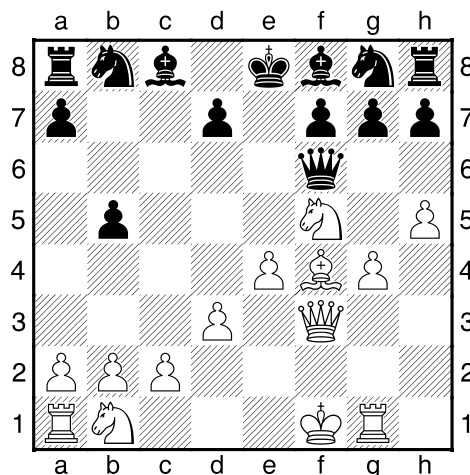
Choose a move for White.

15. Bxf4

Another 5 points for this obvious move. Black has had to retreat his knight to find a safe square for his queen. You can also have 5 points for Nc3, which is just as good.

15... Qf6

Choose a move for White.



16. Nc3

5 points for this natural and strong developing move. Take a look at the position on the board. White has almost completed his development while Black, after 15 moves, has only developed his queen. Not the best way to play chess.

16... Bc5

Choose a move for White.

17. Nd5

There's no need to move the rook: it's not part of White's attack, but the black bishop is very much part of his defence. There are lots of good moves here. You can have 5 points for this move, or for d4, g5, Nxb5, Re1, Be3 or Bd6. It just goes to show how good White's position is, even though he's a bishop down.

17... Qxb2

Choose a move for White.

18. Bd6

If you played this move you score 5 points for being creative and imaginative. There were a lot of better moves, though. The computer likes the simple Re1, moving the rook to safety on a useful square, which scores 10 points. I'll give you 8 points for d4, Be3 or Rd1, and 6 points for Nc7+.

Bonus Question 1: what would you play now if Black continued 18... Qxa1+ 19. Ke2 Qb2?

Answer: you have to defend the pawn on c2 first: 20. Kd2 scores 5 points and Kd1 3 points. Not 20. Nc7+ Kd8 21. Nxa8 Qxc2+ when Black has turned the tables.

Instead, Black took the wrong rook. He needed the bishop on c5 for defence.

18... Bxg1

Choose a move for White.

19. e5

5 points for this excellent move. However, the computer prefers the simple Re1, so I'll give that move 10 points. There are also 5 points for Qd1 (planning Rb1), h6 (gaining control of f6) and Rd1.

19... Qxa1+

Choose a move for White.

20. Ke2

5 points here, but nothing for 20. Kg2 Bb7, when the knight on d5 will be pinned.

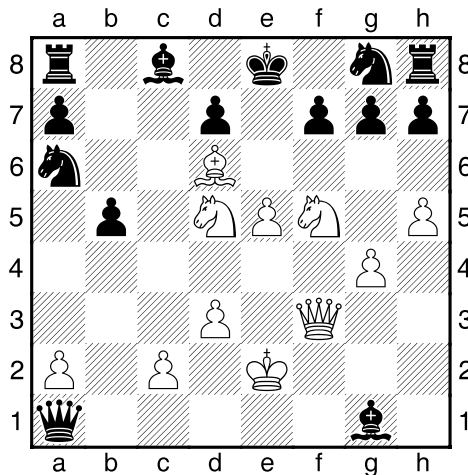
Bonus Question 2: what would you play if Black played 20... Ba6 here?

Answer: 21. Nc7+ scores 5 points, but nothing for Nxg7+ when the black king escapes.

Bonus Question 3: in this variation, what would you play after 21... Kd8?

Answer: you can have 10 points for Nxa6, which should win, threatening Bc7+ as well as Qxa8. But nothing for 22. Qxa8 Qc3 23. Qxb8+ Bc8 when Black will be able to deliver a perpetual check, or for 22. Nxa8 Kc8 when there's no mate and Black should win.

20... Na6



Choose a move for White.

21. Nxg7+

5 points for this move, forcing mate. You can have 3 points if you chose d4 or h6.

21... Kd8

Choose a move for White.

22. Qf6+

10 points for this brilliant queen sacrifice: one reason why this game is so famous. You can also have 10 points for Qxf7, when Black can only delay mate for a couple of moves.

22... Nxf6

Choose a move for White.

23. Be7#

5 points for this simple checkmate: the sacrifice last move deflected the knight away from defending this square.

This was, in some ways, a pretty strange game. No modern player would treat the opening the way Kieseritzky did. He didn't develop most of his pieces, lost control of the centre, almost got his queen trapped and left his king undefended. I'm sure you'd have played the opening better. You can learn a lot from this game about the importance of quick development and centre control in open positions.

Anderssen, one of the strongest players of the mid 19th century, was a brilliantly creative attacking player who loved sacrificing, especially in friendly games such as this one. He had other ways to maintain his advantage, but, already a bishop down, it was very tempting to give up both his rooks as well. Then, calculating accurately, he sacrificed his queen for an immediate checkmate. You can see why the game became so famous. I hope you managed to find some of Anderssen's moves.

GAME 2 ANSWER SHEET

White's 12th move _____

Bonus Question 2 _____

White's 13th move _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

White's 14th move _____

White's 21st move _____

White's 15th move _____

White's 22nd move _____

White's 16th move _____

White's 23rd move _____

White's 17th move _____

White's 18th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 95)

Bonus Question 1 _____

Your rating:

75-95: Grandmaster

White's 19th move _____

55-74: International Master

40-54: National Master

White's 20th move _____

Below 40: Candidate Master

GAME 3

This is Adolf Anderssen's other famous game, known as the Evergreen Game. This was another friendly game in which he played the white pieces against his friend and student Jean Dufresne. It took place in 1852, probably in Berlin.

Stand by for some more brilliant sacrifices – but are they all sound? Can you play as well as Anderssen, or perhaps even better?

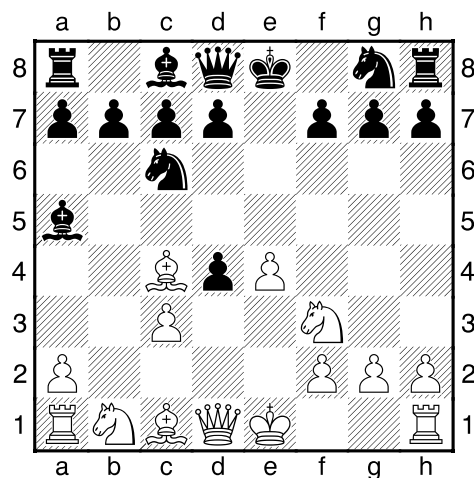
1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5
4. b4

White plays the EVANS GAMBIT, sacrificing the b-pawn to gain time and space.

- 4... Bxb4
5. c3 Ba5

Bc5 and Be7 are both also played here.

6. d4 exd4



The test starts here.

Choose a move for White.

7. O-O

5 points for this move, or for Qb3, which is equally good. White's not bothered about pawns here, preferring to go for a quick attack. Nxd4 takes a pawn back, but is too slow. Now Black decides to return one of the pawns to slow up White's attack.

7... d3

Choose a move for White.

8. Qb3

5 points for this, preferring an attacking move rather than stopping to capture on d3. You had a clue last move.

8... Qf6

Choose a move for White.

9. e5

5 points again here: this is clearly the best move, playing to open the e-file while gaining time by attacking the queen. 3 points for Re1.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played Nxe5?

Answer: 5 points for Re1, occupying the e-file, which gives White a winning attack. For example, d6 can be met by Qa4+ (QUEEN FORK) or by Bg5.

9... Qg6

Choose a move for White.

10. Re1

4 points for this move, which is natural enough, but there are slightly better alternatives. 5 points for Rd1 or Ba3, the computer preferences.

10... Nge7

Choose a move for White.

11. Ba3

4 points for this move, or for Bg5. 5 points for the computer's top choices, Qd1, Re3 or Nbd2. Now Black should just castle when he's doing fine, but instead offers a pawn to try to slow down White's attack. It doesn't end well.

11... b5

Choose a move for White.

12. Qxb5

5 points for this move or for Bxb5.

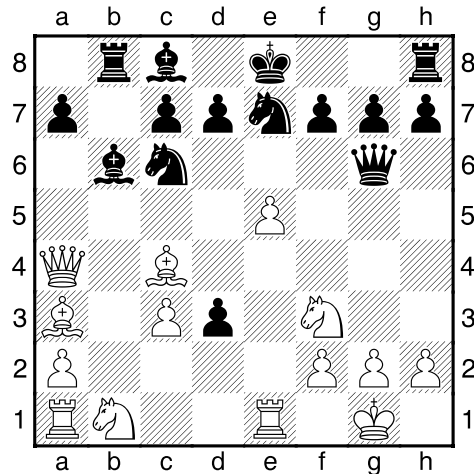
12... Rb8

Choose a move for White.

13. Qa4

5 points for this, the only good square for the queen.

13... Bb6



Choose a move for White.

14. Nbd2

4 points for this natural developing move, or for the tricky Re4. 5 points for Qd1, planning Bxd3 next move. Black should simply castle now, but instead makes a fatal hesitation.

14... Bb7

Choose a move for White.

15. Ne4

5 points for this excellent move, or for Re4. 4 points for Bxe7 or Rad1. Black should now try to slow down the attack by playing d2.

15... Qf5

Choose a move for White.

16. Bxd3

5 points for this natural move threatening a discovered attack winning the queen.

16... Qh5

Choose a move for White.

17. Nf6+

Did you find this brilliant sacrifice? If so, I'm afraid you don't score any points because it actually throws away White's advantage.

The main point of this position is that the black queen is in trouble, with moves like Ng3, Rad1 and Bc1 to come. White will soon win material, so there was no need for this. You score 5 points for either Ng3 or Rad1 here.

17... gxf6

Choose a move for White.

18. exf6

5 points for this obvious capture.

18... Rg8

Choose a move for White.

19. Rad1

Even though this is no better than a couple of other moves you can have 10 points if you found it because it sets a very clever trap. There are 5 points available for Qd1 or Be4, both meeting Black's obvious threat.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play if you were Black in this position?

Answer: If you found one of the best moves here you did really well – or were really lucky! You can have 10 points for Bd4 or Qh3, which should both lead to a draw with best play, and 8 points for Rg4. A sample variation: 19... Bd4 20. cxd4 Qxf3 21. Be4 Rxf3 22. Kh1 Rxf2+, which should lead to a perpetual check.

But Black fell straight into Anderssen's trap. Capturing a piece and threatening mate in one looks obvious, doesn't it?

19... Qxf3

Choose a move for White.

20. Rxe7+

10 points for this rook sacrifice: there's no choice.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play now if Black played 20... Kf8?

Answer: 5 points for Re3+, a DISCOVERED CHECK winning the queen. 3 points for Rxd7+, which also wins, but is neither as quick nor as simple.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played 20... Kd8?

Answer: 10 points for another rook sacrifice: Rxd7+. 5 points for Be4 which leads to a complex position with equal chances according to the computer.

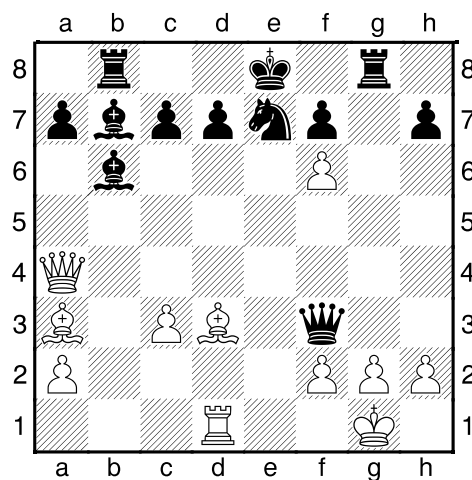
Bonus Question 5: After 20... Kd8 21. Rxd7+ Kxd7, what would you play?

Answer: 22. Bf5+, forcing mate scores 5 points. You can have 3 points for Be2+ or Be4+, both winning the queen.

Bonus Question 6: After 20... Kd8 21. Rxd7+ Kc8, what would you play?

Answer: 22. Rd8+ scores 10 points, winning the queen if Black takes back with the king or rook, or mating if he takes back with the knight.

20... Nxe7



Choose a move for White.

21. Qxd7+

10 points for this spectacular queen sacrifice, which Anderssen must have seen two moves earlier. By the way, in the variation in Bonus Question 6, 22... Nxd8 would also have been met by this move.

21... Kxd7

Choose a move for White.

22. Bf5+

5 points: not 22. Bb5+ Ke6 and the black king escapes.

Bonus Question 7: What would you play after 22... Kc6?

Answer: 5 points for spotting that Bd7 would be mate.

22... Ke8

Choose a move for White.

23. Bd7+

5 points: now it's clear that Black is getting mated.

23... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

24. Bxe7#

An easy 5 points for finding this pretty checkmate.

Another game demonstrating Anderssen's brilliance, imagination and creativity in which accurate calculation was vital. But again this was a friendly game so he could afford to take risks. I hope you managed to find some of his moves, and perhaps even find better moves than he did on occasion.

The Evans Gambit was a very popular opening for most of the 19th century and still stands up well to 21st century computer analysis. Trying it out for yourself would be a great way for you to develop your attacking and tactical skills.

GAME 3 ANSWER SHEET

White's 7th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 8th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

White's 9th move_____

White's 20th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Bonus Question 3_____

White's 10th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

White's 11th move_____

Bonus Question 5_____

White's 12th move_____

Bonus Question 6_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 15th move_____

Bonus Question 7_____

White's 16th move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 18th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 155)

Your rating:

125-155: Grandmaster

95-124: International Master

60-94: National Master

Below 60: Candidate Master

GAME 4

The first American Chess Congress was held in New York in autumn 1857. Sixteen of the strongest players in America played a knock-out competition, with 20-year-old Paul Morphy and the German master Louis Paulsen, who was living in America at the time, reaching the final.

Morphy was already recognised as a brilliant talent, and he had little difficulty in beating his rival. They played eight games, with Morphy winning five, drawing two and losing one. One of his wins with the black pieces would become one of the most famous games ever played. Can you play as well as Morphy? Or perhaps you can play even better!

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Nc3 Nf6
4. Bb5 Bc5
5. O–O O–O
6. Nxe5

If you've read *CHESS HEROES: OPENINGS* you'll be familiar with this idea. If Black plays Nxe5 now, White will play d4, regaining the piece.

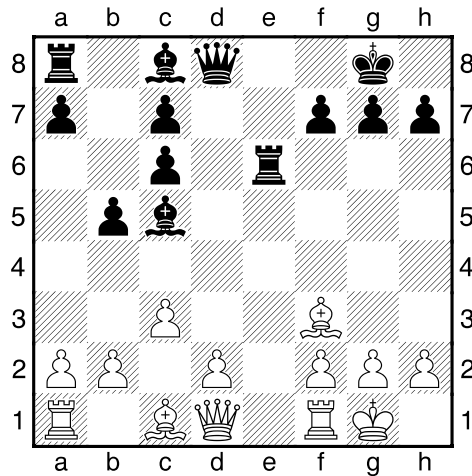
- 6... Re8
7. Nxc6 dxc6
8. Bc4

Not the best move. Morphy could now have played 8... Ng4 with a strong attack.

- 8... b5
9. Be2 Nxe4

Black regains the pawn with an equal position.

10. Nxe4 Rxe4
11. Bf3 Re6
12. c3



The test starts here.

Choose a move for Black.

12... Qd3

5 points for this excellent move, making it hard for White to complete his development.

13. b4

Choose a move for Black.

13... Bb6

4 points for this move, Be7 or Bf8. But there are 5 points for Bd6, planning to play Rh6 at some point to force a weakness in White's castled king position.

14. a4

Choose a move for Black.

14... bxa4

5 points for this move which is clearly best here. Paulsen would have done better to have played Re1.

15. Qxa4

Choose a move for Black.

15... Bd7

Morphy wants to connect his rooks, but this, as you'll see, is the wrong square for the bishop and only scores 2 points. You can score 5 points if you chose Bb7.

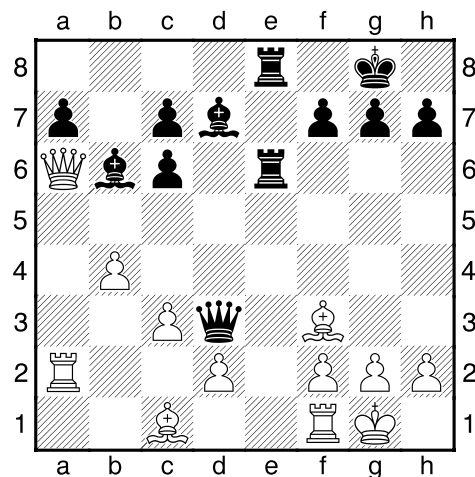
16. Ra2

Choose a move for Black.

16... Rae8

5 points for this very strong move, completing his development and doubling rooks on the open file.

17. Qa6



Choose a move for Black.

17... Qxf3

10 points for this brilliant queen sacrifice which give Black a winning attack. White should have played Qa6 on move 16, when he would have been fine, which is why Black should have played 15... Bb7 rather than Bd7.

18. gxf3

Choose a move for Black.

18... Rg6+

5 points for this obvious check. Nothing for anything else.

19. Kh1

Choose a move for Black.

19... Bh3

Another obvious move and another 5 points.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play if White played 20. Qd3 here?

Answer: 10 points for 20... f5, the only winning move. White would be only too pleased to play Qxg6 to beat off Black's attack, so that move has to be prevented. Perhaps not so obvious.

20. Rd1

Choose a move for Black.

20... Bg2+

5 points for this move, which should lead to checkmate. 3 points for Bxf2.

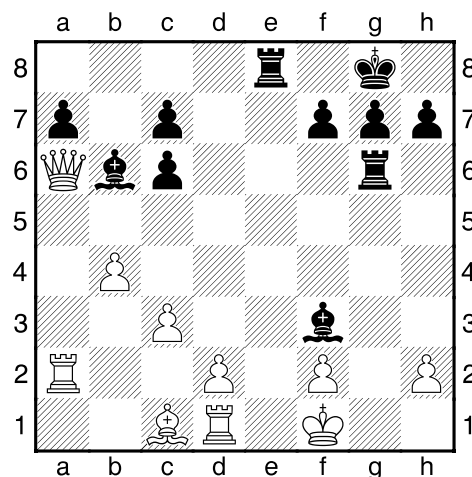
21. Kg1

Choose a move for Black.

21... Bxf3+

5 points for this DISCOVERED CHECK.

22. Kf1



Choose a move for Black.

22... Bg2+

5 points for this move, which wasn't quite the quickest way to win. If you preferred 22... Rg2, intending Rh2 and Rh1#, which White can only delay by giving up his queen, you can have 10 points for being smarter than Morphy!

23. Kg1

Choose a move for Black.

23... Bh3+

5 points for this move, or for Bf3+, going back to the previous variation. Again, if you're smarter than Morphy and found 23... Be4+ 24. Kf1 Bf5 followed by Bh3# you can add 10 points to your score.

24. Kh1

Choose a move for Black.

24... Bxf2

3 points for this move, which wins the queen. There are still 5 points for playing Bg2+ and going back to one of the previous variations which force mate.

25. Qf1

Choose a move for Black.

25... Bxf1

5 points for capturing the enemy queen.

26. Rxf1

Choose a move for Black.

26... Re2

5 points for this move, or 3 points for Re1. Trading rooks when you're two pawns ahead is reasonable, but Re2 is a more efficient way to win.

27. Ra1

Choose a move for Black.

27... Rh6

5 points for this move: the easiest way to win here is to go for the white h-pawn. 3 points for Rf6.

28. d4

Choose a move for Black.

28... Be3

5 points again, meeting the DISCOVERED ATTACK and creating a threat.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if White played 29. Bxe3?

Answer: 5 points for 29... Rhxh2+ and mate next move. Nothing for 29... Rxe3 30. Rxa7 and White is right back in the game.

Having seen this, Paulsen resigned here.

This game is famous because of Morphy's queen sacrifice on move 17. Similar sacrifices have been seen in other games, but Morphy got there first. However, by today's standards, it wasn't a very well-played game. He didn't place his bishops on their best squares, giving Paulsen the opportunity to prevent the sacrifice which he didn't take. He then missed a couple of quicker wins which I hope you found.

All strong players have learnt a lot from studying the great games of the past, though. Not just from the moves themselves but also from being inspired by their stories. Although they didn't play as well as the likes of Magnus Carlsen, they were just as great because they did it all themselves without computers or history to help them.

GAME 4 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 12th move_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Black's 13th move_____

Black's 24th move_____

Black's 14th move_____

Black's 25th move_____

Black's 15th move_____

Black's 26th move_____

Black's 16th move_____

Black's 27th move_____

Black's 17th move_____

Black's 28th move_____

Black's 18th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Black's 19th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 115)

Bonus Question 1_____

Your rating:

Black's 20th move_____

90-115: Grandmaster

Black's 21st move_____

70-89: International Master

Black's 22nd move_____

45-69: National Master

Below 45: Candidate Master

GAME 5

In 1858 the young American star Paul Morphy, famous throughout the world just as top footballers are today, was visiting Paris. Two noblemen, the Duke of Brunswick and Count Isouard de Vauvenargues, invited him to the opera. While listening to the music they played this, perhaps the most famous chess game ever. Take the white pieces and sit beside Paul now. Can you guess his moves? Can you play as well as him? This time we start on move 3.

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 d6

Black chooses PHILIDOR'S DEFENCE rather than the usual 2... Nc6.

Choose a move for White.

3. d4

5 points for this, the usual and best move here. 4 points for Bc4 or Nc3, both sensible developing moves.

- 3... Bg4

Choose a move for White.

4. dxe5

5 points for this move, Nc3 or Be3. 4 points for h3, which doesn't help your development.

Bonus Question 1: what would you play if Black replied with 4... dxe5?

Answer: 5. Qxd8+ Kxd8 6. Nxe5 wins a pawn with a good position as well (5 points).

- 4... Bxf3

Choose a move for White.

5. Qxf3

5 points for this natural recapture. 4 points for gxf3, which is also a good move.

- 5... dxe5

Choose a move for White.

6. Bc4

5 points for this move, threatening mate. 5 points also for Qb3 (the computer preference), winning a pawn unless Black plays the weakening b6. 4 points for Nc3, a decent developing move.

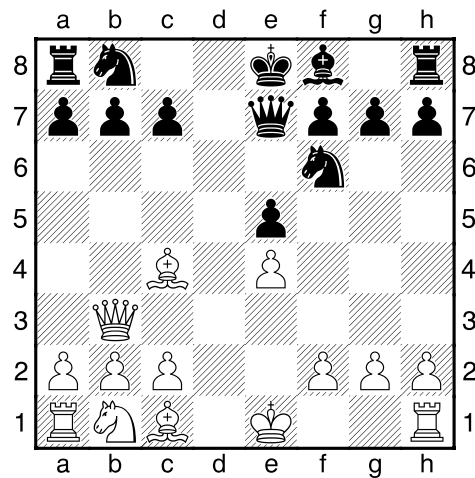
6... Nf6

Choose a move for White.

7. Qb3

5 points for this very strong move, threatening both b7 and f7. Not easy to find as you've probably been taught not to move a piece twice in the opening, but I did give you a clue last move.

7... Qe7



Choose a move for White.

8. Nc3

5 points for this great developing move, playing for an attack rather than winning material. There was also nothing wrong with 8. Qxb7, winning a pawn but allowing the exchange of queens after 8... Qb4+, which also scores 5 points. If you found 8. Bxf7+, intending 8... Qxf7 9. Qxb7, you can have 3 points. You win more material but 9... Bc5 will give Black a dangerously strong attack in return.

8... c6

Choose a move for White.

9. Bg5

5 points for this move, setting up a PIN, or for Be3. 4 points for f4 or a3, 3 points for 0-0.

9... b5

Choose a move for White.

10. Nxb5

10 points for this very strong sacrifice. White wins two pawns for the knight, but makes it very hard for the Black players to complete their development. 5 points for Bxb5, which is also strong, but only 2 points for Bd3 or Be2.

10... cxb5

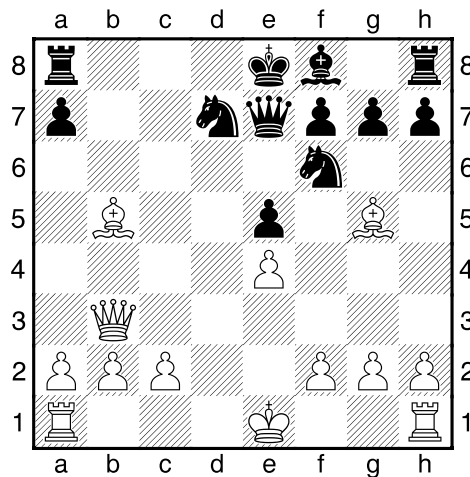
Choose a move for White.

11. Bxb5+

5 points for this fairly obvious recapture, 2 points for Qxb5+.

11... Nbd7

Choose a move for White.



12. O-O-O

5 points: another very strong move. You'll see that both black knights are pinned, the bishop on f8 can't move and the rooks are powerless. White has a winning advantage. 4 points for Bxf6, 3 points for Rd1 but only 2 points for o-o, when Black can defend with Qb4.

12... Rd8

Choose a move for White.

13. Rxd7

10 points for this move, gaining time to bring the other rook into the attack. 5 points for Rd5, Rd3 or Rd2, with the idea of doubling rooks on the d-file.

13... Rxd7

Choose a move for White.

14. Rd1

5 points for this move, the logical follow-up. 3 points for Bxf6, which is also strong.

14... Qe6

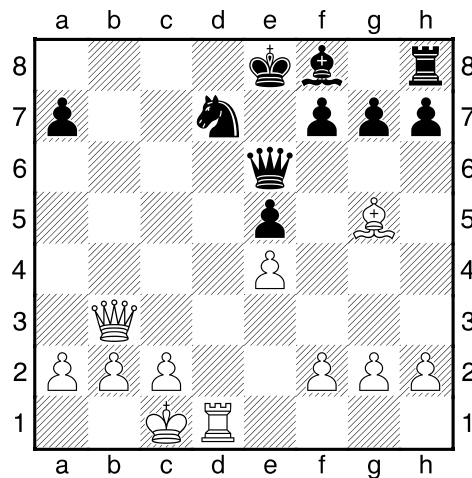
Choose a move for White.

15. Bxd7+

5 points for this move, the quickest way to win – as long as you've seen what's coming next. 4 points for Bxf6 and 3 points for Qxe6+ or Qc3.

15... Nxd7

Choose a move for White.



16. Qb8+

10 points for this QUEEN SACRIFICE. 5 points for Qb7 or Qc3, in each case planning Qc8+. Mate is better, though.

16... Nxb8

Choose a move for White.

17. Rd8#

5 points for finding the CHECKMATE.

This game is rightly very famous – all chess players should know it and perhaps learn it off by heart. The most important lesson you can take from it is the importance of rapid development in open positions. Black's second move is not bad, but rather slow, so Morphy opened the position up and quickly developed all his pieces while the Black king was still in the centre, and their other pieces could hardly move.

GAME 5 ANSWER SHEET

White's 3rd move _____

White's 12th move _____

White's 4th move _____

White's 13th move _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

White's 14th move _____

White's 5th move _____

White's 15th move _____

White's 6th move _____

White's 16th move _____

White's 7th move _____

White's 17th move _____

White's 8th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 95)

White's 9th move _____

Your rating:

75-95: Grandmaster

White's 10th move _____

55-74: International Master

White's 11th move _____

40-54: National Master

Below 40: Candidate Master

GAME 6

For our next game we move forward to 1883. The number of international tournaments taking place was gradually increasing, and the identity of the best player in the world was often a subject for discussion. A particularly important tournament took place in London that year, attracting many of the world's leading players. In this game, the Polish-born Johannes Zukertort won a brilliant game against England's leading player, Joseph Blackburne.

Retrospective ratings suggest that the competitors included nine of the ten strongest players in the world (only number 9 was missing), along with three other strong masters and two enthusiastic amateurs.

Zukertort (rated 2nd) won the tournament, ahead of Wilhelm Steinitz (1st) and Blackburne (3rd).

Can you play as well as Zukertort? Here's your chance to find out. You have the white pieces.

1. c4

White plays what is now known as the English Opening, which was rather unusual at the time.

1... e6

2. e3 Nf6

3. Nf3 b6

4. Be2 Bb7

5. O-O d5

6. d4 Bd6

7. Nc3 O-O

The game has transposed into a rather unusual Queen's Gambit.

8. b3 Nbd7

9. Bb2 Qe7

10. Nb5 Ne4

11. Nxd6 cxd6

12. Nd2 Ndf6

13. f3 Nxd2

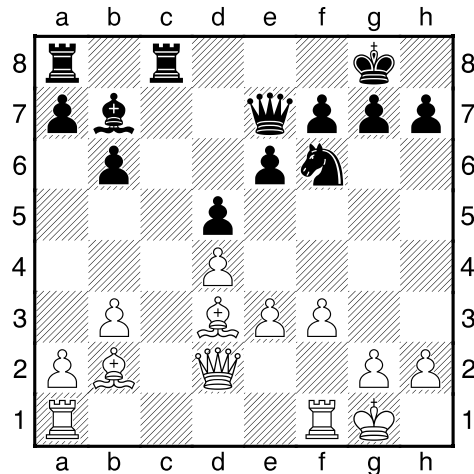
14. Qxd2 dxc4

15. Bxc4 d5

16. Bd3 Rfc8

The pawn formation is almost symmetrical, with an open c-file, while White has two bishops against a bishop and a knight.

Your test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

17. Rae1

5 points for this move, launching a strong plan. 3 points for Rac1 or Rfc1, which will lead to exchanges.

17... Rc7

Choose a move for White.

18. e4

5 points for playing this pawn break, the point of Black's last move. 3 points for Rf2, which will make it easier to double rooks at some point.

18... Rac8

Choose a move for White.

19. e5

5 points for this move, for Rf2 or for Re3. White's plan is to play for a kingside attack, but as dxe4 would give White a very strong centre with all his pieces pointing at the black king there's no need to hurry. Black's rooks on the c-file might look threatening but they have no entry points at the moment.

19... Ne8

Choose a move for White.

20. f4

You score 4 points for this natural move, hoping to follow up with f5, which worked very well over the board. If you found g4, to prevent f5, you can have 5 points. 4 points also for g3, Rf2, Re3 or Qe2.

20... g6

Choose a move for White.

21. Re3

5 points for this move, Re2, Rf3, Rf2 or h3. 4 points for g4.

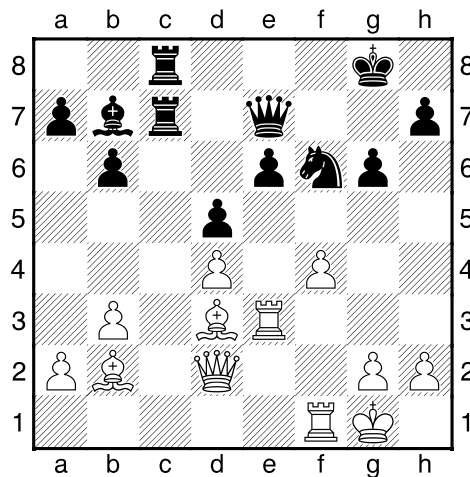
21... f5

Choose a move for White.

22. exf6

5 points for capturing *en passant*, opening up lines to the black king. Although there are other reasonable moves they don't deserve any points.

22... Nxf6



Choose a move for White.

23. f5

5 points for this very strong move, opening more lines. Again, nothing for anything else.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play if Black played 23... gxf5 here?

Answer: 5 points for 24. Bxf5, exploiting the pin on the e-file, when e6 will fall next.
3 points for 24. Rxf5.

23... Ne4

Choose a move for White.

24. Bxe4

5 points for this capture, again the only move to score.

24... dxe4

Choose a move for White.

25. fxe6

5 points: yet again there's only one good move here.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play if Black played 25... hxe6 here?

Answer: 5 points for 26. Rg3, intending to meet Qg7 or Qh7 with d5, unmasking the bishop on b2. 3 points for the immediate 26. d5.

25... Rc2

Choose a move for White.

26. gxe6

5 points: the only good move.

26... Kh8

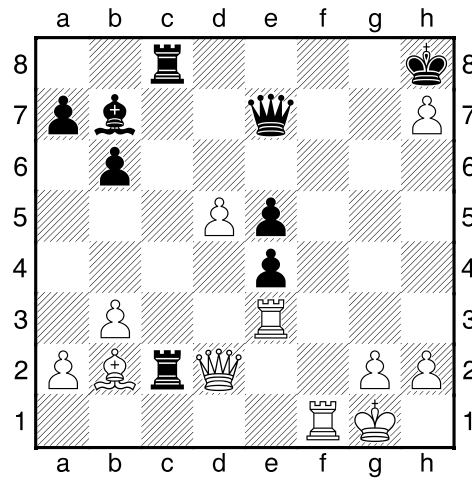
Choose a move for White.

27. d5

5 points for this DISCOVERED CHECK.

27... e5

Choose a move for White.



28. Qb4

10 points for this spectacular queen sacrifice! 5 points for d6, the only other good move here.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play if Black played 28... Qxb4 here?

Answer: 5 points for 29. Bxe5+.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play in this line if Black played 29... Kxh7?

Answer: 5 points for 30. Rh3+, which leads to mate in a few moves.

Bonus Question 5: Going back to 28. Qb4, what would you play if Black played 28... Qe8?

Score 5 points for either 29. Rf8+ or 29. Qd6, and 3 points for either Rg3 or Rh3.

28... R8c5

Choose a move for White.

29. Rf8+

10 points for this move, or for Qxe4, both of which lead to mate.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play if Black played 29... Qxf8 here?

Answer: 5 points for 30. Bxe5+

Bonus Question 7: What would you play in this line if Black played 30... Kxh7?

Answer: 5 points for 31. Qxe4+, which leads to mate, 3 points for Rh3+, winning the queen.

29... Kxh7

Choose a move for White.

30. Qxe4+

5 points for this move, again forcing mate. You can have 3 points for Rh3+ and 2 points for Rf2.

30... Kg7

Choose a move for White.

31. Bxe5+

5 points for this move, and also for either Rf5 or Rf1, all of which force mate. But if you selected 31. Rg8+ instead, having seen 31... Kxg8 32. Qg6+ Qg7 33. Qe8+ you can score 10 points for finding the quickest way to win.

31... Kxf8

Choose a move for White.

32. Bg7+

5 points for this move, the only way to mate. 2 points for Qf3+ or Qf4+

Bonus Question 8: What would you play if Black played Qxg7 here?

Answer: 5 points for Qe8#.

32... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

33. Qxe7

5 points for capturing Black's queen. Black resigned here.

1-0

An impressive attacking game. It's said that, when he played his 28th move one of the spectators whispered "The fiend has sacrificed his queen!". White had better chances at the point where you joined the game, because he had attacking chances on the kingside while Black's doubled rooks on the c-file served little purpose.

How can you learn to find moves like Qb4 yourself? One way is to look for pieces with an important defensive role and ask yourself how you can persuade them to move. Here, Zukertort would have seen that he needed to deflect the black queen away from defending e5, and also calculate that he didn't need the queen to force mate: his two rooks and bishop could combine to do the job. It's easy to end up looking foolish if you sacrifice your queen only to find there's no mate there!

Black's fatal error was 22... Nxf6, which gave White a winning attack because the black queen was in line with the rook on e1. If he'd played 22... Qxf6 instead he'd have had good chances of saving the game.

From that point onwards, there was one clearly best option for White on almost every move. With one unimportant exception, Zukertort managed to find them all. Did you do as well?

After the match, discussions arose as to who really was the best player in the world, and in 1886 Steinitz and Zukertort contested the first official World Championship match.

GAME 6 ANSWER SHEET

White's 17th move_____

White's 28th move_____

White's 18th move_____

Bonus Question 3_____

White's 19th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

White's 20th move_____

Bonus Question 5_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 29th move_____

White's 22nd move_____

Bonus Question 6_____

White's 23rd move_____

Bonus Question 7_____

Bonus Question 1_____

White's 30th move_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 31st move_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 32nd move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 8_____

White's 26th move_____

White's 33rd move_____

White's 27th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 140)

110-140: Grandmaster

85-109: International Master

55-84: National Master

Below 55: Candidate Master

GAME 7

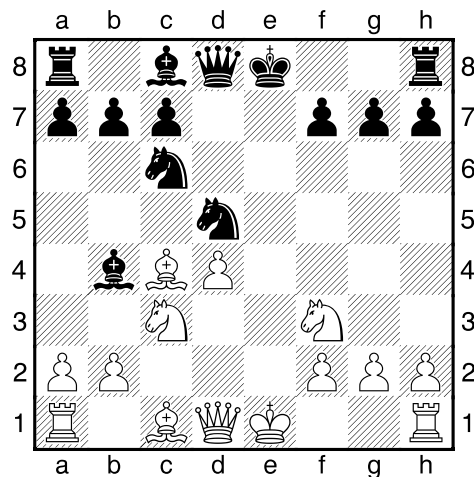
For our next game we move forward to 1895. In that year England hosted another great tournament, attracting most of the world's strongest players, this time in the seaside town of Hastings. The surprise winner was the American player Harry Pillsbury, with the Russian Mikhail Chigorin in second place, followed by the World Champion Emanuel Lasker and Siegbert Tarrasch, another great German player and writer. The former World Champion Steinitz, coming towards the end of his career, finished in 5th place, winning this brilliant game against Curt von Bardeleben.

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5
4. c3 Nf6
5. d4 exd4
6. cxd4 Bb4+
7. Nc3

You might remember these moves if you've read *CHESS HEROES: OPENINGS* or *CHESS HEROES: GAMES BOOK 1*. Black should now be bold and play Nxe4.

- 7... d5
8. exd5 Nxd5

Your test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

9. 0-0

5 points for this move, which is clearly best. In an open position like this with the e-file open you should castle as quickly as possible.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 9... Nxc3 10. bxc3 Bxc3?

Answer: 10 points for Qb3, 8 points for Ba3, Ng5 or Bg5, 5 points for Rb1. White has many ways of getting a strong attack here.

9... Be6

Choose a move for White.

10. Bg5

3 points for this move: good but not best. 5 points for Re1, 3 points also for Qb3, Bxd5 or Nxd5.

Bonus Question 2: If the game had continued 10. Re1 0-0 11. Ng5 Qd7, what would you play next?

Answer: 10 points for finding 12. Rxe6 fxe6 13. Nxe6, when White will emerge ahead after 13... Bxc3 14. Nxf8 Rxf8 15. bxc3.

10... Be7

Choose a move for White.

11. Bxd5

5 points for this move or for Nxd5, 3 points for Bxe7.

11... Bxd5

Choose a move for White.

12. Nxd5

5 points for this move or for Bxe7.

12... Qxd5

Choose a move for White.

13. Bxe7

5 points for this, the only move to score.

13... Nxe7

Choose a move for White.

14. Re1

5 points for this move, again lining up the rook against the uncastled king. 4 points for Qe2 and 3 points for Qb3.

14... f6

Choose a move for White.

15. Qe2

4 points for this move, but slightly better and scoring 5 points was Qa4+.

Bonus Question 3: if the game continued 15. Qa4+ Qd7, what would you play next?

Answer: 5 points for 16. Qb4, which wins a pawn as Rxe7+ followed by Re1 is threatened as well as Qxb7. After 15... c6 instead of Qd7, Qb4 would have won immediately.

15... Qd7

Choose a move for White.

16. Rac1

Only 2 points for this move, which looks natural but isn't best. Much stronger, and scoring 5 points, was Rad1, lining up the rook against the black queen.

Bonus Question 4: After 16. Rad1 Kf7, what would you play next?

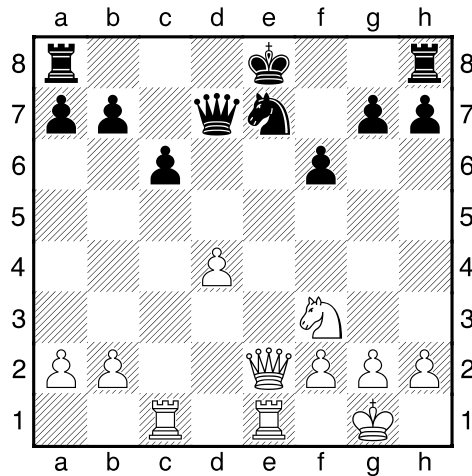
Answer: 5 points for 17. Qc4+.

Bonus Question 5: In this line, after 17... Nd5, what would you play next?

Answer: 10 points for 18. Ne5+: after 18... fxe5 19. dxe5 White regains the piece because of the threat of e6+, leaving him a pawn ahead.

16... c6

Black hesitates for a moment: 16... Kf7 would have equalised.



Choose a move for White.

17. d5

10 points for this star move, sacrificing a pawn to make room for the knight. You can have 5 points for Qc4, preventing Kf7.

17... cxd5

Choose a move for White.

18. Nd4

This was the point of White's last move: 5 points here, but nothing for anything else.

18... Kf7

Choose a move for White.

19. Ne6

5 points for placing the knight on this strong square. Again, nothing else scores.

19... Rhc8

Choose a move for White.

20. Qg4

Threatening mate in 2, amongst other things. Another 5 points, and yet again no points for anything else.

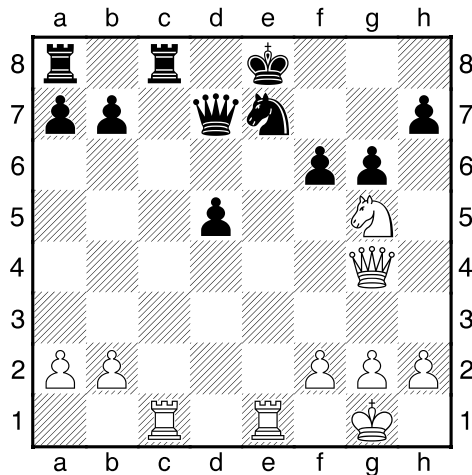
20... g6

Choose a move for White.

21. Ng5+

Another only move, and another 5 points.

21... Ke8



Choose a move for White.

22. Rxe7+

10 points for this move, the start of a splendid combination. 5 points for the clever Nxe7.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play if Black replied with 22... Kxe7?

Answer: You can award yourself 5 points for either 23. Re1+ or 23. Qb4+.

22... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

23. Rf7+

Another 10 points for this, continuing the theme. There are again 5 points for Nxe7+, but certainly no points for taking the queen either way, allowing a back rank mate. You have to be careful!

23... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

24. Rg7+

Another square along the seventh rank and another 10 points. The only other strong move is Rf8+ followed by Nxb7+, which is worth 5 points. You can work out for yourself what happens if Black captures the rook either way.

24... Kh8

Choose a move for White.

25. Rxh7+

You might have guessed this by now: if so you score 10 points yet again. You can have 5 points for playing Rxc8 as long as you were planning to follow up with Rxh7+.

At this point von Bardeleben resigned – or to be precise he left the room, apparently as a protest against the spectators' noise, letting his time run out.

Steinitz then demonstrated the following finish: 25... Kg8 26. Rg7+ Kh8 27. Qh4+ Kxg7 28. Qh7+ Kf8 29. Qh8+ Ke7 30. Qg7+ Ke8 31. Qg8+ Ke7 32. Qf7+ Kd8 33. Qf8+ Qe8 34. Nf7+ Kd7 35. Qd6#.

This game is far from typical of Steinitz's later style. At the start of his career he favoured the sort of sacrificial gambit play which was popular at the time. He gradually came to realise that there was another way of playing: accumulating small advantages, such as having the two bishops against bishop and knight, and exploiting this advantage later in the middlegame or even in the ending.

Steinitz is one of the most important and influential figures in chess history. His games are still very much worth studying today.

GAME 7 ANSWER SHEET

White's 9th move _____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

White's 17th move _____

White's 10th move _____

White's 18th move _____

Bonus Question 2 _____

White's 19th move _____

White's 11th move _____

White's 20th move _____

White's 12th move _____

White's 21st move _____

White's 13th move _____

White's 22nd move _____

White's 14th move _____

Bonus Question 6 _____

White's 15th move _____

White's 23rd move _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

White's 24th move _____

White's 16th move _____

White's 25th move _____

Bonus Question 4 _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 155)

Your rating:

125-155: Grandmaster

95-124: International Master

60-94: National Master

Below 60: Candidate Master

GAME 8

The top five players from Hastings were invited to a tournament in St Petersburg the following winter. Tarrasch was unable to take part, so the other four played each other six times. Lasker was successful on this occasion, winning an exciting and brilliant game with the black pieces against Pillsbury.

Can you play as well as Lasker did, or perhaps even better?

1. d4 d5
2. c4

Pillsbury did a lot to make the Queen's Gambit very popular.

- 2... e6
3. Nc3 Nf6
4. Nf3

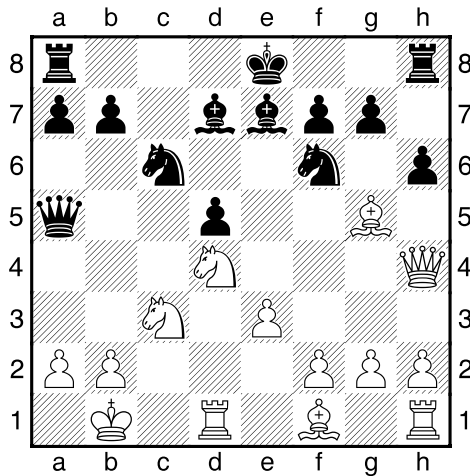
4. Bg5 and 4. cxd5 are also often played here. Pillsbury's move allows Lasker an energetic reply.

- 4... c5
5. Bg5

Perhaps not the right time for this move. 5. cxd5 is the critical choice, and 5. e3, playing quietly for a symmetrical position, is also popular.

- 5... cxd4
6. Qxd4 Nc6
7. Qh4 Be7
8. o-o-o Qa5
9. e3 Bd7
10. Kb1 h6
11. cxd5 exd5
12. Nd4

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

12... O-O

5 points for this simple developing move, threatening to capture on g5. 4 points for Nxd4 and 3 points for Rac8, both very sensible moves.

13. Bxf6

Choose a move for Black.

13... Bxf6

5 points for choosing this obvious recapture.

14. Qh5

Choose a move for Black.

14... Nxd4

4 points for this move, or for Rfd8. You can have 5 points for Be6: there's a slight advantage in playing this move first.

15. exd4

Choose a move for Black.

15... Be6

This move again scores 5 points, and there are 4 points for Rad8. Black is clearly better here, with the two bishops and a safer king. White should now complete his development, perhaps with Bc4, which is why it was slightly better to play the immediate Be6 last move.

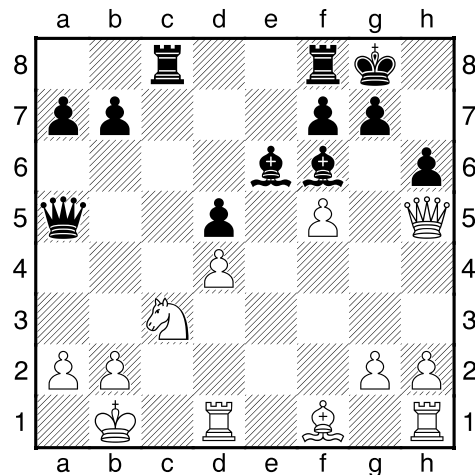
16. f4

Choose a move for Black.

16... Rxc8

There were a number of good choices here. 5 points for this move, also for Rfd8, Rad8 or the interesting pawn sacrifice b5.

17. f5



Choose a move for Black.

17... Rxc3

If you selected this brilliant sacrifice to expose the white king you score 10 points. I have to give you 10 points as well if you preferred the more obvious Bd7, which is the computer's first choice.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 18. bxc3?

Answer: 10 points for 18... Rc8, 8 points for 18... Bd7, 5 points for 18... Qxc3.

Bonus Question 2: In this line, what would you play after 18... Rc8 19. fxe6?

Answer: 5 points for 19... Qxc3.

Bonus Question 3: Continuing this line, what would you play after 19... Qxc3 20. exf7+?

Answer: 5 points for 20... Kf8.

Bonus Question 4: Continuing again, what would you play after 20... Kf8 21. Qe2?

Answer: 5 points for 21... Bxd4, when Black has to play Qe8+ to avoid mate. This is why 20... Kf8 had to be played.

18. fxe6

Choose a move for Black.

18... Ra3

Black is determined to sacrifice his rook: 10 points for this move. You can have 5 points for Rc6, Rc7 or Re3, all of which are about equal. White should take the rook at once here, when he has good chances of defending.

19. exf7+

Choose a move for Black.

19... Rxf7

5 points: obvious and correct.

20. bxa3

Choose a move for Black.

20... Qb6+

5 points: the only move to score. White now has to give up his bishop to distract the black queen from attacking d4.

21. Bb5

Choose a move for Black.

21... Qxb5+

Another obvious 5 points.

22. Ka1

Choose a move for Black.

22... Rc7

No points for finding the same move as Lasker, I'm afraid. If you preferred Qc4 or Qc5 instead you score 5 points. The rook is best where it is: after 22... Qc4 23. Qg4, Black can either play Be5 with the idea of Rf2, or Re7 with the idea of Re2. Now the position is equal with best play, but it's still not easy for Pillsbury to find the right moves.

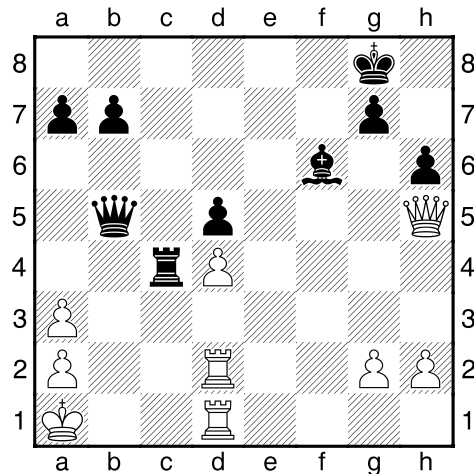
23. Rd2

Choose a move for Black.

23... Rc4

5 points for this move, which gives White the chance to go wrong. 5 points also for Rc2, hoping White will capture the rook and get mated after Bxd4+. You can have 3 points for Qa5, hoping to force a draw after Bxd4+ followed by Qc3+ and Qc2+. Now Pillsbury should have played 24. Re1 when Black can't capture on d4: 24... Bxd4+ 25. Rxd4 Rxd4 26. Qe8+, winning the queen or mating.

24. Rhd1



Choose a move for Black.

24... Rc3

Again, playing Lasker's move doesn't score anything. If you played Qc6 instead, though, threatening mate, you score 5 points. White has to reply with 25. Kb1, when Bg5 will regain the exchange with a winning position. White avoids a trap (25. Rb2 loses to the brilliant 25... Bxd4, instead playing an excellent move preparing to defend with Rc2 or to play Qe6+.

25. Qf5

Choose a move for Black.

25... Qc4

5 points for this move, an excellent practical choice hoping White will fall for another trap. 3 points for Qc6, with similar ideas. White has to prevent a check on c1, and should play Kb1, leaving his king safe and giving good winning chances with his material advantage.

26. Kb2

Choose a move for Black.

26... Rxa3

You deserve 10 points if you found this: Black sacrifices a second rook on the a3 square.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if White played 27. Kb1?

Answer: 10 points for 27... Bxd4, when 28. Rxd4 Qxa2+ leads to mate.

27. Qe6+

Choose a move for Black.

27... Kh7

5 points for this move, or for Kh8, but no points for Kf8, when White can defend with Qd6+.

28. Kxa3

Choose a move for Black.

28... Qc3+

5 points, forcing the white king up the board to his doom.

29. Ka4

Choose a move for Black.

29... b5+

5 points for this pawn sacrifice. 3 points for Qc4+, which takes two moves longer: you have to repeat moves and then play b5+ next time.

30. Kxb5

Choose a move for Black.

30... Qc4+

5 points again: no score for anything else. Now the game will conclude with 31. Ka5 Bd8+ and mate next move.

An exciting game between two of the leading players of their day. Yes, it was far from perfect, but the positions were really difficult so it's not surprising that they didn't always find the best move.

Emanuel Lasker was perhaps the most interesting person to become world chess champion. He excelled at many other things as well as chess. He was a mathematician and philosopher, and played many other games, such as bridge and go, as well as chess. His chess style was hard to pin down. It's often said that his approach was psychological, choosing the moves which would make his opponents feel uncomfortable.

You might like to learn more about his fascinating life and study more of his games.

GAME 8 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 12th move_____

Black's 21st move_____

Black's 13th move_____

Black's 22nd move_____

Black's 14th move_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Black's 15th move_____

Black's 24th move_____

Black's 16th move_____

Black's 25th move_____

Black's 17th move_____

Black's 26th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Bonus Question 5_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Black's 27th move_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Black's 28th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Black's 29th move_____

Black's 18th move_____

Black's 30th move_____

Black's 19th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 145)

Black's 20th move_____

Your rating:

115-145: Grandmaster

85-114: International Master

60-84: National Master

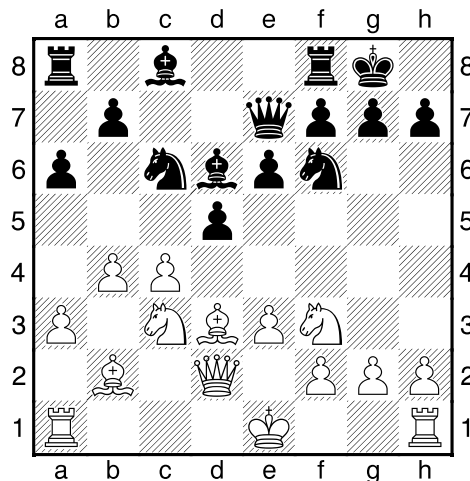
Below 60: Candidate Master

GAME 9

Poland's Akiba Rubinstein (1880-1961) was one of the strongest players never to have won, or even competed for, the World Championship. He was noted for the accuracy of his endgame play, and a number of opening systems also bear his name. Perhaps his most famous game, though, was this one, where, playing Black against Georg Rotlewi (Łódź 1907) he won with one of the most famous combinations of all time. Can you play as well as he did?

1. d4 d5
2. Nf3 e6
3. e3 c5
4. c4 Nc6
5. Nc3 Nf6
6. dxc5 Bxc5
7. a3 a6
8. b4 Bd6
9. Bb2 o-o
10. Qd2 Qe7
11. Bd3

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

11... dxc4

5 points for this move: Black has waited for White to move his bishop before making this capture, which his opponent failed to do on move 6. Rd8, lining up your rook with the white queen, is worth 3 points.

12. Bxc4

Choose a move for Black.

12... b5

5 points for this natural move, or for Rd8.

13. Bd3

Choose a move for Black.

13... Rd8

5 points again for this move, or for Bb7.

14. Qe2

Choose a move for Black.

14... Bb7

Another 5 points here: no real reason to consider anything else.

Stop and take a look at the position here. It's almost symmetrical, but Rubinstein has gained two moves. How did this happen? He gained one move by waiting for White to move his king's bishop before taking on c4, and another move by moving his queen to the correct square, e7, while White moved his queen first to d2, then had to move it again.

15. O-O

Choose a move for Black.

15... Ne5

5 points for this move, trading a queenside piece for a kingside piece. In this sort of position it's sometimes helpful to consider kingside pieces, especially knights, as being slightly stronger than queenside pieces. You can also award yourself 5 points for Rac8, putting a rook on a useful open file.

16. Nxe5

Choose a move for Black.

16... Bxe5

5 points for taking the piece back.

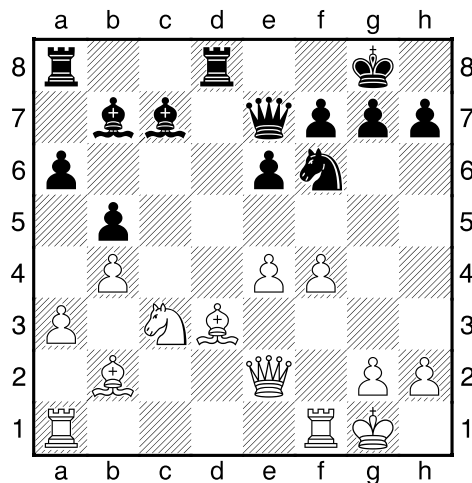
17. f4

Choose a move for Black.

17... Bc7

This is the most flexible square for the bishop, keeping out of the way of the other pieces, so scores 5 points. You can have 4 points for Bb8 and 3 points for Bd6.

18. e4



Choose a move for Black.

18... Rac8

There are several good choices here: you score 5 points for this move, for Bb6+ or for Nh5 (meeting Qxh5 with Rxd3). White thinks he's gaining space in the centre with his 17th to 19th moves, but in reality he's just weakening his king's defences.

19. e5

Choose a move for Black.

19... Bb6+

5 points for this move or for Ng4. Nh5 and Nd5 are both worth 3 points.

20. Kh1

Choose a move for Black.

20... Ng4

You were given a hint last time: 5 points here. You can also have 5 points for the exchange sacrifice Rxd3, followed by Ng4, which gives Black a winning attack. Again there are 3 points for Nd5 or Nh5.

21. Be4

Choose a move for Black.

21... Qh4

5 points for this move, threatening mate. You can also have 5 points for Nxf2 (Kxf2 runs into Qh4#) or Rxc3 (meeting Bxc3 with Qh4).

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 22. h3?

Answer: 10 points for Rxc3 or for h5, 5 points for Bxe4.

Bonus Question 2: After 22. h3 Rxc3 23. Bxc3, what would you play now?

Answer: 5 points for Bxe4.

Bonus Question 3: In this line, after 23... Bxe4 24. Qxe4, how would you continue?

Answer: 10 points for 24... Qg3 25. hxg4 Qh4# (this switchback idea is well worth remembering).

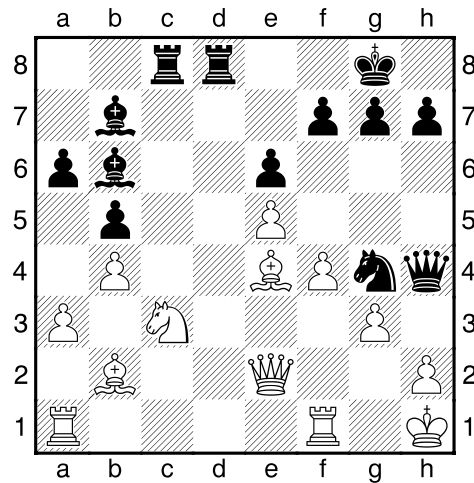
Bonus Question 4: Going back: after 23... Bxe4 24. Qxg4, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for 24... Qxg4 25. hxg4 Rd3.

Bonus Question 5: In this line, what would you play after 26. Rac1?

Answer: 5 points for spotting 26... Rh3# (the g2 pawn is pinned).

22. g3



Choose a move for Black.

22... Rxc3

10 points for this sensational queen sacrifice which makes this game so famous. If you chose Qe7 you can have 5 points.

White now has a choice of three pieces to take.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play now if White played 23. Bxc3?

Answer: 5 points for Bxe4+, forcing mate.

Bonus Question 7: What would you play now if White played 23... Bxb7?

Answer: 5 points for Rxg3, when White will have to give up a lot of material to avoid mate, 3 points for Re3, which should also win.

23. gxh4

Choose a move for Black.

23... Rd2

Another 10 points: not content with just sacrificing his queen, he offers a rook as well. You can have a consolation 3 points for Re3, when White is still in the game after Qxe3.

24. Qxd2

Choose a move for Black.

24... Bxe4+

An easy 5 points for this move.

25. Qg2

Choose a move for Black.

25... Rh3

5 points for this move, when Rxh2# can only be delayed. 4 points for Rc2, which also mates but takes a couple of moves longer, and 2 points for Bxg2+.

White resigned here, the victim of a brilliant attack.

Rubinstein's play in this game was pretty close to perfect, even by the standards of modern computers. Rtlewi played two slightly inaccurate moves in the opening, and then chose a poor plan on moves 17-19, leaving his king at the mercy of the two black bishops controlling vital diagonals. Rubinstein's brilliant tactical play gave him no chance to escape.

GAME 9 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 11th move _____

Black's 12th move _____

Black's 13th move _____

Black's 14th move _____

Black's 15th move _____

Black's 16th move _____

Black's 17th move _____

Black's 18th move _____

Black's 19th move _____

Black's 20th move _____

Black's 21st move _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

Bonus Question 2 _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

Bonus Question 4 _____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Black's 22nd move _____

Bonus Question 6 _____

Bonus Question 7 _____

Black's 23rd move _____

Black's 24th move _____

Black's 25th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 130)

Your rating:

105-130: Grandmaster

80-104: International Master

50-79: National Master

Below 50: Candidate Master

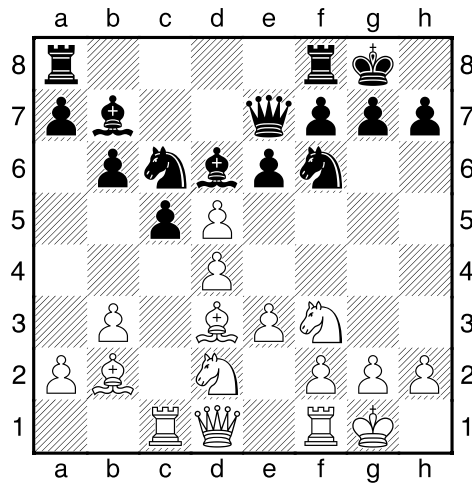
GAME 10

German doctor Siegbert Tarrasch (1864-1932) was one of the greatest players of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was also a very important writer and teacher whose books are still worth reading today. He taught about the value of a strong centre, a solid pawn formation and maximum mobility for your pieces. In the early decades of the last century a new movement in chess thinking arose, one of whose leaders was Aron Nimzowitsch (1886-1935), who was originally Latvian but lived most of his life in Denmark. Known as the Hypermodern School, its members taught that pawn centres can often become weak and can be attacked from the flanks. His books are also important and still read today, but offer a very different approach to chess from that of Tarrasch. Here's what happened when they met in the St Petersburg tournament of 1914. Tarrasch was playing the black pieces and you'll be guessing his moves.

1. d4 d5
2. Nf3 c5
3. c4 e6
4. e3 Nf6
5. Bd3 Nc6
6. o-o Bd6
7. b3 o-o
8. Bb2 b6
9. Nbd2 Bb7
10. Rc1 Qe7
11. cxd5

A typical Queen's Gambit position where White played an early e3 rather than Bg5. You've seen similar positions before.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

11... exd5

5 points for this move, maintaining a pawn in the centre of the board. 3 points for Nxd5.

12. Nh4

Choose a move for Black.

12... g6

5 points for this move. Although it slightly weakens your king's defences you can't allow the knight to reach f5. White thought it was worth two moves to provoke this weakness: Black disagreed.

13. Nhf3

Choose a move for Black.

13... Rad8

5 points for this move: rooks like looking at queens. Lots of choice here: 5 points also for Rfd8, Rac8 or Ne4.

14. dxc5

Choose a move for Black.

14... bxc5

5 points for this move, and 4 points for Bxc5. Stop and look at the pawn formation. Black's pawns on c5 and d5, with no pawns either side, are known as HANGING PAWNS. At the moment they look strong, but White is planning to attack them and prove they're really a weakness. If Black had taken with the bishop instead, he'd have been left with an ISOLATED QUEEN'S PAWN (IQP): another, perhaps even more important, pawn formation which you should study and practise.

15. Bb5

Choose a move for Black.

15... Ne4

5 points for this move, using your extra space to plant a knight in the centre. 4 points for a6 or for Rc8.

16. Bxc6

Choose a move for Black.

16... Bxc6

5 points for this recapture. The only alternative was Nxd2, which scores 3 points.

17. Qc2

Choose a move for Black.

17... Nxd2

5 points for this move, or for the immediate d4. Black is building up a dangerous initiative.

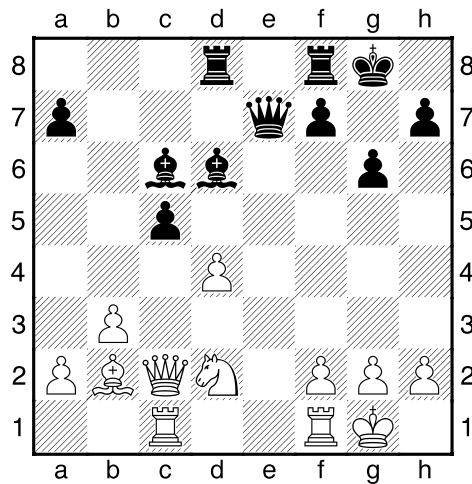
18. Nxd2

Choose a move for Black.

18... d4

5 points for this very strong move. It had to be calculated, though, because your bishop on c6 is loose. The next few moves will find you out. 3 points for Bb7, Ba8, Re8 or Qh4.

19. exd4



Choose a move for Black.

19... Bxh2+

10 points for this bishop sacrifice. It's not the only good move, though. You also score 10 points if you chose the other bishop sacrifice, Bxg2, which is perhaps easier to calculate.

Let's go down this line for a few bonus questions.

Bonus Question 1: If the game continued 19... Bxg2 20. Kxg2, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for 20... Qg5+, obvious and clearly best.

Bonus Question 2: If White now played 21. Kh1, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for 21... Qf4.

Bonus Question 3: If White played instead 21. Kh3, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for either Qh5+ or Qh6+, 3 points for Rde8 or Rfe8.

Bonus Question 4: If White played instead 21. Kf3, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for either Rde8 or Rfe8, 3 points for Qh5+

Returning to the actual game:

20. Kxh2

Choose a move for Black.

20... Qh4+

5 points for this, the only move to score.

21. Kg1

Choose a move for Black.

21... Bxg2

10 points for sacrificing the other bishop: again nothing for anything else. You have to expose the white king.

Bonus Question 5: If White played 22. Kxg2 here, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for Qg4+.

Bonus Question 6: If White then played 23. Kh2, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for Rd5, threatening mate. White will have to give up his queen, and Black will later pick up the knight on d2 via a queen check on g5. Black really had to see that before playing Bxh2+ on move 19.

22. f3

Choose a move for Black.

22... Rfe8

10 points for this move, bringing the last piece into play. 5 points for Rde8, but only 3 points for Bxf1 or Qh2+.

Bonus Question 7: If White now played 23. Kxh2, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for Re2+, with mate to follow.

23. Ne4

Choose a move for Black.

23... Qh1+

5 points for this, nothing for anything else.

24. Kf2

Choose a move for Black.

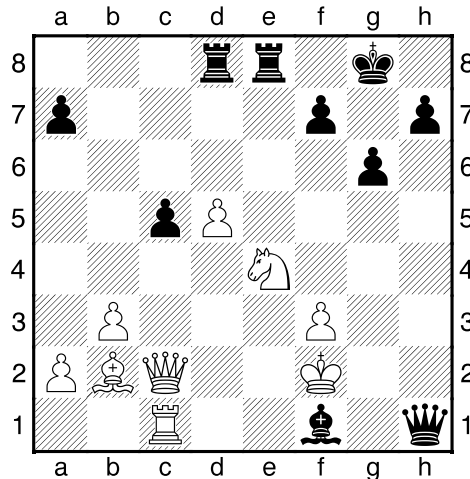
24... Bxf1

Again, this is the only good move, scoring another 5 points.

Bonus Question 8: If White now played 25. Rxf1, how would you continue?

Answer: Qh2+ is a winning skewer, scoring an easy 5 points.

25. d5



Choose a move for Black.

25... f5

5 points for this move, the quickest way to win. There were some alternatives: 4 points for Qg2+, Rd6 or f6.

Bonus Question 9: If White now played 26. Nf6+, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for Kf7: the king is safe on a light square and Black will mate shortly.

26. Qc3

Choose a move for Black.

26... Qg2+

5 points for this, the only winning move.

27. Ke3

Choose a move for Black.

27... Rxe4+

10 points: the quickest route to checkmate. 5 points for Qg5+, Qe2+ or Qg1+, all of which also lead to mate.

28. fxe4

Choose a move for Black.

28... f4+

5 points for this move: not the quickest way to win but Black decides to play for a pretty mate. The quickest win is Qg3+, mating in 3, and Qe2+, Qxe4+, Qh3+ and Qg5+ all lead to mate as well, so you can have 5 points for any of these moves.

29. Kxf4

Choose a move for Black.

29... Rf8+

5 points for this move or for Qh2+, which takes slightly longer.

30. Ke5

Choose a move for Black.

30... Qh2+

5 points for this, or for Qg5+, which takes one move longer.

31. Ke6

Choose a move for Black.

31... Re8+

5 points again, and 3 points for Bh3+.

32. Kd7

Bonus Question 10: If White now played 32. Kf6, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for Qf4# or Qh4#.

Choose a move for Black.

32... Bb5#

5 points for this pretty mate, perhaps the reason why both players chose this variation. If you preferred another pretty mate: 32... Rd8+ 33. Kxd8 Qd6+, with a bishop mate next move, you can also have 5 points.

Even though double bishop sacrifices like this don't happen very often, they're still worth remembering. The idea is to give up the two bishops for the g and h pawns and then mate with queen and rook. Tarrasch was probably influenced by an earlier game played by Lasker where the same idea was used. Otherwise he might have chosen the alternative sacrifice on move 19 which was rather easier to calculate.

In this case it was Tarrasch who won the battle of ideas against Nimzowitsch. His pawn centre and active pieces, especially his raking bishops, proved decisive: White's losing move was 18. exd4: a better defence was 18. g3 dxe3 19. Qc3, but Black was slightly better anyway. Nevertheless, Nimzowitsch and the other hypermodern players would win many fine games over the next 20 years or so.

GAME 10 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 11th move_____

Black's 12th move_____

Black's 13th move_____

Black's 14th move_____

Black's 15th move_____

Black's 16th move_____

Black's 17th move_____

Black's 18th move_____

Black's 19th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Black's 20th move_____

Black's 21st move_____

Bonus Question 5_____

Bonus Question 6_____

Black's 22nd move_____

Bonus Question 7_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Black's 24th move_____

Bonus Question 8_____

Black's 25th move_____

Bonus Question 9_____

Black's 26th move_____

Black's 27th move_____

Black's 28th move_____

Black's 29th move _____

Black's 30th move _____

Black's 31st move _____

Black's 32nd move _____

Bonus Question 10 _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 185)

Your rating:

150-185: Grandmaster

110-149: International Master

75-109: National Master

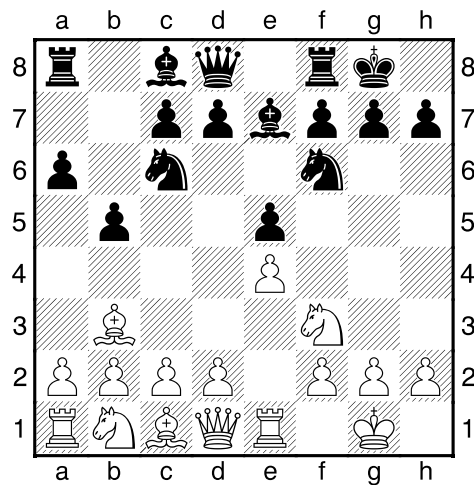
Below 75: Candidate Master

GAME 11

The Cuban player José Raúl Capablanca (1888-1942) was World Champion from 1921 to 1927. He was renowned for his positional and endgame play: you can see one of his most famous endings in *CHESS HEROES: ENDINGS*. He was also a great defensive player. In this game, played in New York in 1918, he faced the American Frank Marshall, a dangerous attacker who had prepared a then little-known pawn sacrifice to play against him. Capablanca was up to the challenge, and was able to beat off the attack and gain a material advantage. Can you defend as well as him?

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bb5 a6
4. Ba4 Nf6
5. O-O Be7
6. Re1 b5
7. Bb3 O-O

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

8. c3

Score 5 points for this, the most popular move here. White's plan is to prepare d4, putting two pawns in the centre. 4 points for a4, d3, d4 or h3, all of which are also excellent moves.

- 8... d5

Choose a move for White.

9. exd5

This is the correct response, scoring 5 points. 3 points for d3 or d4, which are also reasonable.

9... Nxd5

Choose a move for White.

10. Nxe5

There's no real reason not to accept the gambit pawn, so this scores 5 points. You can have 3 points for any of a4, d3, d4 or h3.

10... Nxe5

Choose a move for White.

11. Rxe5

5 points for this forced recapture.

11... Nf6

Choose a move for White.

12. Re1

4 points for this move, and 5 points for d4, which is rather more flexible. You can also have 3 points for h3, taking a square away from Black's minor pieces.

12... Bd6

Choose a move for White.

13. h3

Again this move scores 4 points, while d4 again scores 5 points.

13... Ng4

Choose a move for White.

14. Qf3

5 points for this move, or for d4. Nothing for hxg4, after Qh4 the white king will be in a lot of trouble.

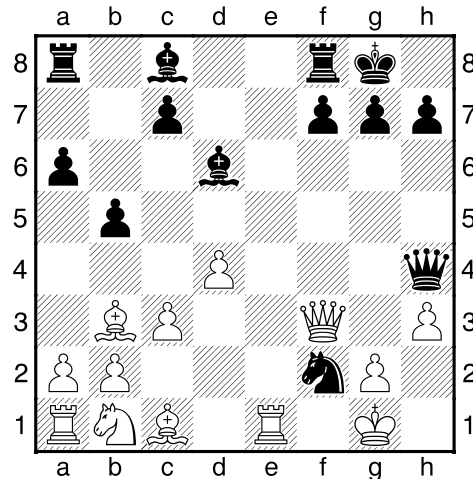
14... Qh4

Choose a move for White.

15. d4

5 points for this move, and 4 points for d3. Certainly not Qxa8, allowing mate in 2.

15... Nxf2



Choose a move for White.

16. Re2

5 points for this excellent defensive move. 3 points for Re3, Bd2 or Qxf2, but nothing for Qxa8, which is met by Nxf2+. We'll take a quick look at Qxf2 now.

Bonus Question 1: If the game continued 16. Qxf2 Bg3, what would you play now?

Answer: 10 points for spotting 17. Qxf7+ Rxf7 18. Re8# (a pin mate).

Bonus Question 2: If the game continued 16. Qxf2 Bh2+ 17. Kf1 Bg3, what would you play now?

Answer: 5 points for 18. Qd2, clearly the best move. Qe2 would be met by Bxh3 followed by Rae8. 18. Qxf7+ no longer works because Rxf7 is check.

Bonus Question 3: If, after 16. Re2, Black played Ng4, what would you play now?

Answer: The best move, which is very hard to find so scores 10 points is g3, allowing the rook to defend along the second rank. After Qxh3 White has time for Qxa8, and Bxg3 runs into Qxf7+ and mate next move again. You can have 5 points for Nd2 and 3 points for Qxa8 (it's not so easy to find the right moves after Qg3) but nothing for hxg4, met by Bxg4.

16... Bg4

Choose a move for White.

17. hxg4

The only good option here, scoring 5 points.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played Nxg4?

Answer: 5 points for Qh3, 4 points for g3 and 3 points for Bf4.

17... Bh2+

Choose a move for White.

18. Kf1

The only legal move, so everyone scores 5 points.

18... Bg3

Choose a move for White.

19. Rxf2

5 points for this move, capturing an important attacking piece. 4 points for Re3 or Ke1, both also allowing the white king to escape.

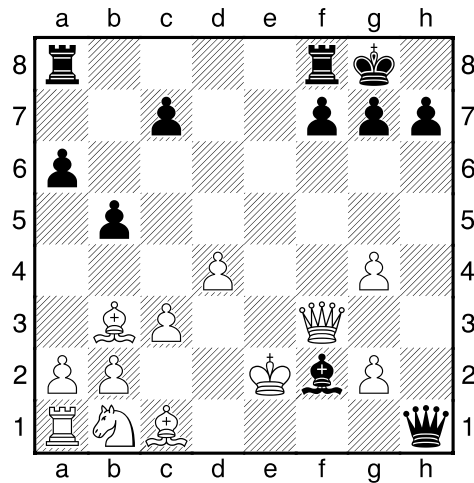
19... Qh1+

Choose a move for White.

20. Ke2

Again the only legal move, so everyone scores 5 points.

20... Bxf2



Choose a move for White.

21. Bd2

5 points for this move, the clearest way to win. 4 points for Kd2, and 3 points for Nd2, Bd1 or Bf4. No credit for Kxf2, when Qxc1 should lead to a draw, or Qxf2, which loses to Qxc1.

21... Bh4

Choose a move for White.

22. Qh3

5 points for this, 4 points for Kd3 and 3 points for Bd5.

23... Rae8+

Choose a move for White.

23. Kd3

5 points for this, the only move to win. Be3 loses to Qe1+ and Kf3 allows Qf1#.

The test concludes here. White has two minor pieces for a rook and his king will find safety on c2. Capablanca would never fail to win a position like this.

Here's how the game finished.

23... Qf1+

24. Kc2 Bf2

25. Qf3 Qg1

26. Bd5 c5

27. dxc5 Bxc5
28. b4 Bd6
29. a4 a5
30. axb5 axb4
31. Ra6 bxc3
32. Nxc3 Bb4
33. b6 Bxc3
34. Bxc3 h6
35. b7 Re3
36. Bxf7+

Black resigns

Marshall's 8th move, d5, now known as the Marshall Gambit, is still very popular today, although these days 11... c6 rather than Nf6 is usually played. It's considered one of Black's best replies to the Spanish (Ruy Lopez). You might want to study some more games with this opening variation.

You should certainly also study more of Capablanca's games: both his beautiful positional play in middlegame positions and his superbly played endings.

GAME 11 ANSWER SHEET

White's 8th move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 9th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

White's 10th move_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 11th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 12th move_____

White's 20th move_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 16th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 105)

Bonus Question 1_____

Your rating:

85-105: Grandmaster

Bonus Question 2_____

65-84: International Master

Bonus Question 3_____

40-64: National Master

Below 40: Candidate Master

GAME 12

Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946) was World Champion from 1927 to 1935, when he lost the title to the Dutch player Max Euwe, and again from 1937, when he regained the title, until his death. Alekhine, born in Russia, but later a French citizen, was famed for his brilliant attacking play and scintillating combinations. This game, in which Alekhine played black against Richard Réti at a 1925 tournament in the German spa town of Baden-Baden, is considered one of his most astonishing feats of calculation. Can you play as well as him.

1. g3 e5
2. Nf3

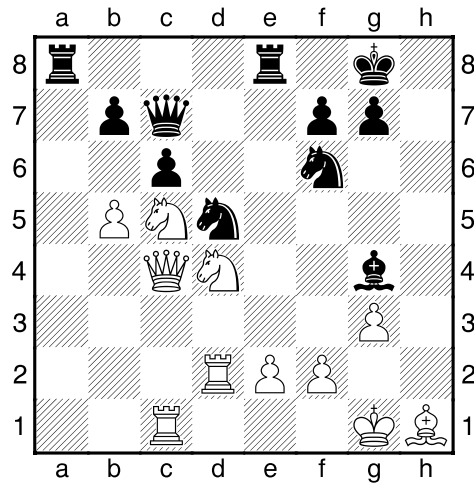
Réti, was, along with Nimzowitsch, a member of the Hypermodern School, and gives his name to the move 1. Nf3. Alekhine, who also used hypermodern ideas on occasion, gives his name to 1. e4 Nf6, when 2. e5 will drive the knight round the board. In this game, White's slightly unconventional first move leads to an unusual position which might be considered a reverse Alekhine's Defence. The early part of the game was well played by both players, leading to an equal game.

- 2... e4
3. Nd4 d5
4. d3 exd3
5. Qxd3 Nf6
6. Bg2 Bb4+
7. Bd2 Bxd2+
8. Nxd2 o-o
9. c4 Na6
10. cxd5 Nb4
11. Qc4 Nbx d5
12. N2b3 c6
13. o-o Re8
14. Rfd1 Bg4
15. Rd2 Qc8
16. Nc5 Bh3
17. Bf3 Bg4
18. Bg2 Bh3
19. Bf3 Bg4
20. Bh1 h5
21. b4 a6
22. Rc1 h4
23. a4 hxg3
24. hxg3 Qc7

25. b5 axb5

26. axb5

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

26... Re3

10 points for this move because of its surprise value. You can score 5 points for Ne3, with similar ideas, for Rac8 or for Rad8.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play if White played 27. fxe3 here?

Answer: 5 points for 27... Qxg3+ 28. Bg2 Nxe3 (or Bh3), when White can only delay Qxg2#.

27. Nf3

Choose a move for Black.

27... cxb5

5 points for this move, diverting the white queen. No score for anything else.

28. Qxb5

Choose a move for Black.

28... Nc3

5 points for this move, and 3 points for Rc3.

29. Qxb7

Choose a move for Black.

29... Qxb7

5 points for this move: Black's attack continues in spite of the queen exchange.

30. Nxb7

Choose a move for Black.

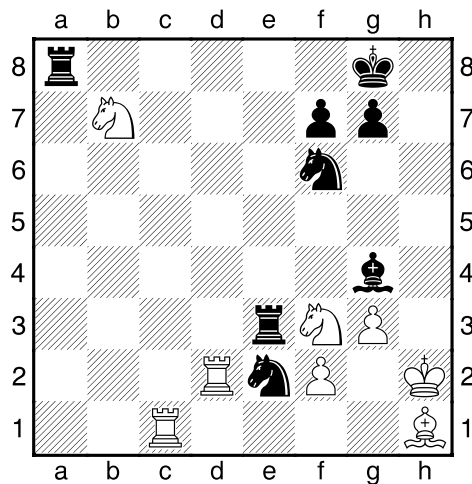
30... Nxe2+

5 points for this, the only move to score.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play if White played 31. Kf1 here?

Answer: 5 points for 31... Nxf3 32. fxf3 Bxf3 when Black will win the g-pawn and have two extra pawns in the ending.

31. Kh2



Choose a move for Black.

31... Ne4

10 points for this, again the only winning move.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play if White played 32. fxe3 here?

Answer: 5 points for 32... Nxd2 when Black will emerge the exchange ahead after 33. Nxd2 Nxc1.

32. Rc4

Choose a move for Black.

32... Nxf2

5 points for this move, yet again the only move to maintain the advantage.

33. Bg2

Choose a move for Black.

33... Be6

You have a choice here. 5 points for this move, Ne4 or Ra6. You can also have 3 points for Rxf3.

34. Rcc2

Choose a move for Black.

34... Ng4+

5 points for this move: nothing for anything else.

35. Kh3

Choose a move for Black.

35... Ne5+

5 points for this move, and 4 points for Nh6+, Nf6+ or Nf2+, when you'll have to return to Ne5+ in two moves time.

36. Kh2

Choose a move for Black.

36... Rxf3

5 points for this capture, and 3 points for Nxf3+, which will leave you a pawn ahead.

37. Rxe2

Choose a move for Black.

37... Ng4+

5 points for this move, the clearest way to win. You can score 3 points for the clever Re3, or for Rf5.

38. Kh3

Choose a move for Black.

38... Ne3+

Again there are several winning moves here. Score 5 points for this move, for Rf2 or for Rf6. Score 4 points for Ne5+ or Nf2+, both repeating moves for the time being, and 3 points for Re3.

39. Kh2

Choose a move for Black.

39... Nxc2

5 points for this move: Alekhine has seen a few moves ahead. You can have 4 points for Ng4+, repeating the position a second time, and 3 points for Nxc2.

40. Bxf3

Choose a move for Black.

40... Nd4

5 points for playing this fork, the only winning move.

Réti resigned here, but there there are more points if you can see why.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if White played 41. Rf2?

Answer: 5 points for 41... Nxf3+ 42. Rxf3 Bd5, with a bishop fork winning the unfortunate knight on b7, or for the more complicated 41... Ra2 42. Rxa2 Nxf3+ 43. Kg2 Bxa2 44. Kxf3 Bd5+, with another bishop fork.

An extraordinary tactical sequence running throughout the whole test. If you managed to find most of Alekhine's moves you've done really well. Réti had improvements on move 27 (the computer prefers Bf3 and considers Kh2 and Rd3 also equal) and move 28 (Qd4 was a better try), but these moves were far from easy to find over the board. From that point on he stood no chance at all faced with Alekhine's precise calculation.

It's always well worth studying Alekhine's games, which will inspire you to become a great tactician yourself.

GAME 12 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 26th move_____

Black's 35th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Black's 36th move_____

Black's 27th move_____

Black's 37th move_____

Black's 28th move_____

Black's 38th move_____

Black's 29th move_____

Black's 39th move_____

Black's 30th move_____

Black's 40th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Black's 31st move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 105)

Bonus Question 3_____

Your rating:

Black's 32nd move_____

85-105: Grandmaster

Black's 33rd move_____

65-84: International Master

Black's 34th move_____

40-64: National Master

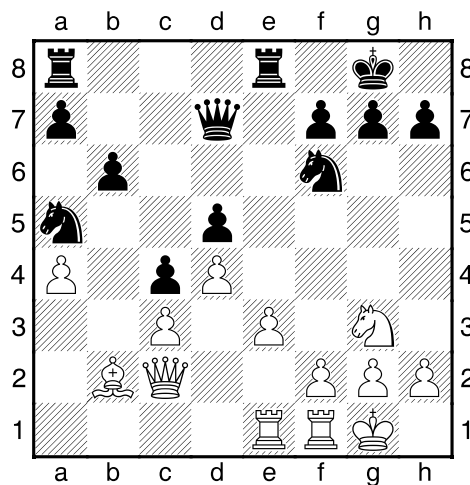
Below 40: Candidate Master

GAME 13

Chess was heavily promoted in the Soviet Union for political reasons from the 1920s onwards, and, from the end of the Second World War to the end of the last century Soviet players would (along, briefly, with Bobby Fischer) dominate international chess. The first great Soviet player was Mikhail Botvinnik (1911-1995). In this game, from an important tournament in the Netherlands in 1938, the great Capablanca makes just one positional misjudgement, and Botvinnik doesn't let him escape.

Can you play as well as him?

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4
4. e3 d5
5. a3 Bxc3+
6. bxc3 c5
7. cxd5 exd5
8. Bd3 o-o
9. Ne2 b6
10. o-o Ba6
11. Bxa6 Nxa6
12. Bb2 Qd7
13. a4 Rfe8
14. Qd3 c4
15. Qc2 Nb8
16. Rae1 Nc6
17. Ng3 Na5



The test starts here.

Choose a move for White.

18. f3

This is clearly the best move, scoring 5 points. White correctly ignores Black's queenside demonstration, preparing to build up a strong centre and launch a kingside attack.

18... Nb3

Choose a move for White.

19. e4

Score 5 points for this move, the whole point of White's play from move 9 onwards. There's no reason to consider anything else.

19... Qxa4

Choose a move for White.

20. e5

Another 5 points here, and again no real reason to do anything else. 3 points for Qf2 or Qd1, which are both quite good.

20... Nd7

Choose a move for White.

21. Qf2

White has a very strong position, with several good ways to continue. Score 5 points for this move, or for any of f4, Re3, Qd1 or Nf5.

21... g6

Choose a move for White.

22. f4

Again there are a few options to try and break down Black's defence. Score 5 points for this move and 4 points for h4 or for Qe3.

22... f5

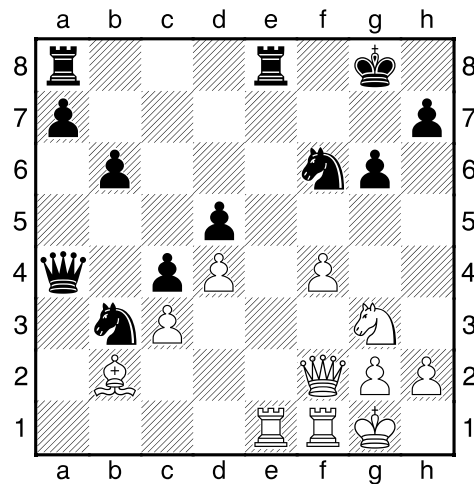
Choose a move for White.

23. exf6

Score 5 points for this *en passant* capture. You can have 3 points for Nh1, planning g4, or for the imaginative sacrifice Nxf5.

23... Nxf6

Choose a move for White.



24. f5

5 points for this move, opening lines against the black king. No points, and no reason, for anything else.

24... Rxe1

Choose a move for White.

25. Rxe1

5 points for this recapture.

25... Re8

Choose a move for White.

26. Re6

Again, this is the only move to maintain White's advantage. 5 points here, and nothing for anything else.

26... Rxe6

Choose a move for White.

27. fxe6

Another obvious recapture for 5 points.

27... Kg7

Choose a move for White.

28. Qf4

White has to act fast, and again only has one good choice. Score 5 points if this was your choice as well, threatening Qc7+.

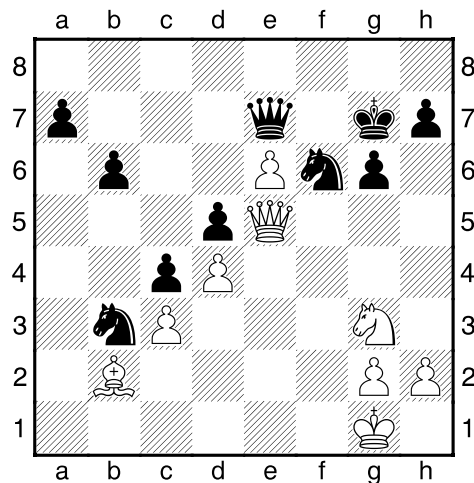
28... Qe8

Choose a move for White.

29. Qe5

This is the only point in the game where Botvinnik didn't find the best move. Take 3 points for this, or for Qd6, but 5 points for Qc7+, which gains a move by forcing the king away before playing Qe5.

29... Qe7



Choose a move for White.

30. Ba3

10 points for this brilliant move, distracting the black queen. You might have wondered what the bishop was doing on b2: here's your answer. The only other good move was h4, which scores 5 points. Black's last move was an understandable mistake: 29... h6 would have been a better defence.

30... Qxa3

Choose a move for White.

31. Nh5+

Another brilliant move, and another 10 points. Nothing for anything else: Qc7+ would be a draw by perpetual check, while other moves give Black time to defend.

31... gxh5

Choose a move for White.

32. Qg5+

5 points: White will regain one of the sacrificed pieces when his e-pawn will decide.

32... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

33. Qxf6+

An easy 5 points for this move.

33... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

34. e7

5 points for pushing this passed pawn. Also 5 points for Qf7+, Qg5+ or Qd8+, but you'll have to play this move eventually – and calculate that you can escape Black's checks.

34... Qc1+

Choose a move for White.

35. Kf2

5 points: no choice as after Qf1 Black will trade queens and stop the pawn.

35... Qc2+

Choose a move for White.

36. Kg3

5 points again: all moves win, but this is quickest. 3 points for Kg1.

36... Qd3+

Choose a move for White.

37. Kh4

The king boldly marches up the board, scoring another 5 points. 3 points for Kf2 when you'll have to come here eventually. Kf4 allows a perpetual check after Qe4+ and Qf3 loses after the queen trade.

37... Qe4+

Choose a move for White.

38. Kxh5

5 points: the only winning move here.

38... Qe2+

Choose a move for White.

39. Kh4

5 points for this move, or for g4, both of which will eventually escape the checks. 3 points for Kh6, when you'll have another chance in two moves time.

39... Qe4+

Choose a move for White.

40. g4

Score 5 points: the quickest way to find safety. Take 4 points for Kh5 and 3 points for Kg3, both of which take longer to win.

40... Qe1+

Choose a move for White.

41. Kh5

Winning at once, as Black has no more checks, and scoring 5 points. Other moves are slower but still win: 4 points for Kg5 or Kh3.

1-0

The first part of this game, up to move 29, was all about finding the correct plan: forming a strong centre and then launching a kingside attack. The rest of the game was all about calculation: rather like the previous game one long variation with few alternatives for either player, which is why there were no bonus questions here. Perhaps the piece sacrifices weren't so hard to find, but, before entering the line Botvinnik had to look a long way ahead to make sure his king could escape from the series of checks. If you struggled to find moves 18-29 you need to think about improving your long-range planning skills. If you missed moves 30-41 you might want to look at training your calculation skills.

GAME 13 ANSWER SHEET

White's 18th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 20th move_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 26th move_____

White's 27th move_____

White's 28th move_____

White's 29th move_____

White's 30th move_____

White's 31st move_____

White's 32nd move_____

White's 33rd move_____

White's 34th move_____

White's 35th move_____

White's 36th move_____

White's 37th move_____

White's 38th move_____

White's 39th move_____

White's 40th move_____

White's 41st move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 130)

Your rating:

105-130: Grandmaster

80-104: International Master

50-79: National Master

Below 50: Candidate Master

GAME 14

Dutchman Max Euwe was world champion between 1935, when he unexpectedly won a match against Alekhine, and 1937, when Alekhine took the title back.

A maths teacher by profession, he later became President of the International Chess Federation (FIDE). His inspirational life did much to make chess very popular in the Netherlands.

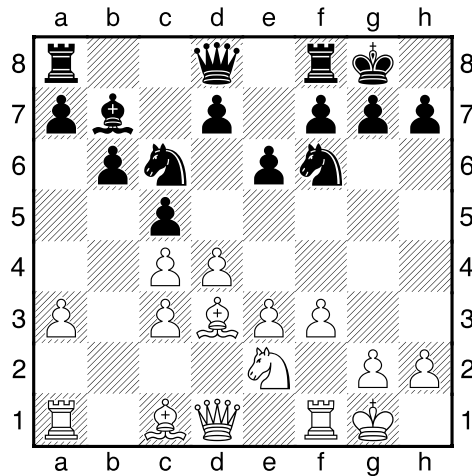
In this game, from the 1953 Candidates Tournament in Switzerland, one of the most famous tournaments of all time, Euwe, playing the black pieces against Efim Geller, a strong Soviet player, demonstrated great strategical understanding in the opening alongside defensive and counter-attacking skills in the middle game. Can you do as well?

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4

It's another Nimzo-Indian Defence

4. e3 c5
5. a3 Bxc3+
6. bxc3 b6
7. Bd3 Bb7
8. f3 Nc6
9. Ne2 O-O
10. O-O

In this variation, Black has given up a bishop for a knight to give White doubled c-pawns. The pawn on c5 stops them advancing and he's now going to attack them with as many pieces as he can. White's plan is to advance his pawns in the centre and the kingside, using his two bishops to start an attack on the black king. Playing Black, your job is to combine attacking White's weak pawns with defending against his dangerous attack.



Choose a move for Black.

10... Na5

Score 5 points for this move, for Ba6 or for Rc8, all of which fit in with Black's plan. Yes, I know you've been taught not to move your knight to the side, but here it's a good move! Chess is hard!

11. e4

Choose a move for Black.

11... Ne8

There are 5 points available for this move. Yes, you've probably also been taught not to move defensive pieces away from your king, but here it's the best move! Chess is hard! One idea is to prevent a pin with Bg5, but there's another idea as well, which you'll see later. Score 4 points for Rc8, cxd4 or h6. And if you chose Ne8 last move, go back and award yourself 5 points there as well.

Bonus Question 1: How would you reply if White played 12. f4 here?

Answer: 5 points for f5: this was the other point of Ne8 as this move blocks White's attack. Yes, again you've been taught not to move the pawns in front of your king, but again chess is hard! You can have 3 points for Rc8 or cxd4.

12. Ng3

Choose a move for Black.

12... cxd4

4 points for this move, which is logical enough, for Rc8, Qc7 or f6. If you chose Ba6 instead you can have 5 points.

13. cxd4

Choose a move for Black.

13... Rc8

Attacking the c-pawn again is the right plan, so 5 points for this move or Ba6, and 4 points for Nd6 or Qc7.

14. f4

Choose a move for Black.

14... Nxc4

No reason not to take the pawn: 5 points for this capture.

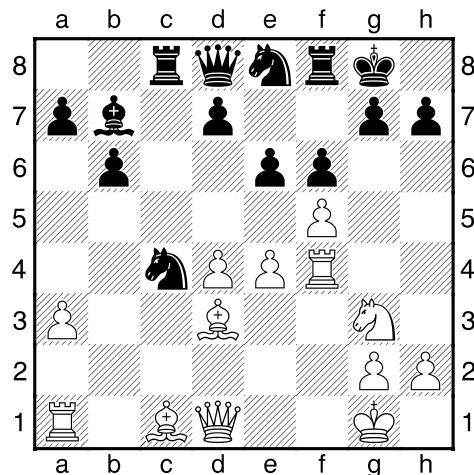
15. f5

Choose a move for Black.

15... f6

A good defensive move, worth 4 points, preventing moves like e5 followed by f6 and preparing an escape route for the king. But if you preferred b5, defending the knight again and opening up a path for your queen, you can have 5 points.

16. Rf4



Choose a move for Black.

16... b5

Take 5 points for this excellent move, 4 points for e5, and 3 points for Qc7 or Qe7.

17. Rh4

Choose a move for Black.

17... Qb6

I'm sure you realised this was the idea of b5, threatening to capture on d4 with check and scoring 5 points. Take 3 points for e5.

18. e5

Choose a move for Black

18... Nxe5

Score 4 points for this capture, exploiting the pin. 18... h6 (the computer move, scoring 5 points) looks scary after 19. Bxh6, but you can then play Nxe5 before accepting the sacrifice. If you chose fxe5 you can have 3 points.

19. fxe6

Choose a move for Black.

19... Nxd3

5 points for this trade: nothing for anything else.

20. Qxd3

Choose a move for Black.

20... Qxe6

This capture is worth 5 points, with 3 points for fxe6.

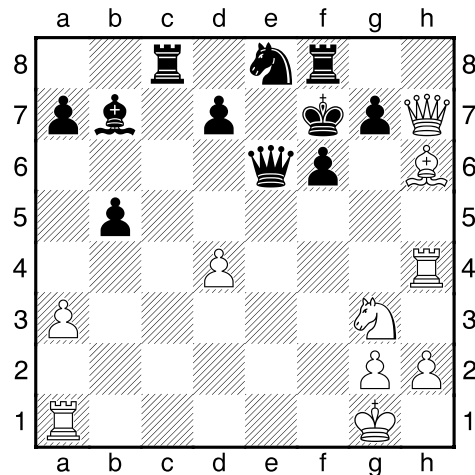
21. Qxh7+

Choose a move for Black.

21... Kf7

5 points for everyone here.

22. Bh6



Choose a move for Black.

22... Rh8

This is the move that made this game famous, but it's certainly not best. How should I mark it? I think I'll give you 10 points since it might be the best practical chance to win. You can also have 10 points for Rc3, the computer choice, which gives Black a slight advantage. The threat is Rxc3 followed by Qe2, meeting Rh2 with Be4, trapping the queen. You can take 5 points for Qd5 or b4, both of which also give Black some chances.

23. Qxh8

Choose a move for Black.

23... Rc2

5 points: the only move that makes sense here. Black has sacrificed his rook, which was doing nothing much anyway, to leave the white queen stuck in the corner.

Now, unusually for this book, I'm going to ask you to turn the board round and...

Bonus Question 2: Choose a move for White.

Answer: 10 points if you found the spectacular defence 24. d5.

Bonus Question 3: After 24. d5 Qxd5, what would you play for White?

Answer: 5 points for Re4, which is now possible because the bishop on b7 no longer controls this square. White is winning and can follow up with Rae1.

Bonus Question 4: After 24. d5 Qb6+ 25. Kh1 Bxd5 what would you play for White?

Answer: 5 points for Ne4, beating off the threats to g2, when White has a clear advantage.

Bonus Question 5: After 24. d5 Bxd5, what would you play for White?

Answer: 5 points for Rd1, the only real defence to the threat of Qb6+. My computer tells me that this position offers equal chances with best play.

But White, understandably perhaps, failed to find 24. d5, so you can turn the board round again.

24. Rc1

Choose a move for Black.

24... Rxc2+

A clearcut choice, earning you 5 points.

25. Kf1

Choose a move for Black.

25... Qb3

Score 5 points for this move, forcing checkmate.

26. Ke1

Choose a move for Black.

26... Qf3

Forcing mate and earning 5 points. You can also have 5 points for Qd3 and 4 points for Rg1+, both of which also lead to eventual checkmate.

0-1

This game was famous because of 22... Rh8, but the real interest is in the possible defence 24. d5, missed by Geller, who was a very strong tactician. If Black takes with the queen his bishop loses control of e4, while if he takes with the bishop his queen loses control of b3, so that Qb3, as played in the game, is no longer possible.

A remarkable idea which is quite common in composed problems but very unusual in over-the-board play.

GAME 14 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 10th move_____

Black's 11th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Black's 12th move_____

Black's 13th move_____

Black's 14th move_____

Black's 15th move_____

Black's 16th move_____

Black's 17th move_____

Black's 18th move_____

Black's 19th move_____

Black's 20th move_____

Black's 21st move_____

Black's 22nd move_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Bonus Question 5_____

Black's 24th move_____

Black's 25th move_____

Black's 26th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 120)

Your rating:

95-120: Grandmaster

70-94: International Master

50-69: National Master

Below 50: Candidate Master

GAME 15

This game, won by the 13-year-old Bobby Fischer, was described as the Game of the Century when it was played in 1956. It was unheard of at the time for a boy of that age to be so successful against master level opponents, but Fischer, it soon became clear, was perhaps the most naturally gifted player in the history of chess.

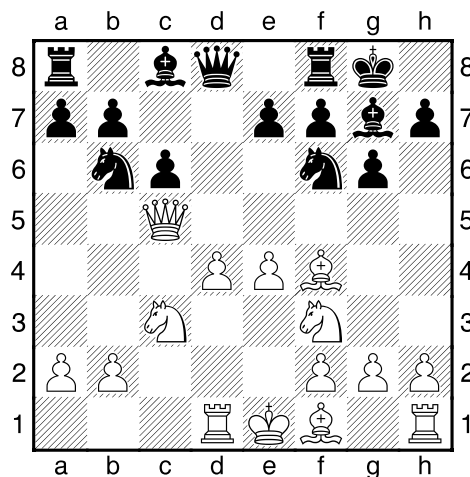
He was playing the black pieces against Donald Byrne, himself a strong master player, in a tournament in New York in 1963. It takes a real genius to find the moves he played, almost from out of the opening. Do you have the brain power to guess his moves correctly?

1. Nf3 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. Nc3 Bg7
4. d4 O-O
5. Bf4 d5

We've now reached a position from the Grünfeld Defence: the usual move order would be 1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5, when one variation is 4. Nf3 Bg7 5. Bf4 O-O.

6. Qb3 dxc4
7. Qxc4 c6
8. e4 Nbd7
9. Rd1 Nb6
10. Qc5

Opening theory has moved on a long way since 1956. We now know that 8... Nbd7 isn't Black's best move, and that Qc5 isn't the best square for the white queen.



Choose a move for Black.

10... Bg4

It's time for Black to develop his bishop: 5 points for this natural move, and 3 points for Be6.

11. Bg5

Choose a move for Black.

11... Na4

Score 10 points for this, the start of a remarkable series of moves. You can have 5 points for Re8, providing extra defence for the pawn on e7.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 12. Nxa4?

Answer: 5 points for the obvious Nxe4, when Black will regain the piece with a winning advantage in all lines, because the white king is stuck in the centre.

12. Qa3

Choose a move for Black.

12... Nxc3

Take 5 points for this move: no credit for anything else.

13. bxc3

Choose a move for Black.

13... Nxe4

Another 5 points here, and again nothing for alternatives.

14. Bxe7

Choose a move for Black.

14... Qb6

5 points for this move or for Qd5, the computer's preference. 3 points for Qe8.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if White played 15. Bxf8?

Answer: 5 points for 15... Bxf8, when after 16. Qb3 Black has, amongst other things, Nxc3. Although White is slightly up in material his position is hopeless, with his king an open target in the centre and his kingside pieces undeveloped.

15. Bc4

Choose a move for Black.

15... Nxc3

If you found this move you score 10 points: Black ignores the attack on his rook and offers his knight as well. Give yourself 5 points for Rfe8 or Bxf3, both of which are also good.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play now if White played 16. Qxc3?

Answer: 5 points for Rae8, regaining the piece when Black will be a pawn ahead. 4 points for Rfe8, which is slightly less accurate because it's useful to keep a rook on f8 to defend f7.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if White played 16. Bxf8?

Answer: again 5 points for Bxf8: Black will take the rook later, again with an extra pawn and a winning position. You can have 3 points for Re8+.

16. Bc5

Choose a move for Black.

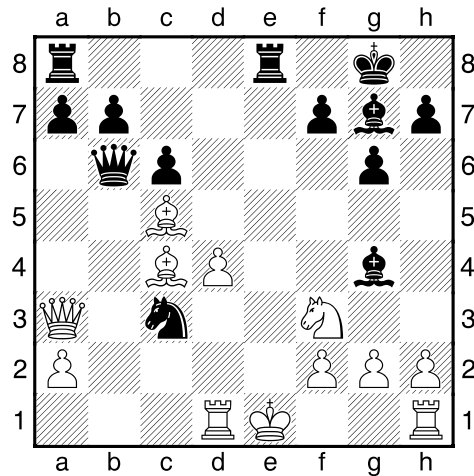
16... Rfe8+

Award yourself 5 points for this move, which however only works if you've seen, as Fischer must have done, Black's next move. You can also score 5 points for Nb5, which is an equally good alternative.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if White played 17. Ne5?

Answer: 5 points for 17... Bxe5, meeting 18. Bxb6 with Bd6+. 3 points for 17... Rxe5.

17. Kf1



Choose a move for Black.

17... Be6

This sensational move, which he must have seen in advance, sent shockwaves round the world: a well-deserved 10 points are yours if this was your choice.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play now if White played 18. Qxc3?

Answer: This was White's best choice, but Black will reply 18... Qxc5, exploiting the pin to regain the piece and scoring 5 points. With an extra pawn he should win the ending.

Bonus Question 7: What would you play now if White played 18. Bxe6?

Answer: 5 points are yours if you found 18... Qb5+.

Bonus Question 8: In this variation, what would you play after 19. Kg1?

Answer: You should be familiar with the mating sequence 19... Ne2+ 20. Kf1 Ng3+ 21. Kg1 Qf1+ 22. Rxf1 Ne2#. As it's a queen sacrifice you score 10 points for seeing the whole variation.

18. Bxb6

Choose a move for Black.

18... Bxc4+

Everyone should score 5 points here. It's easy to see that Black has a draw for the taking, but is there more?

19. Kg1

Choose a move for Black.

19... Ne2+

Again, I'm sure you found this move: add 5 points to your score.

20. Kf1

Choose a move for Black.

20... Nxd4+

All knight moves except Ng1+ will enable you to repeat moves, so I'm only going to give you 5 points for this, the quickest solution.

21. Kg1

Choose a move for Black.

21... Ne2+

5 points for this move, and 4 points for axb6, which is also good enough.

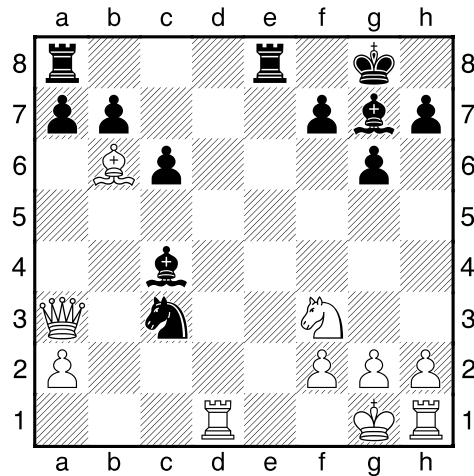
22. Kf1

Choose a move for Black.

22... Nc3+

Again, you're only going to get 5 points for finding the shortest route to victory. You had to capture on d4 first so that the bishop is now defending the knight on this square.

23. Kg1



Choose a move for Black.

23... axb6

Now is the right time to strike. 5 points for this move, discovering an attack on the queen, and 2 points for the immediate Nxd1.

24. Qb4

Choose a move for Black.

24... Ra4

5 points for agreeing with Fischer about this move. There were plenty of alternatives: 4 points for Ne2+ or b5, and 3 points for Nxd1 or Bxa2.

25. Qxb6

Choose a move for Black.

25... Nxd1

Score 5 points for this move or Rxa2.

We'll stop the test here. Black now has rook, two bishops and pawn against queen, with more pawns to come. White could have resigned, but chose to play on to give Fischer the satisfaction of mating him.

You might like to play out the rest of the game for yourself and admire how well he coordinated his pieces rather than just playing random moves and hoping for the best.

26. h3 Rxa2
27. Kh2 Nxf2
28. Re1 Rxe1
29. Qd8+ Bf8
30. Nxe1 Bd5
31. Nf3 Ne4
32. Qb8 b5
33. h4 h5
34. Ne5 Kg7
35. Kg1 Bc5+
36. Kf1 Ng3+
37. Ke1 Bb4+
38. Kd1 Bb3+
39. Kc1 Ne2+
40. Kb1 Nc3+
41. Kc1 Rc2#

I'm sure you can see why this game became so famous. White's 10th and, especially, 11th moves were ill-judged, placing his queen and bishop on exposed squares. I'm sure you would have played something sensible like 11. Be2 instead, just completing your development instead of trying to be clever.

After 11... Na4, the computer confirms that Black already had a winning position, but it required a few strokes of genius to bring home the full point.

You'll find out more about Bobby Fischer later in this book.

GAME 15 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 10th move _____

Bonus Question 6 _____

Black's 11th move _____

Bonus Question 7 _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

Bonus Question 8 _____

Black's 12th move _____

Black's 18th move _____

Black's 13th move _____

Black's 19th move _____

Black's 14th move _____

Black's 20th move _____

Bonus Question 2 _____

Black's 21st move _____

Black's 15th move _____

Black's 22nd move _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

Black's 23rd move _____

Bonus Question 4 _____

Black's 24th move _____

Black's 16th move _____

Black's 25th move _____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Black's 26th move _____

Black's 17th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 140)

Your rating:

110-140: Grandmaster

85-109: International Master

55-84: National Master

Below 55: Candidate Master

GAME 16

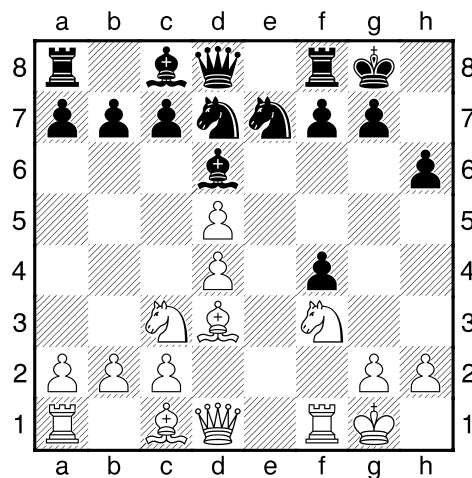
The conclusion of this game, minus a couple of pawns, has probably been seen by more people than any other game extract, as it was used in the 1963 James Bond film *From Russia With Love*.

The winner was Boris Spassky, who would later become world champion in 1969, before losing a very famous match against Bobby Fischer in 1972. His opponent, David Bronstein, was another player from the Soviet Union, a highly creative and imaginative player who tied a World Championship match against Botvinnik in 1951. The game was played in the 1960 Soviet Championship. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to take the white pieces and see if you can play as well as, or even better than, Spassky.

1. e4 e5
2. f4

Spassky chooses the King's Gambit, a 19th century favourite, which, by this time, was only used as a surprise weapon at grandmaster level. Bronstein also played it occasionally. Today, though, computers have discovered that there are several ways for Black to reach a good position, so it's no longer played by top players.

- 2... exf4
3. Nf3 d5
4. exd5 Bd6
5. Nc3 Ne7
6. d4 o-o
7. Bd3 Nd7
8. o-o h6



Choose a move for White.

9. Ne4

5 points for this move, abandoning the d5 pawn but freeing his c-pawn to advance. 4 points for Qe2 or Ne2.

9... Nxd5

Choose a move for White.

10. c4

You were given a clue for this move, which scores 5 points. Score 3 points for Nxd6.

10... Ne3

Choose a move for White.

11. Bxe3

Take 5 points for this capture: not much choice, I think.

11... fxe3

Choose a move for White.

12. c5

Score 5 points for this, continuing his plan. 3 points for Qe2, also a sensible choice.

12... Be7

Choose a move for White.

13. Bc2

This move looks strange, but is part of a strong plan, scoring 5 points. Again you can have 3 points for Qe2.

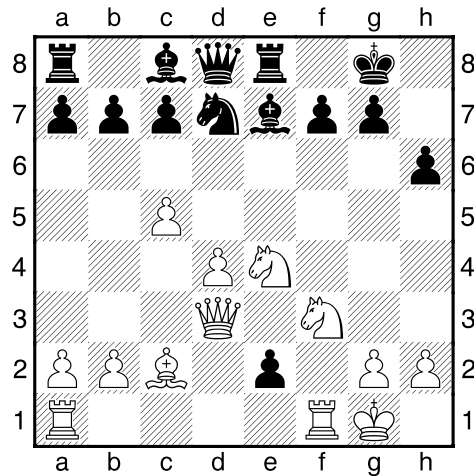
13... Re8

Choose a move for White.

14. Qd3

5 points for this move, the point of White's plan. Nothing for anything else. The idea of Bc2 and Qd3 is well worth remembering: it's very common in positions with an isolated d-pawn but it can happen elsewhere, such as here, as well.

14... e2



Choose a move for White.

15. Nd6

This is another game where the move that made it famous was actually a mistake. In the unlikely event that this was your choice I'll have to give you 5 points for creativity. I suspect you probably played the obvious Qxe2, which is actually the best (and only clearly winning) move and also scores 5 points. You can have 3 points for Rfe1 and 2 points for Rf2. Black should now have promoted on f1 followed by Bxd6, which is equal with best play, but instead panicked.

15... Nf8

Choose a move for White.

16. Nxf7

This time the brilliant sacrifice is correct, scoring 10 points. No credit for anything else.

16... exf1Q+

Choose a move for White.

17. Rxf1

5 points for this move, the obvious recapture.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 17... Kxf7?

Answer: 5 points for Ng5+, Ne5+ or Bb3+, all of which lead to mate.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play in this variation, if play continued 18. Ne5+ Kg8?

Answer: 10 points for 19. Qh7+ Nxh7 20. Bb3+, mating, 5 points for Rxf8+, winning material.

Bonus Question 3: Going back, what would you play now if Black played 17... Qd5?

Answer: 5 points for 18. Nxh6+ gxh6 19. Bb3, or 18. Bb3 followed by Nxh6+.

17... Bf5

Choose a move for White.

18. Qxf5

5 points: no choice here.

18... Qd7

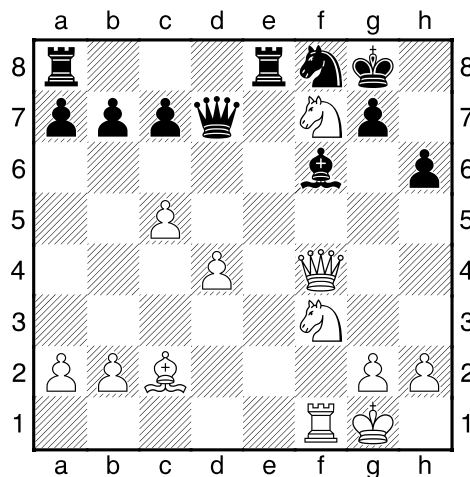
Choose a move for White.

19. Qf4

5 points for this move or for Qd3, 4 points for Qh5 or Nxh6+.

19... Bf6

Choose a move for White.



20. N3e5

There are lots of winning moves from here to the end of the game: 5 points for this move, Bb3, N7e5 or Nxh6+.

20... Qe7

Choose a move for White.

21. Bb3

5 points for this move or for Qg4.

21... Bxe5

Choose a move for White.

22. Nxe5+

Score 5 points for this capture and 3 points for dxe5.

22... Kh7

Choose a move for White.

23. Qe4+

5 points for this check, and 4 points for Qf5+. Anything sensible wins here, though, with the a8 rook out of the game and Black's other pieces misplaced.

Black resigned here, but there's one more question.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played 23... Kg8?

Answer: 10 points for finding the mate in 4: 24. Rxf8+ Rxf8 25. Ng6+ Kh7 26. Nxf8+ Kh8 27. Qh7#, but only 5 points if you were planning to capture the queen on move 26 instead.

If your opponent makes a daring sacrifice, you have to calculate carefully whether or not to accept it. Black made a couple of imprecise moves (8... Nf6 and 13... Nf6 were improvements) and would have been much worse after 15. Qxe2. White's sacrifice on move 15 was spectacular but unnecessary, and should have been accepted. The computer analyses 15... exf1Q+ 16. Rxf1 Bxd6 17. Qh7+ Kf8 18. cxd6 cxd6 19. Qh8+ Ke7 20. Re1+ Ne5 (perhaps the move both players missed) 21. Qxg7 Be6, when the engine claims equality but a human game could go either way.

GAME 16 ANSWER SHEET

White's 9th move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 10th move_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 11th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 12th move_____

White's 20th move_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 16th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 110)

Bonus Question 2_____

Your rating:

Bonus Question 3_____

90-110: Grandmaster

65-89: International Master

45-64: National Master

Below 45: Candidate Master

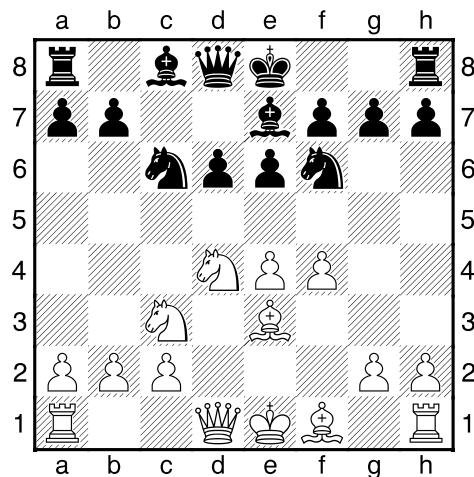
GAME 17

If you've read the first *CHESS HEROES: GAMES* book you will already have met Mikhail Tal, World Champion from 1960 to 1961. "There are two types of sacrifice", he said, "correct ones and mine.". He also said: "You must take your opponent into a deep dark forest where $2+2=5$, and the path leading out is only wide enough for one."

In this game, from a 1965 World Championship Candidates match where he was white against the Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen, he did just that, playing a sacrifice that wasn't, strictly speaking, the best move, but his opponent, one of the world's strongest players at the time, wasn't able to find the only path out of the forest.

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 e6
5. Nc3 d6
6. Be3 Nf6
7. f4 Be7

The game has opened with the Scheveningen Variation of the Sicilian Defence. A very typical position has arisen where the players will be attacking on opposite sides of the board.



Choose a move for White.

8. Qf3

Score 5 points for this move, the most popular and also, according to the computer, the strongest move in this position. 3 points for Be2 or Qd2.

8... 0-0

Choose a move for White.

9. 0-0-0

This is the point of White's opening, so 5 points if you chose this move, and nothing for anything else.

9... Qc7

Choose a move for White.

10. Ndb5

5 points for this move. It looks like he's wasting two moves with his knight, but it's worth it to force the black queen to a worse square. 4 points for Ncb5 or Be2.

10... Qb8

Choose a move for White.

11. g4

Starting a kingside pawn storm is the right idea here, so you can take 5 points for this move. The tactical point of playing it here is that Black can't meet this move with Nxd4 followed by e5, as there's nothing on d4 to capture.

11... a6

Choose a move for White.

12. Nd4

5 points again: not much choice.

12...Nxd4

Choose a move for White.

13. Bxd4

5 points for this recapture, and 2 points for Rxd4.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 13... e5?

Answer: The only good reply is 14. g5, perhaps not too easy to find, so scoring 10 points.

Bonus Question 2: Continuing this line, what would you play if Black played 14... Bg4?

Answer: 5 points for 15. Qg3, 3 points for Qg2.

Bonus Question 3: In this line, after 15. Qg3 Bxd1, how would you continue?

Answer: 10 points if you were planning 16. gxf6 Bxf6 17. Nd5, with a decisive attack.

Bonus Question 4: Going back, after 15. Qg3 exd4, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for 16. gxf6, 2 points for Rxd4.

Bonus Question 5: In this line, after 16. gxf6 dxc3, how would you continue?

Answer: Remarkably, the only good move here is 17. h3, planning to capture on g4 with the pawn, when the threats on the h-file will give White a decisive advantage. Take a well deserved 10 points if this was your choice.

I guess both Tal and Larsen would have seen much of this in advance.

13... b5

Choose a move for White.

14. g5

Score 5 points for this logical move. 4 points for Rg1, 3 points for Bd3 or f5.

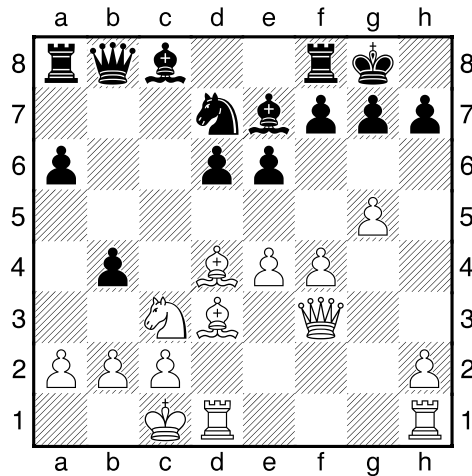
14... Nd7

Choose a move for White.

15. Bd3

Only 3 points for this move: the bishop might be better off somewhere else, perhaps on c4 after Black plays b4. You can have 5 points for Rg1 or h4, continuing the attack, or for Kb1, moving the king to a safer square.

15... b4



Choose a move for White.

16. Nd5

I'm not sure how to mark this: it's close to losing if Black finds the correct defence, but that would be very difficult over the board. Perhaps I should award 5 points for this, and also for Ne2, in theory the best move. Na4, scoring 4 points, is also playable.

16... exd5

Choose a move for White.

17. exd5

5 points for you here: no credit for alternatives.

Bonus Question 6: If Black now played 17... a5, what would you play next?

Answer: You can have 5 points for Qe4, Rhe1 or Rde1, all of which will win back the piece, but if you chose 18. Bxh7+ award yourself 10 points.

Bonus Question 7: In this variation, after 18. Bxh7+ Kxh7 19. Qh5+ Kg8, how would you continue?

Answer: 10 points for 20. Bxg7 (a double bishop sacrifice: you might have seen another example earlier in the book) which gives White a winning attack after 20... Kxg7 21. Qh6+ Kh8 22. g6.

Bonus Question 8: Now, returning to the position after 17. exd5, turn the board round and tell me what you would play for Black.

Answer: 5 points for 17... g6, which leads to Black's advantage if he finds 18. Rhe1 Bd8 19. Qh3 Ne5 20. Qh6 Bb6. If you didn't find this you were unlucky, as was Larsen, who played...

17... f5

Choose a move for White.

18. Rde1

5 points for this move, which should lead to equality with best play. You can also have 5 points for any of exf6 Qe3 or Qe2, all of which are, according to the computer, also about equal. Black should now play Bd8, but instead chose...

18... Rf7

Choose a move for White.

19. h4

Score 5 points for this quiet but deadly move. It's the only way to win, so nothing for anything else.

Bonus Question 9: What would you play now if Black replied 19... a4?

Answer: 10 points for 20. g6, meeting hxg6 with h5, and White breaks through to the black king, with mates on h8 in some variations. Take 5 points for 20. h5, which is also good.

19... Bb7

Choose a move for White.

20. Bxf5

4 points for this move, winning a pawn and continuing the attack. You can give yourself 5 points if you played either h5 or g6, though, and 4 points also for Rhg1.

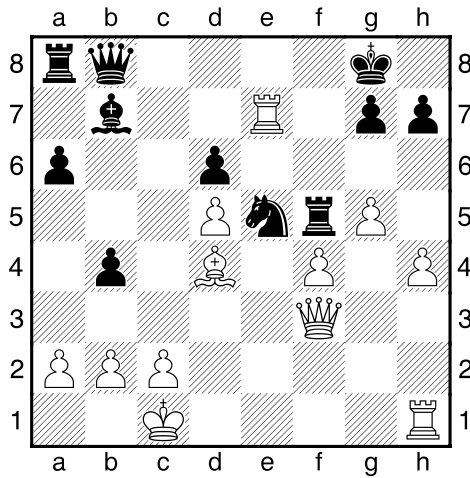
20... Rxf5

Choose a move for White.

21. Rxe7

This obvious capture earns you another 5 points.

21... Ne5



Choose a move for White.

22. Qe4

5 points for this move, finally winning back the sacrificed knight.

22... Qf8

Choose a move for White.

23. fxe5

Take 5 points for this capture.

23... Rf4

Choose a move for White.

24. Qe3

5 points: you have to keep attacking the rook.

24... Rf3

Choose a move for White.

25. Qe2

5 points again, for the same reason.

25... Qxe7

Choose a move for White.

26. Qxf3

This obvious capture gets you 5 more points.

26... dxe5

Choose a move for White.

27. Re1

Score 5 points for setting up a pin which will win the pawn on e5.

27... Rd8

Choose a move for White.

28. Rxe5

A final 5 points for this capture, leaving White two pawns ahead with what should be an easy win.

We'll stop the test here. The remaining moves were:

28... Qd6

29. Qf4 Rf8

30. Qe4 b3

31. axb3 Rf1+

32. Kd2 Qb4+

33. c3 Qd6

34. Bc5 Qxc5

35. Re8+ Rf8

36. Qe6+ Kh8

37. Qf7

1-0

If you enjoyed this game, and enjoy playing like this yourself, it's well worth studying more of Tal's games. There's nothing like them for excitement and creativity. Computers will tell you his sacrifice should only have been good for equality.

Defending isn't easy, and, if you play like Tal, you'll sometimes win games with sacrifices which shouldn't really work.

Risk taking isn't for everyone, though. If you're a more cautious person who prefers to play safe, perhaps you should look elsewhere.

GAME 17 ANSWER SHEET

White's 8th move_____

White's 16th move_____

White's 9th move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 10th move_____

Bonus Question 6_____

White's 11th move_____

Bonus Question 7_____

White's 12th move_____

Bonus Question 8_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 18th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

White's 19th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

White's 20th move_____

Bonus Question 3_____

White's 21st move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

White's 22nd move_____

Bonus Question 5_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 26th move _____

Your rating:

145-180: Grandmaster

White's 27th move _____

110-144: International Master

70-109 National Master

White's 28th move _____

Below 70: Candidate Master

Total Score: _____ (Max 180)

GAME 18

Tigran Petrosian, World Champion between 1963 and 1969, was Tal's polar opposite. He played safe and solid chess, enjoying positional play and manoeuvring in closed positions, and was often happy with a draw. If you enjoy Tal's games, Petrosian might not be the player for you, but if you prefer a more cautious approach there's much to learn from his games.

He was, however, famous for his exchange sacrifices, not because he wanted to take risks, but because his deep understanding of chess told him that in some positions minor pieces could be at least as good as rooks.

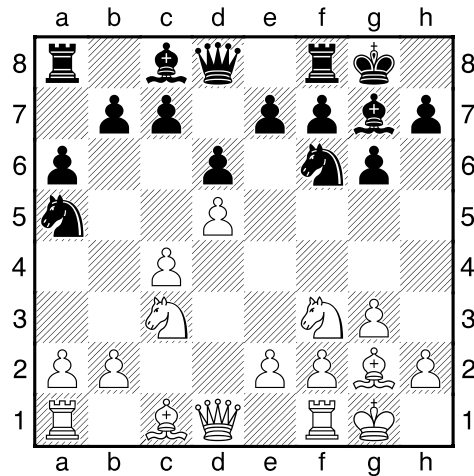
Petrosian became World Champion by winning a match against Botvinnik in 1963, and defeated his challenger, Spassky, in 1966, before losing his title to the same opponent three years later.

This game, in which he was White against Spassky, is taken from the 1966 World Championship match. Can you play as well as him?

1. Nf3 Nf6
2. g3 g6
3. c4 Bg7
4. Bg2 O-O
5. O-O Nc6
6. Nc3 d6
7. d4 a6

The game started as a Réti (1. Nf3), then turned into an English (3. c4) before becoming a popular variation of the King's Indian Defence, where White has chosen the modest Fianchetto Variation rather than boldly occupying the centre at once with e4.

8. d5 Na5



Choose a move for White.

9. Nd2

White has to defend the c-pawn and chooses this move, also opening up the bishop on g2 and the f-pawn, and scoring 5 points. Equally good is b3, also scoring 5 points, while there are 2 points for Qd3 or Qa4.

9... c5

Choose a move for White.

10. Qc2

5 points for this move or for Rb1, both positioning major pieces on better squares. 3 points for Re1, h3 or a4, all reasonable moves.

10... e5

Choose a move for White.

11. b3

Again, plenty of good moves here. Take 5 points for this move, preparing Bb2, e4 (to occupy the centre), a3 (to prepare b4) or a4 (to prevent b5). All moves must have a reason.

11... Ng4

Choose a move for White.

12. e4

Black's last move prepared f5, a standard move in positions like this. White has to think at this point how to meet it. Score 5 points for this move, for h3 or for Bb2.

12...f5

Choose a move for White.

13. exf5

Award yourself 5 points for this trade, the reason why he played e4 last move. White is going to target the pawn on f5 and try to prove that it's a weakness. You can have 3 points for h3.

13... gxf5

Choose a move for White.

14. Nd1

4 points for this move: the plan will become apparent next move. However, the computer prefers several other moves. Take 5 points for Bb2 or Bh3, 4 points for Ne2 or h3.

14... b5

Choose a move for White.

15. f3

This was the idea behind his last move. He wanted to play this move to challenge the knight as well as the black e-pawn should it advance, but first had to prevent Ne3 in reply. So you can give yourself 5 points for this move, and also for Bb2.

15... e4

Choose a move for White.

16. Bb2

5 points for this move or for Rb1. Black's last move opened a discovered attack on the rook.

16... exf3

Choose a move for White.

17. Bxf3

You can have 5 points for any capture on f3: Bxf3, Nxf3 or Rxf3.

17... Bxb2

Choose a move for White.

18. Qxb2

The only move to gain credit, and another 5 points for your score.

18...Ne5

Choose a move for White.

19. Be2

Take 5 points for this move, defending c4 again. Take 4 points for Bg2 or Qc3.

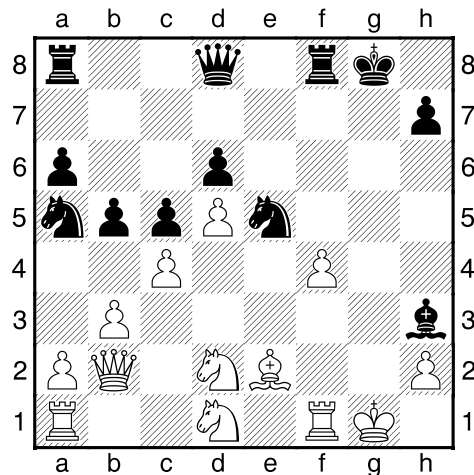
19... f4

Choose a move for White.

20. gxf4

Only 3 points for this move. The way to refute Spassky's dubious sacrifice was to capture with the rook: Rxf4 will gain you 5 points.

20... Bh3



Choose a move for White.

21. Ne3

10 points for this move, offering an exchange sacrifice (I did warn you that Petrosian liked exchange sacrifices). 5 points for Ne4 and 3 moves for Rf2. Certainly nothing for fxe5, after which Qg5+ is mating.

21... Bxf1

Choose a move for White.

22. Rxf1

Add 5 points to your score for this capture. No score for alternatives.

22... Ng6

Choose a move for White.

23. Bg4

5 points for this move, the point of White's exchange sacrifice. Nothing for anything else.

23...Nxf4

Choose a move for White.

24. Rxf4

Yes, it's another exchange sacrifice, scoring 10 points. You can also take 10 points if you chose Ne4: the computer has a slight preference for playing this first because Black could now play Qg5.

24... Rxf4

Choose a move for White.

25. Be6+

This check, the point of the exchange sacrifices, earns you another 5 points. No other move scores.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 25... Kf8?

Answer: 5 points for Qh8+, 3 points for Ne4, which should also win.

Bonus Question 2: Continuing this line, what would you play after 26. Qh8+ Ke7?

Answer: 5 points for Qxh7+, 3 points for Nf5+, which should also win.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play in this line after 27. Qxh7+ Kf6?

Answer: 5 points for either Qf7+ or Qh6+, which will both lead to the same position.

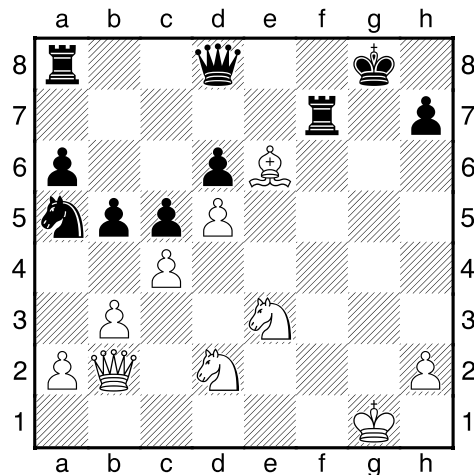
Bonus Question 4: What would you play in this line after 28. Qf7+ Ke5?

Answer: 5 points for Qg7+, 3 points for Qg6 or Ng4+, 2 points for Qh5+.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play in this line after 29. Qg7+ Qf6?

Answer: 10 points for Qg3, the only winning move here, pinning the rook and threatening Ng4+. Black has no way of meeting the threats.

25... Rf7



Choose a move for White.

26. Ne4

White wants to prevent Qg5+, so 5 points for this move and 4 points for Nf3. Nothing for Bxf7+, which throws away the advantage.

26... Qh4

Choose a move for White.

27. Nxd6

Take 5 points for this move, capturing an important pawn and attacking the pinned rook again.

27... Qg5+

Choose a move for White.

28. Kh1

Score 5 points for this move, 4 points for Ng4 or Qg2, and 3 points for Ng2.

28... Raa7

Choose a move for White.

29. Bxf7+

Petrosian has spotted a neat simplification. 5 points for this move or for Nef5, and 3 points for Nxf7 or Qf2, all of which should win easily.

29... Rxf7

Choose a move for White.

30. Qh8+

Award yourself 10 points for this brilliant finish: a knight fork will win the rook and then the queen, leaving White a knight and a pawn ahead with a simple win. Black resigned here.

A great win for Tigran Petrosian: Spassky's mistakes were the over ambitious 19... f4 (Qf6, for example, would have been much better), 21... Bxf1, again too ambitious or perhaps too greedy (here he should have preferred 21... Rxf4 22. Rxf4 Qg5+) and finally 23... Nxf4 (Qf6 was the only move to keep him in the game), after which Petrosian didn't give him a chance. It seems like he underestimated the two exchange sacrifices.

Sixty years or so on, today's top grandmasters would never make the same sort of mistake: the standard of play is so much higher now. If you found most of Petrosian's moves in this game, perhaps you'll reach that level yourself.

GAME 18 ANSWER SHEET

White's 9th move_____

White's 10th move_____

White's 11th move_____

White's 12th move_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 16th move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 20th move_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 25th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Bonus Question 5_____

White's 26th move_____

White's 27th move_____

White's 28th move_____

White's 29th move_____

White's 30th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 155)

Your rating:

125-155 Grandmaster

95-124: International Master

60-94: National Master

Below 60: Candidate Master

GAME 19

Mikhail Botvinnik became World Champion by winning the 1948 World Championship Tournament held to find a successor to Alekhine, who had died in 1946. He held the title for most of the next 15 years, losing matches against Vasily Smyslov in 1957 and Mikhail Tal in 1960, but, in each case, regaining the title the following year.

This game comes from towards the end of his career, in 1968, playing White against Lajos Portisch, Hungary's top player for many years in a tournament in Monte Carlo. Although he was primarily a strategic player, like all great champions he could, given the right opportunity, play tactical masterpieces as well.

Can you play as well as he did in this game?

1. c4 e5

White starts with the English Opening, which Black meets with e5, making the position a reversed Sicilian Defence.

2. Nc3 Nf6

3. g3 d5

4. cxd5 Nxd5

5. Bg2 Be6

6. Nf3 Nc6

7. o-o Nb6

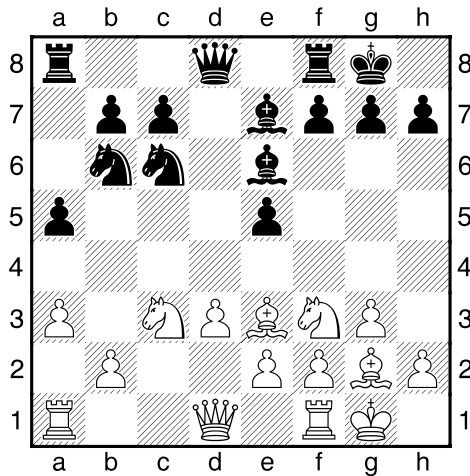
8. d3 Be7

It's now a reversed Sicilian Dragon, something that happens very often in the English Opening, where White is playing to control d5.

9. a3 a5

10. Be3 o-o

The test starts here



Choose a move for White.

11. Na4

Score 5 points for this move, aiming to control the c5 square, for Rc1, placing a rook on a half open file, or for Bxb6, weakening Black's pawn formation at the cost of a bishop for a knight. All moves have to be played with a reason.

11... Nxa4

Choose a move for White.

12. Qxa4

An easy 5 points for making the obvious recapture.

12... Bd5

Choose a move for White.

13. Rfc1

5 points for this move or for Rac1. There are many reasonable moves here, but occupying the c-file is the obvious plan.

13... Re8

Choose a move for White.

14. Rc2

Again, many moves are possible, but the most natural plan is to double rooks on the half open file. Take 5 points for this move and 3 points for Rc3.

14...Bf8

Choose a move for White.

15. Rac1

Completing the plan scores another 5 points. No real reason to consider anything else.

Black's next move sets a trap. You'll have to be very careful!

15... Nb8

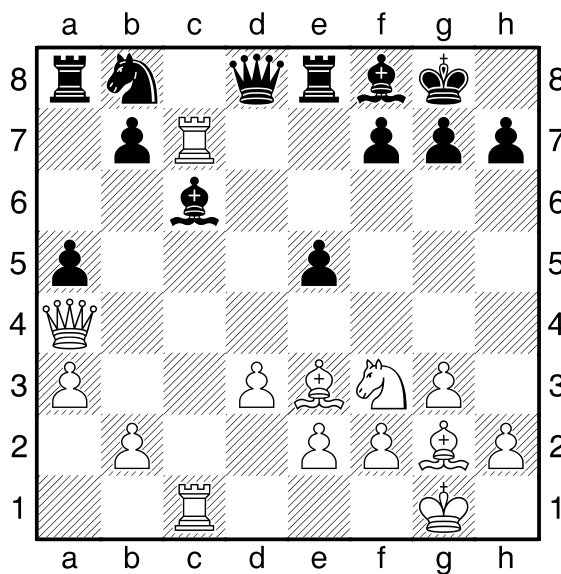
Choose a move for White.

16. Rxc7

If you chose this move, I'll give you 5 points, but you're either brilliant, in which case you deserve more, or careless, in which case you deserve nothing. It looks like you've fallen straight into Black's trap, because he can now trap your rook by playing...

16... Bc6

Choose a move for White.



17. R1xc6

Yes, it's another exchange sacrifice, which Botvinnik must have seen in advance. Strong players don't miss threats like Bc6. Score 10 points for this move and 5 points for R7xc6, which is about equal.

17... bxc6

Choose a move for White.

18. Rxf7

This was the real point of the exchange sacrifice: White now offers his other rook. If you found this stunning move you deserve another 10 points.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played Kxf7?

Answer: Score 5 points for any of Qc4+, Qb3+ or Ng5+, all of which give White a winning attack. Black is a lot of material ahead, but his pieces are all stuck on the back rank.

18... h6

Choose a move for White.

19. Rb7

5 points for this move or for Rf5, both moving the rook to safety, or for Ng5, planning to meet hxg5 with Qc4. The immediate Qc4 or Qb3 (2 points for either move) wouldn't be so good because Black could reply with Qd5.

19... Qc8

Choose a move for White.

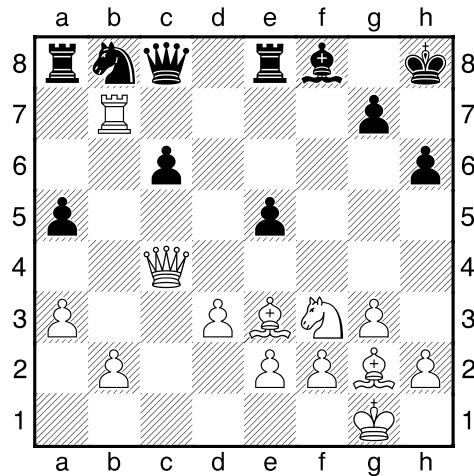
20. Qc4+

Take 5 points for this move, and 4 points if you chose Qb3+, Rb6 or Rb3.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played Qe6?

Answer: The simplest move is Nxe5, exploiting the pin to capture a pawn: 5 points for this. If you just count points you might think the resulting position is level, but in fact White is winning because the black pieces are so badly placed.

20... Kh8



Choose a move for White.

21. Nh4

Score 5 points for this, again leaving the rook to be taken. You can also have 5 points for Qf7 or Rf7, both of which are equally strong.

21... Qxb7

Choose a move for White.

22. Ng6+

An easy 5 points here, as this is the only logical way of justifying the rook sacrifice.

22... Kh7

Choose a move for White.

23. Be4

Again the only move to score, setting up a decisive discovered check. Another 5 points are yours if this was your selection.

23... Bd6

Choose a move for White.

24. Nxe5+

This discovered check scores 5 points. If you played Ne7+, Nf8+, Nf4+, Nh4+ you can have 3 points. You'll have to repeat moves and then capture the pawn.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play now if Black played Kh8?

Answer: 5 points for Nf7+, winning the black queen.

24... g6

Choose a move for White.

25. Bxg6+

No reason not to take the pawn, and either capture will suffice. 5 points for this move, or for Nxc6.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played Kh8?

Answer: Again 5 points for Nf7+ followed by Nxd6, winning everything.

25... Kg7

Choose a move for White.

26. Bxh6+

This final sacrifice scores 10 points, but as the simple Bxe8 is equally good as long as you meet Bxe5 with Qe6 or Qe4, heading for g6, so I have to give you 10 points for that move as well.

Black resigned here, but we can continue with some more bonus questions.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if Black played 26... Kxh6?

Answer: 5 points for Qh4+, 3 points for Bxe8.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play in this line after 27. Qh4+ Kg7?

Answer: 5 points for Qh7+, a skewer winning the black queen.

Portisch clearly either overlooked or underestimated Botvinnik's sacrifices when he played 15... Nb8, after which he wasn't given a chance. I don't think a top grandmaster would make such a mistake today.

This might have been a relatively easy game in which to make a good score: after the rook sacrifices most of White's moves weren't so hard to find.

The lesson to take here is that he lost because his pieces were all stuck on the back rank. It's no good having a large material advantage if, because of the threats to your king, you don't have time to get your extra pieces into play.

GAME 19 ANSWER SHEET

White's 11th move _____

White's 22nd move _____

White's 12th move _____

White's 23rd move _____

White's 13th move _____

White's 24th move _____

White's 14th move _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

White's 15th move _____

White's 25th move _____

White's 16th move _____

Bonus Question 4 _____

White's 17th move _____

White's 26th move _____

White's 18th move _____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

Bonus Question 6 _____

White's 19th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 155)

White's 20th move _____

Your rating:

100-125 Grandmaster

Bonus Question 2 _____

75-99: International Master

50-74: National Master

White's 21st move _____

Below 50: Candidate Master

GAME 20

The 1972 World Championship match between Boris Spassky and his American challenger changed the game for ever. It was on the front page of every paper throughout the world and inspired many people to take up chess. It was also because of this match that I started teaching chess.

No book of this nature would be complete without a game from this match. The 6th game, which Fischer won with White, is considered by many to be the best.

Can you play as well as Bobby Fischer? You'll need to excel at both positional and tactical play to do so.

1. c4

Fischer almost always opened with 1. e4 (best by test, he said) but here he wanted to surprise Spassky by starting with the English Opening.

1... e6

2. Nf3 d5

3. d4 Nf6

Now we've reached a main line of the Queen's Gambit Declined.

4. Nc3 Be7

5. Bg5 0-0

6. e3 h6

7. Bh4 b6

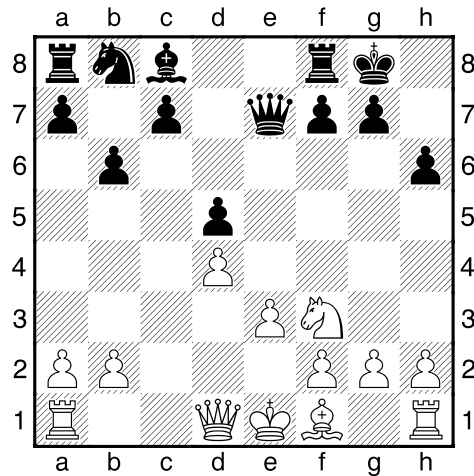
Spassky chooses the Tartakower Variation, still considered one of Black's best ways of playing this opening.

8. cxd5 Nxd5

9. Bxe7 Qxe7

10. Nxd5 exd5

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

11. Rc1

At this point all reasonable moves are equal, but choosing a move that does something useful will makes Black's life harder. Score 5 points for this move: we know this must be the right square for the rook. You can also have 5 points for Be2, Bd3 or h3.

11... Be6

Choose a move for White.

12. Qa4

Take 5 points for this move, Be2, Bd3 or h3.

12... c5

Choose a move for White.

13. Qa3

Black has played the thematic pawn break in this variation. White has to decide how to reply: in particular how to prevent c4, which Black would like to play next. You can have 5 points for this move, pinning the c-pawn, for b3 or for dxc5.

13... Rc8

Choose a move for White.

14. Bb5

It's time to decide on the best square for this bishop. I'll give you 4 points for this move or Bd3, and 5 points for Be2, probably the best square here. You can also have 5 points for the immediate dxc5.

14... a6

Choose a move for White.

15. dxc5

5 points for this move, or for Be2 and 4 points for Bd3. You'll notice that the black a-pawn is pinned.

15... bxc5

Choose a move for White.

16. O-O

It's finally time to get the king into safety, so 5 points for this move. You can also have 5 points for Be2 and 4 points for Bd3.

16... Ra7

Choose a move for White.

17. Be2

Black's last move unpinned the a-pawn, so the bishop has to retreat. Take 5 points for this move, 4 points for Ba4 or Bd3.

17... Nd7

Choose a move for White.

18. Nd4

Black's pawn duo on c5 and d5 are known as HANGING PAWNS, which you might have seen in an earlier game in this book. They often arise, for either player, in openings like the Queen's Gambit and the Nimzo-Indian Defence. At present they control a lot of useful squares but are also subject to attack, and moving either pawn will create weak squares. Let's see how they play out in this game.

White notices that the black c-pawn is now pinned again, and takes the opportunity to trade off the black bishop, changing the pawn formation again. Award yourself 5 points if you chose this move, and 3 points for any of b3, h3 and Rfd1.

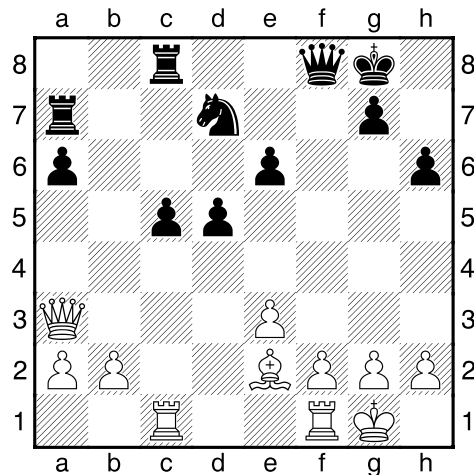
18... Qf8

Choose a move for White.

19. Nxe6

The only logical choice here: 5 points are yours for selecting this move.

19... fxe6



Choose a move for White.

20. e4

Score 10 points for this inspirational and instructive pawn sacrifice. Fischer thought it well worth a pawn to weaken Black's pawn formation further and open the a2-g8 diagonal.

20... d4

Choose a move for White.

21. f4

Black's last move was a fatal error: White can now change tack and launch a powerful kingside attack. I'll give you another 10 points for this move, even though it's not a sacrifice. Anything else will give Black time to consolidate.

21... Qe7

Choose a move for White.

22. e5

You can have 4 points for this move, fixing the weak pawn on e6 and opening the long diagonal. If you preferred Qh3, repositioning the queen while still attacking e6, you can have 5 points. 4 points also for Qg3 or b4. The immediate Bc4 doesn't work yet because of Nb6.

22... Rb8

Choose a move for White.

23. Bc4

This time you get 5 points for this move, or for Qh3.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played Nb6?

Answer: 5 points for Qb3, taking advantage of the rook on b8 being unprotected.

23... Kh8

Choose a move for White.

24. Qh3

Take 5 points for this move: you were given some clues so no real reason to choose anything else.

24... Nf8

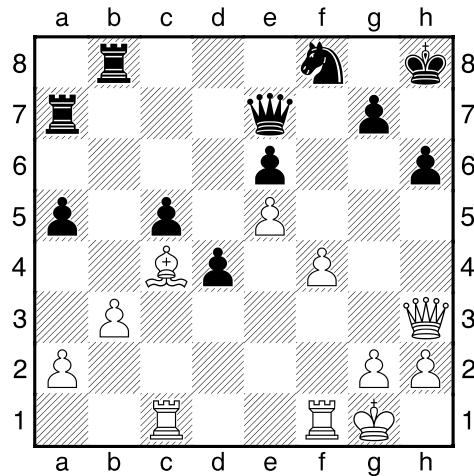
Choose a move for White.

25. b3

It makes sense to stop and defend the b-pawn as Black can't do anything very useful, so this move scores 5 points. You can also have 5 points for the more direct f5 or Rf3, and 4 points for Rf2 or Rc2.

23... a5

Choose a move for White.



26. f5

Again, there are several choices here. If, like Fischer, you thought it was time to launch the attack with this pawn break, you deserve 5 points. It was also very sensible to play a4 to prevent any possible counterplay, or to double on the f-file with Rf2 or Rc2. All these moves also merit 5 points.

26... exf5

Choose a move for White.

27. Rxf5

Although other moves are also good, there's no reason not to take back. 5 points for this recapture, and 4 points for Qxf5.

27... Nh7

Choose a move for White.

28. Rcf1

Why not double rooks? This move scores 5 points, as does Qg3, with 4 points for Qg4.

28... Qd8

Choose a move for White.

29. Qg3

Take 5 points for this move (there was a hint last move), Qg4 or the immediate e6.

29... Re7

Choose a move for White.

30. h4

Fischer is in no hurry, and first takes the g5 square away from the knight. The immediate e6 was also very effective: score 5 points for either move.

30... Rbb7

Choose a move for White.

31. e6

This time he went for the pawn push: if you agreed with him you can have 5 points, with 4 points for Qg6.

We'll stop the test here. Spassky struggled on for another ten moves, but the result was never in doubt.

You'll enjoy playing through the moves yourself. As Black had no counterplay, Fischer could take as long as he liked to break through. Eventually, Spassky allowed a rather obvious exchange sacrifice on move 38.

31... Rbc7

32. Qe5 Qe8

33. a4 Qd8

34. R1f2 Qe8

35. R2f3 Qd8

36. Bd3 Qe8

37. Qe4 Nf6

38. Rxf6 gxf6

39. Rxf6 Kg8

40. Bc4 Kh8

41. Qf4

Black resigned here.

We can all enjoy beautiful attacks, sacrifices and checkmates, but the mark of a strong and mature player is that you will get at least as much enjoyment from beautiful positional games like this one.

The opening was, according to the computer, completely level, but Spassky started to lose the thread at about move 17, while on move 20 either c4 or dxe4 would have been much better than d4, giving White a winning attack.

Perhaps you'll be inspired to play positional chess as well as Fischer did in this game.

GAME 20 ANSWER SHEET

White's 11th move _____

White's 12th move _____

White's 13th move _____

White's 14th move _____

White's 15th move _____

White's 16th move _____

White's 17th move _____

White's 18th move _____

White's 19th move _____

White's 20th move _____

White's 21st move _____

White's 22nd move _____

White's 23rd move _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

White's 24th move _____

White's 25th move _____

White's 26th move _____

White's 27th move _____

White's 28th move _____

White's 29th move _____

White's 30th move _____

White's 31st move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 155)

Your rating:

95-120: Grandmaster

70-94: International Master

50-69: National Master

Below 50: Candidate Master

GAME 21

The young Soviet player Anatoly Karpov won through a series of candidates matches taking place in 1974 to find a challenger to Bobby Fischer. He took the title by default the following year when Fischer was unable to agree terms for the match.

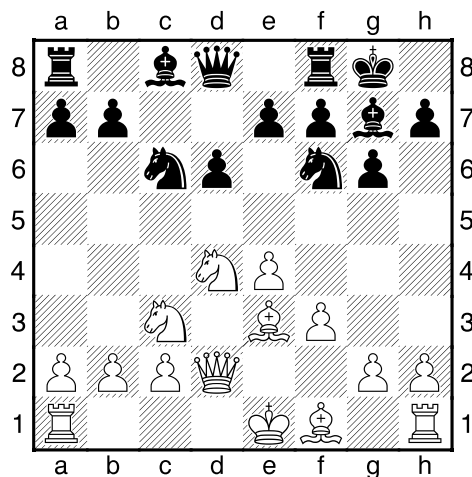
In the Candidates final he faced Viktor Korchnoi, whom he beat in this game. Karpov has a reputation as a slow, positional player, but like all great champions, he can also play tactically when the position demands it.

This game is a great lesson in how to play against the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defence.

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 d6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 g6
6. Be3 Bg7
7. f3 Nc6
8. Qd2 o-o

We've reached the starting position of the main line of the Yugoslav Attack, White's most popular and critical choice against the Dragon Variation.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

9. Bc4

5 points for this natural developing move, the most popular choice here. 5 points also for O-O-O, another very popular move: White thinks Black will play Nc4 at some point and will gain time by taking with the bishop on f1 rather than b3, but at the same time allows 9... d5 in reply. Also worth 5 points is the immediate g4.

9... Bd7

Choose a move for White.

10. h4

Take 5 points for this move, O-O-O or Bb3. 3 points for g4, which doesn't work quite as well here because Ne5 will hit the unprotected f3 pawn.

10... Rc8

Choose a move for White.

11. Bb3

Black was threatening to win a piece by playing Nxd4, so this move gives you 5 points. It's almost always played here, but the engine prefers Nxc6, which also scores 5 points. This has hardly ever been played as it's generally wrong to play this capture in most Open Sicilian lines because it gives Black another pawn near the centre. The computer thinks that, in this precise position, it gives White a quicker attack, and I'm not going to argue with it. At the same time, I won't deduct points if you played the human choice.

11... Ne5

Choose a move for White.

12. O-O-O

Award yourself 5 points for this, the move usually played here, and also for g4, h5 or Bh6, all of which are part of White's attacking plan.

12... Nc4

Choose a move for White.

13. Bxc4

The only move that makes sense, so another 5 points if this was your choice.

13... Rxc4

Choose a move for White.

14. h5

This pawn sacrifice is a standard idea in this sort of position, opening the h-file. White needs to press on with his attack, so 5 points for this move or for g4, which is also good.

14... Nxf5

Choose a move for White.

15. g4

Take 5 points for this, the only logical continuation.

15... Nf6

Choose a move for White.

16. Nde2

This was Karpov's big new idea in this game, so I'll give you 5 points as I'm feeling generous. In this opening Black very often sacrifices the exchange on c3 to double White's c-pawns, and retreating the knight to support c3 again prevents this. The computer prefers Kb1, though, so you can certainly have 5 points for making your king safer.

16... Qa5

Choose a move for White.

17. Bh6

Score 5 points for this move. White has to act fast, before Black is able to meet this move with Bh8, so nothing for anything else.

17... Bxh6

Choose a move for White.

18. Qxh6

This obvious recapture earns you 5 points, but only 2 points for Rxh6.

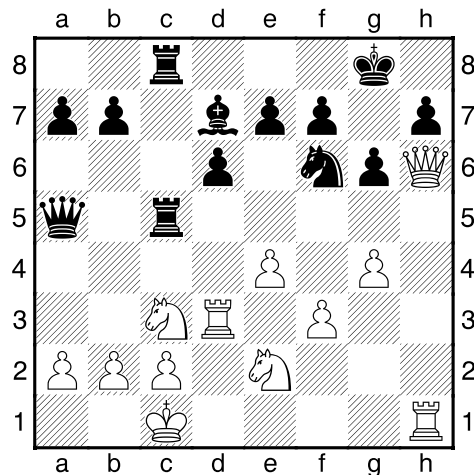
18... Rfc8

Choose a move for White.

19. Rd3

5 points for this move, defending c3 again so that the knight on e2 can join in the attack. Take 4 points for Rd5 and 3 points for Kb1.

19... R4c5



Choose a move for White.

20. g5

If this was your choice you score 10 points. You're sacrificing a pawn to force the black rook to an unfavourable square. You can have 5 points for Nf4.

Bonus Question 1: If Black played Nh5 here, how would you continue?

Answer: 5 points for Nf4, getting rid of the knight blocking the h-file.

20... Rxc5

Choose a move for White.

21. Rd5

Have another 10 points for this move: obviously Black can't reply with Nxd5 because of mate in 2.

21... Rxd5

Choose a move for White.

22. Nxd5

The only move to score: 5 points

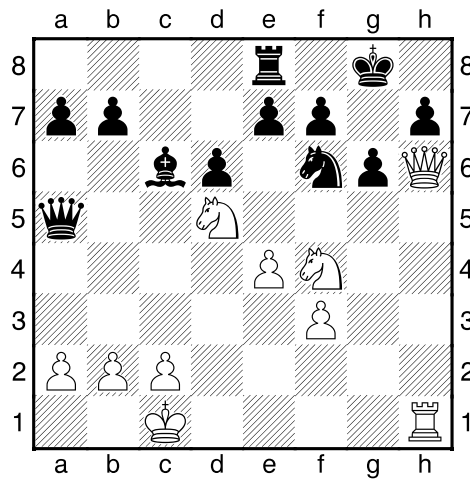
22... Re8

Choose a move for White.

23. Nef4

This move earns you 5 points and again is the only move that works. After the immediate Nxf6 the black king will escape.

23... Bc6



Choose a move for White.

24. e5

Again there's only one good move: 10 points this time. You'll see why the immediate Nxf6 doesn't work next move.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played 24... dxe5?

Answer: 5 points for Nxf6+, which now works.

Bonus Question 3: In this variation, how would you continue after 25. Nxf6+ exf6?

Answer: if you found 26. Nh5, forcing mate, you score 10 points. If the pawn wasn't on e5 Black would have been able to trade queens with Qg5+ here, which is why White had to play e5 first.

24... Bxd5

Choose a move for White.

25. exf6

Score 5 points for this, which wins while everything else loses.

25... exf6

Choose a move for White.

26. Qxh7+

Another 5 points for you here.

26... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

27. Qh8+

5 more easy points for everyone here, I hope. Black resigned here, but let's just play one more move.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played 27... Ke7?

Answer: A final 5 points for 28. Nxd5, meeting 28... Qxd5 with 29. Re1+.

This game became a template for the modern (for its time) way of combatting the Sicilian Dragon: note particularly 16. Nde2 and 19. Rd3, guarding against possible exchange sacrifices on c3.

These days Black is more likely to play an early h5 to try to stifle White's attack, which Korchnoi could have done somewhere between moves 10 and 12, but this idea wasn't very well known back in 1972. His big mistake was his 19th move (Be6 would have been a much better try), understandably overlooking the combination of Karpov's 20th and 21st moves.

I hope you managed to find these moves yourself.

GAME 21 ANSWER SHEET

White's 9th move_____

White's 10th move_____

White's 11th move_____

White's 12th move_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 16th move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 20th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 24th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 26th move_____

White's 27th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 135)

Your rating:

110-135: Grandmaster

80-109: International Master

55-79: National Master

Below 55: Candidate Master

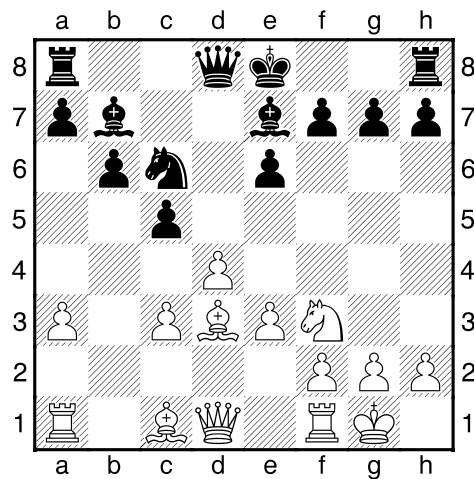
GAME 22

The early 1980s witnessed the rise of Garry Kasparov, a young Soviet player whose brilliant attacking play was reminiscent of Alekhine at his best.

In this game, played in a tournament in Nikšić, Montenegro in 1983, he destroyed Hungarian star Lajos Portisch with the white pieces. Can you match Kasparov's tactical skills?

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nf3 b6
4. Nc3 Bb7
5. a3 d5
6. cxd5 Nxd5
7. e3 Nxc3
8. bxc3 Be7
9. Bb5+ c6
10. Bd3 c5
11. 0-0 Nc6

The test starts here



Choose a move for White

12. Bb2

This at first, looks odd, although you might recall Botvinnik doing something similar. White's plan is to advance in the centre with moves like e4, d5 and c4, after which the bishop will suddenly become very strong. 5 points for this, and also for any of Qe2, Re1, Rb1 (all improving the position of your major pieces) or the immediate e4.

12... Rc8

Choose a move for White.

13. Qe2

Take 5 points for this move or Re1, and 4 points for e4. All moves must have a purpose.

13... 0-0

Choose a move for White.

14. Rad1

Score 5 points for this move, Rfe1 or e4, and 4 points for Rae1. Kasparov is following a specific plan rather than just playing random moves.

14... Qc7

Choose a move for White.

15. c4

Now Black's committed himself to doubling on the c-file White changes his plan slightly. You can have 5 points for this move, while Re1 and e4 both deserve 3 points.

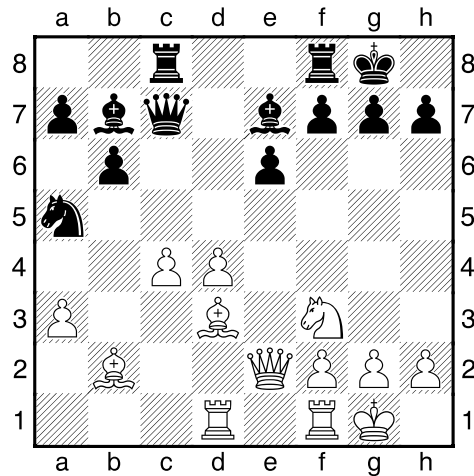
15... cxd4

Choose a move for White.

16. exd4

The only move to score: 5 points if this was your choice. White now has HANGING PAWNS: will they prove strong or weak?

16... Na5



Choose a move for White.

17. d5

White boldly ignores the threat to his c-pawn and advances the d-pawn to where it too can be captured. Look at how strong the bishops are now. If you selected this very strong move, you deserve 10 points. The other good option was Ne5, which scores 5 points.

Bonus Question 1: How would you continue now if Black played 17... Nxc4?

Answer: 5 points for 18. Qe4, threatening mate.

Bonus Question 2: In this line, how would you continue after 18... g6?

Answer: 5 points for 19. Bxc4, trading the important knight.

Bonus Question 3: In this line again, how would you continue after 19... Qxc4?

Answer: 5 points for 20. Qe5, threatening mate again and forcing 20... f6. Of course Kasparov would have seen this before playing 17. d5.

17... exd5

Choose a move for White.

18. cxd5

Taking the pawn back gets you 5 points. Nothing for anything else.

18... Bxd5

Choose a move for White.

19. Bxh7+

Regaining the pawn through a familiar discovered check. You can have 5 points for this move. It's not the only good move, though. You also score 5 points for either Nd4 or Nh4, heading for Nf5, which you can still play after g6. Equally strong is Rfe1, putting more pressure on the e-file: 5 points also if that was your choice.

19... Kxh7

Choose a move for White.

20. Rxd5

5 easy points for everyone here.

20... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

21. Bxg7

If you played the same brilliant sacrifice as Kasparov I have to give you 10 points. However, there was an even better move: Rh5, so I will also give you 10 points if that was your choice. Score 5 points for Re1 or Nd2, both of which are also strong.

21... Kxg7

Choose a move for White.

22. Ne5

Take 5 points for this move, the only winning option, opening up the queen's diagonal and preparing an invasion on d7.

22... Rfd8

Choose a move for White.

23. Qg4+

Why wouldn't you play this check here? 5 points are yours if that's what you did.

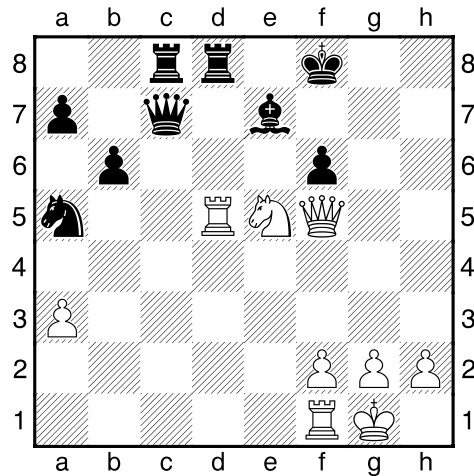
23... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

24. Qf5

Score 5 points for this move: threatening mate while keeping control of d7 is clearly best.

24... f6



Choose a move for White.

25. Nd7+

Now is the right time to strike on d7. Take 5 points for this move, and 4 points for Ng6+, which is also good enough. As Kg7 will leave the king far too exposed after, for example, 26. Re1, bringing up reinforcements, Black has little choice but to give up the exchange.

25... Rxd7

Choose a move for White.

26. Rxd7

5 easy points: there's no way we're trading queens here.

26... Qc5

Choose a move for White.

27. Qh7

Take 5 points for this, again White's strongest move, and 3 points for Qh3, which is also good but can be met by Nc4.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played 27... Nc4?

Answer: 10 points for spotting the tactic 28. Rxe7 Qxe7 29. Qh8+, winning a piece.

27... Rc7

Choose a move for White.

28. Qh8+

This is again best: 5 points for this move and 4 points for Qh6+.

Now turn the board round for the next question.

Bonus Question 5: If White had played 28. Rd3 here, how should Black reply?

Answer: 10 points for the temporary queen sacrifice 28... Qxf2+, when 29. Rxf2 Rc1+ leads to mate and 29. Kxf2 Bc5+ regains the queen with an equal position. Even when you're attacking strongly you still have to be careful not to miss counterblows like this.

28... Kf7

Choose a move for White.

29. Rd3

Score 5 points: repositioning the rook like this now works. I suppose I'll have to give you 3 points for Qh7+, which will repeat moves but give you another chance in two moves time. Of course you have to remember to meet Qxf2+ with Kxf2 rather than Rxf2!

29... Nc4

Choose a move for White.

30. Rfd1

Bringing the other rook into the attack gets you 5 points. 3 points for Qh7+, again repeating moves, or for either Rg3 or Rh3, both of which are also strong.

30... Ne5

Choose a move for White.

31. Qh7+

Black's last move wasn't best, although he was losing anyway. This check is now decisive, so scores 5 points, while you can take 3 points for Qh5+.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play if Black played 31... Kf8 here?

Answer: 10 points for the mate in 2 with Rd8+, 5 points for Qh8+.

Bonus Question 7: What would you play if Black played 31... Ke8 here?

Answer: 5 points for Qg8+, followed by Qe6+ and Rd8#.

31... Ke6

Choose a move for White.

32. Qg8+

The quickest way to win scores 5 points, with 3 points for Qh3+.

32... Kf5

Choose a move for White.

33. g4+

10 points for this move, which forces mate. 5 points for Qh3+, repeating moves for the time being, Rh3 or Rd5.

Bonus Question 8: What would you play if Black played 33... Nxc4 here?

Answer: 5 points for Rf3+ followed by Qxc4, with mate to follow.

Bonus Question 9: What would you play if Black played 33... Ke4 here?

Answer: 5 points for either Qh7+ or Qe6, both of which force mate. Other moves also win, but it's good to be efficient.

33... Kf4

Choose a move for White.

34. Rd4+

You earn 5 points for forcing mate. Rd5 and Re3 are the other winning moves but there's no need to complicate so they only score 2 points each.

34... Kf3

Choose a move for White.

35. Qb3+

5 points for this check, which persuaded Black to resign.

Bonus Question 10: What would you play if Black played on with 35... Qc3?

Answer: a final 5 points for 36. Qd5+ Ke2 37. Qe4+ and mate next move.

Portisch's big mistake in this game was trading pawns on move 15, which just opened a lot of lines for Kasparov. The immediate Na5 would have been much better.

Yes, it's tough, but when facing an attacking genius like Kasparov, just one slight mistake in a position like this will be fatal.

GAME 22 ANSWER SHEET

White's 12 th move_____	White's 22 nd move_____
White's 13 th move_____	White's 23 rd move_____
White's 14 th move_____	White's 24 th move_____
White's 15 th move_____	White's 25 th move_____
White's 16 th move_____	White's 26 th move_____
White's 17 th move_____	White's 27 th move_____
Bonus Question 1_____	Bonus Question 4_____
Bonus Question 2_____	White's 28 th move_____
Bonus Question 3_____	Bonus Question 5_____
White's 18 th move_____	White's 29 th move_____
White's 19 th move_____	White's 30 th move_____
White's 20 th move_____	White's 31 st move_____
White's 21 st move_____	Bonus Question 6_____
	Bonus Question 7_____

White's 32nd move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 200)

White's 33rd move _____

Your rating:

Bonus Question 8 _____

160-200: Grandmaster

Bonus Question 9 _____

120-159: International Master

White's 34th move _____

80-119: National Master

White's 35th move _____

Below 80: Candidate Master

Bonus Question 10 _____

GAME 23

The Soviet Russian Grandmaster Vasily Smyslov, who held the World Championship between 1957 and 1958, maintained his strength well into his 60s. In 1983, at the age of 62, he reached the final of the World Championship Candidates, where he lost to Garry Kasparov.

This game is taken from his semi-final match against the Hungarian grandmaster Zoltan Ribli, played in London. Taking the white pieces, can you match his moves?

1. d4 Nf6
2. Nf3 e6
3. c4 d5
4. Nc3 c5

This is the SEMI-TARRASCH VARIATION of the Queen's Gambit Declined. Many different pawn formations are possible depending on how the pawn exchanges in the centre play out over the next few moves. Pawn formations determine middle game plans. White chooses to trade on d5 immediately.

5. cxd5 Nxd5

Black could also play either exd5 or cxd4 here. All choices are fine, as long as you know what you're doing. White could now grab the centre with 6. e4 but chooses the more cautious option.

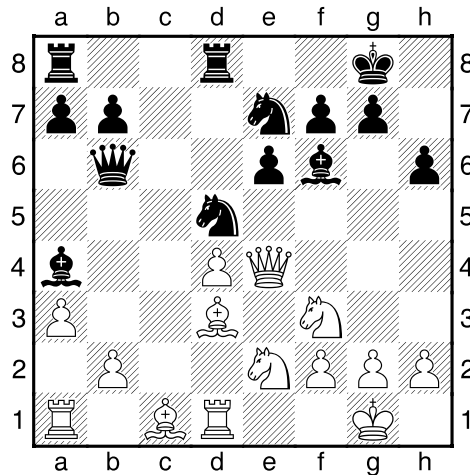
6. e3 Nc6
7. Bd3 Be7
8. o-o o-o
9. a3 cxd4
10. exd4

After this exchange we've now reached an IQP position: White has an ISOLATED QUEEN'S PAWN. White's plan will be to use his space advantage to launch an attack in the centre and on the kingside, while Black will aim to trade pieces, particularly minor pieces, and exploit White's isolated pawn in the ending. This pawn formation can arise from many different openings: the Queen's Gambit, the Nimzo-Indian Defence, as well as the Panov-Botvinnik Attack in the Caro-Kann Defence (1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 cxd5 4. c4). It would be well worth your time to seek out some more games with this important formation, and to play some games with it yourself, taking both sides of the board.

- 10... Bf6
11. Qc2 h6

- 12. Rd1 Qb6
- 13. Bc4 Rd8
- 14. Ne2 Bd7
- 15. Qe4 Nce7
- 16. Bd3 Ba4

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

- 17. Qh7+

Smyslov had to decide whether or not the queen was strong on this square. He was right, and if you agreed with him you score 5 points. The computer also likes the rather inhuman b3, giving up a pawn to gain a couple of tempi, so if that was your choice you can also have 5 points.

- 17... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

- 18. Re1

If you moved your rook to safety, 5 points are yours. If you took the hint last time and chose b3 instead, then 5 points are again yours.

- 18... Bb5

Choose a move for White.

- 19. Bxb5

5 points for trading bishops, but only 3 points if you played Qh8+ first.

19... Qxb5

Choose a move for White.

20. Ng3

Continuing the knight's journey to the kingside is worth 5 points. You can also have 5 points for b3 (again) or a4: one idea is that the bishop might be developed to a3 in some lines.

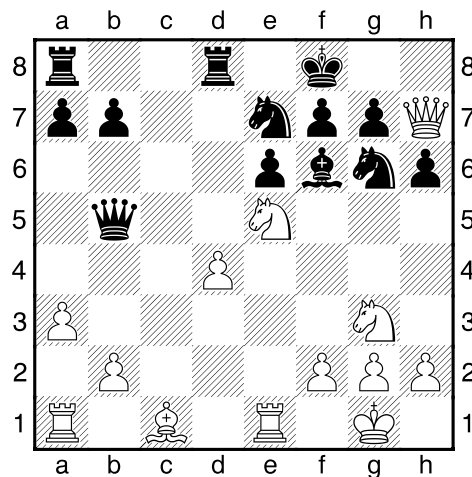
20... Ng6

Choose a move for White.

21. Ne5

Ribli was probably happy here, as the white queen seems to be stuck in the corner without any means of escape. Smyslov continues his plan with this move, scoring 5 points. Yet again, b3 and a4 were both good alternatives, worth 5 points each.

21... Nde7



Choose a move for White.

22. Bxh6

The start of the fireworks: as always you get 10 points for this sacrifice. I have to award you 10 points as well if you chose Nh5 instead, which will probably lead to the same position.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 22... gxh6?

Answer: An easy 5 points for 23. Qxf7#

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played 22... Bxe5?

Answer: 10 points for 23. Rxe5, followed by capturing on g7 with a winning attack.

22... Nxe5

Choose a move for White.

23. Nh5

You probably played the natural dxe5 here, which scores 5 points. If you chose the same move as Smyslov you can also have 5 points: it's just as good but allows Black an alternative defence.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play now if Black played 23... Nf5?

Answer: 5 points for 24. dxe5

Bonus Question 4: What would you play in this line if Black played 24... Bxe5?

Answer: 5 points for 25. Bg5, threatening Qh8# as well as Bxd8

Bonus Question 5: What would you play in this line if Black played 25... f6?

Answer: 5 points for 26. g4, with a winning attack, 3 points for 26. Nxe7.

Bonus Question 6: Going back a move, what would you play if Black played 25... Nh6?

Answer: It's better to keep the attack going than take the rook: 5 points for Bxe6 and 3 points for Bxd8.

25... Nf3+

Choose a move for White.

24. gxf3

An easy 5 points for everyone here.

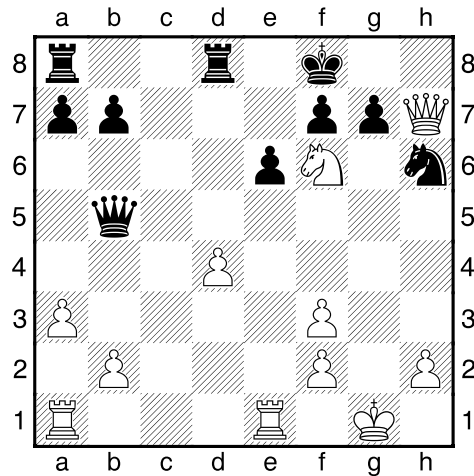
24... Nf5

Choose a move for White.

25. Nxe6

Take 5 points for this very natural capture.

25... Nxe6



Choose a move for White.

26. d5

This pawn sacrifice to open lines earns you 10 points. If you chose Re5 instead you can have 5 points. If d5 was your choice last move you can add another 5 points to your score.

Bonus Question 7: What would you play now if Black played 26... gxf6?

Answer: 5 points for 27. dxe6, which is even stronger than Qxh6+ (3 points). For example, 27... Qg5+ 28. Kh1 Rd4 29. Rg1 with too many threats. Hard to see and assess, though.

Bonus Question 8: Going back a move, what would you play now if Black played 26... exd5?

Answer: 5 points if you planned a mate in 2: 27. Qh8+ Ng8 28. Qxg8# or the more artistic 27. Qg8+ Nxc8 28. Nh7#.

26... Qxb2

Choose a move for White.

27. Qh8+

Score 5 points for this check (but you have to see what comes next) or for dxe6, which is equally strong.

27... Ke7

Choose a move for White.

28. Rxe6+

This decisive rook sacrifice nets you 10 points, although there was really no choice. You could only play 27. Qh8+ if you saw this coming.

28... fxe6

Choose a move for White.

29. Qxg7+

No choice: 5 points, I hope, for you.

29... Nf7

Choose a move for White.

30. d6+

Take 5 points – again nothing else works.

Bonus Question 9: What would you play now if Black played Kxd6?

Answer: 5 points for Ne4+, using a discovered attack to win the queen, 3 points for Ne8+, winning the queen but losing the knight.

30... Rxd6

Choose a move for White.

31. Nd5+

Black still loses his queen to a discovered attack. I'm sure you found this and scored 5 points.

31... Rxd5

Choose a move for White.

32. Qxb2

The test finishes with another question where everyone scores 5 points.

White now has a winning material advantage: queen and pawn against rook and knight. You can guess the rest of the moves for fun if you like: there's a nice tactic on move 38.

32... b6

33. Qb4+ Kf6

34. Re1 Rh8

35. h4 Rhd8

36. Re4 Nd6
37. Qc3+ e5
38. Rxe5 Rxe5
39. f4 Nf7
40. fxe5+ Ke6
41. Qc4+

Black finally resigned here.

Ribli's big mistake here was his 21st move (Qa5 would have kept him alive) but he could perhaps be excused for missing Smyslov's long tactical sequence which was worthy of Alekhine.

There are two things to learn from this game. The first is that chess isn't just a game for young people: players of any age can play brilliant combinations.

Smyslov was mainly noted for his harmonious positional play (appropriately, as he was also an opera singer) and endgame mastery, but, like all great players he could play tactically when required.

Your choice of openings and style of play might reflect your personality, but the second lesson is that, to maximise your potential, you must learn to excel at every type of position, every aspect of chess.

GAME 23 ANSWER SHEET

White's 17th move_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 20th move_____

White's 21st move_____

White's 22nd move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Bonus Question 2_____

White's 23rd move_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Bonus Question 5_____

Bonus Question 6_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 26th move_____

Bonus Question 7_____

Bonus Question 8_____

White's 27th move_____

White's 28th move_____

White's 29th move_____

White's 30th move_____

Bonus Question 9_____

White's 31st move_____

White's 32nd move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 145)

Your rating:

115-145: Grandmaster

85-114: International Master

60-84: National Master

Below 60: Candidate Master

GAME 24

Anatoly Karpov's best tournament result was perhaps at Linares (Spain) in 1994, where he scored 11/14, 2½ points clear of world champion Garry Kasparov, with many of the world's leading players trailing behind.

In this game he had the white pieces against Bulgarian number one Veselin Topalov. Can you match his blend of strategy and tactics?

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 c5

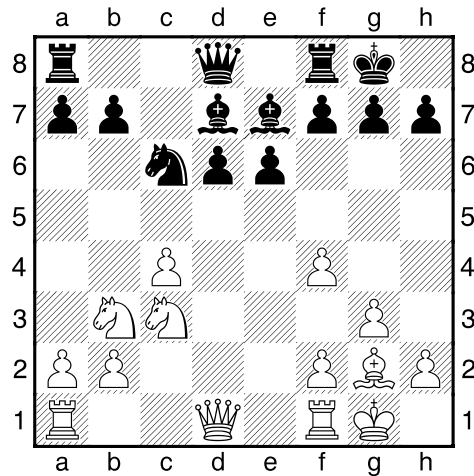
An ambitious choice: White's most principled move here is 3. d5, when Black's choices include 3... b5 (the Benko Gambit) and 3... e6 (the Modern Benoni), two very sharp and interesting openings.

Karpov, true to his style, prefers a quieter and more cautious option.

3. Nf3 cxd4
4. Nxd4 e6
5. g3 Nc6
6. Bg2 Bc5
7. Nb3 Be7
8. Nc3 o-o
9. o-o d6
10. Bf4 Nh5
11. e3 Nxf4
12. exf4 Bd7

Karpov's 11th move was perhaps unexpected, trading a bishop for a knight and accepting doubled pawns. In exchange he has pressure on the central files and the h1-a8 diagonal, along with chances on the kingside.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

13. Qd2

White needs to think about where he wants his major pieces. There are several options: 5 points for this move, Qe2, Re1, Rc1 or Nb5.

13... Qb8

Choose a move for White.

14. Rfe1

Score 5 points for this move or Rad1, 4 points for Rac1 or Rfd1. White is now looking to play f5, which Black won't be able to take because of Bxc6 followed by Rxd7, so he decides to take preventive action.

14... g6

Choose a move for White.

15. h4

Karpov spots a weakness and immediately strikes. Take 5 points for this move or for Rad1, and 4 points for g5.

15... a6

Choose a move for White.

16. h5

Pushing on like this earns you 5 points, as does Rad1.

16... b5

Choose a move for White.

17. hxg6

This is a very natural, human move so I'll give you, and Karpov, 5 points. However, it's not the computer's first choice. It claims that h6 (also 5 points) is much better, but the variations are difficult to understand, so I won't penalise you. Engines like playing h6 in this sort of position, cramping the black king, which is something you might want to remember.

17... hxg6

Choose a move for White.

18. Nc5

You had to see a long way ahead to play this move, so you can have 10 points if you chose it. If you played this last move, you can go back and give yourself 5 points there. 5 points for either Bxc6 or f5: the idea is to play these moves in either order and follow up with Nd4: another difficult idea to find.

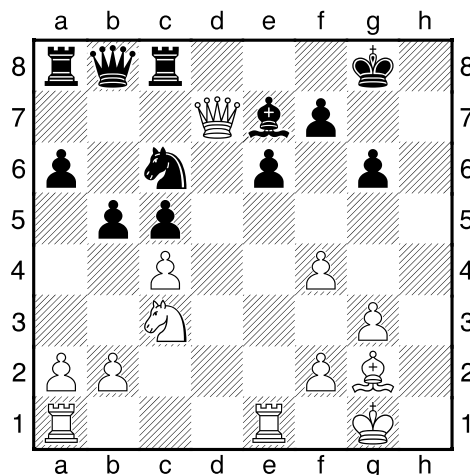
18... dxc5

Choose a move for White.

19. Qxd7

This time there's an easy 5 points for everyone.

19... Rc8



Choose a move for White.

20. Rxe6

The most obvious move is Bxc6, scoring 5 points. It doesn't win a piece, though, because Black will reply with Ra7 to drive the queen away. The second most obvious move is cxb5, also scoring 5 points: again Black will reply with Ra7. If you chose the same move as Karpov, though, you deserve 10 points. As you'll see, it leads to an advantage for White.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 20... fxe6?

Answer: 5 points for 21. Qxe6+ Kg7 22. Bxc6, and if 22... Ra7 then 23. Be4 when g6 falls is one of many winning options. 3 points for the immediate 21. Bxc6, which will leave White a pawn ahead.

20... Ra7

Choose a move for White.

21. Rxc6+

10 points again for this move: Karpov insists on Topalov taking the rook. Also Qd5 also scores 10 points: although the rook will be captured on a different square it will lead to the same position. 5 points for Qd3, which gives Black a few more options.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played 20... Kh7?

Answer: 5 points for Qh3+, 3 points for Qg4.

Bonus Question 3: In this line, after 21. Qh3+ Kxc6, what would you play?

Answer: 5 points for Be4+.

Bonus Question 4: Continuing this line, after 22. Be4+ Kg7, what would you play?

Answer: 5 points for Qh7+, with mate next move.

21... fxc6

Choose a move for White.

22. Qe6+

Take 5 points for this move or for Qg4.

22... Kg7

Choose a move for White.

23. Bxc6

Score 5 points for this simple capture. White now has two pawns for the exchange while his attack continues.

23... Rd8

Choose a move for White.

24. cxb5

Add 5 points to your score for this simple capture. There were other good moves: 5 points also for Ne4, Bd5 or Be4.

24... Bf6

Choose a move for White.

25. Ne4

This is clearly best, bringing another piece into the attack, hitting f6 and preventing Rd6. 5 points are yours if this was your choice.

25... Bd4

Choose a move for White.

26. bxa6

Why not take another pawn off? 5 points for this move, for Kg2, making the king safer, and for Rd1, activating the rook.

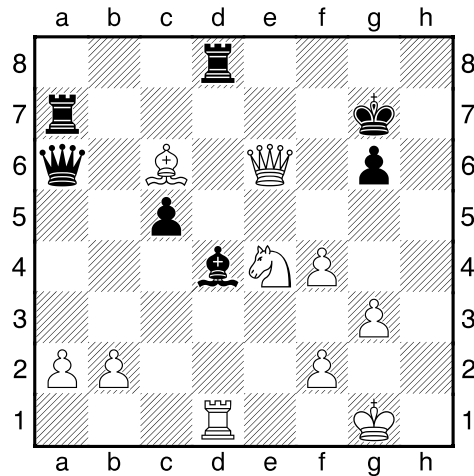
26... Qb6

Choose a move for White.

27. Rd1

This is the best move, scoring 5 points. Karpov would have already seen the continuation. There were several reasonable alternatives: Ng5, Kg2 and Rc1 are all worth 3 points.

27... Qxa6



Choose a move for White.

28. Rxd4

What a great move! 10 points for Karpov, and for you if you found it. Karpov shows outstanding judgement in understanding that the bishop which had an important defensive role was much more important than his rook which wasn't participating in the attack. He's now two exchanges down, but his remaining pieces will create enough threats to win him the game.

28... Rxd4

Choose a move for White.

29. Qf6+

Obvious and best, scoring 5 points. Not 29. Nxc5 Rd1+, when suddenly Black has counterplay. You always have to be careful.

29... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

30. Qxg6+

5 points again. White now has four pawns for two exchanges: an unusual material balance.

30... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

31. Qe8+

I'll give you 5 points for this move, Qf6+ or Qh6+, all of which win. My computer wants to play 31. Qh6+ Kg8 32. Nf6+ Kf7 33. Nh5, which is the most convincing way to win, but not so easy to find. Karpov had seen a way to win so didn't need to look further.

31... Kg7

Choose a move for White.

32. Qe5+

It's best to keep checking, so take 5 points for this move.

32... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

33. Nf6+

I'm not going to argue with Karpov, so again 5 points for this, but also for any of Qb8+, Qe8+ or Qe6+, all heading back to the Qh6+ line. I gave you a big hint two moves ago, so won't award you any more than that. You can also have 5 points for Qg5+ or Bd5+, which are both also convincing.

33... Kf7

Choose a move for White.

34. Be8+

This was Karpov's method of finishing off the game. 5 points for this move, and 3 points for Bd5+.

34... Kf8

Choose a move for White.

35. Qxc5+

The simplest way to win, scoring 5 points. The computer prefers the more complicated Bh5, so you can have 5 points for that move as well.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if Black played 35... Rd6?

Answer: Although other moves also work, simplest and best is 36. Ne4 (5 points), attacking the pinned rook.

35... Qd6

Choose a move for White.

36. Qxa7

No reason not to score 5 points by taking the rook.

35... Qxf6

Choose a move for White.

37. Bh5

5 points for any safe bishop move, Bd7, Bb5, Ba4 or Karpov's preference.

White now has no less than 5 pawns for the exchange: an easy win. We'll stop the test here, although the game only lasted two more moves.

37... Rd2

38. b3 Rb2

39. Kg2

Black resigned

A great lesson in positional and tactical play from Karpov. His opening plan, allowing the trade on f4, presented Topalov with some unfamiliar problems which he was unable to resolve. While he didn't make any obvious errors, he gradually lost the thread of the game between moves 13 and 16, and if you lose the thread of the game against Karpov you'll stand no chance. The game wasn't just about tactics but also about Karpov's superb positional judgement. At a couple of points the computer prefers alternatives, but he preferred to choose the simplest path to victory, always happy that he was in complete control of the position.

Spassky said something to the effect of "Karpov plays a lot of second best moves. But they are the strongest second best moves of all time."

GAME 24 ANSWER SHEET

White's 13th move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 16th move_____

White's 17th move_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 20th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

White's 21st move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Bonus Question 4_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 23rd move_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 26th move_____

White's 27th move_____

White's 28th move_____

White's 29th move_____

White's 30th move_____

White's 31st move_____

White's 32nd move_____

White's 33rd move_____

White's 34th move_____

White's 35th move_____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 170)

White's 36th move _____

Your rating:

135-170: Grandmaster

White's 37th move _____

100-134: International Master

70-99: National Master

Below 70: Candidate Master

GAME 25

Judit Polgár, the youngest of three Hungarian sisters, is by far the strongest female player of all time, noted in particular for her sharp and aggressive style.

In this game, played in Buenos Aires in 1994, she had the black pieces against Latvia's Alexei Shirov, one of the most feared attacking players of his generation, and, as you'll see, completely demolished him.

Can you play as well as she did? You'll certainly want to find out: and you'll learn a lot about the Sicilian Defence at the same time.

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 e6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nc6
5. Nc3 d6

This is the start of a line somewhere between the Scheveningen and Taimanov Variations of the Sicilian Defence. Black's 2nd, 4th and 5th moves can be played in any order, all of which give White slightly different options.

6. g4

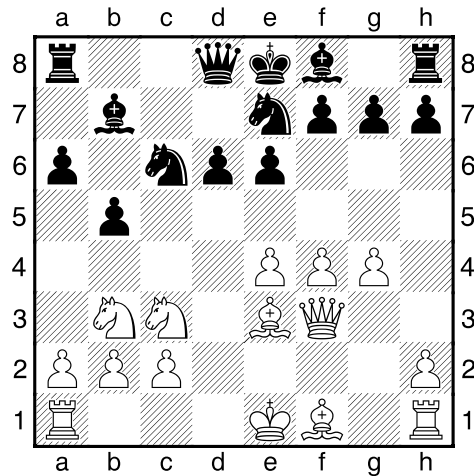
Shirov predictably chooses White's most dangerous option planning to meet Nf6 with g5. Polgár chooses a different set-up.

- 6... a6
7. Be3 Nge7
8. Nb3 b5
9. f4 Bb7

Black has played some natural moves on the queenside but still has to work out how to untangle her kingside.

10. Qf3

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

10... g5

We'll begin with 10 points for this unexpected pawn sacrifice, showing great understanding of the position. If you chose b4 you can have 5 points.

11. fxg5

Choose a move for Black.

10... Ne5

This was one of the ideas of Black's sacrifice. The knight reaches a strong square, gaining time by hitting the white queen. 5 points for this move, or for either Bg7 (the sacrifice also opened up some opportunities for this bishop) or the immediate b4.

12. Qg2

Choose a move for Black.

12... b4

Score 5 points for this move or for Bg7, 3 points for Rc8.

13. Ne2

Choose a move for Black.

13... h5

Another surprising pawn move and another 10 points if this was your choice. If you chose it last move, where it was also strong, go back and give yourself 5 points there. You can have 5 points for Bg7 or Rc8, both very sensible developing moves.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 14. gxf6 (capturing *en passant*)?

Answer: If you chose a third pawn sacrifice, 14... f5, there are 10 more points awaiting you. 5 points for Bxh6, N7g6 or Rc8.

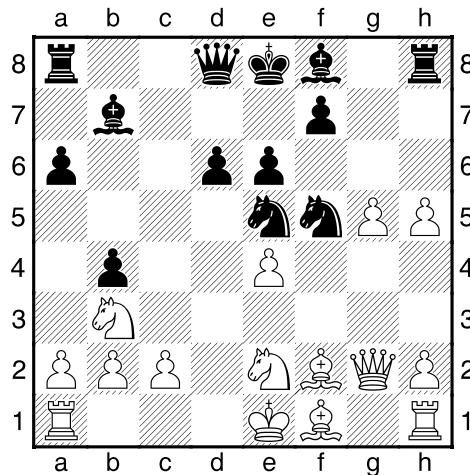
14. gxf5

Choose a move for Black.

14... Nf5

I'll give you another 10 points for this move, exploiting the pin on the e4 pawn. Black may be two pawns down, but suddenly all her pieces are springing into action.

15. Bf2



Choose a move for Black.

15... Qxg5

If, like Judit Polgár, you sacrificed your queen here, you can take 10 points. No credit for anything else: slower moves give White the time to consolidate with Ned4.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if White played 16. Qxg5?

Answer: 5 points for Nf3+, a fork regaining the queen. White will be a pawn up in the resulting position, but a quick look will reveal that his position is falling apart.

16. Na5

Choose a move for Black.

16... Ne3

Score another 10 points for this move: now if White takes the queen, Nf3 is mate!
The second best option, Qh6, will add 5 points to your score. Now, if 17. Bxe3 Qxe3
18. Nxb7, Nf3+ is the simplest of many winning moves.

17. Qg3

Choose a move for Black.

17... Qxg3

The computer prefers the immediate Nxc2+, keeping the queens on the board, but this is the sensible human option. If you're winning material, trade queens. You can have 5 points for either move.

18. Nxc3

Choose a move for Black.

18...Nxc2+

5 points for a simple fork: nothing for anything else.

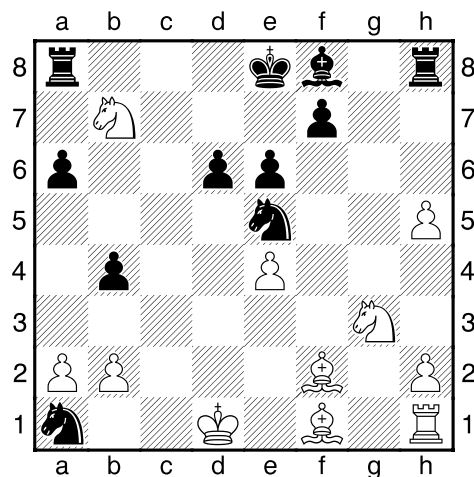
19. Kd1

Choose a move for Black.

19... Nxa1

5 more points for an even simpler capture.

20. Nxb7



Choose a move for Black.

20... b3

The rest of the game is fairly easy as the knight in the corner is never going to get trapped. 5 points for this move, Rc8, Kd7 or Ke7.

21. axb3

Choose a move for Black.

21... Nxb3

There's no very good reason to look beyond this capture, but Rc8 and a5 were good alternatives. You can have 5 points for any of these moves.

22. Kc2

Choose a move for Black.

22...Nc5

Take 5 points for this move, and 3 points for Rb8.

23. Nxc5

Choose a move for Black.

23... dxc5

No reason not to score 5 points for this recapture.

We'll stop the test here. The game concluded:

24. Be1 Nf3

25. Bc3 Nd4+

26. Kd3 Bd6

27. Bg2 Be5

28. Kc4 Ke7

29. Ra1 Nc6

And White, the exchange down in a hopeless position, resigned.

Judit Polgár's plan executed between moves 10 and 14 was both surprising and instructive. Shirov should perhaps have played 14 O-O-O, returning the pawn and completing his development.

Very often in the Sicilian Defence Black castles kingside and White throws his pawns forward but games like this led to an increasing understanding that, in some positions, Black can prevent the attack by advancing her own pawns. These positions are complex and fascinating: you might like to try playing the Sicilian Defence like this in your own games.

GAME 25 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 10th move_____

Black's 11th move_____

Black's 12th move_____

Black's 13th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Black's 14th move_____

Black's 15th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Black's 16th move_____

Black's 17th move_____

Black's 18th move_____

Black's 19th move_____

Black's 20th move_____

Black's 21st move_____

Black's 22nd move_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 110)

Your rating:

90-110: Grandmaster

65-89: International Master

45-64: National Master

Below 45: Candidate Master

GAME 26

In 1993 the English Grandmaster Nigel Short qualified to take on Kasparov for the title of World Champion. They had a disagreement with FIDE (the International Chess Federation) about how the match should be run, and, as a result, there were two World Champions: the classical champion (retained by Kasparov on beating Short), and the FIDE Champion. In 2006 the two titles were reunited. We'll follow the classical championship (as most chess players and historians do) in this book.

In 2000 Kasparov lost a match against fellow Russian player Vladimir Kramnik. Here's one of Kramnik's best games, against the brilliant and often eccentric Ukrainian Grandmaster Vasyl Ivanchuk, played in the Dos Hermanas tournament in Spain in 1996.

You're again Black in a Sicilian Defence: can you play as well as, or perhaps even better than, Kramnik.

1. e4 c5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4 cxd4
4. Nxd4 Nf6
5. Nc3 d6

This is another very popular variation of the Sicilian Defence. Ivanchuk selects White's most popular option here.

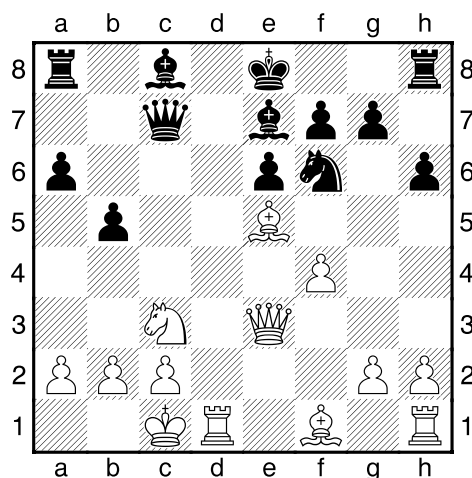
6. Bg5 e6
7. Qd2 a6
8. o-o-o h6
9. Be3 Be7
10. f4 Nxd4
11. Bxd4 b5

White has castled queenside at will attack in the centre and on the kingside, prepared to throw his pawns forward if Black decides to castle there. Black continues with his queenside development, leaving his king in the centre for the time being.

12. Qe3 Qc7
13. e5 dxe5
14. Bxe5

White has chosen to break in the centre.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

14... Ng4

Counterattacking the white queen requires accurate calculation, and scores 10 points. Take 5 points for Qa5 and 3 points for Qc6.

15. Qf3

Choose a move for Black.

16... Nxe5

Black appears to be in trouble, with his queen, rook and knight all under threat, but he has everything under control. Score 5 points for this move, which is, of course, forced.

16. Qxa8

Choose a move for Black.

16... Nd7

5 points for this move, or for Ng4. Black has sacrificed the exchange, an increasingly common idea in modern grandmaster chess. You really need a lot of experience to understand when this is likely to be a good idea, though, which is why studying top level games, especially in your favourite openings, can be beneficial.

17. g3

Choose a move for Black.

17... Nb6

Gaining time and scoring 5 points. You can have 3 points for o-o. Black can now win back the exchange – if he chooses.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 18. Nxb5?

Answer: the best move is 18... Qc5 (5 points), maintaining the pressure. There are points for other moves: Nxa8 (3 points) and axb5 (2 points).

18. Qf3

Choose a move for Black.

18... Bb7

Developing the bishop while skewering the queen and rook earns you 5 points. 3 points for b4.

19. Ne4

Choose a move for White.

19... f5

Again it's natural to attack the pinned piece, so you can take 5 points here. You can also take 5 points for o-o, quietly completing your development. You might think that White's just the exchange ahead after o-o, but the engines will tell you Black has a winning advantage. Yes, it's very hard to understand the concept of compensation in a complex position like this.

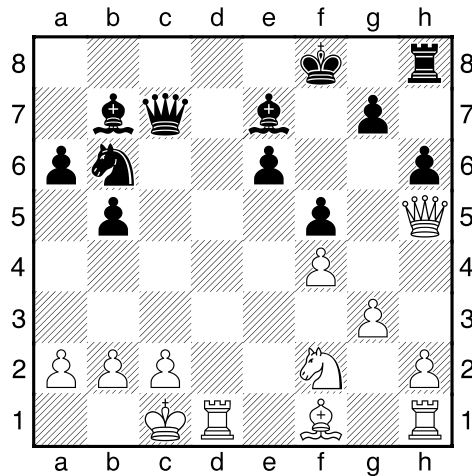
20. Qh5+

Choose a move for Black.

20... Kf8

It should be easy for everyone to score 5 points here.

21. Nf2



Choose a move for Black.

22... Bf6

I'd guess you probably played Bxh1 here, regaining the exchange and leaving the white knight in the corner, in which case you can have 5 points. But if you agreed with Kramnik and played Bf6 instead, ignoring the material and continuing the attack, you can award yourself 10 points.

22. Bd3

Choose a move for Black.

22... Na4

Kramnik again refuses the exchange, preferring to continue his attack. If you played that move 5 points are yours. You can also have 5 points here for Bxh1, which is the engine's first choice. The subtle difference is that the bishop has now occupied d3, the best defensive square for the knight. This is the sort of thing that today's engines see quickly but humans probably won't appreciate at all.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if White played 23. Bxf5?

Answer: 5 points for taking the bait: 23... exf5, 3 points for Bxh1 or Bxb2+

Bonus Question 3: In this line, what would you play now after 23... exf5 24. Rhe1?

Answer: 5 points for Qc8, preventing mate while keeping up the attack and maintaining the bishop on f6 where it helps defend the king. 3 points for Bxb2+ or Be4, both of which lead to a draw with best play.

23. Rhe1

Choose a move for Black.

23... Bxb2+

In this position the obvious capture with check is clearly the best move: 5 points for this, and nothing for anything else.

24. Kb1

Choose a move for Black.

24... Bd5

The only winning move, scoring 5 points. White was threatening Bxf5.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play if White played 25. Bxf5 here?

Answer: 10 points for 25... Bxa2+, sacrificing the bishop.

Bonus Question 5: in this variation, what would you play after 25... Bxa2+ 26. Kxa2?

Answer: 5 points for 26... Qc4+.

Bonus Question 6: continuing this variation, what would you play after 26... Qc4+ 27. Kb1?

Answer: 10 points for 27... Nc3+, which, as I'm sure you can work out for yourself, is mate in 3.

25. Bxb5

Choose a move for Black.

25... Bxa2+

This is the only winning move, and, as it's a sacrifice, I'll give you 10 points. You did have a big clue just now, though. 25... Nc3+ leads to a level position, while the immediate 25... axb5 fails to 26. Rxd5.

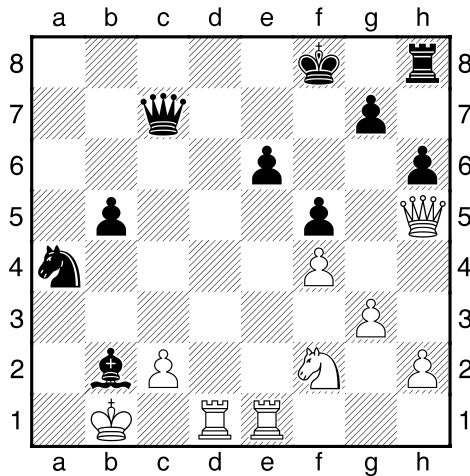
26. Kxa2

Choose a move for Black.

26... axb5

Now this is winning because White no longer has Rxd5 available while the white king is fatally exposed. Take 5 points for this capture.

27. Kb1



Choose a move for Black.

27... Qa5

If you played the same move as Kramnik, I'll give you 5 points. It was a mistake, though: the winning move was 27... Qe7, threatening the familiar Nc3+. If you're more clever than Kramnik and chose this move I'll award you 10 points.

Bonus Question 7: Turn the board round: if you were White in this position, what would you play?

Answer: If you found the unlikely 28. c3 sacrificing a pawn for an escape square, you can have 10 points. The main variation now is 28... Nxc3+ 29. Kxb2 Na4+ 30. Ka2 Qb4 31. Rd8+ Ke7 32. Re8+ Rxe8 33. Rxe6+ Kxe6 34. Qxe8+, when Black will be a pawn up in the ending, but at least White is still alive.

28. Nd3

Choose a move for Black.

28... Ba3

Score 5 points for this move, preventing Kc1, the easiest way to win. I'll give you 3 points for 28... Bd4, although the winning moves here are much harder to find.

29. Ka2

Choose a move for Black.

29... Nc3+

You should know what to do by now. 5 points for this move, and 3 points for any of g6, Bb4 or Bc5.

30. Kb3

Choose a move for Black.

30... Nd5

This is the right square for the knight: if you found it, 5 points are yours. You can take 4 points for Ne4 or g6, and 3 points for Nxd1.

31. Ka2

Choose a move for Black.

31... Bb4+

The quickest finish: 5 points for this move, or for Qa4, which takes a move longer.

32. Kb1

Choose a move for Black.

32... Bc3

Finishing him off with a quick mate, which White can only delay by sacrificing all his pieces. Take 5 points for choosing this move.

White resigned here.

A great win by Kramnik, in spite of one inaccurate move. Black's well-coordinated attacking forces were more than a match for White's extra material, even though he had a rook stuck in the corner out of play.

Ivanchuk should have played Bxe5, not fxe5 on move 14, with an equal position, and might also have done better with 17. Qe4 and 23. Bxf5 as well as 28. c3.

You'll see that these Open Sicilian positions (with 3. d4) are very difficult to play and understand, and are therefore very popular at Grandmaster level. Many club players will prefer to choose simpler openings. Are you brave enough to try these lines out yourself?

GAME 26 ANSWER SHEET

- Black's 14th move_____
- Black's 15th move_____
- Black's 16th move_____
- Black's 17th move_____
- Bonus Question 1_____
- Black's 18th move_____
- Black's 19th move_____
- Black's 20th move_____
- Black's 21st move_____
- Black's 22nd move_____
- Bonus Question 2_____
- Bonus Question 3_____
- Black's 23rd move_____
- Black's 24th move_____
- Bonus Question 4_____
- Bonus Question 5_____
- Bonus Question 6_____
- Black's 25th move_____
- Black's 26th move_____
- Black's 27th move_____
- Bonus Question 7_____
- Black's 28th move_____
- Black's 29th move_____
- Black's 30th move_____
- Black's 31st move_____
- Black's 32nd move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 160)

Your rating:

130-160: Grandmaster

95-129: International Master

65-94: National Master

Below 65: Candidate Master

GAME 27

Kasparov is thought by many to be the most outstanding attacking player of all time. If you want to see some brilliant play you should certainly study his games, but, because they're relatively recent they're harder to understand than games played by 19th century players like Morphy or even early 20th century players like Alekhine.

This game is widely considered one of his greatest tactical achievements, so it might not be easy for you to calculate his best moves here.

Kasparov was playing White against Bulgarian star Veselin Topalov, and the game was played in the annual tournament in Wijk aan Zee, in the Netherlands, in 1999.

1. e4 d6
2. d4 Nf6
3. Nc3 g6
4. Be3 Bg7

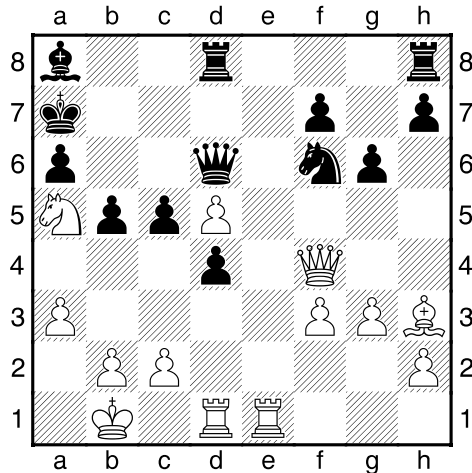
Topalov has courageously chosen the Pirc Defence, closely related to the King's Indian Defence. Kasparov, true to his style, meets it with an aggressive set-up which you might have already seen played against other openings where Black fianchettoes the king's bishop.

5. Qd2 c6
6. f3 b5
7. Nge2 Nbd7
8. Bh6 Bxh6
9. Qxh6 Bb7
10. a3 e5
11. o-o-o Qe7
12. Kb1 a6
13. Nc1 o-o-o
14. Nb3 exd4
15. Rxd4 c5
16. Rd1 Nb6
17. g3 Kb8
18. Na5 Ba8
19. Bh3 d5
20. Qf4+ Ka7
21. Rhe1 d4
22. Nd5 Nbx5
23. exd5 Qd6

After some complicated play in the middlegame we've reached this position.

It looks like Black is doing fine here, but it's your move.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

24. Rxd4

We start with 10 points for this rook sacrifice, which Black really should have declined. Other moves give Black few problems, so don't merit any points.

24... cxd4

Choose a move for White.

25. Re7+

Kasparov now offers a second rook: take another 10 points if this was your choice as well. Again there's no credit for anything else.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 25... Qxe7?

Answer: 5 points for 26. Qxd4+, leading to mate.

25... Kb6

Choose a move for White.

26. Qxd4+

Score 5 points for this check: you've already had a clue, so nothing else scores.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played 26... Qc5?

Answer: 5 points for 27. Qxf6+

Bonus Question 3: What would you play in this line if Black played 27... Qd6?

Answer: 10 points for the beautiful 28. Be6, when fxe6 is met by Rxe6. Other variations after this move will be similar to the game continuation.

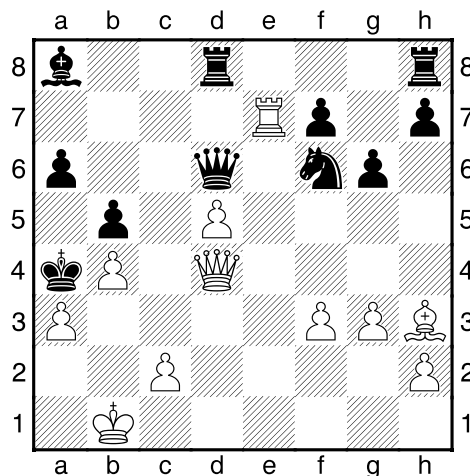
26... Kxa5

Choose a move for White.

27. b4+

The obvious continuation is correct here: 5 points for this move.

27... Ka4



Choose a move for White.

28. Qc3

If you chose the same move as Kasparov you can award yourself 5 points. Although it was good enough to win it wasn't the best move. If you preferred 28. Ra7 you can have 10 points instead. White has two mating ideas: Rxa6 and Qb2. Let's look at some variations.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play after 28. Ra7 Nxd5?

Answer: 10 points for 29. Rxa6+ Qxa6 30. Qb2. The immediate 29. Qb2 fails to Nxb4 so White has to divert the queen first.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play after 28. Ra7 Bxd5?

Answer: 5 points for 29. Qc3, the only winning move.

Bonus Question 6: In this line, what would you play after 29. Qc3 Rhe8?

Answer: 5 points for 30. Kb2, threatening a queen sacrifice for mate in 2. If you played the creative Be6, which doesn't force mate but also wins, you also score 5 points.

Bonus Question 7: In this line, what would you play after 30. Kb2 Re2?

Answer: There's only one winning move: 5 points if you found 31. Qc7, threatening Qa5# and meeting Qxc7 with Rxa6+.

28... Qxd5

Choose a move for White.

29. Ra7

You had a clue last move: 5 points for this. After Qc7 instead, Black would have a perpetual check with Qd1+ and Qd4+.

29... Bb7

Choose a move for White.

30. Rxb7

As it's a sacrifice I'll be generous and give you 10 points, even though it's obvious it can't be accepted.

Bonus Question 8: What would you play now if Black played 30... Rd6?

Answer: 10 points for 31. Rb6, meeting 31... Rxb6 with 32. Kb2. The immediate 31. Kb2 fails to Qd4, so you have to deflect the rook first.

30... Qc4

Choose a move for White.

31. Qxf6

Regaining some of the sacrificed material earns you 5 points.

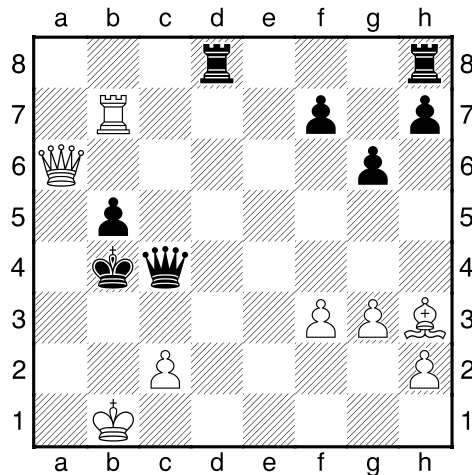
31... Kxa3

Choose a move for White.

32. Qxa6+

Take 5 points for this check.

32... Kxb4



Choose a move for White.

33. c3+

Another spectacular move, scoring 10 points. You can have 5 points for Bd7.

Bonus Question 9: What would you play now if Black played 33... Qxc3?

Answer 5 points for Qxb5+, mating. 3 points for Rxb5+, which takes a few moves longer.

33... Kxc3

Choose a move for White.

34. Qa1+

The only winning move: 5 points (I hope you didn't forget to notice that Black was threatening mate)

34... Kd2

Choose a move for White.

35. Qb2+

Again Black was threatening mate. 5 points for this move: everything else loses.

35...Kd1

Choose a move for White.

36. Bf1

A well-deserved 10 points for this move, which Kasparov must have foreseen several moves previously. Yet again, all other moves lose.

Bonus Question 10: What would you play now if Black played 36... Qxf1?

Answer: 37. Qc2+ 38. Ke1 Re7+ and mate next move gives you 5 points.

36... Rd2

Choose a move for White.

37. Rd7

The last difficult move: 10 points for this, but only 5 points for the immediate Bxc4, when the resulting rook ending should be drawn.

37... Rxd7

Choose a move for White.

38. Bxc4

5 easy points for taking Black's queen.

38... bxc4

Choose a move for White.

39. Qxh8

A final 5 easy points for taking Black's rook.

That concludes the test, but the game continued for a few more moves.

39... Rd3

40. Qa8 c3

41. Qa4+ Ke1

42. f4 f5

43. Kc1 Rd2

44. Qa7

Black resigned here.

A modern classic from Kasparov which demanded advanced skills in calculation. Even Kasparov himself didn't play perfectly, missing the best option on move 28.

To play chess at a high level you need to excel tactically. Even if you prefer a quieter style of play, you'll still find yourself in complex positions from time to time.

Topalov was actually doing fine after the opening. His big mistake was taking the rook on move 26. He had several better options which would have kept the position unclear, but playing a position of that nature against a genius like Kasparov is never going to be easy. If you managed to find some of the 10 point moves in this game you can feel very proud of yourself.

GAME 27 ANSWER SHEET

White's 24th move_____

White's 25th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

White's 26th move_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

White's 27th move_____

White's 28th move_____

Bonus Question 4_____

Bonus Question 5_____

Bonus Question 6_____

Bonus Question 7_____

White's 29th move_____

White's 30th move_____

Bonus Question 8_____

White's 31st move_____

White's 32nd move_____

White's 33rd move_____

Bonus Question 9_____

White's 34th move_____

White's 35th move_____

White's 36th move_____

Bonus Question 10_____

White's 37th move_____

White's 38th move_____

White's 39th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 180)

Your rating:

145-180: Grandmaster

110-144: International Master

70-109 National Master

Below 70: Candidate Master

GAME 28

After that last game, you'll welcome some light relief, so here's another sparkling win (there are plenty to choose from) by Judit Polgár.

This game was played in Budapest in 2003 against fellow Hungarian Grandmaster Ferenc Berkes. Can you match her brilliant sacrificial attack? I'm sure you'll want to have a go.

1. e4 e6
2. d4 d5
3. Nc3 Nf6

Black chooses the French Defence. The main alternatives here are 3... Bb4, the very complex Winawer Variation and 3... dxe4, giving Black a slightly cramped but very solid position.

Now White can play the immediate 4. e5 (the Steinitz Variation) or pin the black knight.

4. Bg5 dxe4

Black again has a choice. 4... Be7 is the traditional move, 4... Bb4 is the McCutcheon Variation, meeting 5. e5 with h6. Berkes prefers the Burn Variation, similar to the Rubinstein Variation, but hoping to trade off more minor pieces.

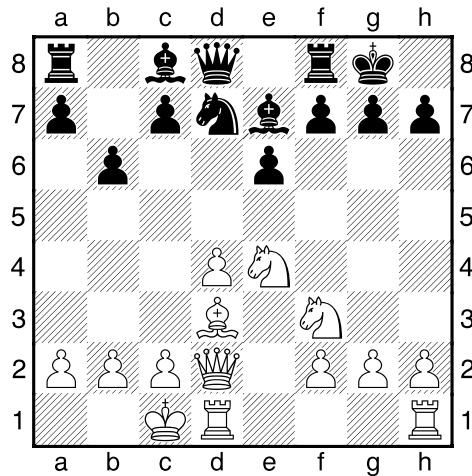
5. Nxe4 Be7
6. Bxf6

White trades off a bishop for a knight, but avoids losing time. Now, 6... gxf6 is a more dynamic alternative.

- 6... Bxf6
7. Nf3 o-o
8. Qd2 Nd7
9. o-o-o Be7
10. Bd3 b6

Judit Polgár, true to her style, has chosen an aggressive set-up, planning a kingside attack.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

11. Neg5

An ambitious choice, earning you 5 points. There were plenty of alternatives. The most popular move here is h4: engines love playing this move in positions like this to soften up the black king's defences. Other sensible options are Kb1, putting your king on a safer square, c3, defending the d4 pawn again, and c4, gaining space in the centre. You can also have 5 points for any of these moves.

11... h6

Choose a move for White.

12. Bh7+

This is the point of White's plan, forcing the black king to the h-file and scoring 5 points. It's not the only good plan, though. You can also take 5 points for the sacrifice 12. h4, when Black should decline the knight as White's attack is too strong after 12... f5 13. Qe3 followed by a check and capture on e6.

12... Kh8

Choose a move for White.

13. Be4

Hitting the black rook gets you 5 points. You can have 3 points for 13. h4, when after 13... Bxg5 14. hxg5 Kxh7 15. Qf4 White's attack is, according to the engines, good enough for a draw.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 13... Rb8?

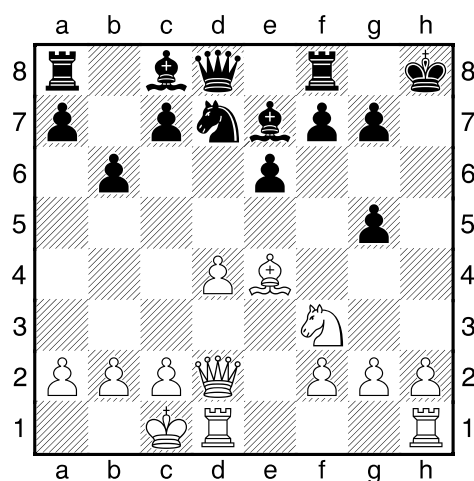
Answer: 5 points for 14. h4, clearly the best move.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played 13... Bxg5 14. Nxg5 Rb8?

Answer: 5 points for either 15. h4 or the simple 15. Nf3.

Black should have chosen one of these options, but had missed Polgár's next move.

13... hxg5



Choose a move for White.

14. g4

If you found this move you score 10 points. It's absolutely forced as 14. Bxa8 loses to g4, and, if the knight moves, Bg5 wins the queen thanks to the *en passant* rule.

14... Rb8

Choose a move for White.

15. h4

Again, no choice. White must open the h-file to justify her piece sacrifice, so you get 5 points for this, but nothing for anything else.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play now if Black played 15... gxh4?

Answer: 5 points for 16. g5, cutting off Black's defence of h4.

Bonus Question 4: In this variation, what would you play after 16. g5 f5?

Answer: There are three good moves, in order of strength: 10 points for Qf4, 8 points for Bc6 and 5 points for Rxh4+. After 17. Qf4 fxe4 18. Qxh4+ Black will eventually have to give up his queen to avoid mate.

15... g6

Choose a move for White.

16. hxg5+

An easy one this time: 5 points are yours.

16... Kg7

Choose a move for White.

17. Qf4

The only winning move, earning you 5 points. The queen is heading for h2 as well as eyeing c7.

Black has several possible defences here.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if Black played 17... Rh8?

Answer: 5 points for 18. Rxh8.

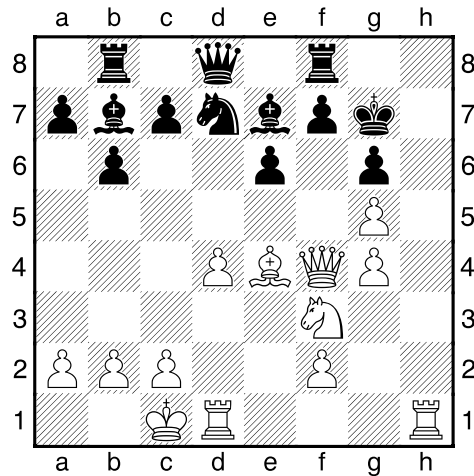
Bonus Question 6: What would you play in this line after 18. Rxh8 Qxh8?

Answer: 5 points for 19. Ne5, the only winning move. Now 19... Qf8 is met by 20. Rh1, and after 19... Nxe5 20. Qxe5+, c7 will fall.

Bonus Question 7: Going back, what would you now if Black played 17... Bd6?

Answer: Again, 18. Ne5 is the best move, scoring 5 points. Play might continue 18... Bxe5 19. dxe5 Rh8 20. Rh6.

17... Bb7



Choose a move for White.

18. Rh7+

Again, there's just one way to guarantee the full point, and again Polgár finds it. 10 points are yours if you found it as well. 5 points for Bxb7, which, according to the engines, leads to a draw with best play. White is now a rook and a bishop down, but has a winning attack.

18... Kxh7

Choose a move for White.

19. Qh2+

This move wins the game, and 5 points as well. Everything else loses.

19... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

20. Rh1

This obvious move will no doubt give you another 5 points.

20... Bxg5+

Choose a move for White.

21. Nxc5

A pretty obvious capture, and again 5 points.

Bonus Question 8: What would you play now if Black played 21... Kg7?

Answer: 10 points for 22. Nxe6+, forking everything but sacrificing another piece. Qh7+ (5 points) is only a draw according to the engines.

Bonus Question 9: In this line, what would you play after 22. Nxe6+ fxe6?

Answer: 5 points for 23. Qh7+, only 2 points for Qh6+, which is a perpetual check.

Bonus Question 10: Continuing, what would you play after 23. Qh7+ Kf6?

Answer: 5 points for 24. g5+, a final pawn sacrifice. 2 points for f4, which leads to a draw with best play. Other moves all lose.

Bonus Question 11: Continuing again, what would you play after 24. g5+ Kxg5?

Answer: 5 points for spotting 25. Qh4#, as I'm sure you did.

This line would have been a more fitting end to the game, I think. What actually happened was something of an anticlimax.

21... Qxg5+

Choose a move for White.

22. f4

5 easy points: everything else loses.

22... Qxf4+

Choose a move for White.

23. Qxf4

5 even easier points for taking the black queen.

23... Bxe4

Choose a move for White.

24. Qxe4

A final easy 5 points for recapturing the bishop.

At this point Black decided he'd seen enough and resigned. If you count the points you might think it's equal (rook, knight and pawn against queen), but points are for babies. Black's pieces are uncoordinated and his king is still in danger from h-file attacks. White's next move may well be Qf4, threatening Qh6 and Qxc7. You might like to play the position out yourself to confirm that White is winning.

A modern classic in the style of Paul Morphy, but it's unusual for today's grandmasters to lose in this way.

Judit Polgár and her two sisters spent hours every day solving tactics puzzles, and you can see the results in this and many other games. Don't forget to read the *CHESS HEROES: PUZZLES* books which will provide you with hundreds of puzzles to solve yourself.

GAME 28 ANSWER SHEET

White's 11th move _____

White's 12th move _____

White's 13th move _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

Bonus Question 2 _____

White's 14th move _____

White's 15th move _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

Bonus Question 4 _____

White's 16th move _____

White's 17th move _____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Bonus Question 6 _____

Bonus Question 7 _____

White's 18th move _____

White's 19th move _____

White's 20th move _____

White's 21st move _____

Bonus Question 8 _____

Bonus Question 9 _____

Bonus Question 10 _____

Bonus Question 11 _____

White's 22nd move _____

White's 23rd move _____

White's 24th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 145)

Your rating:

115-145: Grandmaster

85-114: International Master

60-84: National Master

Below 60: Candidate Master

GAME 29

Magnus Carlsen, from Norway, was the World Champion between 2013 and 2023, and is the highest ever rated human chess player in the world.

Today's grandmaster games are often hard for the rest of us to understand as they're played at such a high level, but, if you really want to appreciate chess you should certainly have a look at some of them.

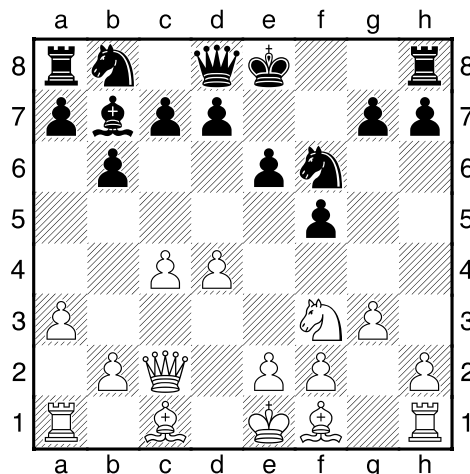
This game was played in Bilbao in 2011 against Ukrainian grandmaster Vasyl Ivanchuk. Like Carlsen, you will take the white pieces. See how you get on! You might even do better than him on some of the moves!

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4

Black chooses the Nimzo-Indian Defence. The most popular replies are e3 and Qc2, but many other moves, including Carlsen's choice here, are also good.

4. Nf3 b6
5. Qc2 Bb7
6. a3 Bxc3+
7. Qxc3 Ne4
8. Qc2 f5
9. g3 Nf6

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

10. Bh3

You probably played Bg2 here, completing the fianchetto and scoring 5 points. Carlsen, though, chose the other bishop move, also scoring 5 points, not wanting a possible bishop trade as well as eyeing the pawn on f5. You can also have 5 points for b4, which also makes a lot of sense.

10... O-O

Choose a move for White.

11. O-O

I'll give you 5 points for this very natural move, or for the immediate d5, and 4 points for Bf4 or b4.

11... a5

Choose a move for White.

12. Rd1

Another natural move scoring 5 points: we all know that rooks like looking at queens. Again, you can also take 5 points for d5.

12... Qe8

Choose a move for White.

13. d5

This is the move White usually wants to play in this sort of position. You've already had some hints! Score 5 points if this was your choice, and 4 points for Bf4 or Bg5.

13... Na6

Choose a move for White.

14. Bf4

Lots of choice here: 5 points for this move, Bg5 or Be3, or for dxe6.

14... exd5

Choose a move for White.

15. Bxf5

This is one reason for his 10th move. 5 points are yours for this move, and 3 points for cxd5.

15... dxc4

Choose a move for White.

16. Ng5

Take 5 points for this very strong move. The alternative, Qxc4+, scores 3 points.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played 16... h6?

Answer: 5 points for 17. Bxd7, leading to a decisive advantage.

Bonus Question 2: In this variation, what would you play after 17... Qe7?

Answer: 5 points for 18. Qc4+.

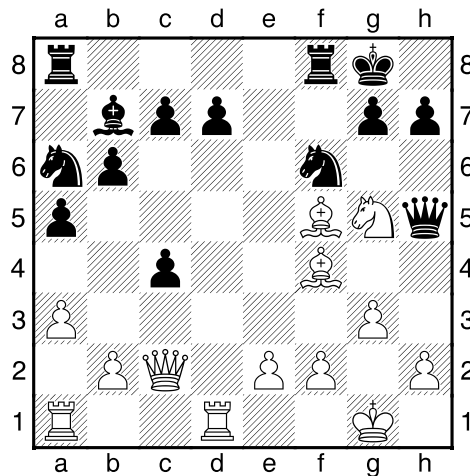
Bonus Question 3: Continuing, what would you play after 18... Kh8

Answer: 10 points for 19. Qe6, when White will emerge two pawns ahead.

Bonus Question 4: Going back, what would you play after 16... h6 17. Bxd7 Qh5?

Answer: 5 points for 18. g4, which is winning after 18... Qh4 19. Qxc4+ Kh8 20. Nf7+.

16... Qh5



Choose a move for White.

17. Rxd7

This brilliant move earns you 10 points. There's another strong move as well: 17. Rd4, with the idea of Bd2 and Rh4, with perhaps also Bc3 at some point. You can have 10 points for that move as well.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if Black played 17... Nxd7?

Answer: 5 points for 18. Bh7+.

Bonus Question 6: In this variation, what would you play if Black played 18... Kh8?

Answer: 5 points for 19. Bg6, winning the queen (19... Qh6 20. Nf7+).

17... Kh8

Choose a move for White.

18. Re7

If you agreed with Carlsen here you can take 5 points, and 5 points are also available for Rd4, with the same idea as above. But neither was the strongest option: if you chose to sacrifice the exchange with Rad1 you can have 10 points. Carlsen himself gives the continuation 18. Rad1 Nxd7 19. Rxd7 Nc5 20. Rxc7 Rad8 21. f3 with the idea of Bg4, and White has a dominating position.

18... Nd5

Choose a move for White.

19. Bg4

Carlsen again criticised this move, for which I'll give you 4 points. You can also have 4 points for g4, but 5 points for Re5, which, according to the engines, is White's strongest choice.

19... Qg6

Choose a move for White.

20. Nf7+

Fairly obvious this time, I suppose, as 20... Rxf7 loses material after 21. Qxg6. 5 points are yours if this was your selection.

20... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

21. Bf5

5 points for this move, and the same score for Nh6+, a strong sacrifice but White will have to go back again after Kg8.

Bonus Question 7: What would you play now if Black played 21... Qh5?

Answer: 5 points for 22. g4, 3 points for either 22. Bg4 or 22. Nh6+, both of which will return to what happened in the game.

Bonus Question 8: In this variation, what would you play after 22. g4 Qh4?

Answer: 10 points for 23. Bg3, and 5 points for Bg5, the second best move.

Bonus Question 9: Continuing, what would you play after 23. Bg3 Qxe7?

Answer: 10 more points for 24. Bxh7+, because of 24... Kxf7 25. Qg6#.

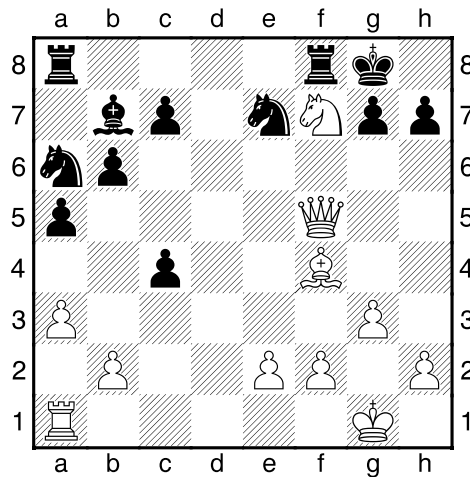
21... Qxf5

Choose a move for White.

22. Qxf5

Carlsen had overlooked that Ivanchuk could give up his queen here, but he's still a lot better. 5 points for everyone here.

22... Nxe7



Choose a move for White.

23. Nh6+

The only move to retain White's advantage is worth 5 points.

Bonus Question 10: What would you play now if Black played 23... Kh8?

Answer: most queen moves are good, but I'll give you 5 points for 24. Qe6 and 3 points for 24. Qd7.

Bonus Question 11: In this variation, what would you play after 24. Qe6 Nd5?

Answer: at this point in your chess career it should be automatic to play 25. Qg8+ Rxc8 26. Nf7#. As it's a queen sacrifice I'll give you 10 points anyway.

23... gxf6

Choose a move for White.

24. Qg4+

This is the best queen move, earning you 5 points. 3 points for Qe6+, Qb5 or Qc2.

24... Ng6

Choose a move for White.

25. Bxf6

Why not take a pawn and attack a rook? Score 5 points for this move and 3 points for Rd1. If you count the points, you'll see that Black has a rook and two knights against White's queen. If you just count up, you might conclude that Black has the advantage, but, just as in the last game, points are for babies. Carlsen pointed out at the time that White has the easier game because of Black's exposed king, and the engines will tell you he has a winning advantage.

25... Rf7

Choose a move for White.

26. Rd1

Why not put your rook on an open file? I'll give you 5 points for this move, and also 5 points for h4 (the engine choice). Why not threaten to attack the pinned knight? You can have 4 points for f4, with the same idea.

26... Re8

Choose a move for White.

27. h4

Take 5 points for this move: rather obvious and there was a clue last time. 3 points for Qc4+.

27... Nc5

Choose a move for White.

28. h5

Sometimes the most obvious moves are also the best: 5 points for this.

28... Bc8

Choose a move for White.

29. Qxc4

Black's last move saved his pinned knight. White has only two options: take 4 points for this move, but 5 points for Qd4, which the engines prefer.

29... Ne5

Choose a move for White.

30. Qh4

This is the best square for the queen, and is worth 5 points. You can have 3 points for Qd5, but certainly not for Qd4, which loses at once to Rd7.

30... Nc6

Choose a move for White.

31. Rd5

If you chose the same move as Carlsen you deserve 5 points. Other good moves are f3, Qg5+ and b4: 4 points for any of these.

31... Ne6

Choose a move for White.

32. Qc4

Carlsen pointed out after the game that Qa4 would have been even stronger, so you can have 5 points for Qa4, and 4 points for Qc4, Qg4+ or f3.

32... Ncd8

Choose a move for White.

33. Qg4+

This check wins at once: take 5 points if it was your choice.

Bonus Question 12: What would you play now if Black played 33... Kh8?

Answer: 5 points for 34. Bd2, with the idea of Bc3+, an idea which has been floating around for some time. A nice finish is 34. Bd2 Nb7 35. Bc3+ Ng7 36. Re5 Bxg4 37. Rxe8+.

33... Ng7

Choose a move for White.

34. Qxc8

A final 5 points for capturing a free bishop: Ivanchuk was so short of time that this move came as a complete shock to him. Understandably, he resigned here.

1-0

Today's top grandmasters have studied all the openings they play in depth, never miss simple tactics and play endings with extraordinary accuracy. Players like Carlsen know how to make life difficult for their opponents by facing them with unfamiliar ideas which might run them short of time.

This is what happened to Ivanchuk here. He could have defended better (30... Ne6, for instance) but was in desperate time trouble towards the end of the game. His real mistake, though, was 14... exd5: perhaps he was confused by the bishop on h3, or he missed or underestimated 16. Ng5. Carlsen, whose notes (from MegaBase 2025) I used when annotating this game, suggests 14... d6, while today's engines prefer 14... Qh5.

GAME 29 ANSWER SHEET

White's 10th move_____

White's 11th move_____

White's 12th move_____

White's 13th move_____

White's 14th move_____

White's 15th move_____

White's 16th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Bonus Question 2_____

Bonus Question 3_____

Bonus Question 4_____

White's 17th move_____

Bonus Question 5_____

Bonus Question 6_____

White's 18th move_____

White's 19th move_____

White's 20th move_____

White's 21st move_____

Bonus Question 7_____

Bonus Question 8_____

Bonus Question 9_____

White's 22nd move_____

White's 23rd move_____

Bonus Question 10_____

Bonus Question 11_____

White's 24th move_____

White's 25th move_____

White's 26th move _____

White's 33rd move _____

White's 27th move _____

Bonus Question 12 _____

White's 28th move _____

White's 34th move _____

White's 29th move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 215)

White's 30th move _____

Your rating:

170-215: Grandmaster

White's 31st move _____

130-169: International Master

85-129: National Master

White's 32nd move _____

Below 85: Candidate Master

GAME 30

Viswanathan "Vishy" Anand, from India, held the title of World Champion between 2007 and 2013. It's partly because of his influence that India is now one of the major powers in world chess.

It's not very often that one of the world's leading players gets crushed with the white pieces in under 25 moves, but that's what happened to Armenian grandmaster Levon Aronian in this game, played at the Tata Steel tournament in Wijk aan Zee, in the Netherlands, in 2013.

Some more light relief for you, perhaps, after the last game: see if can you play as well as Anand. You have the black pieces.

1. d4 d5
2. c4 c6
3. Nf3 Nf6
4. Nc3 e6

Anand chooses the Semi-Slav Defence: Black sets up a pawn triangle in the centre, just as White does in the Colle System. White now has to decide whether he wants to allow Black to play dxc4 and hold onto the pawn. Here, Aronian chooses the most popular option.

5. e3 Nbd7
6. Bd3 dxc4
7. Bxc4 b5

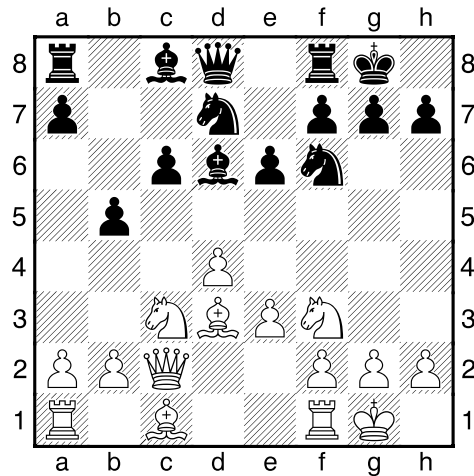
This is the Meran Variation of the Semi-Slav Defence, which leads to complex play. Black has given up the centre, but will later hit back, perhaps with c5.

8. Bd3 Bd6

Black has several options here: Bb7 and a6 are both very popular, and b4 is also playable.

9. O-O O-O
10. Qc2

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

10... Bb7

Take 5 points for this move, which is almost always played here. There's no reason not to complete your development: the bishop will spring to life after you've played c5.

11. a3

Choose a move for Black.

11... Rc8

As you know by now, rooks like looking at queens, so 5 points for this move, or for Re8. You can also take 5 points for a6 or a5, both of which are often played here.

12. Ng5

Choose a move for Black.

12... c5

This is the best move, ignoring White's attack on h7 and scoring 5 points. You can have 3 points for h6 or Bxh2+, regaining the piece after Kxh2 Ng4+.

13. Nxb7

Choose a move for Black.

13... Ng4

Black again ignores White's threat, creating his own threat on h2. 10 points for this move, but there were plenty of alternatives. Award yourself 8 points for c4 and 5 points for Re8. At this point you might like to compare the bishops on c1 and b7.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 14. Nxf8?

Answer: 5 points for 14... Bxh2+, 3 points for 14... Qh4.

Bonus Question 2: In this line, what would you play after 14... Bxh2+ 15. Kh1?

Answer 5 points for 15... Qh4, with a mating attack.

Bonus Question 3: Going back, what would you play now if White played 14. h3?

Answer: 5 points for 14... Bh2+, which is equal after 15 Kh1 Qh4 16. Be4. 3 points for 14... Qh4, when White is slightly better after 15. f4. It's best to force the king to h1 first so that the g-pawn is pinned, allowing Qxh3 in some lines.

14. f4

Choose a move for Black.

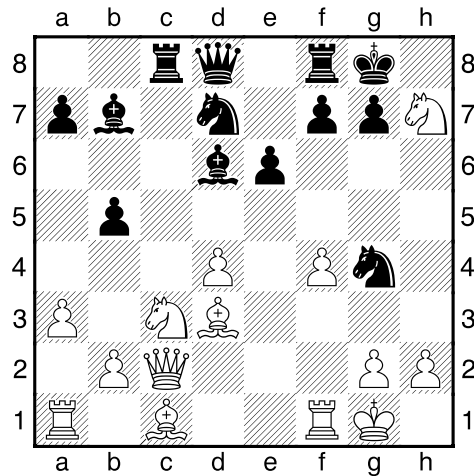
14... cxd4

The only good move, earning you 5 points. In positions like this it's important to open lines for your pieces. I'll give you 2 points for Qh4, which is met by h3, when the engines prefer White.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if White played 15. Nxf8?

Answer: 5 points for 15... Bxf8, 15... Kxf8 or 15... c5. Only 3 points for Nxf8 and 2 points for Qxf8, both of which move important attacking pieces to less effective squares.

15. exd4



Choose a move for Black.

15... Bc5

A stunning move offering you 10 points for creativity – and for making life hard for your opponent. There were other choices, all about equal, apparently. 5 points for Qb6, Ndf6, Qh4 or Re8.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if White played 16. dxc5?

Answer: 5 points for Nxc5, with ideas such as Nxd3 and Qd4+ also noting that White's knight will be trapped after a possible Nxf8. White might be able to hold on with best play, but defending is never easy.

16. Be2

Choose a move for Black.

16... Nde5

Another shock for White, which he must have overlooked. A well-deserved 10 points for this move, throwing another piece onto the fire and opening more lines. 5 points for the more obvious Bxd4+ and 3 points for Qh4.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play now if White played 17. fxe5?

Answer: 5 points for 17... Qxd4+.

Bonus Question 7: Continuing this line, what would you play if White played 18. Kh1?

Answer: An easy (I hope) 10 points for 18... Qg1+ 19. Rxd1 Nf2#, and a reluctant 5 points for Nf2+, which takes longer to mate.

Bonus Question 8: Going back, what would you play if White played 17. dxc5?

Answer: You know the idea by now: 5 points for 17... Qd4+.

Bonus Question 9: Continuing again, what would you play if White now played 18. Kh1?

Answer: 5 points for 18... Nf2+.

Bonus Question 10: In this line, what would you play if White played 19. Kg1?

Answer: 10 points if you saw 19... Nh3+ 20. Kh1 Qg1+ 21. Rxg1 Nf2# at this point. If you played Nh3+ without having seen the mate you only score 5 points.

17. Bxg4

Choose a move for Black.

17... Bxd4+

Take 5 points for this move, which is slightly stronger than Qxd4+ (4 points).

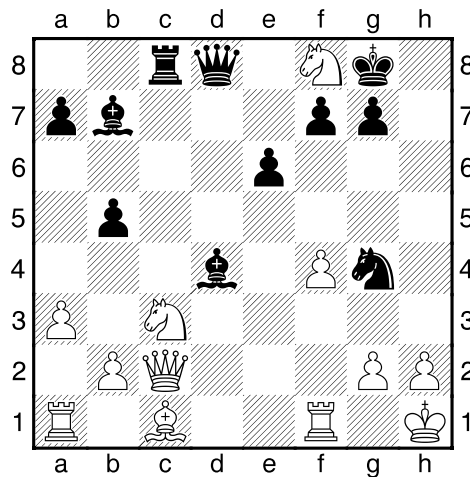
18. Kh1

Choose a move for Black.

18... Nxf4

Not much choice here: 5 points are yours for this one.

19. Nxf8



Choose a move for Black.

19... f5

Score 5 points for this excellent move, and 3 points for Kxf8, which is also good. Nothing for Qh4, when White can trade queens with Qh7+, resulting in a balanced position.

20. Ng6

Choose a move for Black.

20... Qf6

Take 5 points for this move, or for Kh7.

Bonus Question 11: What would you play now if White played 21. Ne5?

Answer: 10 points for 21... Nxf2 and if 22. Kxf2 then Qh4#. All other moves lose.

21. h3

Choose a move for Black.

21... Qxg6

5 points for this capture: no reason to do anything else.

22. Qe2

Choose a move for Black.

22... Qh5

It seems obvious to transfer the queen to the h-file, so I'll give you 5 points for this move or for Qh6. The engines prefer Rd8, followed by Bb6, which are much less human, but you can also have 5 points if you selected one of those options.

Bonus Question 12: What would you play now if White played 23. Qxb5?

Answer: You should certainly have spotted 23... Qxh3#, which is worth 5 points.

23. Qd3

Choose a move for Black.

23... Be3

10 points for this beautiful move, cutting off the white queen's defence of h3. Qh4 is equally strong, so you can have 10 points for that as well. 5 points for Nf2+, which will take longer.

White resigned here as he will have to give up his queen to avoid immediate mate.

It's very unusual for a world class grandmaster to lose like this. Aronian had to take the bishop on move 16, but must have missed Anand's reply. At the end of the game he could have struggled on with 24. Rf3, returning the exchange, but, although material would have been level his lack of development would render his position hopeless.

This was a great game by Anand: did you manage to find some of his brilliant moves?

GAME 30 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 10th move _____

Black's 11th move _____

Black's 12th move _____

Black's 13th move _____

Bonus Question 1 _____

Bonus Question 2 _____

Bonus Question 3 _____

Black's 14th move _____

Bonus Question 4 _____

Black's 15th move _____

Bonus Question 5 _____

Black's 16th move _____

Bonus Question 6 _____

Bonus Question 7 _____

Bonus Question 8 _____

Bonus Question 9 _____

Bonus Question 10 _____

Black's 17th move _____

Black's 18th move _____

Black's 19th move _____

Black's 20th move _____

Bonus Question 11 _____

Black's 21st move _____

Black's 22nd move _____

Bonus Question 12 _____

Black's 23rd move _____

Total Score: _____ (Max 165)

Your rating:

130-165: Grandmaster

100-129: International Master

65-99: National Master

Below 65: Candidate Master

GAME 31

Magnus Carlsen is famous for grinding down his opponents in long endings, playing on and on, even though the position may only be equal, until his opponents crack and make a fatal mistake.

Like all great players, though he excels at all aspects of the game. Here, at the 2015 Qatar Masters, he faced Chinese grandmaster Li Chao in what turned out to be an exciting tactical encounter.

Can you match his moves in this game? You take the white pieces.

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 g6
3. f3

By playing this move rather than developing a knight White avoids the main lines of the Grünfeld Defence and signals that he is prepared to play the Sämisch Variation against the King's Indian Defence.

3... d5

Black insists on a Grünfeld Defence, allowing White a strong pawn centre.

4. cxd5 Nxd5
5. e4 Nb6
6. Nc3 Bg7
7. Be3 o-o
8. Qd2 Nc6
9. o-o-o

Castling on opposite sides, as you've seen elsewhere, often leads to sharp positions with both players launching attacks on the enemy king.

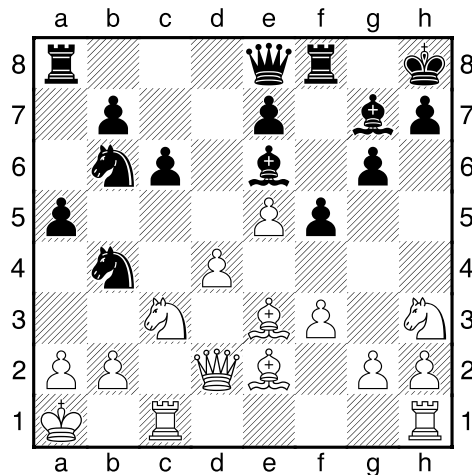
9... f5

Black attacks the white centre. Carlsen chooses the best reply.

10. e5 Nb4
11. Nh3 Qe8
12. Kb1 a5
13. Be2 c6
14. Rc1 Kh8
15. Ka1 Be6

Over the last few moves Carlsen has moved his king safely into the corner and stationed his rook on a useful half-open file. It's now time to start the attack.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for White.

16. Nf4

Score 5 points for this move, which is clearly best, freeing the h-pawn, eyeing e6 and, potentially, g6, and also controlling d5. 3 points for Bh6.

16... Qf7

Choose a move for White.

17. h4

Take 5 points for this move or for Nxe6, and 3 points for a3.

17... Bxa2

Choose a move for White.

18. h5

You know what to do here – pushing on will gain you 5 points. You can have 3 points for g4.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if Black played g5?

Answer: 10 points for Ng6+, winning the exchange as Black cannot take without losing his queen. 5 points for h6, which is also strong.

18... Kg8

Choose a move for White.

19. hxg6

Opening lines is the key to this sort of position. 5 points for this move, or for g4.

19... hxg6

Choose a move for White.

20. g4

If this was your choice you can have 5 points: you were given a clue last time.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if Black played g5?

Answer: The simplest and best reply is to retreat with Nh3, leaving the g5 pawn vulnerable. This gives you a clear advantage as well as 5 points.

20... Bb3

Choose a move for White.

21. Bd1

The bishop needs to move to make way for the queen: take 5 points for this move or for Bf1. The next best moves are Ba6 and Bb5 (3 points each), but it's unlikely anyone would choose either of them.

21... a4

Choose a move for White.

22. Qh2

5 points for this, the obvious point of White's last move.

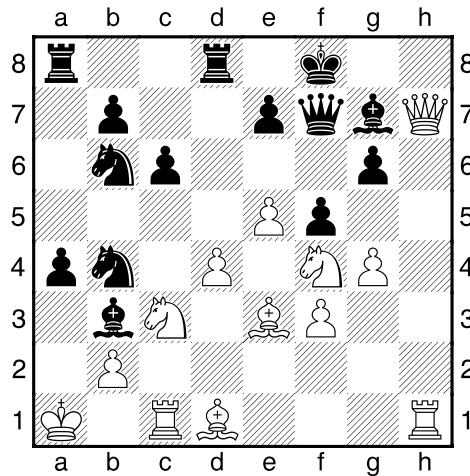
22... Rfd8

Choose a move for White.

23. Qh7+

Again, the obvious move is worth 5 points. The alternative, gxf5, also scores 5 points.

23... Kf8



Choose a move for White.

24. d5

10 points for this beautiful move, placing a pawn on a square controlled by no less than six enemy pieces (count them!) but only two friendly pieces. It opens up a white bishop line to threaten Bxb6, and also closes a black bishop line to threaten e6. You can also have 10 points for gxf5, which is equally strong. This time the obvious move is less good: only 5 points for Nxg6+.

24... Nc4

Choose a move for White.

25. Nxg6+

5 points for this, and 3 points for Be2. Certainly nothing for e6, which is met by a3 when Black is winning as it's mate in 2 if White takes the queen. In complicated positions just one slight miscalculation can turn victory into defeat.

25... Ke8

Choose a move for White.

26. e6

Now this is correct as you can take the queen with check. 5 points for this move, and again 3 points for Be2.

Bonus Question 3: What would you play now if Black played 26... Qf6?

Answer: 5 points for 27. Qg8+, forcing mate in a few moves after, for example, 27... Bf8 Rh8. 3 points for Be2 or Kb1, which both also win.

26... a3

Choose a move for White.

27. exf7+

I told you so. 5 easy points for everyone here.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if Black played 27... Kxf7?

Answer: 5 points for either Ne5+ or Kb1.

27... Kd7

Choose a move for White.

28. Ne5+

You have to find a way to deal with Black's mate threats. 10 points for this move, opening a line for your queen. I must also give you 10 points for dxc6+, which also wins as long as you play Ne5+ next move. 5 points for Kb1, which costs a tempo and leads eventually to an equal position.

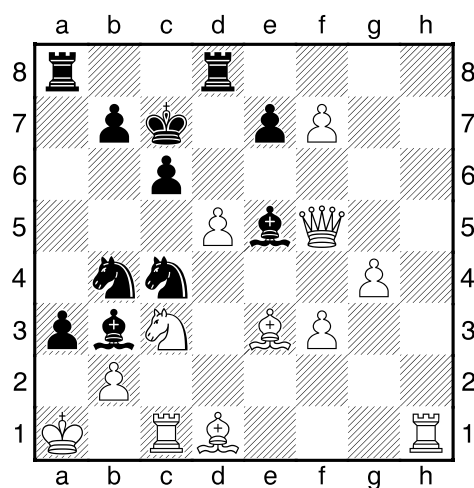
28... Bxe5

Choose a move for White.

29. Qxf5+

This capture and check earns you 5 easy points.

29... Kc7



Choose a move for White.

30. Qxe5+

White must return the queen to prevent mate. 10 points for this move. If you happened to play Nb5+ first, planning to meet Kb8 with Qxe5+ you can also have 10 points. You can have 5 points for bxa3, when Rxa3+ gives Black a draw by perpetual check, or for Kb1, which, as two moves ago, costs a vital tempo.

30... Nxe5

Choose a move for White.

31. Bxb3

No reason not to take a free piece and earn 5 points.

31... axb2+

Choose a move for White.

32. Kxb2

Another easy 5 points for you here.

32... Nbd3+

Choose a move for White.

33. Kb1

5 points for this or for Kc2.

33... Nxc1

Choose a move for White.

34. Rxc1

Rooks like looking at kings, so 5 points for this recapture: 4 points for Bxc1 or Kxc1.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if Black played Nxf7?

Answer: There are lots of good moves but 35. dxc6 is easiest, threatening knight checks as well as Bxf7. 5 points for this, 4 points for Nb5+ and 3 points for Bf4+. With two bishops and that pawn on f7 for a rook, it's an easy win for White.

34... Kc8

35. dxc6 bxc6

36. f4

Black resigned here.

A great game from Magnus Carlsen which will have tested both your attacking and defending skills.

The opening was slightly better for White, but Black could have stayed in the game with 17... Rfd8. There were also later improvements: 18... g5 and 20... g5 would both have been better, but playing the strongest human in chess history is never going to be easy.

GAME 31 ANSWER SHEET

- White's 16th move_____
- White's 17th move_____
- White's 18th move_____
- Bonus Question 1_____
- White's 19th move_____
- White's 20th move_____
- Bonus Question 2_____
- White's 21st move_____
- White's 22nd move_____
- White's 23rd move_____
- White's 24th move_____
- White's 25th move_____
- White's 26th move_____
- Bonus Question 3_____
- White's 27th move_____
- Bonus Question 4_____
- White's 28th move_____
- White's 29th move_____
- White's 30th move_____
- White's 31st move_____
- White's 32nd move_____
- White's 33rd move_____
- White's 34th move_____
- Bonus Question 5_____
- Total Score: _____ (Max 140)

Your rating:

110-140: Grandmaster

85-109: International Master

55-84: National Master

Below 55: Candidate Master

GAME 32

After Carlsen decided not to defend his world championship title in 2022, a match took place the following year between Ian Nepomniachtchi, from Russia, and Ding Liren, from China, who had finished first and second in the Candidates' Tournament, to decide the new champion.

After the match finished level, Ding won the fourth rapid tiebreak game, thereby becoming the first Chinese World Champion.

This game from 2017, where Ding played black against fellow Chinese Grandmaster Bai Jinshi, is considered one of the most brilliant of recent years. Can you play as brilliantly yourself?

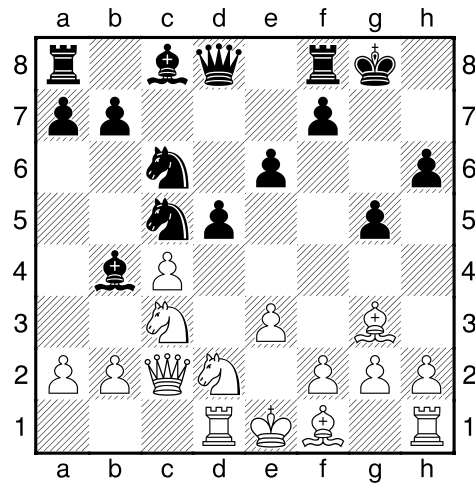
1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nc3 Bb4

Black chooses the ever-popular Nimzo-Indian Defence. White opts for a slightly unusual variation.

4. Nf3 O-O
5. Bg5 c5
6. e3 cxd4
7. Qxd4 Nc6
8. Qd3 h6
9. Bh4 d5
10. Rd1 g5
11. Bg3 Ne4
12. Nd2 Nc5
13. Qc2

Black has gained space at the expense of some pawn weaknesses.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

13... d4

This is definitely the best move, worth 5 points, even though it looks dangerous with the white rook looking at the black queen.

14. Nf3

Choose a move for Black.

14... e5

Offering a pawn for a quick attack while the white king is still in the centre is again clearly best, this time scoring 10 points.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 15. Bxe5?

Answer: 5 points for 15... Nxe5: after 16. Nxe5 Re8 Black will have enough compensation for the pawn.

15. Nxe5

Choose a move for Black.

15... dxc3

If you had the courage and imagination to select this queen sacrifice you well deserve 10 points. Other moves are equally good so I may have to give you the same score for Qa5, Qf6 or Re8.

16. Rxd8

Choose a move for Black.

16... cxb2+

This one's easy: 5 points for a discovered check.

Bonus Question 2: What would you play now if White played 17. Rd2?

Answer: 5 points for 17... Rd8, attacking the pinned rook again.

Bonus Question 3: In this variation, what would you play if White played 18. Nf3?

Answer: 5 points for 18... Bg4, attacking the piece defending the pinned rook.

17. Ke2

Choose a move for Black.

17... Rxd8

I'm sure you scored 5 points for playing this capture.

18. Qxb2

Choose a move for Black.

18... Na4

Take 5 points for this move, hitting the queen and planning a check on c3.

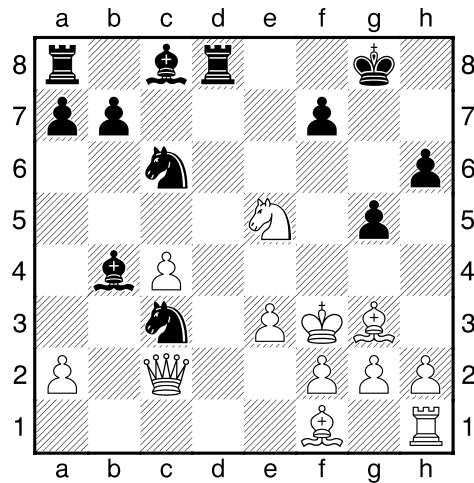
19. Qc2

Choose a move for Black.

19... Nc3+

5 points here: I told you so.

20. Kf3



Choose a move for Black.

20... Rd4

Score 10 points for this move, bringing the rook into play. As it happens, h5 is equally good so I'll give you 10 points assuming you'd find Rd4 next move. 5 points for Rd6, the next best option.

Bonus Question 4: What would you play now if White played 21. exd4?

Answer: An easy 5 points for Nxd4, forking king and queen.

21. h3

Choose a move for Black.

21... h5

Take 5 points for this move, again you had a clue, and 3 points for b6, planning Bb7.

22. Bh2

Choose a move for Black.

23... g4+

The only good move, and pretty obvious as well: 5 points for this check.

23. Kg3

Choose a move for Black.

23... Rd2

There's only one winning move here: if you found it you deserve 10 points.

Bonus Question 5: What would you play now if White played 23. Qxd2?

Answer: It's the same idea again, but this time using the other knight: 5 points for Ne4+.

24. Qb3

Choose a move for Black.

24... Ne4+

This is excellent, and worth 5 points, but Nxe5 is equally excellent and equally worth 5 points.

Bonus Question 6: What would you play now if White played 25. Kf4?

Answer: 10 points for 25... Rxf2+, 5 points for Nc5 or Nxe5.

Bonus Question 7: In this variation, what would you play if White played 26. Kxe4?

Answer: 5 points for 26... Bf5+, which is mating after 27. Kd5 Rd8+

25. Kh4

Choose a move for Black.

25... Be7+

Take 5 points for this check, and 3 points for Nxe5.

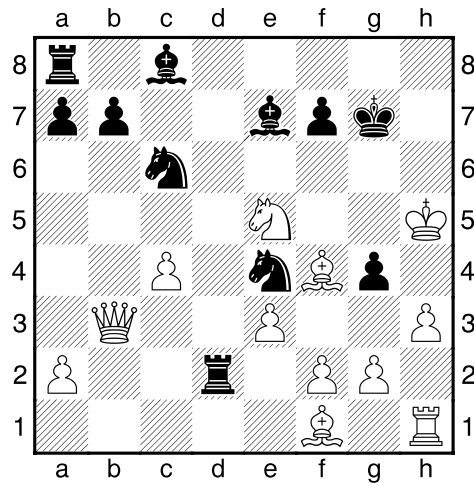
26. Kxh5

Choose a move for Black.

26... Kg7

Score 5 points for this lovely quiet move, or for Rxf2. You can have 3 points for Nxe5, Nf6+ or g3. Black has many ways to win this position.

27. Bf4



Choose a move for Black.

27... Bf5

The engines slightly prefer Rxf2 or Nf6+, but this move also wins easily. Take 5 points for any of these moves, and 3 points for Be6 or Nxe5.

28. Bh6+

Choose a move for Black.

28... Kh7

5 points are yours for this move, and 3 points for Kg8, which also wins.

29. Qxb7

Choose a move for Black.

29... Rxf2

Take 5 points for this capture, 4 points for Rg8, and 3 points for either Nf6+ or Rh8.

Bonus Question 8: What would you play now if White played 30. Qxa8?

Answer: 5 easy points for Ng3#. Other moves also force mate, but there's no excuse for missing a mate in 1.

Bonus Question 9: Going back, what would you play if White played 30. Bf4?

Answer: 10 points for 30... Rxf4, because of 31. exf4 Ng3#. 5 reluctant points for Kg7 or Rh8.

30. Bg5

Choose a move for Black.

30... Rh8

Hiding behind the king is the only way to force a quick mate. 5 points for this move, 3 points for Rg8.

Bonus Question 10: What would you play now if White played 31. Qc6?

Answer: 5 points for 31... Kg8+, which leads to a beautiful mate after 32. Qh6 Rxh6+ 33. Kxh6 Bxg5+ 34. Kh5 f6 (a lovely quiet move) 35. Nxf7 Ng3#.

31. Nxf7

Choose a move for Black.

31... Bg6+

5 points for this check: no real reason to consider anything else.

32. Kxg4

Choose a move for Black.

32... Ne5+

This forces checkmate and earns you 10 points. 5 points for Bf5+, Rxf7, or Kg8. White resigned here, but let's play it out.

Bonus Question 11: What would you play now if White played 33. Nxe5?

Answer: 5 points for 33... Bf5+, with 34. Kh5 Kg7+ 35. Bh6+ Rxh6# to follow.

Bonus Question 12: Going back, what would you play now if White played 33. Kh4?

Answer: A final 5 points for 33... Kg8+, with either 34. Nh6+ Rxh6# (two cross checks, replying to a check with a check, and also a pin mate (the g5 bishop is pinned)), or the even more gorgeous 34. Nxf7 Bxg5#, a mate using all four minor pieces.

A beautiful finish: I think White should have played it out so that one of these artistic mates could appear on the board, rather than resigning.

An extraordinary game: a queen sacrifice, a king hunt, some superb knight play and a collection of aesthetically pleasing possible finishes. It's games like this that make chess such a wonderful game. I hope you managed to find some of Ding's moves.

White's only real mistake was playing 17. Ke2 rather than Rd2: a brave but ultimately foolish decision. 17. Rd2 Rd8 18. Nf3 Bg4 19. Qxb2 Bxf3 20. gxf3 Rxd2 21. Qxd2 Bxd2+ 22. Kxd2 leads to an interesting situation where White has two bishops and a pawn against two knights, but is behind in development. The computer thinks the resulting position is balanced.

GAME 32 ANSWER SHEET

- Black's 13th move_____
- Black's 14th move_____
- Bonus Question 1_____
- Black's 15th move_____
- Black's 16th move_____
- Bonus Question 2_____
- Bonus Question 3_____
- Black's 17th move_____
- Black's 18th move_____
- Black's 19th move_____
- Black's 20th move_____
- Bonus Question 4_____
- Black's 21st move_____
- Black's 22nd move_____
- Black's 23rd move_____
- Bonus Question 5_____
- Black's 24th move_____
- Bonus Question 6_____
- Bonus Question 7_____
- Black's 25th move_____
- Black's 26th move_____
- Black's 27th move_____
- Black's 28th move_____
- Black's 29th move_____
- Bonus Question 8_____
- Bonus Question 9_____
- Black's 30th move_____

Bonus Question 10_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 195)

Black's 31st move_____

Your rating:

Black's 32nd move_____

155-195: Grandmaster

115-154: International Master

Bonus Question 11_____

80-114: National Master

Below 80: Candidate Master

Bonus Question 12_____

GAME 33

The 2024 World Championship match featured Ding Liren defending his title against 18-year-old Gukesh Dommaraju, just one of many young Indian players of world class. Gukesh won a close match, becoming the youngest ever undisputed world chess champion.

Many consider India to be the leading power in world chess today: Anand's influence was one factor in encouraging very many children there to take up chess, and, if they displayed talent, to take the game seriously.

In this game, played in the FIDE Grand Swiss in Riga, Latvia, in 2021, Gukesh had the black pieces against the experienced Bulgarian Grandmaster Kiril Georgiev. Can you play as well as he did? There's one point in the game where you might even be able to play better.

1. d4 Nf6
2. c4 e6
3. Nf3 d5

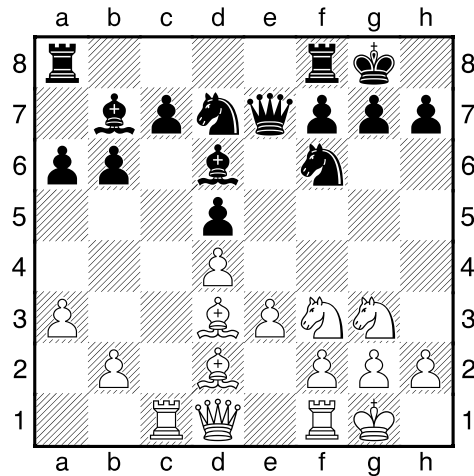
The game starts as a Queen's Gambit Declined.

4. Nc3 Bb4

Now Black turns it into a Nimzo-Indian Defence. This Queen's Gambit/Nimzo-Indian hybrid is sometimes called the Ragozin Defence.

5. e3 o-o
6. Bd2 b6
7. a3 Bd6
8. Rc1 a6
9. Bd3 Bb7
10. cxd5 exd5
11. o-o Nbd7
12. Ne2 Qe7
13. Ng3

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

13... g6

Black really wants to prevent Nf5 here. 5 points for this move: there's no way Black can take advantage of your slightly weakened kingside. 3 points for Bxg3.

14. Bb4

Choose a move for Black.

14... c5

Again, this is the first move you should consider. Take 5 points for this, and 3 points for Rac8, Rfc8 or c6.

15. dxc5

Choose a move for Black.

15... bxc5

All recaptures are reasonable, but I'll give you 5 points for this move, 4 points for Nxc5 and 3 points for Bxc5. Black now has 'HANGING PAWNS' on c5 and d5: you might remember this pawn formation from previous games. It's a typical battle between White's better structure and Black's spatial advantage.

16. Bc3

Choose a move for Black.

16... Rfd8

There are many possible moves here. You can have 5 points for this move, Rfc8, Rab8 or a5.

17. Re1

Choose a move for Black.

17... a5

One idea of this move is to advance to a4 and fix the weak square on b3. Take 5 points for this move, or for Rac8, Rab8 or h5.

18. Qa4

Choose a move for Black.

18... c4

Score 5 points for this move. White's last move wasn't best, allowing Black to gain some time.

19. Bb1

Choose a move for Black.

19... Nc5

This knight has suddenly become very powerful. 5 points for this very natural move.

20. Qd1

Choose a move for Black.

20... Nb3

Why not gain some more time, and 5 more points. White's rook is forced to block his bishop. Black is doing very well in this position.

21. Rc2

Choose a move for Black.

21... Ne4

Another very natural move, scoring 5 points. There were good alternatives here: 4 points for any of a4, h5 or Rac8.

22. Nxe4

Choose a move for Black.

22... dxe4

Everyone scores 5 points for this recapture.

23. Nd4

Choose a move for Black.

23... Nc5

Take 5 points for this move: Black has spotted another tasty square for his knight. You can also have 5 points, just as two moves ago, for a4, h5 or Rac8.

24. Qg4

Choose a move for Black.

24... Nd3

The sort of square every knight dreams of. 5 points for this, and also for h5, which is equally strong.

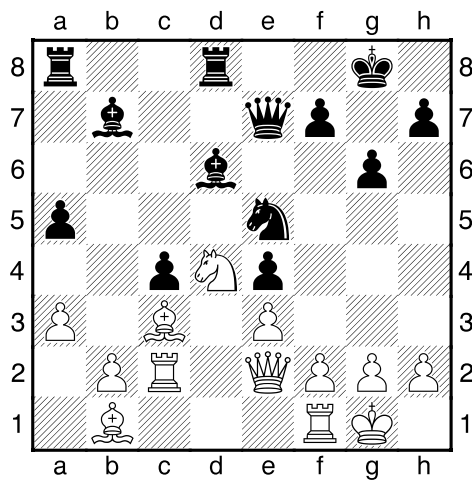
25. Rf1

Choose a move for Black.

25... Ne5

The knight retreats again, having seen something even better. 5 points for this move, 3 points for h5 or Rac8.

26. Qe2



Choose a move for Black.

26... Nf3+

This was Black's brilliant idea: a knight sacrifice to expose the white king. Score 10 points for this move, and 5 points for Rac8.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 27. gxf3?

Answer: 5 points for 27... Qg5+, the easiest way to win, but 5 points also for Bxh2+, which also wins.

Bonus Question 2: Continuing this line, what would you play after 27... Qg5+ 28. Kh1?

Answer: 5 points for 28... exf3: nothing for anything else.

Bonus Question 3: Continuing again, what would you play after 28... exf3 29. Nxf3?

Answer: 5 points for 29... Qh4, threatening a pin mate with Qxh2, when White has to play e4 and give up his queen. 5 points also for 29... Qg4 or 29... Qf5, but nothing for 29... Qh5, when 30. e4 will keep White in the game.

27. Nxf3

Choose a move for Black.

27... exf3

An easy 5 points for everyone here.

28. Qxc4

Choose a move for Black.

28... fxg2

This move gives you 5 points. Winning the exchange with Ba6 is worth 3 points, as is Rac8.

29. Re1

Choose a move for Black.

29... Bf3

Score 5 points for this move, preventing Qg4 and fixing the f2 pawn. 3 points are yours for Rac8 or the imaginative Bxh2+, both of which are also strong.

30. Ba2

Choose a move for Black.

30... Rac8

Take 5 points if this was your choice: bringing the rook into play with gain of time must be a good idea.

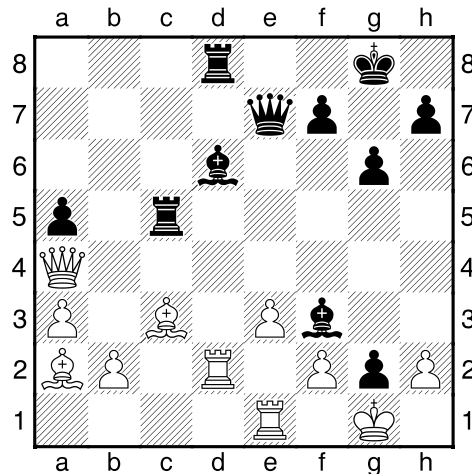
31. Qa4

Choose a move for Black.

31... Rc5

Preparing to swing the rook across to h5 earns you 5 points. Note that White's pieces are mostly on the wrong side of the board.

32. Rd2



Choose a move for Black.

32... Bc6

This is good enough to win, as is Rxc3: both moves score 5 points. This is where Gukesh missed a quicker win: you can have 10 points for Bxh2+.

Bonus Question 4: If the game continues 32... Bxh2+ 33. Kxh2, what would you play next?

Answer: 5 points for 33... Rh5+: no reason to play anything else.

Bonus Question 5: Continuing this line, what would you play after 33... Rh5+ 34. Kg3?

Answer: 10 points for 34... Qg5+.

Bonus Question 6: Continuing again: what would you play after 34... Qg5+ 35. Kxf3?

Answer: 5 points for 35... Rh3+.

Bonus Question 7: Continuing again, what would you play after 35... Rh3+ 36. Ke2?

Answer: 5 points for 36... Qh5+, forcing mate.

33. Qg4

Choose a move for Black.

33... Bxh2+

This still works, even though it doesn't now lead to mate. 10 points for this move or for Rxc3, which also works.

34. Kxh2

Choose a move for Black.

34... Rxd2

Score 5 points for this move, or for the immediate Rh5+.

35. Bxd2

Choose a move for Black.

35... Rh5+

This move or Qd6+ will both give you 5 points.

36. Kg3

Choose a move for Black.

36... Rg5

Winning the queen nets you a final 5 points. Again, Qd6+, trading queens and then playing Rh1, also merits 5 points.

Black resigned here.

In spite of the missed opportunity on move 32, an excellent game by the future world champion.

White's opening, with the bishop on d2, didn't look very impressive to me. His big mistake, though, was 18. Qa4, giving Black a lot of time and some beautiful squares for his knight.

Like many games in this book you can learn two things: how to build up an attack and how to finish your opponent off. How well did you do?

GAME 33 ANSWER SHEET

- Black's 13th move_____
- Black's 14th move_____
- Black's 15th move_____
- Black's 16th move_____
- Black's 17th move_____
- Black's 18th move_____
- Black's 19th move_____
- Black's 20th move_____
- Black's 21st move_____
- Black's 22nd move_____
- Black's 23rd move_____
- Black's 24th move_____
- Black's 25th move_____
- Black's 26th move_____
- Bonus Question 1_____
- Bonus Question 2_____
- Bonus Question 3_____
- Black's 27th move_____
- Black's 28th move_____
- Black's 29th move_____
- Black's 30th move_____
- Black's 31st move_____
- Black's 32nd move_____
- Bonus Question 4_____
- Bonus Question 5_____
- Bonus Question 6_____
- Bonus Question 7_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 175)

Your rating:

140-175: Grandmaster

105-139: International Master

70-104: National Master

Below 70: Candidate Master

GAME 34

These days everyone has many more opportunities to play and study chess than in the past. Some young children with an exceptional talent decide at an early age to devote their lives to chess and reach very high levels sometimes even before they reach their teens.

One example of many is the young Turkish grandmaster Yağız Kaan Erdoğan, born in 2011. He was awarded the IM title at the age of 11, and in 2024, he became the fourth-youngest grandmaster in history, and, later that year, the youngest player ever to reach a rating of 2600. As of July 2025, Erdoğan was the youngest grandmaster in the world.

This game, played in September 2025, stunned the world with its brilliant finish. It was quickly dubbed the Turkish Immortal, and considered by many even better than Fischer's Game of the Century. Erdoğan was Black against young Indian GM Aditya Mittal. Can you play as well as he did, and spot his spectacular and brilliant conclusion?

1. c4 e6
2. Nc3 d5
3. d4

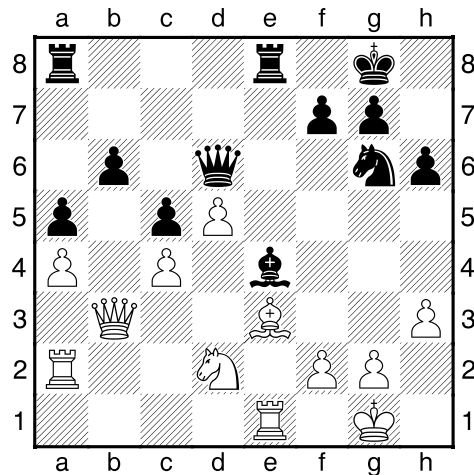
We've transposed from an English Opening to a Queen's Gambit. Black now decides to take the pawn, and the game plays into a rather unusual variation of the Queen's Gambit Accepted.

- 3... dxc4
4. e4 c5
5. d5 exd5
6. exd5 Bd6
7. Bxc4 Ne7
8. h3 o-o
9. Nf3 Nd7
10. o-o Nb6
11. b3 Nxc4
12. bxc4 Ng6
13. Ne4 Bf5
14. Nxd6 Qxd6
15. Qb3 b6
16. a4 a5
17. Re1 Rfe8
18. Be3 h6
19. Ra2 Be4

20. Nd2

An interesting position has been reached. White has a strong passed pawn on d5, and is also putting pressure on the backward black b-pawn. Black, in compensation, has some activity on the kingside. Chances at the moment are about equal.

The test starts here.



Choose a move for Black.

20... Nh4

This is the strongest move here, feeding a piece towards the white king. 5 points for this, and 3 points for Bf5.

21. Bxc5

Choose a move for Black.

21... Qg6

Take 5 points here: Black had to see Bxc5 coming and prepare this move, which will regain the pawn.

22. g3

Choose a move for Black.

22... Bg2

5 points for this move, or for Bf5, which amounts to the same thing.

23. Be7

Choose a move for Black.

23... Bxh3

5 fairly easy points this time, but again you have to think ahead.

24. Kh2

Choose a move for Black.

24... Ng2

Black has two pieces attacked so has to find a way out. Score 5 points for this move or for Nf5, but there was something better. You deserve 10 points for Bd7, threatening Nf5 and meeting gxh4 with Rxe7 followed by Qd6+.

25. Re5

Choose a move for Black.

25... f6

White's last move prevented Qh5, so Black still has to find a way to save the piece. This is the way to do it: 5 points are yours for this.

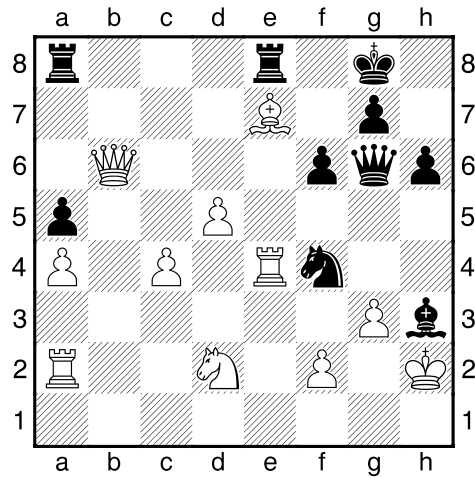
26. Qxb6

Choose a move for Black.

26... Nf4

Defending both the queen and the bishop gets you 5 points. There were other good moves, which all work in different ways: 5 points also for any of Bf5, Bc8, Rab8 or Qf7. There are many variations where Black gives up material for a perpetual check.

27. Re4



Choose a move for Black.

27... Qh5

I'll give you 10 points for this move, leading to Black's advantage, and 5 points for Rxe7, which will lead to a draw by perpetual check.

Bonus Question 1: What would you play now if White played 28. gxf4?

Answer: 5 points for 28... Bf5+, winning material.

28. Rxf4

Choose a move for Black.

28... Bg4+

5 points for spotting the only good move: you have to cut the rook off from h4.

29. Kg1

Choose a move for Black.

29... Rxe7

An easy choice: 5 points for regaining the piece.

30. Ra1

Choose a move for Black.

30... Rae8

No reason not to double rooks on the open file, scoring another 5 points. White has an extra pawn, along with two dangerous looking connected passed pawns, but his king isn't entirely safe.

31. Rf1

Choose a move for Black.

31... Bh3

Erdoğan slips up here: he should certainly have played Re1 here, when White will have to give up the exchange to save his king. I'll give you 3 points for this move, and 5 points for Re1.

32. d6

Choose a move for Black.

32... Re2

Take 5 points for this move, for Re1 or for Re5.

33. Rh4

Choose a move for Black.

33... Qf5

Score 5 points: this is the best queen move.

34. Qb5

Choose a move for Black.

34... R8e5

5 points for this move, giving White the chance to go wrong. 4 points for R2e5 or Qxb5, which both offer equal chances according to the engine.

35. d7

Choose a move for Black.

35... Rxd2

I'll give you 10 points for this move: he must have seen right to the end of the game at this point. 5 points for Qxd7, capturing the dangerous pawn.

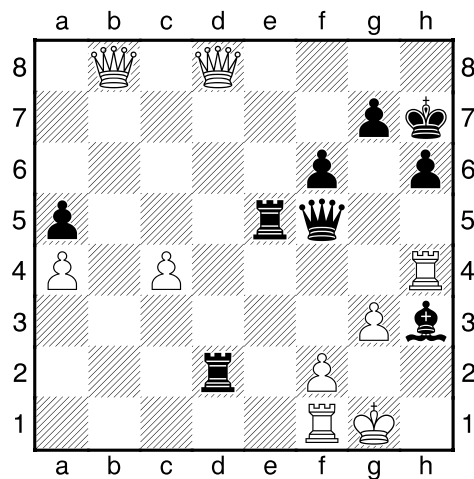
36. Qb8+

Choose a move for Black.

36... Kh7

5 points for evading check in this way, but nothing for Kf7, which will only lead to a level major piece ending.

37. d8Q



Choose a move for Black.

37... Qxf2+

The obvious continuation is 37... Rxd8, which grants you 5 points: 38. Qxd8 Bxf1 39. Kxf1 g5 may be winning for Black, but this queen sacrifice leads to mate along with 10 points to add to your collection. White could have resigned here, but sportingly chose to play it out.

38. Rxf2

Choose a move for Black.

38... Re1+

5 points.

39. Kh2

Choose a move for Black.

39... Rxf2+

5 points.

40. Kxh3

Choose a move for Black.

40... Rh1+

5 points.

41. Kg4

Choose a move for Black.

41... f5+

5 points.

42. Kh5

Choose a move for Black.

42... g6#

5 points for this beautiful pawn mate, or for Rxf2+, which is mate in 2, if you'd rather mate with only one rook on the board! In the final position, White has two queens and a rook against Black's two rook. Extraordinary!

This was a very complex game with, inevitably, a few errors pointed out by the engines. White should have played 27. Re3 rather than Re4, giving Black the advantage. Black, as you've seen, missed his chance on move 31, letting White back into the game. The final mistake was 35. d7. He should have preferred 35. Qb8+ Kh7 36. Qb1, trading queens, but had missed Black's queen sacrifice two moves later.

It's not really a very suitable game for presenting in this format: it was decided by a tactical oversight after which all the moves were forced, with no options for bonus questions.

Perhaps also the game was overhyped: I suspect any grandmaster would have found the queen sacrifice instantly. But the final position was so beautiful that I felt it would make a suitable conclusion to this book and to what is likely to be the complete Chess Heroes project. From the brilliance of Morphy in the late 1850s to Fischer a century later, and to today's young stars, the excitement and beauty of chess echo down the years. I hope you enjoyed playing through this and the other games in this book.

GAME 34 ANSWER SHEET

Black's 20th move_____

Black's 32nd move_____

Black's 21st move_____

Black's 33rd move_____

Black's 22nd move_____

Black's 34th move_____

Black's 23rd move_____

Black's 35th move_____

Black's 24th move_____

Black's 36th move_____

Black's 25th move_____

Black's 37th move_____

Black's 26th move_____

Black's 38th move_____

Black's 27th move_____

Black's 39th move_____

Bonus Question 1_____

Black's 40th move_____

Black's 28th move_____

Black's 41st move_____

Black's 29th move_____

Black's 42nd move_____

Black's 30th move_____

Total Score: _____ (Max 140)

Black's 31st move_____

Your rating:

110-140: Grandmaster

85-109: International Master

55-84: National Master

Below 55: Candidate Master