

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Created by David Bronstein

Compiled by Tom Fürstenberg

New In Chess 2009

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

“One of the great books of recent decades.”
IM Bernard Cafferty, The Sunday Times

“Now everyone has an opportunity to learn from the game's most romantic player (..) There are many tips for the non-genius and it is a very useful book for those who want to improve. Bronstein's chess philosophy and his opinions about players and politics from past and present make fascinating reading.”

IM Angus Donnington, CHESS Magazine

“A monumental book about Bronstein's life and chess.”
Tim Krabbé

“Every reader will become the apprentice of the sorcerer that Bronstein is by reading this highly recommended book.”
Stefan Bücker, Schach-Report

“Unlike most books on top players, it is not simply a well-annotated games collection. Written with amateurs in mind, it has easily understood commentaries. The book is made even more interesting by Bronstein's fascinating stories. It is indeed a book of pure magic that will appeal to a broad range of players.”

B. Milligan, The Southern Reporter

“Every reader beyond the novice stage should buy The Sorcerer's Apprentice, which is an inexhaustible fund of chess ideas and delights.”
IM John Littlewood

“One of the most original and delightful chess books to appear in recent years.”
IM William Hartston, The Independent

“A non-conventional but magnificent book about David Bronstein. It is inspiring and very instructive and has been written in easy-to-understand English. Bronstein's original, intuitive-artistic-creative approach to chess has always remained unique.”
Wouter Janssens, De Morgen

“There are photographs, personal history, anecdotes and advice. Above all it is a wonderful record of Bronstein's great achievements. A splendid addition to any chess library.”
IM Malcolm Pein, The Guardian

“A passionate, compelling account.”
IM Herman Grooten, Trouw

“This is a marvellous book and one which guarantees many months of great enjoyment. Compared to many modern books, its price makes it a bargain as well as a cultural treat.”
British Chess Magazine

“Amateur chess player Tom Fürstenberg invested several years of his time to write, with Bronstein, a biography and the final result has become more than that. It paints a wonderful picture of this GRANDmaster. A beautiful book.”
G. van Perlo, author of 'Endgame Tactics'

“A staggering, fascinating and highly original book.”

Richard Meulders, Gazet van Antwerpen

“An extraordinary book, which I read from start to finish without putting the book down; it reads as a novel. Bronstein is a colourful man with a romantic soul, but first and foremost an Artist with a capital letter A.”

Jules Welling, Schaaknieuws

“[F]antastic material. It does Bronstein fully justice, the great chess player he used to be. The Sorcerer’s Apprentice is an exceptional book, which will undoubtedly become a rarity.”

Max Pam, Het Parool

“Tom Fürstenberg made it his task to assemble, select and compile the abundant material into a fascinating book.”

IM Paul Boersma, Algemeen Dagblad

“A true jewel with many fantastic and unique games and many interesting photographs. Bronstein is probably the most original chess player of all times.”

B.H. Wilders, Nederlands Dagblad

“A fine collection of creative games.”

GM Leonard Barden, The Financial Times

“Pride of place goes to The Sorcerer’s Apprentice by David Bronstein and Tom Fürstenberg. Players of any level can enjoy it.”

IM Kevin O’Connell, The East Anglian Daily Times

“Probably the most unusual chess book I have come across in more than 70 years. It is about the strongest chess player never to hold the world title. It is a book I can recommend for any player.”

Ken Bloodworth, The Western Morning News

“Has everything a good chess book should have: human interest stories, biographical data, grandmaster annotations and advice, photographs, good layout and production.”

Joe Sparks

“On the occasion of David Bronstein’s 70th birthday, Tom Fürstenberg paid homage to the great man by writing The Sorcerer’s Apprentice. Those who wish to go back in time and enjoy the timeless beauty of Bronstein’s chess combinations will most certainly not be disappointed.”

Markus Domanski, Europa Rochade

“A marvellous collection of Bronstein’s games. The explanation of the title is simple. As you go through the games of this genius you will see that a sorcerer has been at work and you have become his apprentice. From the first moment of picking it up you can sense the care with which it has been constructed.”

Ivor Annets, En Passant

“A fabulous book about a fabulous player.”

CHESS

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The King Has Resigned

David Bronstein, the great little man is no longer, and I am sad.

A few weeks before his death I had a lengthy telephone conversation with him. It took well over an hour. Everyone who had the privilege to have known David Bronstein personally knows how that came about. I phoned him regularly and normally I tried to end the conversation after about 15-20 minutes so, when lucky, I would manage to put down the receiver after half an hour. This time however, I let him talk freely. His voice sounded tired, and I had a premonition that it would be the last time I talked to him.

Of course he didn't tell me anything new, as I heard the same old stories I had already heard numerous times in a previous conversation... and during the conversation before that one... and in conversations before that one. In short, all topics that had been discussed since our renewed acquaintance during the 1990 Aegon tournament. However, this time the conversation ended differently – it was a final goodbye.

When he asked me several years ago what to do, I suggested that he should sell his apartment in Moscow and buy a nice apartment in Minsk so he could live together with his wife Tatiana Boleslavskaya. I didn't think it would be wise for him to continue living by himself at his age and his state of health – for many years he suffered from severe hypertension. And so he did, and when he started his life in Minsk he was grateful: 'Thanks to you I made an excellent move!'

But soon his praise became an accusation. Minsk turned out not to be what he had hoped and expected. He missed Moscow terribly, but even more all of his friends. On top of that, his eyesight deteriorated rapidly and the last year of his life he couldn't read or watch television any more. Going outside for a walk by himself became impossible. His world became smaller and smaller.

In 1954, I was 18 years old and a chess fanatic, and that to such an extent that I had to get autographs of all the participants of the Chess Olympiad that was held in Amsterdam that year. I succeeded, and at that occasion I met David Bronstein for the first time in person.

Three years earlier I had followed his match with Botvinnik closely. How? Well, there weren't that many possibilities. Usually I rode my bike for several kilometres until I would meet the newspaperman. By the roadside I would get out my pocket chess set and play through the games.

Of course I was bitterly disappointed when Bronstein didn't win the match. Normally one supports the underdog, but this time it was different. Even I recognized that David played a special kind of chess. That's why, in my opinion, he deserved to become World Champion.

When I received his autograph, he started a conversation in perfect English with me. I couldn't grasp why this great player wanted to talk to me. However, he put me at ease and we had quite a nice conversation. He asked me what I did for a living and I handed him my visiting card – I worked in my father's shop – and nobody was more surprised than

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

me when David came to visit me there on his day off, continuing the conversation where we had left off a few days earlier. Eventually he bought a coffee service that he, as I learnt much later, had carried on his lap back to Moscow.

From then on David greeted me whenever he saw me amongst the crowd and I was mightily pleased when the spectators stared at me with envious looks that expressed 'he-knows-Bronstein'.

Of course I continued to follow his career and was really sorry that he never again managed to have another possibility to play for the title.

In 1990 Bronstein participated for the first time in the Aegon Humans vs. Computers Tournament and when he was fetched from the airport he could not understand why the tournament director was waiting for him. He had no idea that it was the tournament director who felt honoured.

Of course I took the first opportunity to shake hands again with David after so many years. I showed him the autograph book that he had signed back in 1954 and immediately he recognized it and remembered me – after 36 years! And when he came again one year later he showed me the visiting card I had given him back in 1954. Unbelievable – he had kept it all these years!

It was during this tournament that he created, in my humble opinion, the craziest but most brilliant game ever played by a human against a computer. I was lucky and privileged to be the computer operator at that occasion. David asked me if I would like him to play a specific opening. I challenged him to play his beloved King's Gambit – an opening no sane human being would dare to play against a computer, but he didn't blink an eye. A King's Gambit it was. I asked him if he could think aloud and he had no problem in fulfilling that request either.

Soon the table was surrounded by curious spectators; other participants stopped their clocks to watch the extraordinary spectacle that was taking place on David's board. Against a human, his method of play would have a chance of success, but a computer would simply out-calculate him; or so everybody thought. However, it seemed that even the computer became confused by the dazzling complications that David was creating. David was thoroughly enjoying himself. He had nearly always played for the audience and was extremely satisfied that he had managed, once again, to create something special. You can find the game, complete with David's comments, on page 348.

He explained patiently that he couldn't care less if he won or lost against a computer, but that it was always a pleasure to play against it. With his more than 60 years of experience, he could see immediately which pieces could pose a threat to him during the next few moves. Sometimes he would play carefully, sometimes recklessly, nearly always relying on his intuition. Calculating variations seemed senseless as he would be out-calculated anyway. He always tried to find a move which he completely understood and that could be useful in the position he had on the board. He was fully aware that computers made moves without playing real chess. They could not plan ahead and Bronstein managed to exploit that weakness to the fullest. Nevertheless he had great admiration for the programmers who managed sometimes to let their brainchild find moves that were of grandmaster level.

Sometimes he would drive you crazy; he didn't stop talking – and not always coherently. While you were contemplating what he meant, he had already changed the subject. It was sometimes quite tiring to listen to him, but he was never angry. Although...? Once I saw him really annoyed. We were working on 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' and while he was searching for some papers in one of his numerous suitcases that had meanwhile gathered in my basement, I had started a game of Tetris on my computer. When he finally reappeared I was reaching a monster score. He waited patiently but all pieces continued to fall perfectly and I couldn't stop. After having stood next to me for a quarter of an hour – I thought it had been a couple of minutes – he lashed out at me – verbally. I was so surprised that I stopped right away and forgot to save the game. Gone was my highest score ever! But David was right to be angry – I had been impolite.

When David visited me another time, my wife and I had meanwhile adopted two sisters, orphans from the former Soviet Union. I had taught the elder one, 12 years young at the time, the rules of chess. When David entered the room she was moving the pieces on the chessboard and David watched. I had forgotten to tell the girls who he was. 'Do you play chess?' she asked innocently. 'A little', he answered. 'Would you like to play a game with me?' 'Yes, why not?', he answered and sat down. He made even worse moves than she did and eventually managed to lose the game. 'Can I play another game with you?', he asked politely. 'No, not really', was her surprising answer, 'you really haven't a clue how to play chess!'

Sometimes I acted as his manager and once I did so when a phone call came from England, inviting him to come and play a tournament there. He agreed without asking about the financial aspect of his participation; it was an honour for him simply to be invited. It did not occur to him that it could be the other way round. Suddenly he realised that it would mean that he would have to fly to Manchester the same day and that was absolutely impossible, so he politely declined the invitation! Although it was only 10 o'clock in the morning, he would not be able to pack his suitcase in time to be at the airport at 14.00 hours. Normally it would take him the best part of a whole day to do so as he was always in doubt what to pack! I called back the organisers and told them that David would be there and would take the flight they had proposed. I also arranged a suitable fee for him. Then I started to pack his suitcase and managed it within 10 minutes. David was speechless, and on numerous occasions he compared this feat to winning a Formula 1 race!

During the first Glass Tournament in Hoogetveen, Holland, he was paired against a woman. Soon she had a lost position but, being short on time, nevertheless continued the game. Then David 'forgot' to press his clock and this woman took full advantage of this noble gesture, but David didn't want to win on time.

David was an excellent chess trainer – he prepared Nona Gaprindashvili for her world title match – and accepted a position as a trainer in Oviedo, Spain. He achieved fantastic results, but his contract was not renewed, although he had put all his hopes on this in order to settle in the West permanently. As it turned out, he drove everybody crazy with his stories. Other possibilities came and went for the same reason. When I confronted him with the facts and asked him if he couldn't stop talking so much, the only answer he came up with was: 'I like people.'

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Then the moment came that I visited David in Moscow and I stayed with him for a week. He had only one bed and insisted that I sleep in it. He would sleep on two chairs pushed together. I will never forget his warm and genuine hospitality. His apartment was a museum – thousands of books, most of them not about chess. Remarkable were the number of photographs of Bobby Fischer. Numerous cartons and suitcases randomly stacked on and under tables and chairs, papers and souvenirs filled his living room. Surprisingly I saw the coffee service he had purchased from me back in 1954. It was obvious to me he had never used it.

David's thoughts were sometimes occupied by his life coming to an end. He was surprised that he had already passed 80; none of his relatives had achieved that before. But he had no illusions; he would die of a brain haemorrhage, like many members of his family. And so it happened. On Tuesday 5 December, something snapped in his beautiful but complicated brain, and it was fatal.

Suffering from a tremendous headache he was taken to hospital where he, surprisingly, managed to answer slowly but coherently all the questions the doctors asked him. A few hours later he lost consciousness and an hour later he died. Two days later he was buried close to the grave of Grandmaster Isaak Boleslavsky, colleague, rival, friend and father-in-law.

I shall greatly miss this sometimes outlandish, eccentric, but ingenious, creative, generous, sweet, brilliant, modest, sincere and cordial man. May he at last find the peace which has eluded him during most of his life.

Tom Fürstenberg
2007

40 Combinations with Explanations

Bronstein, David - Morgulis, L

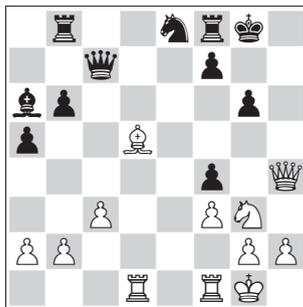
(1)

Pioneers Palace Championship, Kiev 1940

[C25] Vienna Opening

1.e4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘c5 3.♙c4 ♗f6 4.d3 d6 5.♗a4 ♗bd7 6.♗xc5 ♗xc5 7.♗e2 c6
8.0-0 0-0 9.♙g5 h6 10.♙e3 ♗e6 11.f3 d5 12.♙b3 a5 13.c3 b6 14.♖e1 ♖c7
15.♗f2 ♗b8 16.♗h4 ♙a6 17.♗ad1 ♗c5 18.♙xh6 ♗e8 19.♙e3 ♗xd3 20.exd5
cxd5 21.♗g3 g6 22.♙xd5 ♗f4 23.♙xf4 exf4 24.♗e4! ♙xf1 25.♗g5 ♗f6
26.♗h6 ♖e5 27.♗xg6+ ♗h8 28.♗h6+ ♗g8 29.♙e4 ♙c4 30.♙h7+ ♗h8
31.♙d3+ ♗g8 32.♙xc4 ♗b7 33.♗g6+ ♗h8 34.♙xf7 The black King resigns.

Position after 23...exf4



24.♗g3-e4!

With hindsight everything is simple but when sitting at the board it was not so easy to find 23...exf4 24.♗e4! ♙xf1 25.♗g5 ♗g7 26.♗h7+ ♗f6 27.♗e4+ ♗e5 28.g3 fxg3 29.♗h4. Such a variation seems to be obvious after you learn more and more new methods of attack. Also, you have to respect the strategic and tactical ideas of your opponent. For instance, if instead of 28.♗h6+ White plays 28.♙xf7, Black can answer 28...♙d3 and White's attack grinds to a halt. But I did not fall into this trap because we knew each other very well. We were about the same age and we both liked to play an innovative style of chess. Every Sunday we used to come to the chess club as early as possible to play blitz chess. We must have played thousands and thousands of three-minute games. Morgulis, whose talent was undeniable, died suddenly of heart disease at a very young age in 1942.

What have we learned from this game? After White obtained the pair of Bishops with the move 6.♗xc5, it was easier to start a direct attack against the pawns defending the black King. The result was first the move 18.♙xh6 and then the beautiful manoeuvres of the white Knight: e2-g3-e4-g5 with the help of the white Queen.

Bronstein, David - Ratner, Boris

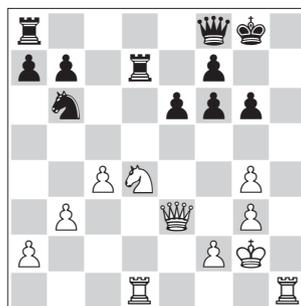
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14th USSR Championship, Moscow 1945

[B16] Caro-Kann Defence

1.e4 c6 2.♘c3 d5 3.♗f3 dxe4 4.♗xe4 ♘f6 5.♗xf6+ gxf6 6.d4 ♕f5 7.♖d3 ♖g6
 8.♖f4 e6 9.0-0 ♖d6 10.♖g3 ♖xg3 11.hxg3 ♗d7 12.♗d2 0-0 13.♖ad1 ♖g7
 14.♖fe1 ♗c7 15.c4 ♗b6 16.b3 ♖fd8 17.♗e3 ♖d7 18.g4 ♗d8 19.g3 c5 20.♖xg6
 hxg6 21.♖g2 cxd4 22.♗xd4 ♗f8 23.♖h1 ♖g8 24.♗xe6! ♖xd1 25.♗xf8 ♖xh1
 26.♖xh1 ♖xf8 27.♗e7 ♖g7 28.♗xb7 ♗c8 29.♗d7 The black King resigns.

Position after 23...♖g8



24.♗d4xe6!

White's pieces are clearly more active than Black's. The Rook on h1 has a strong influence on the open h-file. It could even give a check on h8 at the right moment. At the same time the centralised white Knight strikes deep into the enemy camp, amongst others the square e6. In such cases we must find a way to increase the strength of the attack by means of a sacrifice. It is not too difficult to find 23...♖g8 24.♗xe6 fxe6 (24...♗e7 25.♖h8+ ♖xh8 26.♗h6+) 25.♖xd7 ♗xd7 26.♗xe6+ ♗f7 27.♖h8+. The game took a different turn, but the result was the same.

How was such a combination possible? The answer is simple. The black Rook on a8 is not participating. Had it been on e8, the pressure on the h-file would have been much more difficult to exploit. If this had been the case White might have taken action on the other wing to try to make use of the passive position of the black Knight by playing 24.♗b5 with the aim of taking on a7.

What have we learned from this game? The main advantage of the variation 5...gxf6 is that the pawn on f6 now protects the square e5 and the white Knights cannot exploit this square. But at the same time, this move is weakening the pawn structure on the kingside. Therefore it is not very advisable to try to look for a shelter for the black King near this pawn formation. Black voluntarily violated this rule and hoped that by transferring the queen's Bishop to g6 the black King would be better defended. It worked for a while, until White found the correct plan and exchanged the Bishop with 20.♖xg6, and when the h-pawn was on g6 it became obvious that a very logical plan for White to continue the attack was to put the King on g2 to give way for the Rook to occupy the h-file. Realising the danger, the black Queen was in a hurry to join the King in defence, but then the danger came from another side. It is obvious that the Knight on b6 and the Rook on a8 did nothing to help their King. The Knight was on a wrong square and the Rook had no time to move at all. This is a typical example of pieces that did not work together.

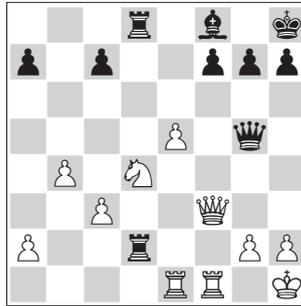
Bronstein, David - Koblents, Alexander (3)

14th USSR Championship, Moscow 1945

[C35] King's Gambit Accepted

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 ♕e7 4.♙c4 ♘f6 5.e5 ♘g4 6.0-0 d6 7.exd6 ♖xd6 8.d4
 0-0 9.♘c3 ♘e3 10.♙xe3 fxe3 11.♖d3 ♘c6 12.♗ae1 ♙g4 13.♗xe3 ♖h6 14.♗ee1
 ♙d6 15.♘e5 ♘xe5 16.dxe5 ♙c5+ 17.♖h1 ♙e6 18.♘e4 ♙b6 19.c3 ♗ad8
 20.♖e2 ♗fe8 21.♙xe6 ♗xe6 22.♖f3 ♗e7 23.♘g3 ♗ed7 24.♘f5 ♖g5 25.♖xb7
 ♗d2 26.♖f3 ♙c5 27.b4 ♙f8 28.♘d4 ♖h8 29.♘e6! The black King resigns.

Position after 28...♖h8

**29.♘d4-e6!**

After 28...♖h8, it seems that Black has some compensation for the pawn: he has a Rook on White's second rank. But to be objective, White's position is much better than Black's. The white pieces are very well placed, but we have to be careful. If, for instance, the white Queen takes the pawn on f7, Black might answer Queen takes the pawn on g2 and gives mate. We have to find another way to exploit the weakness of the pawn on f7. Although this pawn controls the square e6, it cannot leave the f-file as otherwise the white Queen can sacrifice herself by taking the black Bishop on f8 and after the black Rook takes the Queen, White's Rook on f1 will give mate by taking the Rook on f8. The white Knight therefore does not have to fear the black pawn on f7 when it goes to e6 and wins the exchange.

What have we learned from this game? First of all we should not forget that the King's Gambit is not a winning opening, possibly the contrary. One has to know very well what to expect. During the romantic period of chess the players used to play this opening frequently with white and black just to enjoy the fantastic positions that can arise from it. Then they played very often the main line of the variation as it was played in this game: 4...♙h4+ 5.g3 ffg3 6.0-0 gxh2+ 7.♖h1 and as the King is now protected by the pawn on h2, White can start a direct attack. In the second half of this century, Robert Fischer published an article about the King's Gambit and claimed that in the old days, people were considering this opening as too romantic, but if we look at this from a scientific point of view then it is not clear how White can create an attack after 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 d6 4.d4 g5 5.h4 g4 6.♘g5 f6. Despite this opinion of the World Champion, we can try to continue this variation in romantic style, entirely in the spirit of the King's Gambit, with: 7.♙xf4 ffg5 8.hxg5 and then ♘c3, ♖d2, 0-0-0, etc. It is not easy for Black to find the best defence over the board because it is not clear where to put the Queen and Queen's Bishop. If Black is too slow, then White can use his Rooks on the open f- and h-files.



David, four and a half months old, with his parents, Smiela 1924.



David's third birthday. This rocking horse didn't last very long. David took it apart to find out how it could survive without eating! Berdiansk, 17-2-1927.



Top row from left to right: Tunik Ginzburg (cousin of David's mother), Sarra Ginzburg (a close friend of David's mother and wife of Mutsia Ginzburg), Esther Aptaker-Bronstein (David's mother). 1st row: Mutsia Ginzburg (cousin of David's mother and husband of Sarra Ginzburg), Israel Aptaker (brother of David's mother), David himself, David's father Iohonon Bronstein.



David, age 5, Berdiansk on the Sea of Azov, 1929.

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

a check on a6 makes no sense as White can interpose his Bishop.

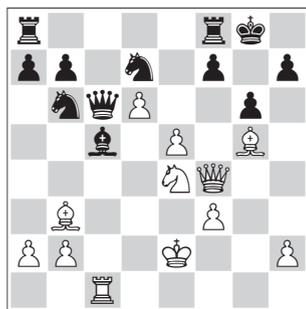
21. ♖a1-c1!

Keres: This quiet move now decides, as Black has no defence against the following sacrifice. A really curious position!

21. ... ♔c8-c6

The white pieces are swarming over the King's refuge and it only requires one further determined effort to break triumphantly into the fortress, especially since a yawning breach has already been made in the wall.

Timman: Prepares a check, but with his next move, White takes the sting out of it.



22. ♖c1xc5!! (Reuben Fine)

The amazing dénouement now unfolds. By sacrificing the exchange on c5, White removes a key defender of f6.

Bronstein: What is better – to castle or to leave the King in the centre? In his book *My Match with Capablanca* (1921), Dr Emanuel Lasker wrote that he was a little sad that the Italians introduced castling in chess as the King could now flee into hiding very quickly and it would be more difficult to attack him.

From experience chess players know quite well that if there are open files in the centre it is better for the King to castle but if pawns block the centre there is no hurry to do so.

In this game White did the latter. The King abandoned the right to castle to give his Rook free play on the first rank. If the white King had castled queenside he would have occupied c1 and the Rook would not have had this important square.

By the way, the strongest and most important chess piece became restricted in his movements.

Many years ago the Queen suddenly increased her steps to an unlimited number of squares. Before that she had equal rights with the King.

Has, with the 21st century, the time not come to allow the King an extra step in all directions? I think it will be fair. It could bring a breath of fresh air to our noble game. After all, the King already moves more than one square when castling.

Keres: Bronstein still has something left to sacrifice! Now the black King comes under a devastating mating attack.

Timman: This sacrifice of the exchange enables White to place a proud Knight on f6.

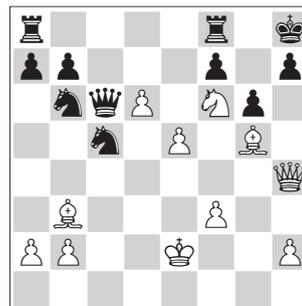
22. ... ♘d7xc5

23. ♘e4-f6+ ♔g8-h8

No better is 23... ♖g7 24. ♖h4.

Keres: On 23... ♖g7 the answer 24. ♖h4! is even stronger.

24. ♖f4-h4



Now Black can only avoid mate by a wholesale abandonment of his pieces. He still has a few spite checks.

Keres: White has not many pieces left but the few that remain create a mating net around the black King. There is no defence.

Timman: Although Black's material advantage is overwhelming, he cannot avoid checkmate. Just a few spite checks remain.

24. ... ♖c6-b5+

A desperate sortie by the main forces, timed to coincide with White's time-trouble. White had less than one minute per move left on his clock, whereas Black had used only 30 minutes for his 24 moves.

There follows a spurt forward by the white King, going personally into the attack. Note that Black is now not only a Rook up but also the exchange.

Bronstein: When Ljubojevic made his 20th move 20...♘8d7, he calculated this long variation and was of the opinion that he had found a draw by repetition of moves. After the game was finished Ljubojevic told me: 'You were lucky to find 25.♙e3', but I answered without hesitation: 'No, it is you who were lucky that in this position only this move wins. The white attack is so strong that normally there should be more than one possibility to win. You played too riskily for a serious tournament game.'

I never talk like this during friendly analysis after a game but Ljubojevic should have known that attacking with sacrifices, of which nobody can calculate exactly all the consequences, is my hobby-horse and this is how I made my name.

25. ♙e2-e3!!



If 25.♙f2? (25.♙e1? ♖b4+ forces the exchange of Queens) 25...♘d3+ 26.♙g1 (26.♙g2 ♘e1+) 26...♖c5+ 27.♙h1 h5 28.♘h5 ♖f2! 29.♘g3+ ♙g8 30.♙f6, Black has perpetual check with 30...♖xf3+ and may even try for more by collecting the b2 pawn with queen checks, then some more checks and after ♙g2, ...♘f4+ followed by ...♘h5. If White takes on h5, ...♘d5!? ♙xd5 ♖ac8! seizes the initiative.

Timman: The crowning of White's play. The only useful check that Black still has is 25...♖d3+, but after 26.♙f2 Black has nothing, for instance: 26...h5 27.♘h5 gxh5 28.♙f6+ ♙g8 29.♖g5+ and mate. Please note that an immediate 25.♙f2 would only lead to a draw after 25...♘d3+ 26.♙g1 ♖c5+ 27.♙h1 h5 28.♘h5 ♖f2 29.♘g3+ ♙g8 30.♙f6 and Black has perpetual check with 30...♖xf3+. Also 26.♙g2 (instead of 26.♙g1) is no better, as Black has such a material advantage that he can permit himself to play 26...♘e1+, while 25.♙e1 would be even worse because of 25...♖b4+ with the exchange of Queens.

25. ... h7-h5

After 25...♖d3+ 26.♙f2 there are no more checks. Black is without resource but played on as White was in severe time-trouble.

Keres: There are no more checks after 25...♖d3+ 26.♙f2, etc.

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26. ♖f6xh5 ♜b5xb3+

Desperation. If instead 26... ♜d3+ 27. ♖f2 gxf5 28. ♙f6+ and mate in a few moves. And if 26... ♗d5+ then 27. ♙xd5.

Bronstein: Ljubojevic told me that he had calculated the move 28. ♜xh5 and did not see the check with the Bishop on f6.

Keres: Desperation, but there is no defence. On 26... ♜d3+ 27. ♖f2 gxf5 28. ♙f6+ mates and 26... ♗d5+ 27. ♙xd5 ♜d3+ 28. ♖f2 ♜c2+ 29. ♖g3 means only a short period of relief. 26... ♜d3+ 27. ♖f2 ♗e4+ 28. fxe4 ♜d4+ offered a little more play for Black, but this also leads to a loss after 29. ♖g2 ♜xb2+ 30. ♖h3 ♜c3+ 31. ♗g3+ and 32. ♙f6 mating.

Timman: Black will have to give back quite a lot of material in order to avoid being checkmated immediately.

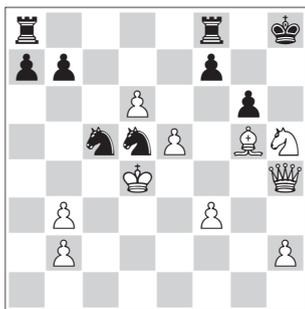
27. a2xb3 ♗b6-d5+

28. ♖e3-d4!

Continuing aggressively. Black was hoping for 28. ♖f2 gxf5 29. ♜xh5+ ♖g8 30. ♙f6 ♗xf6 31. exf6 ♗e6 and Black gets out.

Bronstein: Normally, when the King comes to the middle of the board, the battle is over. In this case it is the opposite: the King attacks both Black's Knights in the very centre of the battlefield. With this action he supports the attack of the white Queen.

Keres: Black was hoping for 28. ♖f2 gxf5 29. ♜xh5+ ♖g8 30. ♙f6 ♗xf6 31. exf6 ♗e6, etc.



Timman: The King is a strong piece.

28. ... ♗c5-e6+

29. ♖d4xd5 ♗e6xg5

Keres: Now 29... gxf5 30. ♙f6+ ♖g8 31. ♖e4 leads to mate.

30. ♗h5-f6+ ♖h8-g7

31. ♜h4xg5

With Queen and Knight for the two Rooks and Black still being in a mating net, the rest is simple.

Keres: The game is finished. Ljubojevic played on in the hope of taking advantage of his opponent's severe time-trouble but it is already too simple.

Timman: Now it is White's turn to have a big material advantage. Ljubojevic continues to play until the time control as Bronstein was in severe time-trouble. The rest is not interesting any longer.

31. ... ♜f8-c8

Here the curtain could have been lowered. A worthy conclusion to the game would have been 32. ♗g4 ♖h8 33. ♜h6+ ♖g8 34. ♗f6 mate.

32. e5-e6 f7xe6+

33. ♖d5xe6

A most enterprising King!

33. ... ♜c8-f8

34. d6-d7 a7-a5

35. ♗f6-g4 ♜a8-a6+

The first move in the game for this Rook.

36. ♖e6-e5 ♜f8-f5+

37. ♜g5xf5 g6xf5

38. d7-d8 ♜ f5xg4

39. ♜d8-d7+ ♖g7-h6

40. ♜d7xb7 ♜a6-g6

41. f3-f4

The black King resigns.

Bronstein: After the game the American chess maecenas Isidor Turover gave me his own brilliancy prize in the form of 2 magnum bottles of the finest French champagne. It took us only 2 hours to fin-

ish them! While we 'celebrated' he repeated several times, in Russian, that he did not send someone but 'I went into a shop on my old legs to buy them!'

Keres: A wonderful game!

□ **Palatnik, Semen** (40)

■ **Bronstein, David**

USSR Championship 1st League
Tbilisi, October 1973

[A13] *English Opening*

This was the first year that the Soviet Championship was divided into two groups: a Super League and a First League. As I had participated in the Interzonal Tournament in Petropolis I should have played in the Super League. The Soviet Chess Federation, however, had, once again, something else in mind for me. They decided to penalise me because six months earlier I had refused to play in the Semi-Finals.

What could I do? Refuse again? It was not really an option. I accepted their decision and went to Tbilisi where I had spent so much time earlier in my life and where I had many friends. So in fact it was not a penalty but a favour!

Why had I refused to play in the Semi-Finals? It was just not possible physically as the Interzonal Tournament in Leningrad was held at the same time and I preferred to go there as a reporter for *Izvestia*. I felt I had an obligation to my readers.

As it turned out my name was on the list as a reserve player, but that fact I only found out years later. No one had ever bothered to tell me that at the time!

This Interzonal Tournament was remarkable for two reasons: (1) It was the beginning of the rivalry between Kortchnoi and Karpov and (2) I got the idea for my electronic chess clock and published an article in *Izvestia* about it when I saw how

Kortchnoi had lost in a terrible time-scramble.

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| 1. c2-c4 | e7-e6 |
| 2. ♘g1-f3 | d7-d5 |
| 3. g2-g3 | d5-d4 |

Attempting to delay the development of White's 'lazy Knight' on b1. Also Black has prevented White from playing d4 himself and controlling the squares c5 and e5.

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| 4. d2-d3 | ♗b8-c6 |
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It is not logical to play 4...c5 as it weakens the diagonal h1-a8, making the task of the Bishop on g2 much easier. Also b2-b4 will be stronger with the black pawn on c5.

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| 5. ♙f1-g2 | ♗g8-f6 |
| 6. 0-0 | |



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| 6. ... | ♙f8-e7 |
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Another possibility was 6...e5. It would then have been natural to continue with 7.b4 ♙xb4 8.♗xe5 ♗xe5 9.♖a4+. Is that good for White or for Black? After 9...♙d7 10.♖xb4 b6 11.♙xa8 c5 12.♖a3 ♖xa8 the position is very sharp. Despite having won the exchange, White should be very careful because Black's Bishops are very strong. Also there is the possibility for Black to open the h-file with ...h7-h5-h4. However, after 13.f3 it is difficult to see how Black can make any progress. The white pawns are passive but in good defensive positions.

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| 7. e2-e3 |
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Better is 7.e4 because after 7...dxe3 8.fxe3 e5 9.d4 the white pawn centre is

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very active. That is why 6...e5 would have been more precise. If then 7.e4 Black can play 7...dxe3 8.fxe3 e4, destroying White's pawn chain.

Does this mean that the opening has been in White's favour? Yes and no! The privilege of making the first move gives White a slight edge. If you want to fight you need to take some risk. For instance, after 7.e4 Black could try 7...dxe3 8.fxe3 e5 9.d4 ♖g4 10.h3 ♘xf3 11.♙xf3 exd4 12.♙xc6+ bxc6 13.exd4 ♚d7 to break White's pawn centre, and the white King is not well protected.

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| 7. ... | 0-0 |
| 8. e3xd4 | ♗c6xd4 |
| 9. ♖f3xd4 | ♚d8xd4 |



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| 10. ♗b1-c3 | e6-e5 |
| 11. ♙c1-e3 | ♚d4-d8 |
| 12. h2-h3 | c7-c6 |
| 13. d3-d4 | e5xd4 |
| 14. ♚d1xd4 | ♙c8-e6 |

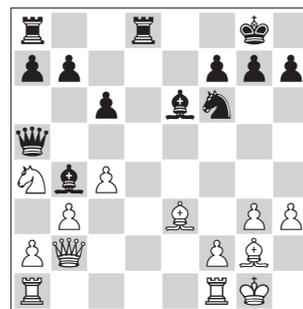


The game was played in the last round of the tournament and I was convinced that White would exchange Queens to enter into a slightly better endgame. That was why I proposed a draw at this stage but my partner said, apologetically, that he would have a slight chance to qualify to play in the first division of next year's Soviet Championship. I acknowledged that I understood his motivation to play on.

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| 15. b2-b3 | ♚d8-a5 |
| 16. ♗c3-a4 | ♜f8-d8 |
| 17. ♚d4-c3 | |

Now it was my partner who offered a peaceful conclusion to this game but with the black Queen looking forward to the journey from a5 to h5, I suddenly was full of chess energy and politely expressed my wish to continue the game.

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| 17. ... | ♙e7-b4 |
| 18. ♚c3-b2 | |



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| 18. ... | ♚a5-h5 |
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I remember that I spent about half an hour of thinking before changing the position of my Queen. The problem was not how to react to White's brave pawn move 19.g4, but how to answer if White would decide to play safe with 19.h4. I did not find any active plan and was ready to propose a draw once again. But my partner, still in search for complications hoping to get lucky, played the g-pawn without hesitation.

19. g3-g4 ♖e6xg4

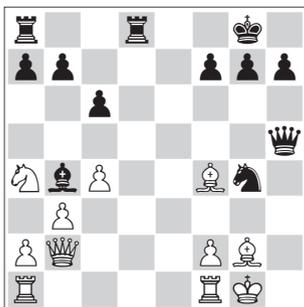
The Bishop took the pawn with the same speed as it had appeared on g4. Certainly, it is clear that Black will get a strong attack, but will it be enough to win? And how should Black play to get the best practical chances?

This was the main problem I had to solve and I am proud to say that it seems I found my way along a super-highway to my destination.

20. h3xg4 ♜f6xg4**21. ♖e3-f4**

The best defence against the threat of 21...♖h2 mate. If 21.♖fe1 then Black could try the beautiful variation 21...♖xe1 22.♖xe1 ♖h2+ 23.♖f1 ♜xe3+ 24.♖xe3 (if 24.fxe3 then 24...♖d6) 24...♖d1+ 25.♖e2 ♖xg2 26.♖xd1 ♖d8+ 27.♖e2 ♖g4+ 28.♖f1 ♖d1+ 29.♖e1 ♖h3+ 30.♖e2 ♖d3 mate.

After the text it seems that the Black attack has ground to a halt. If now 21...♖d2 then 22.♖c1 and if 21...♖d2 then 22.♖g3.

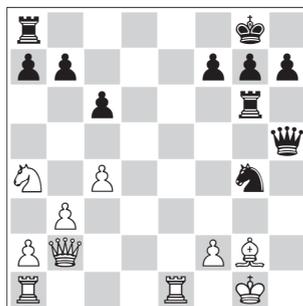
**21. ...** ♖b4-d6

Simple and strong. The Bishop on f4 is White's only active piece. In such cases it is recommended that one should try to reduce the power of such a piece. By exchanging Bishops on d6 White is losing control over the diagonal h2-b8 but if 22.♖d2 or 22.♖d4 then 22...♖h2+

23.♖xh2 ♖xh2+ 24.♖h1 ♖xd4 (or 24...♖xd2) 25.f3 ♜e3 and the endgame is in Black's favour thanks to the advantage of three connected pawns on the kingside against one lone isolated white pawn. Also the black Rooks are much stronger in this type of open position than White's Knight and Bishop.

Furthermore, if White plays 22.♖c1 then Black's g-pawn can join into the attack. The main line is 22...g5 23.♖xd6 ♖xd6 24.♖e1 ♖h2+ 25.♖f1 ♜xf2 26.♖xg5+ ♖g6 27.♖xg6+ fxg6 28.♖xf2 and the black Rook on a8 will announce the decisive check: 28...♖f8+.

By the way, as far as I have observed from thousands of games, if both white and black Rooks are still in quiet positions on a1 and a8 the Rook that centralises first usually helps to decide the battle. We shall see this later.

22. ♖f4xd6 ♖d8xd6**23. ♖f1-e1** ♖d6-g6

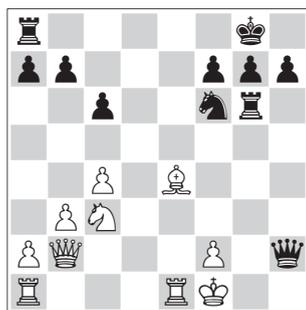
While the black Rook on a8 is still awaiting orders to march to a more active position, the Rook on g6 is looking for subtle combinations like 24.♖e2 (if 24.♖e4 then 24...♖h2+ 25.♖f1 ♜f6, and if 24.♖e7 then 24...♖h2+ 25.♖f1 ♖h4 26.♖ae1 h5) 24...♖h2+ 25.♖f1 ♖h1+ 26.♖xh1 ♜h2 mate, or 24.♖e2 ♖d8 25.♜c3 (if 25.♖d4 then 25...♖h2+

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26. ♖f1 ♔xg2+ 27. ♖xg2 ♕f6+)
 25... ♗h2+ 26. ♖f1 ♗h1+ 27. ♕xh1
 ♕h2+ 28. ♖e1 ♖g1 mate.

That is why White is in a hurry to bring the Knight, gone astray on a4, closer to his King. If Black loses the momentum of the attack then, after ♕c3-e4-g3, the Knight could become very useful in the defence of the white King.

24. ♕a4-c3 ♗h5-h2+
 25. ♖g1-f1 ♕g4-f6
 26. ♕g2-e4



It easy to understand my partner's desire to play actively in this game. Of course, if White had realised that he could no longer win, would he be able to make a draw by playing passively, in spite of his extra piece? I don't think so. After 26.f3 his Bishop would have become merely another pawn and Black has the choice whether to play 26... ♕h5 and ... ♕f4 or just to push his h-pawn forward to h5-h4-h3.

Looking back after more than 20 years I can now see that Black has created a winning attack, but during the game I was not so certain. After all, I was thinking all the time, I was tired, I was respecting my partner and I was expecting unusual moves from all sides. Besides, I took risks and was looking for the most economical way to play, not only for myself but also for the chess army of my King.

I was very pleased and grateful to Dr Max Euwe when I read in one of his books: 'David Bronstein often takes a long time to think before making even obvious moves. The explanation of this is that he likes not only to win the game but wants to do it in the most beautiful way.'

Do I need to add that in many complicated chess games the most beautiful way to win a game is not necessarily like the Niagara Falls but could resemble also a little country stream, as in this game.

26. ... ♗h2-h3+
 27. ♖f1-e2 ♕f6xe4
 28. ♕c3xe4 ♖g6-e6
 29. ♖e2-d2 ♖a8-d8+

The Rook has been waiting in his corner for a very long time to give this simple but decisive check. Now Black's Rooks are co-operating. If 30. ♖c2 or 30. ♖c1, then 30... ♖xe4 and after 31. ♖xe4 the Queen gives check on d3 or h1 and takes the Rook on e4. Therefore...

The white King resigns.

□ **Kaplan, Julio** (41)

■ **Bronstein, David**

International Tournament
 Hastings 1975/76

[C11] *French Defence*

This was my first game at Hastings for 22 years. It was in 1953/54 that I lost an historic game to C.H.O'D. Alexander in 120 moves.

As I started to play my main aim was to try to forget how old I was.

I was glad to find myself paired in the first round against a very pleasant young man (as he still is), who had won the World Junior Championship in 1967.

Mark Taimanov and I recalled how we had had visited Liverpool in the Spring of 1952, invited by the International Union

of Students, to take part in the first Students World Championship. The next championship was played as a team event and another such individual championship was never held again. So presumably Taimanov and I, as we tied for first place, are still Co-World Student Champions! That thought made me feel a lot younger!

In 1974 I proposed to Dr Max Euwe, President of FIDE, that a new World Championship should be instituted for grandmasters over 50, limited to players who had qualified for at least two Candidates' Tournaments or match sequences. He replied: 'What a nice idea! I might compete myself.' It made **him** feel younger.

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| 1. e2-e4 | e7-e6 |
| 2. d2-d4 | d7-d5 |
| 3. ♖b1-c3 | ♗g8-f6 |
| 4. ♕c1-g5 | d5xe4 |
| 5. ♗c3xe4 | ♕f8-e7 |
| 6. ♕g5xf6 | g7xf6 |

Some may find this variation too committal but I like such situations, with the black pawns on e6 and f6 controlling the centre, the open g-file for my Rook and maybe, if the game opens up – as this game amply proves –, a promising future for my light-squared Bishop.

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| 7. ♗g1-f3 | ♗b8-d7 |
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Usually, 7...b6 is played here.

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| 8. ♖d1-d2 | c7-c5 |
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As Kaplan had shown no great eagerness to play 8.d5 I deliberately provoked him to do so! I was slightly nervous about playing this but it had to be done.

9. d4-d5

Instead, 9.0-0-0 first would have been better and then not 9...cxd4 10.♖xd4 0-0 with a restrained position for Black, but 9...f5 followed by 10.♗g3 cxd4 11.♖xd4 ♕f6 and 12.♖d2 0-0.

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| 9. ... | f6-f5 |
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10. d5xe6

Played after long thought.



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| 10. ... | f5xe4 |
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11. e6xd7+

White rejected 11.exf7+ because he liked his position after his next move.

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| 11. ... | ♖d8xd7 |
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12. ♖d2-c3

Kaplan can hardly be blamed for feeling that he now had an excellent position. Black's queenside is underdeveloped.

Also, compare White's neat compact pawns to Black's.

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| 12. ... | 0-0 |
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| 13. ♗f3-d2 | ♖d7-f5 |
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| 14. 0-0-0 | ♖f5xf2 |
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15. ♗d2xe4?

Now White made, to my mind, the losing move. White ties himself up regaining an unimportant pawn. Better would have been 15.♕c4.

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| 15. ... | ♖f2-f4+! |
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| 16. ♗e4-d2 | ♕c8-g4 |
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| 17. ♖d1-e1 | ♕e7-g5 |
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| 18. ♕f1-d3 | |
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