

# Preface

When I edited the book *New In Chess: The First 25 Years*, back in 2010, I commented then that few chess eras had been so lovingly recorded in print. From its inception in 1984, the magazine has covered all major chess events and published pretty much every really important grandmaster game, usually with annotations by one of the players concerned. Now in its 33rd year of continuous publication, the magazine has tracked in the greatest detail the second half of Karpov's career, almost all of Kasparov's, plus those of Anand, Kramnik, all of their contemporaries, and now those of Carlsen and his generation.

It thus goes without saying that the back catalogue of *New In Chess* represents a fabulous source of chess instruction, with every issue full of detailed and highly instructive annotations by the world's best players, of their own best games. The fact that the magazine has never been a languageless, symbol-based publication, is also of great significance – it is much easier to study and learn from game annotations written in words, where players explain their reasoning process and the ideas behind their moves.

I was therefore delighted when the company approached me and asked that I put together an instructional volume, based on material published in *New In Chess* magazine over the past 33 years. I have written a number of other books, based around using complete games as a source of instruction, and am firmly convinced that for the average player, the study of well-annotated master games is the best way to improve.

In putting this book together, I have re-read from cover to cover every single issue of *New In Chess* magazine, beginning with the January 1984 issue, up to the present day, and have selected the games I consider to be the most instructive. As the Contents page shows, the material has been broken down into various standard topics, such as attack, defence, pawn structures, etc. Each chapter has an introduction, which summarises the games therein, and should serve as a guide with which readers can orient themselves around the material. This should make it possible to use the book not only as a volume to be gone through from page one to the end, but also as a source of material on different topics, which can be dipped into, whenever a reader wishes to study a particular aspect of the game. As such, I hope that it will also prove a valuable source of material for chess coaches.

In the main, the annotations have been reproduced directly, as they appeared in the original magazine. Apart from amending the occasional typo and/or English language error, the only other changes I have made involve removing some digressions, such as concern the tournament situation in which a particular game was played, chess politics, or other topical matters, which would be out of place in a book of instruction.

I should add one other point. It has often been noted that the standard of chess has improved a great deal over the years and one sees far fewer one-sided games at GM level than was the case back in the 1930s and beyond. From an instructional point of view, this can be a slight drawback, as the simplest and most didactic examples to follow are those where a player is able to carry out a clear plan or idea, without undue hindrance from the opponent. One finds many such cases in the games of the old greats, such as Capablanca, when the gap between the top few players and the rest was so much greater than is the case today. Nowadays, players fight much harder and understand so much more, with the result that one rarely sees a top GM beaten in such straightforward fashion. Since the advent of computers, this has become even more marked. Every observer of top chess today realises how the old adage, about winning a won game being the hardest thing in chess, really has become true. The computer has shown us the extent of the defensive resources in chess, and top players nowadays are remarkably tenacious.

However, it is also true that it is not only at the grandmaster level that standards have improved greatly over recent years. The same is true at the amateur level as well. The average player nowadays is much stronger than his equivalent of 50 or even 25 years ago. Not only is his opening knowledge much greater, so is his tactical alertness and his knowledge of many standard positions and typical plans. Consequently, this means that he needs a higher standard of instructional material anyway, and the simplistic examples to be found in the books of Irving Chernev and Fred Reinfeld are no longer going to be as useful to him as they were to preceding generations. I have done my best to pick the clearest and most didactic examples I could find in New In Chess, but the general standard of material is much higher than the games to be found in older instructional volumes, and I am confident that the material here will be extremely valuable to the modern player at amateur level. The games here represent a true picture of the top level of modern chess, and with a little hard work, studying the annotations in detail, there is a wealth of instruction to be found here. Less of the fruit is low-hanging than in older instructional books, perhaps, but some very sweet and tasty treats are awaiting the reader who is willing to make a little more effort to clamber up a few branches.

This has been an enjoyable and rewarding project on which to work, and I hope readers will find the book to be a hugely instructive volume, as well as one to be simply enjoyed.

Steve Giddins  
Rochester, UK  
April 2017

### **Acknowledgements**


My thanks go to all the staff at New In Chess for their assistance with the book, especially Joop de Groot, who showed the patience of a saint in meeting my regular requests for additional copies of old material. I am also indebted to George Hollands, who kindly lent me (and transported) several crates full of past New In Chess magazines from his collection, thus enabling me to review them and choose material for the book.

## CHAPTER 2

# Defence

The counterpart to attack is defence, but the latter is a subject which gets far less treatment in chess literature. Most players much prefer to attack than to defend, and excellent defensive games are rarely chosen for annotation in tournament reports or best game collections. As a result, it is much harder to find really good instructional material on the subject of defence, which is a major reason why the present chapter is so much shorter than the previous one.

Having said that, defence is one of the areas of the game which has seen the greatest improvement in recent years, largely because of the impact of the computer. Almost as soon as playing programmes started reaching master strength, one was struck by how remarkably tenacious they were in defending difficult positions. For decades, there had been an unstated assumption that once a player fell into an inferior position, he would in practice generally lose it, if playing a strong opponent. Annotators took it for granted that the defender would make mistakes, and usually excused such errors with a comment such as ‘mistakes come easily in bad positions’. However, the computer showed that the defensive margin in chess is much greater than had generally been thought, and even extremely bad positions could be held, if the defender knuckled down and did not commit further mistakes. It is true that one or two players of past generations had realised this years before, Emanuel Lasker being the outstanding example, but it was a lesson that had escaped most players.

 The defensive margin in chess is much greater than generally thought

Nowadays, however, the defensive powers of the top GMs are remarkable, and converting an advantage is now one of the hardest things to do against a world-class player.

We present three games in this chapter, all featuring world champions. A careful study of this small, but elite selection will teach you much of what you need to know to become a good defender. Above all, it is a matter of mindset – never give up!

## Game 15

In this game, we see the much underrated Dutch World Champion, Max Euwe, in action. His defensive skill and coolness under fire were key components in his defeat of Alekhine in their 1935 World Championship match. This is a typical example of Euwe absorbing the early pressure and keeping a clear head in the face of enemy threats, before finally turning the tables.

NOTES BY

**Jan Timman**

KP 10.9 – C49

**Alexander Alekhine**

**Max Euwe**

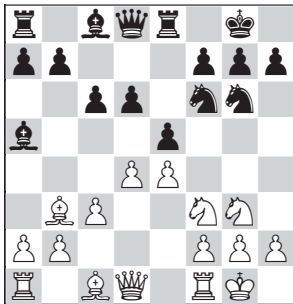
Amsterdam 1936 (2)

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♙b5  
♙b4 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d6 7.♗e2 ♗e7**

For the moment he is happy to maintain the symmetry.

**8.c3 ♙a5 9.♗g3 c6 10.♙a4 ♗g6**

**11.d4 ♖e8 12.♙b3**



**12...exd4**

Abandoning the centre in this way is a sign of optimism, although

objectively speaking it is not very sound.

**13.cxd4 ♙e6 14.♗g5**

This is how White holds on to the initiative.

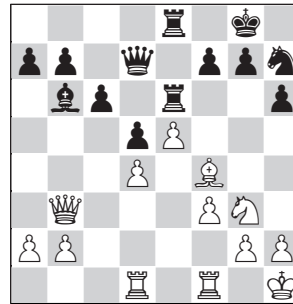
**14...♙xb3 15.♖xb3 ♖d7 16.f3 h6**

**17.♗h3 ♖e6 18.♗f4 ♗xf4 19.♙xf4**

**♙b6 20.♖ad1 ♖ae8 21.♗h1 d5**

It is becoming difficult to find more waiting moves.

**22.e5 ♗h7**



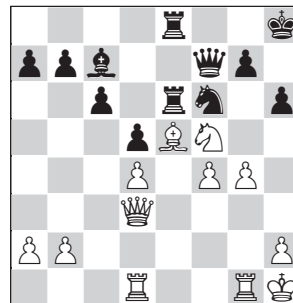
**23.♗f5 f6**

Now this natural reaction is perfectly suited to take the impetus from White's attack.

**24.g4 fxe5 25.♙xe5 ♗f6**

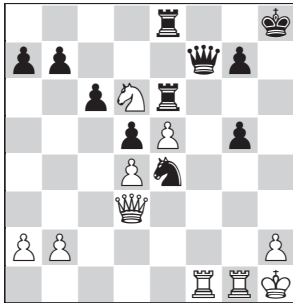
The position has some similarities with my game against Kortchnoi in Las Palmas 1981. Black is threatening to free himself with 26...♙c7.

**26.♖d3 ♗h8 27.♖g1 ♙c7 28.f4 ♖f7!**



Careful play. Black prepares for 29...♖e5 30.dxe5 ♘e4.

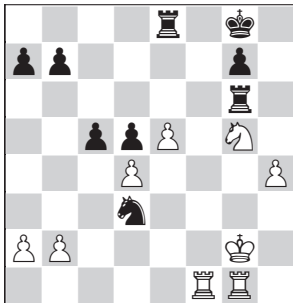
29.♞df1 ♙xe5 30.fxe5 ♘e4 31.g5 hxg5 32.♘d6



32...♘f2+ 33.♔g2 ♘xd3 34.♘xf7+ ♔g8 35.♘xg5 ♞g6

It is clear that Black has got a solid initiative now.

36.h4 c5!



The strong white central fortress is finally broken.

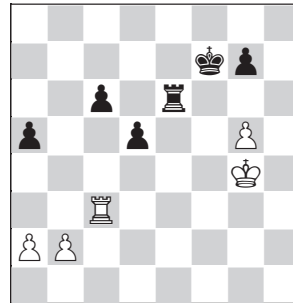
37.dxc5 ♞xe5 38.♔h3 ♘xc5 39.♞c1 ♞c6 40.♞ge1 ♘e4

Black keeps the files closed; otherwise the position of the white knight might spell danger for his king.

41.♞xc6 bxc6 42.♞c1 ♘xg5+ 43.hxg5 ♞e6

It goes without saying that Black maintains his queenside pawn majority.

44.♔g4 ♔f7 45.♞c3 a5!



46.♔f3 ♔g6 47.♞a3

Only now was the game adjourned. Black is winning, but the passed outside pawn White will be getting is going to cause him all kinds of technical problems.

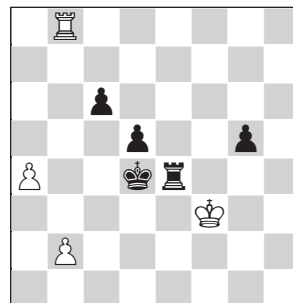
47...♔xg5 48.♞xa5 ♔f5 49.a4 g5 50.♞a8 ♞e4!

Excellent technique. Square e4 is the bridgehead in this rook ending.

51.♞f8+

The start of a very fine defensive manoeuvre aimed at reducing the effective range of the black rook on the fourth rank.

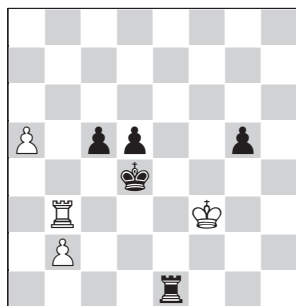
51...♔e5 52.♞e8+ ♔d4 53.♞b8



Now that he has lured the black king to d4, White is threatening to create a pawn duo b4-a5.

53...c5 54.b4?

This careless move throws away the game again. Correct is 54.a5. Nearly all commentaries – including that in Fine’s *Basic Chess Endings* and Levenfish’s and Smyslov’s *Rook Endings* – limit themselves to a variation indicated by Euwe himself in *Chess*: 54...♖e1 55.a6 ♖a1 56.♖a8 c4 57.a7 ♔d3 58.♔g4 d4 59.♔xg5 ♕c2 60.♖c8 ♖xa7 61.♖xc4+ ♕d3, with a technically winning endgame. In the tournament book, Fine adds a variation in case White continues with 55.b4 (instead of 55.a6). Black then wins with 55...c4 56.a6 ♖a1 57.b5 c3 58.♖c8 ♔d3 59.b6 ♖xa6 60.b7 ♖b6 61.b8♗ ♖xb8 62.♖xb8 c2 63.♖c8 ♕d2. All this looks quite correct, but White has a far stronger possibility at the start of the variation, viz. 55.♖b3!



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

Now a rook swap on a3 would lead to a draw. This means that White gets his rook behind the passed pawn. If he succeeds in pushing his passed pawn to a6, the draw is guaranteed. So in order to preserve winning chances, Black must withdraw his rook to e6; but after 55...♖e6 56.♖b6 he still hasn’t made any headway. White finds it easy

enough to hold on to the draw, precisely because his b-pawn hasn’t been advanced yet.

**54...c4 55.a5 ♖e3+**

More accurate than 55...♖e1, which is also enough for the win: see the note after Whites 54th move.

**56.♔f2 ♖a3 57.♖g8 c3**

The black pawns roll on. White is utterly powerless.

**58.♖xg5 ♖a2+ 59.♔f3 c2 60.♖g1**

And White resigned simultaneously.

This game was played in the second round of the Amsterdam tournament and contributed heavily to Euwe scoring his first tournament victory on Dutch soil after becoming World Champion.

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### The Key Lessons

- Euwe’s calmness in the face of the developing white initiative was an essential element in his success
  - Note how Euwe reduces the pressure by exchanging dangerous attacking pieces (13...♕e6, 27...♕c7)
  - Preparing counterplay is an essential element in successful defence (23...f6)
- 

### Game 16

This game is notable particularly for the annotations by Ian Rogers, who expounds the theory of an Australian amateur, Bill Jordan, and his ‘theory of infinite resistance’. This is a theory which all players should understand and try to apply to their own defensive efforts.

Basically, the message is: no matter how bad your position, it is possible to keep putting up resistance and making the opponent's task as hard as possible. As emphasized in the chapter introduction, defence is first and foremost a matter of attitude.

In the game itself, Garry Kasparov, a player known much more for his attacking prowess than for defending, shows just how tough he can be to defeat, when his back is to the wall. It is true that White could have won by force at several points, when all Kasparov's heroics would have been unavailing. But the key point is: White DIDN'T win by force! By making it as hard as possible, Kasparov succeeded in driving Short into time-trouble and forcing him to keep finding the best moves. Eventually, he missed his chance and Black escaped.

NOTES BY

**Ian Rogers**

SI 13.7 – B90

**Nigel Short**

**Garry Kasparov**

London m 1993 (10)

### **The Theory of Infinite Resistance**

For most people the sum total of Australia's contribution to the development of chess thought lies in the writings of Cecil Purdy. Admittedly, Purdy's magazine *Chess World* excelled in finding sound general principles to apply to a

multitude of chessboard problems, but other Australians have also contributed useful theories.

When playing through many of the games from the rebel World Championship match I was struck by how well Kasparov seemed to understand Jordan's Theory of Infinite Resistance, even if he had never heard of it.

The Theory of Infinite Resistance was developed by a Melbourne player Bill Jordan more than a decade ago. It is a theory designed to encourage players to fully utilise the defensive resources available in a bad, or even strategically lost, position. The theory postulates that

WHEN A PLAYER MAKES A SERIOUS MISTAKE OR REACHES A BAD POSITION, IF HE OR SHE CONTINUES TO TRY TO FIND THE BEST POSSIBLE MOVE THEREAFTER, HE OR SHE CAN PUT UP VIRTUALLY INFINITE RESISTANCE AND SHOULD NOT LOSE.

This may sound like a truism, but the theory is of real practical usefulness.

Of course some positions are beyond even perfect defence, but their number is far smaller than imagined. There is, however, a tendency among many players – particularly weaker American players for some reason – to overrate the size of advantage and the ease with which it can be converted into a win. Annotators



who write notes such as ‘Mistakes are easy to come by in a bad position’ are making a similar assumption – the player who stands worse is somehow expected to make more mistakes than the player who holds the advantage.

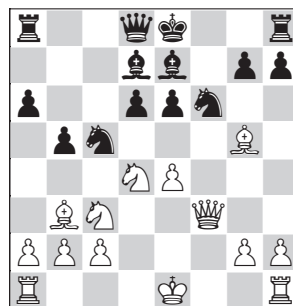
Unfortunately the Theory of Infinite Resistance is extremely difficult to put into practice, since the most common accompaniment to a bad position is depression, and it is very difficult to find good moves when one is depressed. It is also difficult to apply yourself fully when you ‘know’ that your position should be lost. (This applies particularly to Eastern European players with a good chess education who understand too well which positions are good and which are bad.)

The Theory of Infinite Resistance is often misunderstood as a licence to swindle – players will try a few tricks and resign if they fail because he or she ‘knows’ the position should be lost in the long run. However, the true follower of the theory knows that the long run never comes: every chess game is filled with incidents and errors which interrupt the logical flow of the game.

Most of the players who were regarded as virtually unbeatable in their time have intuitively understood the Theory of Infinite Resistance. Both Karpov and Kasparov have shown in their

current world title fights that their last line of defence is far stronger than their opponents imagine. Timman-Karpov, Game 5, is a wonderful example of Karpov’s defensive skills in a totally depressing situation, while the following game is an extreme example from the London match.

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.♖c4 e6 7.♖b3 ♗bd7 8.f4 ♗c5 9.♚f3!? b5 10.f5 ♖d7! 11.fxe6?! fxe6 12.♖g5 ♖e7**



**13.0-0-0**

Short spent 52 minutes on this move, realising that the line he had chosen, involving a queen sacrifice, was not as good as he had thought. In a way the time was well spent, since Kasparov, already five points up in the match, was lured into believing that his opponent was already trying something desperate. After the game Kasparov admitted that 13...♚c8! would now have been totally safe for Black but he wanted to encourage Short’s planned 14.e5.

**13...0-0!? 14.e5! ♗fe4?**  
 14...♗d5! 15.♖xe7 ♗xe7! 16.♚h3  
 d5 would have been strong for Black, but Kasparov apparently

‘forgot’ that 15...♗xe7 was legal. He probably also didn’t believe the coming queen sacrifice was serious and busied himself with calculating lines after 14...♗fe4 15. ♕xe7 ♖xe7 16. ♖e3.

15. ♕xe7 ♖xe7



The assembled throng in the press room were now busy deciding whether after 16. ♖e3, 16...♗f2 or 16...♗xc3 was stronger, when Short’s reply was registered on the video monitor.

16. ♗xe4!! ♖xf3 17. exd6 ♗xb3+  
18. ♗xb3 ♖f8 19. gxf3

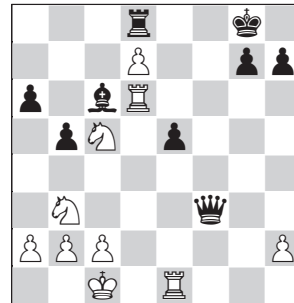


19... ♖xf3?!

In his post-game press conference Kasparov claimed that White was simply winning after the queen sacrifice. I suspect that this realisation came slowly – otherwise ...♗d8 would have been played

here or on the next move, trying to maintain the blockade of the d-pawn.

20. ♗ec5 ♕c6 21. ♖he1 e5 22. d7 ♗d8  
23. ♗d6



By now Black is definitely lost and must choose a mode of defence.

Although infinite resistance is impossible in a hopeless position, the general spirit of the theory can still be applied.

My personal preference would be for 23...h5, hoping to sacrifice the bishop for the d-pawn as late as possible, win the h-pawn and hope for counterplay with advanced e- and h-pawns. The disadvantage of this policy is that White will have a win on material alone when Black gives up his bishop so should Black’s pawns become blockaded he is sure to lose.

Kasparov examined 23...♕d5!? but realised that resistance might rapidly be terminated after 24. ♗d2 ♖f2 25. ♗d3. After eight minutes’ thought he decided on a very sensible policy – increasing the confusion factor in the position. He has noticed a significant weakness in Short’s play – the Englishman seems to become

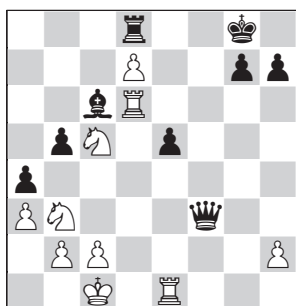
overcautious in good positions and avoids lines which require lengthy calculation.

**23...a5!?**

Kasparov's last move is tactically justified by the variation 24.♖xa5 ♜f4+ 25.♗b1 ♜b4, although even here White can keep an advantage with 26.♞xe5 ♜xa5 27.♞xc6 ♜d2 28.a4!.

Short finds an excellent reply, defusing all of Kasparov's counterplay, but it cost him ten precious minutes, leaving him only 14 minutes to reach move 40.

**24.a3! a4**



**25.♖d2**

25.♖a5 would force Black to sacrifice his bishop immediately, but Kasparov could at least hope that the knight on a5 would prove to be out of play. So caution rules and Short decides to consolidate his winning position.

**25...♜g2 26.c3! ♕d5**

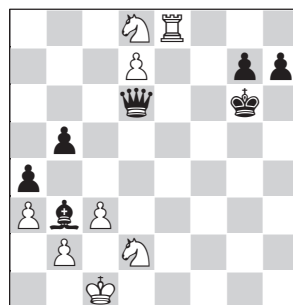
Another confusing move. 26...♕xd7, which Short must have been expecting, offers no hope at all after 27.♖xd7 ♞e8 28.♞xe5 ♞xe5 29.♖xe5, as White can keep his h-pawn due to the mate threat. Unfortunately for Kasparov, his opponent

continues to play well and Black's position finally reaches the point of collapse.

**27.♖d3! ♕b3 28.♖xe5 ♜xh2**

**29.♖c6! ♜xd6 30.♞e8+ ♖f7**

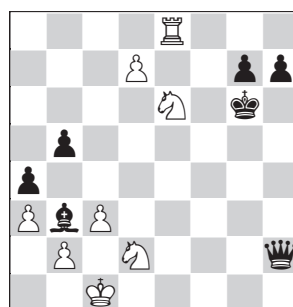
**31.♖xd8+ ♖g6**



**32.♖e6?**

The first in an incredible series of errors by Short. After 32.♞e6+! ♕xe6 33.♖xe6 ♜xe6 (33...♜xd7 34.♖f8+) 34.d8♜ Kasparov would have been forced to resign in a few moves. In time-trouble, Short wanted something 'cleaner'.

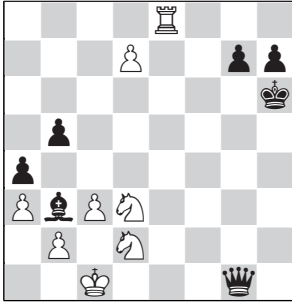
**32...♜h2**



**33.♖f4+?**

33.♞f8! ♜g1+ 34.♞f1 wins. Around here Kasparov probably began to realise that infinite resistance may yet be possible, with a little help from Short.

**33...♖h6 34.♖d3 ♜g1+**

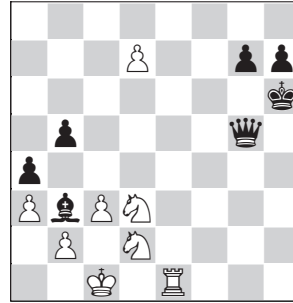


The most entertaining minute of television I have ever seen came while Short was considering his reply to this move. The English commercial television station Channel 4, owner of the exclusive television rights to the match, was covering the time-scramble 'live' as it did every match day. The Channel 4 commentators – or more accurately Nigel Short cheer squad leaders – Ray Keene and Danny King were urging Short to play 35.♖e1, when they were sure Kasparov would resign. 'Come on Nigel!', urged Danny King, while Ray Keene pronounced September 28, 1993 a great day for British chess. Then, suddenly, a strange sound filled the air – Keene had begun humming 'God Save the Queen' into a reluctant microphone. The camera focussed on Short, who was looking more and more worried. The concert ended and Short was still thinking. The commentators couldn't understand why he wasn't moving. It was a great show, filled with tension, embarrassment and unintentional humour. Then, with only about half a minute left on the clock, Short spoiled everything by moving

### 35.♖e1

Just in time, Short realised that his intended 35.♖e1 fails to 35...♔g4!. White has not spoiled anything yet but his priorities have changed – he must avoid the disaster of Game 1 and make the time-control.

### 35...♔g5

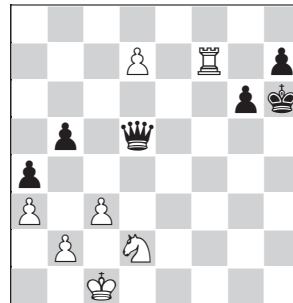


### 36.♗e5?

36.♗h1+ ♖g6 37.♗e5+ ♔f5 38.♗c6 is still a simple win.

### 36...g6 37.♗f1 ♕e6 38.♗f7+ ♕xf7

### 39.♗xf7 ♔d5



### 40.♖e7?

With only seconds to spare, it is perhaps forgivable that Short misses the last clear win – 40.♗e4! ♔d3 41.♗f2!! ♔xd7 42.♗h2+ ♖g7 43.♗xh7+! ♖xh7 44.♗f6+.

### 40...♔d6 41.♗f7 ♔d3 42.♗e4 ♔e3+

### 43.♗d2 ♔d3

Draw agreed.

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## The Key Lessons

- In even the most desperate positions, there is a virtually infinite capacity to keep resisting
  - When the position is bad, increasing the confusion factor is often an effective defensive technique (23...a5, 26...♙d5)
  - The clock is a weapon the defender can use. By making the opponent's task harder, one drives him into time-trouble, when anything can happen, even with the best players in the world
  - Above all, NEVER GIVE UP
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## Game 17

This was the game which effectively brought Magnus Carlsen the World Championship title – by winning it, he led by three points, with three games to go, and an easy draw as White a day later settled things. But for most of the game, a black win seemed the least likely outcome. After a poor opening, Carlsen was in desperate trouble, and most of the GM commentators online were writing Black's obituaries as early as move 10, 'strategically lost' being the most common verdict on Black's position. It was a perfect example of the sort of position which, in bygone days, would have just been assumed as 'inevitably lost' for Black. But Carlsen defended superbly, clearly understanding that, difficult though his position was, that is not the same as lost – if Black does not make further mistakes, he should still hold.

Giri's splendid annotations show where White could have tried to improve, but in no variation is there a clear, forced win. As in the previous game, Carlsen puts up 'infinite resistance' and eventually reaps the reward. That he actually won was due to a blunder, and a draw should have been the correct result, but the fact is that his near-perfect defence eventually wore Anand out, and a blunder frequently results in such situations.

NOTES BY

**Anish Giri**

NI 19.9 – E25

**Viswanathan Anand**

**Magnus Carlsen**

Chennai m 2013 (9)

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Before this game everyone knew that it was now or never. With -2 and four games to go this was Vishy's last chance to strike back. And he went for it.

**1.d4! ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3**

Frankly speaking, I had expected to see the Nimzo. With 3.♟f3 Vishy's team would have had a hard time to prepare, as it's not clear what to expect from Magnus there.

**3...♙b4 4.f3**

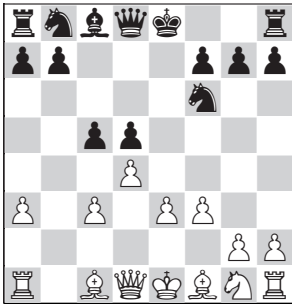
This line has served Anand well in the past. The play becomes terribly sharp, which is what Vishy was aiming for.

**4...d5 5.a3 ♙xc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.cxd5 exd5!?**

All mainstream theory so far. Here Magnus, as usual, deviates from the main theoretical paths.

7...♖xd5 8.dxc5 has been discussed a lot at top level. See Anand-Kramnik 2008, Anand-Wang Hao 2011, etc.

**8.e3**



**8...c4**

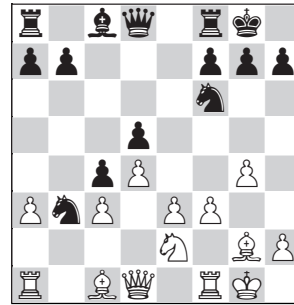
The relative popularity of this line is probably due to the rise of chess engines, which consider Black's position better here. As far as I know, it has been thought since the game Botvinnik-Capablanca from ages ago that closing the centre so quickly in such a structure is far too dangerous, and that after the eventual e3-e4 break Black will be under serious attack. In our days, however, people realise that there is quite a considerable gap between serious attack and mate, and things are no longer that one-sided.

**9.♖e2 ♖c6 10.g4!**

Gaining space on the kingside, where the future attack will take place. In the long run White is aiming for e3-e4.

10.♖g3 doesn't look good here, as after 10...h5!? the white knight will be pushed back and it will be hard to manage the desired e3-e4 break.

**10...0-0 11.♗g2 ♖a5 12.0-0 ♖b3**



**13.♖a2**

It is quite a subtle decision where to put the rook.

The advantage of having the rook protecting the c1-bishop can be seen in the following line: 13.♖b1 h6 14.♖g3 ♖e8 15.h3 ♖d6, and here White has 16.♖e1! ♖xc1 17.♖xc1! (having the rook on b1 finally pays off) 17...♖xa3 18.e4 and the white pawns are rolling. The line is absolutely unforced, and the very first move, 13...h6, is probably inaccurate.

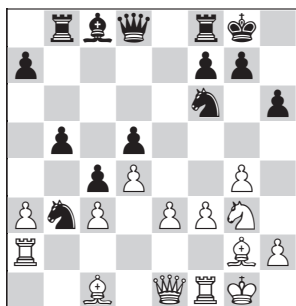
**13...b5**

Advancing his queenside pawns, hoping for the best.

In general the black strategy in such positions is quite simple. He should pretend he doesn't care at all that he gets mated, create some silly counterplay on the queenside and hope that White will not find a forced mate.

13...h6 is the move preferred by the engines (and most players who have had this position over the board), which Kasparov in his comments on Twitter (the new evil in this world, next to Facebook, YouTube, the Internet and, of course – not

to forget – the smileys) classified as simply ‘very bad’: 14.♘g3 (14.e4!? right away is not that bad either: 14...dxe4 15.fxe4 ♕xg4 16.♖e1, and the pawn centre is worth a pawn. Oops, given away another novelty to NIC readers) 14...b5 15.♖e1 ♖b8



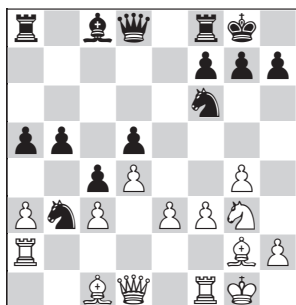
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

16.e4!? (a pawn sacrifice that was played in one correspondence game – White gets a very dangerous initiative) 16...♘xc1 17.♖xc1 dxe4 18.g5 hxg5 19.fxe4

**14.♘g3**

14.g5 is also possible, but perhaps White didn’t want to allow 14...♘h5!?.

**14...a5**



**15.g5**

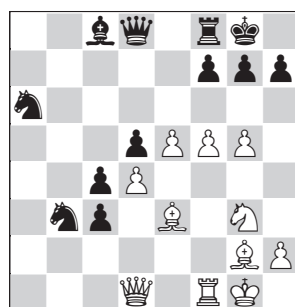
The immediate 15.e4 was also interesting, but Black seems to be getting quite some counterplay

here: 15...dxe4 16.♕g5 h6 17.♕xf6 ♖xf6 18.fxe4 ♖b6 19.g5 ♖a6!? 20.e5 b4!, breaking down the essential c3/d4 tandem.

**15...♘e8 16.e4 ♘xc1**

Personally I don’t like this decision, although it is by no means bad, especially if Magnus decided that he should do it. Black exchanges his active knight, fearing that the knight might end up doing nothing on the juicy b3-square (again Botvinnik-Capablanca comes to mind).

The scenario that might unfold would be: 16...♘c7 17.♕e3 ♖a6!? (17...b4 18.axb4 axb4 19.♖xa8 ♘xa8 20.cxb4) 18.e5 b4 19.axb4 (19.f4 ♘b5; 19.a4 bxc3 20.f4) 19...axb4 20.♖xa6 ♘xa6 21.f4 bxc3 22.f5



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and the pawns look scary, just as in the game.

**17.♖xc1 ♖a6 18.e5**

The most straightforward. White wants to follow up with f4-f5. 18.f4 is not so conceptual: 18...dxe4 (18...b4) 19.♘e4 b4, with counterplay.

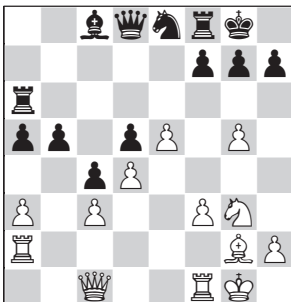
18.♖b2!? was suggested by Kasparov. A cautious move, taking care of the counterplay first. However, it

wouldn't change the character of the fight too much, as after 18...♘c7 19.e5 ♖e7 20.♖b1 ♖b6! 21.f4 b4! White would still have no easy mate: 22.f5 g6!



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

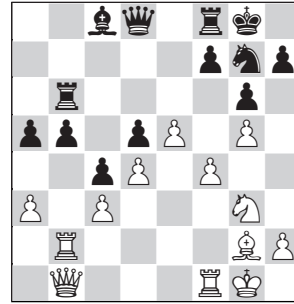
and it's not easy to continue with the attack, the counterplay is still there. Obviously, just as in the game, White's attack is very powerful here, too.



### 18...♘c7?!

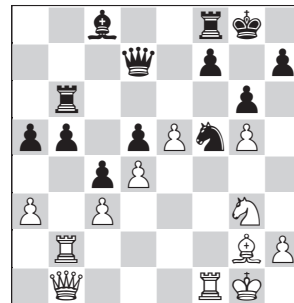
Magnus decided to go all out for counterplay, thinking that the planned ...g7-g6 and ...♘g7 wouldn't work.

Magnus's initial intention 18...g6! was, after all, safer: 19.f4 ♘g7. Now Carlsen noticed the powerful shift of focus by White's major pieces: 20.♖b2! ♖b6 21.♖b1



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and now there is only one move, which is terribly awkward: 21...♖d7!, and it still is hard for White to do anything. The only sensible move seems to be 22.f5, when after 22...♘xf5 White can take on f5 with knight, rook or bishop (♙h3!?), but in all cases Black seems to be holding his ground:



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23.♖xf5!? (23.♙h3 ♖e7!; 23.♘xf5 gxf5) 23...gxf5 24.♘h5 b4 25.axb4 (25.♘f6+ ♖xf6 26.gxf6 b3 27.♙f3 ♙h8) 25...axb4 26.♖xb4 ♖xb4 27.♖xb4 ♖b7.

18...b4!? was proposed by Nigel Short, who said that a player with a good sense of danger would seriously consider this option. That looks interesting, but I don't think Black will be having fun if White

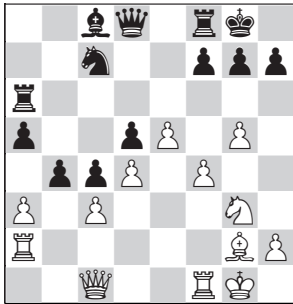


simply ignores the pawn advance: 19.f4! (19.axb4 gives Black quite decent counterplay against the d4-pawn: 19...axb4 20.♖xa6 ♘xa6 21.cxb4 ♖b6 22.♗c3 ♘c7) 19...b3 (this doesn't help Black; with all rooks still on the board the b-pawn doesn't play such a big role) 20.♖af2 g6 21.f5.

**19.f4**

Now White will have all the fun.

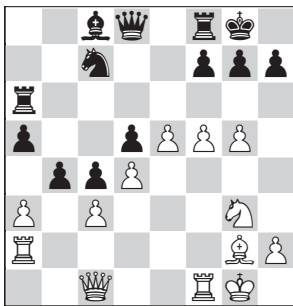
**19...b4**



**20.axb4?!**

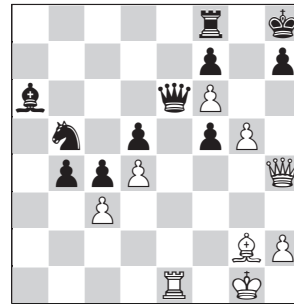
Many strong players criticized this move. And indeed, White had more challenging options by keeping all the rooks on the board.

20.f5! is very dangerous, especially since the logical 20...♗b5 is just not working.



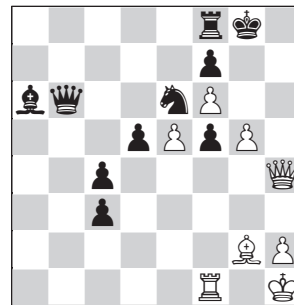
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) 20...♗b5? 21.axb4 axb4 22.♖xa6 ♘xa6 23.f6 g6 24.♗f4!. Now Black is lost. He is just too late to prevent the eventual mate: 24...♖b6 (24...bxc3 25.e6! wins easily) A clever try, but it won't help: 25.♗h4 (25.♗f5! also wins: 25...gxf5 (25...h5 26.♖e1!!, don't ask me why) 26.♗h4 ♖h8 27.e6 ♗xe6 28.♖e1, and the rook joins the attack:



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28...♗c6 29.g6 fxe6 30.♖e7) 25...h5! 26.♗xh5 bxc3! (a good try, but White wins anyway) 27.♖h1 (27.♗f4 ♗xd4!, and Black suddenly survives, as he plays ...♗f5) 27...♗xd4 28.♗g3 ♗e6 29.♗f5! gxf5



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

30.♗h5!! (30.♗h6 would be met by 30...♗e3) Now g5-g6 is unstoppable. White wins!;

B) Quite dubious is 20...b3!  
21.♖af2 a4 22.♘h5, as the b-pawn won't be a worry for White, who has an extra rook to take care of it, compared to the situation in the game;

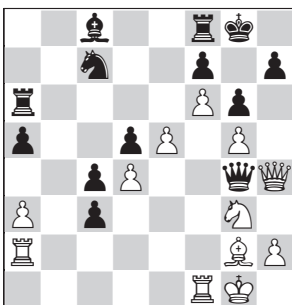
C) Maybe the best try is 20...bxc3!, hoping to get some counterplay against the d4-pawn: 21.f6 g6:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

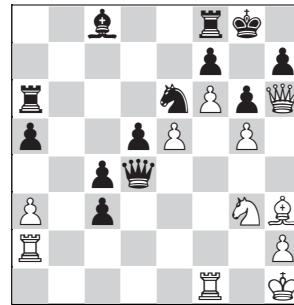
C1) 22.♖xc3!. Simple and strong. White wants to get the b-file and establish positional domination;

C2) 22.♖f4 is critical, but here Black seems to have a brilliant defence: 22...♖d7!! The only way, otherwise ♖h4 will lead to mate. 23.♖h4 (23.h3 ♖d8! 24.♖h4 ♖e8, and the queen is in time to reach the f8-square) 23...♖g4! The point. Now it's a miracle that Black holds, but he seems to be doing so:



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24.♖h6 ♖xd4+ 25.♔h1 (25.♖af2 ♘e8 26.♔h1 c2! Black aims to eliminate the f6-pawn: 27.♘e2 (27.♖xc2 ♖b6! 28.♘e2 ♖xe5 29.♘f4 ♘xf6 30.gxf6 ♖xf6) 27...♖xe5 28.♖f4 ♖xf6 29.gxf6 ♖e3 30.♘c1 ♘xf6, and Black survives) 25...♘e6 26.♔h3



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

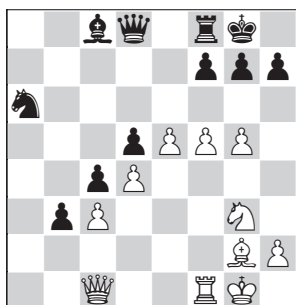
This looks like mate, but no way: 26...♖a7!! 27.♖e2. Now 28.♘f5 looks like a deadly threat, but Black can still fight on: 27...c2!! 28.♖xc2 ♖e3 29.♘f5 ♖xg5 30.♖xg5 ♘xg5 31.♘e7+ ♖xe7 32.fxe7 ♘xh3 33.exf8♖+ ♔xf8

The lines are of course surreal; all they teach us is that chess is ungraspable. Finally, 20.a4!? was suggested by many strong players, including Nigel Short and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave. White has such a dangerous initiative that he can indeed afford to make such a slow move. Black would have had a tough time here trying to find counterplay.

**20...axb4 21.♖xa6 ♘xa6 22.f5**

As Anand pointed out, 22.cxb4 would have been safer, but as he added right away, it was also safer for Black: 22...♘xb4 23.f5 ♖b6

24. ♖c3 ♜c6 with counterplay against the central pawns.  
**22...b3!?**



With just one rook left for White, the b-pawn is a serious asset. White would like to involve all his major pieces in the attack, but then the b-pawn will be a nuisance.

**23. ♖f4?!**

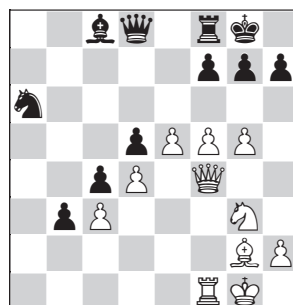
After a terribly long think, and unable to find a forced win, Anand finally played this move. As far as I understand, he underestimated the ...♘a6-c7-e8 defence and was hoping for 23...♙h8 here.

Instead he should have played even more cautiously. 23.h4! would have put Magnus under a lot of pressure, as Black doesn't really have counterplay with his pieces so badly coordinated.

23.f6 g6 24. ♖f4 ♜c7 transposes to the game. Anand wanted to avoid 24...♙h8, which also seems to be good for Black: 25. ♖h4 b2! 26. ♖h6 ♜g8 27. ♜f4 b1♖+ 28. ♙f1 ♖d1! (the same motif as in the game) 29. ♜h4 ♖h5 30. ♜xh5 gxh5 31. ♖xh5 ♙f5 32. ♖xf7 ♜c7!

So, best was 23.h4!, and now White can afford to take his time and make two moves with his h-pawn.

There is no forced mate yet, but it is simply not clear how Black should proceed. An attempt to ask White to clarify things would be: 23...g6! (23...♜c7 24.h5!) 24.h5, and White can just continue to play slowly: 24...♜c7 25. ♙h2, and it's hard for Black to make a move. Taking everything off on f5 is still dangerous and otherwise the ideas of ♖f4 and f5-f6 are always there anyway.



**23...♜c7!**

23...♙h8 is bad indeed: 24. ♘h5! ♜c7 25.e6 fxe6 26. ♘xg7!, and Black is under a serious attack here: 26...♙xg7 27.f6+ ♙f7 28. ♖h4 This is just devastating.

**24.f6**

Again forcing the play, but this is merely enough for a draw. 24. ♖h4!?, keeping the tension, was Kasparov's suggestion. This was indeed a better try, but Black can force matters anyway and play 24...g6!?. Now 25.f6 would transpose to the game, and if White inverts the moves, 25. ♖h6, Black goes 25...♙xf5! 26. ♜xf5 ♖e7!., and the mighty computer claims that the b-pawn is worth a piece. Indeed, White's attack has been slowed

down and Black will have some serious counterplay thanks to his advanced protected passed pawn. The question is, though, who would have played this way with Black? And if not 24...g6, then Black would have serious trouble finding a good move, as White still keeps the idea of f5-f6 (and ♖h5).

### 24...g6

Magnus was aiming for this position anyway, so he didn't seriously consider 24...gxf6, which was another option.

After 24...gxf6 25.exf6 (25.♖h5 was pointed out by Magnus, as well as the brilliant defensive line 25...fxg5 26.♖f6+ ♖h8 27.♖xg5 ♖g8!, and while Magnus was saying that it's not so clear, he must have realised that Black is winning here) 25...♖h8 26.h4 ♖g8 Black survives.

### 25.♖h4 ♖e8!



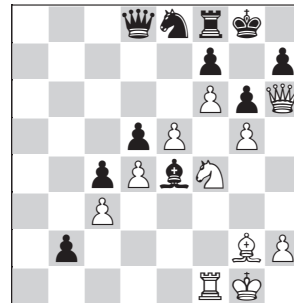
### 26.♖h6

26.♖e2!? was another way to continue with the initiative, but Black is fine: 26...♗e6 27.♖f4 ♖a5 Now White has options, but the position is objectively equal, for example: 28.♗h3 (28.♖xe6 fxe6 29.♗h3 ♖c7 30.f7+ ♖xf7 31.♖xf7 ♖xf7 32.♖xh7+) 28...♗xh3 29.♖xh3

b2 30.♖e6 (30.e6 ♖d6 31.♖xg6 hxg6 32.♖h6 ♖f5 33.♖xf5 b1♖+ 34.♖f1 ♖xf1+ 35.♖xf1 ♖a1+) 30...♖a1 31.♖xf8 ♖xf8 32.e6 ♖d6! 33.♖h6+ ♖e8 34.exf7+ ♖xf7 35.♖h3! ♖d8 36.♖g2 b1♖ 37.♖xd5+ ♖c8 38.♖e6+ ♖d8 39.♖d5+ ♖c8 40.♖e6+, and as in all the analyses done with the computer, it ends in perpetual check.

### 26...b2! 27.♖f4

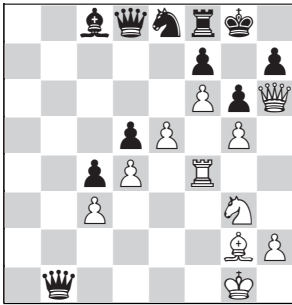
Forcing the play completely, but there still was the idea of the move discussed in the previous note: 27.♖e2!? ♗f5 (27...♗e6 with the pawn already on b2 is a bit risky. After 28.♖f4 ♖a5 29.♖xe6 fxe6 30.♗h3 ♖a6 31.♗g4 ♖f7 32.♖h3 ♖c7 33.♖g2 the black pieces are all pretty much tied down and Black risks losing the b2-pawn, though after 33...♖a2 34.♖c2 ♖f8! he seems to be surviving again: 35.f7+ ♖g7 36.♖f2 h5!) 28.♖f4 ♗e4



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The position is totally out of control, but with perfect play it ends in a perpetual as well: 29.h4 (29.e6 ♖xf6!) 29...♗xg2 30.♖xg2 ♖b8 31.e6 (31.♖b1 ♖b3) 31...b1♖ 32.♖xb1 ♖xf4! 33.e7 ♖e4+ Quite a peculiar position, but it's perpetual check.

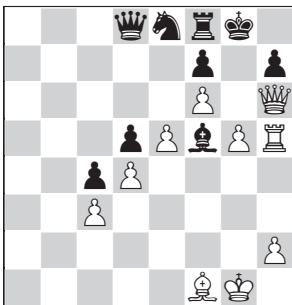
27...b1 ♖+



28. ♘f1??

I perfectly know this feeling. When the win is so needed and not there, any hallucination is very welcome. Calculating 28. ♘f1 over and over Anand couldn't find a way, and then, when he suddenly thought of blocking the check with the knight, he thought he had found it. Obviously there was no emotional energy left to double check, and only when he made the move did he realise what he had done.

28. ♘f1 was the move, and now the play is forced: 28... ♖d1! 29. ♖h4 ♖h5! 30. ♘h5 gxh5 31. ♖xh5 (31. ♘h3? doesn't work, as Anand pointed out: 31... ♘h3 32. ♖xh3 ♖b6 33. ♖xh5 ♖b1+ 34. ♘g2 ♖g6!) 31... ♘f5!



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Here both players missed a spectacular way to stalemate all the black pieces: 32.g6!! (32. ♘h3 was suggested by the players, and after the forced 32... ♘g6 33.e6! ♘xf6! (33...fxe6 34. ♘xe6+ ♖f7 35. ♖h3, winning) 34.gxf6 ♖xf6 it is indeed Black who has some advantage: 35. ♖e5 fxe6 36. ♖e3 ♘f7) 32... ♘xg6 33. ♖g5, and now it is Black who has to make a draw: 33... ♘xf6! 34.exf6 ♖xf6 35. ♖xd5 ♖f3 36. ♖c5 ♖xc3 37. ♖xc4, with a draw.

28... ♖e1!

Anand had correctly seen that 28... ♖d1?? would lose here: 29. ♖h4 ♖h5 30. ♖xh5 gxh5 31. ♘e3! ♘e6 32. ♘xd5!, and Black is lost. But there obviously is this other defence, and now White is absolutely lost, so he resigned.

### The Key Lessons

- Despite Black's incredibly dangerous-looking position, the analysis shows that there was never at any point a clear, forced win for White. A BAD POSITION IS NOT THE SAME AS A LOST ONE
- Whilst defending against threats, the defender should seize the chance of counterplay (22...b3)
- When faced with infinite resistance, even the greatest players can get flustered and blunder