

**WCC Israel 2005****News**02/11/2005 @
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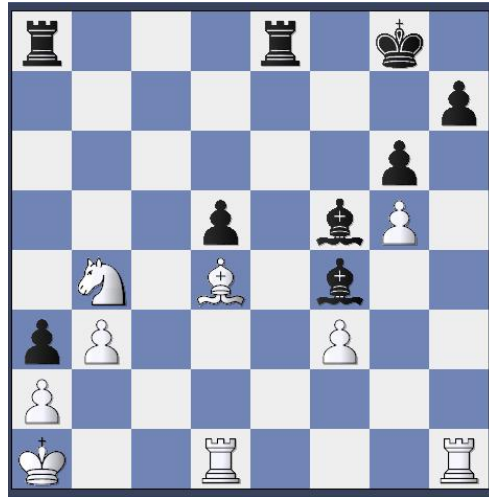
Round 1: Fierce battles from the very beginning

China men's team leads after a clean sweep of their women's team; Russia defeated Cuba 3:1 and USA beat Georgia 2.5:1.5 ; Israel and Armenia fought hardly but eventually shared the points

It is common practice in major tournaments to play the first round cautiously. All the more so when your team's result is at stake. But that wasn't the case today in the Team World Championship in Beer-Sheva, when we were spoiled with a lot of exciting chess.

Russia came to the event determined to mend its reputation after the disgraceful performance in the recent European Championship in Gothenburg. Their only problem seemed to be the fatigue of the two stars Svidler and Morozevich, who didn't have enough time to recover from the World Championship in San Luis. But these two were responsible for the victory today. Svidler won a model game against Bruzon's tough Berlin variation. He gradually improved his position on the kingside and eventually created a decisive passed pawn. Morozevich played vigorously against Quezada's English attack in the Sicilian. With 17...d5! and 18...b3! he sacrificed a pawn and seized the initiative. White tried to decrease the pressure with queens' swap, but just then the activity of the black pieces became fully apparent.

Quezada (Cuba) – Morozevich (Russia)

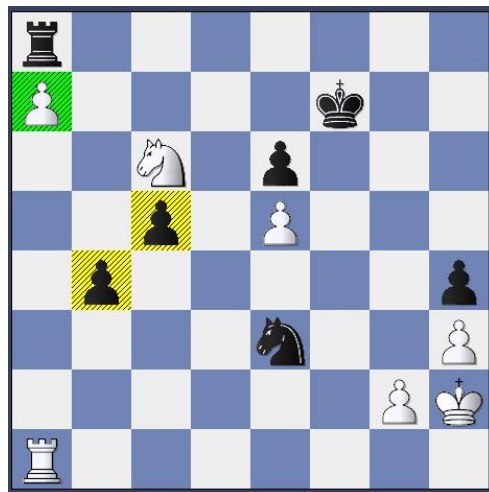


33...Re5! 34.Nc6 Re6 35.Nb4 Bxg5 36.Nxd5 Rd8 37.Bc3 Rc8 38. Bb4? (38.f4) Rc2 39.Rhe1 Rxe1 40.Rxe1 Be6! 41.f4 Bh4 42.Ne3 Bf6+ 43.Kb1 Rb2+ and White resigned.

The match USA - Georgia saw two rather uneventful draws and two breathtaking battles. The encounter on the first board between Onischuk and Jobava was fantastic, when both players played for a win throughout the whole game. As often happens in such cases, it was eventually drawn.

This left the match decision to the third board:

Ibragimov (USA) – Pantsulaia (Georgia)



What is more dangerous, White's advanced passed pawn or Black's connected passed pawns? Black didn't have much time to scrutinize the issue and instead just decided to go forward:

54...b3? But this is a mistake. Instead, he should have challenged the troublesome Nc6, by means of either Nc2-d4 or Nd5-e7.

55.Ra5! b2 56.Rb5 Nc4 57.g3 Kg6 58.Rb8 Kg7 59.gxh4 Kh6 60. Kg3 Black, helpless against the march of the White king to the queenside, played ten more moves and resigned.

The attention of the local fans has been naturally focused on the match of the Israeli team against Armenia. On the top board Aronian had a small advantage against Gelfand, but the Israeli held without much difficulty.

The game on the second board was more juicy. Sutovsky often reminds me of those guys who make their living chasing tornado storms and taking close-up photos. He never misses a chance to indulge himself in adventures. Today he obtained a comfortable advantage out of the opening, but then decided that the time is ripe for an exchange sacrifice. It was not entirely sound but Akopian decided to defend cautiously and missed an opportunity to get an advantage. Perhaps he was influenced by his team-mate Aronian who called Sutovsky "the world champion in open positions"... Anyway, after 31 moves the following position has been reached.

Sutovsky (Israel) – Akopian (Armenia)

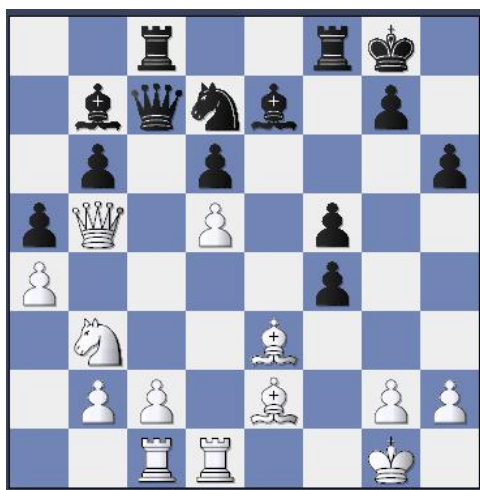


32.Nd7! Qxd7 33.Qxg6+ Kh8 34.Qxh6+ Kg8 35.Qg6+ Kh8 (It is too risky to play for a win: after 35...Qg7?! 36.Rf1 Nc7 37.Qa2, followed by 38.Bb3 only White has winning chances) **36.Qh6+** with a perpetual check.

Boris Avrukh, the top player of the local club, played below his level today and duly lost to Asrian. He may have suffered from the high expectations of his many friends in the audience, as well as from his lack of experience with the Ruy Lopez. On the fourth board Vaganian played horribly and lost to Roiz without resistance. But both Vaganian and Avrukh are tough players and will surely recover.

In the derby match between the two Chinese teams the men showed no mercy to the ladies. But in chess, fighting till the end doesn't mean that you are not a gentleman. Despite their colossal defeat the women gave a hard fight and most of the games were long technical duels. The striking exception was on the third board.

Yang Shen (China Women) – Zhou Jiangchao (China)



Instead of the normal 21.Bxf4, White opted here for **21.Nd4!? fxe3**
22.Ne6. Now it was Black who contributed his fair share of creativity
 with **22...Bf6!?** and after **23.Nxc7 Rxc7** a very interesting position
 has been accepted. Despite his considerable material inferiority Black
 has good prospects thanks to his strong pieces and powerful pawn
 formation. In the ensuing battle White didn't manage to block these
 pawns and they eventually decided the issue:



There followed: **47...f2 48.Qe4+ Rg6 49.Rxg6 fxe1=N+! 50.Kb3**
Nxg6 51.Qxe2 Rb7+ 52.Ka2 Re7 and Black won.

The main match of the second round tomorrow will be between
 Russia and Israel. After the eventful start we may expect some more
 fun!

Report by Alon Greenfeld



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News

03/11/2005 **Round 2: Chernov-Russia Takes the Lead**
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In the main match of the day Russia beat Israel 2.5:1.5; The Ukrainians scored the same result in their debut against U.S. A; Armenia and Cuba won 3:1 against Georgia and China's women respectively.

It was another exciting day in the World Team Championship in Beer-Sheva. Like yesterday, the audience crowded the playing hall, but today there was a special reason: Israel confronted Russia .



This was the match of the day and it became a black one: three players won

with the black pieces while the fourth game has been drawn!

On top board Svidler adopted the maxim "when in Rome do as the Romans do". It's not a secret that all the leading players of the local club, the most successful one in the history of , are keen adherents of the Grunfeld Defense. Today Svidler himself opted for that opening. His opponent, Boris Gelfand, is never shying away from the Grunfeld and today he played the same variation that led him to a brilliant win against Shirov in Polanica Zdroj 1998. But Svidler came up with a novel plan: 16...Rfd8 and 17...h6. This seemed to have unbalanced Gelfand who uncharacteristically lost control. As a result, White failed to obtain substantial initiative in compensation for the pawn he has sacrificed. And still worse for him – Svidler kept playing very well: 24...a5!, 26...Nb8! and 30...f5! After that the game was soon over.

The second board saw the most beautiful game of the match.

Grischuk (Russia) – Smirin (Israel)



Ilya Smirin is one of the best King Indian players in the world and today he proved it once more. He played a relatively rare line in the Samisch variation, refraining from an early e6. This might be dangerous for Black since it deprives him of the usual counter-play on the queenside and on the e file. Very much depends therefore on his ability to play that move later on. Here Smirin played 18...e6! and achieved his goal after 19.Nc3 exd5. What remained behind the scenes is that White could not have trapped the bishop with 19.g4 instead.

This would have been met with 19...hxg4 20.fxg4 Bd3!!

(Analysis diagram)



after which black has the advantage because the bishop is taboo (21.Bxd3? Nf3+ or 21.Nxd3 Nxc4 22.Qc1 Nxe3 23.Qxe3 Bd4).

The game continued: 20.cxd5 Nf6 21.h3 Re8 22.a6 Rb8 23.Nb5.



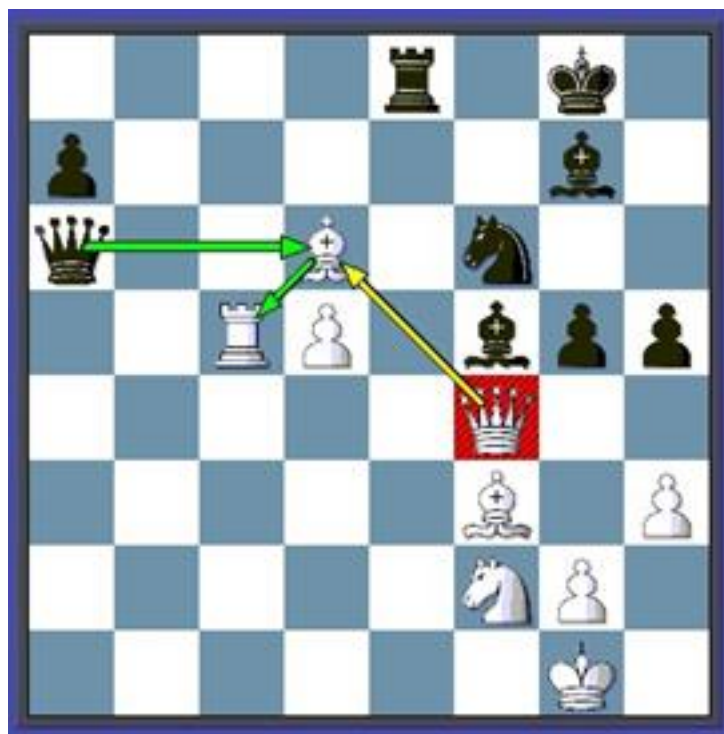
Black is apparently in trouble due to White's pressure on the queenside, but Smirin unveiled yet another fine resource:

23...Qe7! (eyeing the two bishops on the e file) 24.Bf4 bxa6 25.Rxa6 Nxf3+!

26.Bxf3 Rxb5 27.Bxd6 Qb7 and Black seized the initiative.

There followed 28.Rc6 Rxb2 29.Qf4 Rb1 30.Rxc5? Rxf1+ 31.Kxf1 Qa6+ and White resigned, because of 32.Kg1 (or 32.Rc4 Ne4) g5!

(Analysis diagram)



33.Qxf5 (not better is 33.Qg3 h4 34.Qh2 Re1 mate!) Re1+ 34.Kh2 Qxd6+ etc.

On the third board Sutovsky sacrificed a pawn against Morozevich, and like yesterday this was not entirely sound. Morozevich played accurately, warded off White's initiative and converted his material advantage.

On the fourth board two Sergeys played each other: Rublevsky vs. Erenburg. The Israeli champion held quite easily, but that wasn't enough to save the day.

Once again Svidler and Morozevich were the Russian heroes. The two "tired guys from San Luis" seem to be in hot form and thanks to their efforts today "Cherno-Russia" (Black Russia) is currently leading the tournament.

In spite of Black's domination in that match, White is still the preferred color in chess. Today the Armenians used the White pieces to great effect, winning on boards 2 and 4 while drawing the other two games. Curiously, their two wins featured the same decisive motif – the weakness of the last rank.

Akopian (Armenia) – Jobava (Georgia)



31.Rh8+! and the mate is inevitable.

Anastasian (Armenia) – Gagunashvili (Georgia)



42.Rxf8+! Kxf8 43.Qd8+ Qe8 44.Bd6+ and Black resigned.

The Olympic champions from the made their debut today. On the first board Ivanchuk outplayed Onischuk with great technique. The super-star looks quite fresh after four consecutive tournaments.

The other Ukrainian win has been achieved on the third board:



Black's position looks very solid, without any weaknesses, and his knight, which can't be harassed by enemy pawns, is apparently powerful. Alas, he has one temporary problem – on the long diagonal – but this is enough for Volokitin.

26.Qf3! c6 27.Bxf6 Nxf6 (Black could have tried 27...Rf8, but after the switchback 28.Qh5! there is no good way to recapture the bishop) 28.Nf5 Re8? (28...Nd5 was frightening but necessary: after 29.Qg4 – with the threats 30.Nh6+ and 30.Re7 – Kf8! Black seems to hold although White has the initiative) 29.Rxe8+ Nxe8 30.Qxc6! Qxc6 31.Ne7+ Kf7 32.Nxc6 and White easily won the endgame.

The Ukrainian victory could have been even higher but Eljanov lost an advantageous position against Ibragimov. This was already the second win of the American in the event.

The Chinese women scored their first point today - they drew two games in their match against . The most interesting game has been played on the top

board:

Bruzon (Cuba) - Zhao (China Women)



This position emerged from a topical variation in the Ruy Lopez. Bruzon is quite an expert in this line and just two weeks ago he used it as Black to win against Ivanchuk. This time he demonstrates his abilities with colors reversed.

23.Nf5! Bxf5 24.Qxb5! Bd7 25.Qxb6 Qxb6 26.Bxb6 Rab8 27.Bc5 Rxb2 28.Red1. White got a large positional advantage thanks to his pair of bishops, and eventually won.

The main matches tomorrow will be Armenia-Ukraine and Russia-Georgia. And again we can expect a lot of interesting games.



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News

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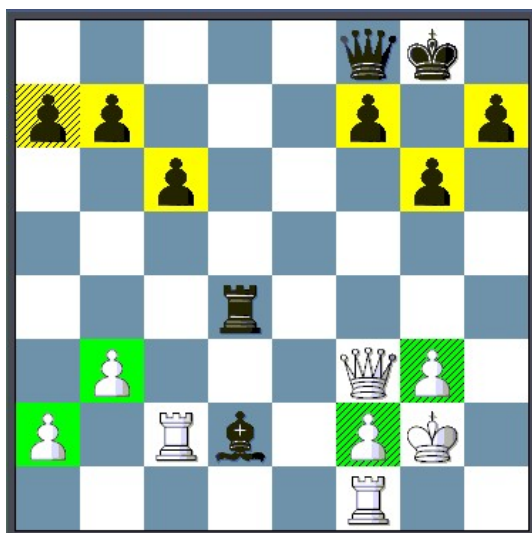
Round 3: A Great Day for China

Their men team crushed Cuba 3.5:0.5 while the women squeezed a point and half from Israel; Armenia and Russia beat Ukraine and Georgia respectively in tough matches, both of which ended 2.5:1.5.

It was a round of bitter struggles today in Beer-Sheva. Most of the games lasted more than 40 moves and three match decisions occurred at the fifth playing hour.

The main match was Armenia-Ukraine. During the first time control the prospects of the Ukrainians looked more rosy. Volokitin had the advantage against Akopian while the other games were roughly even. But Akopian defended superbly, ultimately leaving the decision to the top board.

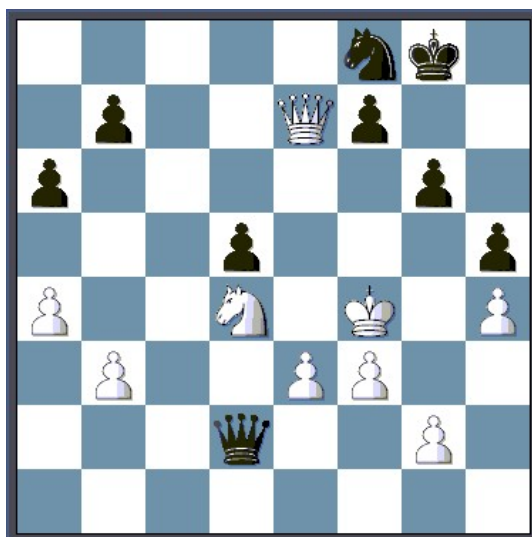
Aronian (Armenia) - Ivanchuk (Ukraine)



Ivanchuk sacrificed the exchange in the opening, for which he obtained sufficient compensation. But when he grabbed another pawn, thus leveling the material balance, Aronian's heavy pieces became predominant. In the diagram position we can see that the extra pawns, one in each flank, are relatively insignificant because Black can't create two connected passers. Aronian swapped queens and a pair of rooks and in the resulting R v. B endgame his advantage was decisive.

On paper, the teams of China and Cuba are about equal. But today the Chinese clearly outplayed their opponents. On the top board the extremely gifted 19-year-old Bu Xiangzhi maneuvered patiently for many moves in a slightly better position, just to make a sharp turn right before the time control.

Bu Xiangzhi (China) – Bruzon (Cuba)



39.Kg5! Qxg2+ 40.Kh6 The king joins the attack, spinning a mate net together with the queen. After **40...Qb2 41.f4!** Black resigned, because he is helpless against 42.Qe5 Ne6 43.Nxe6 Qxe5 44.fxe5 fxe6 45.Kxg6, with an easily won pawn endgame.

Russia-Georgia was a very interesting match. Svidler scored his third consecutive win in a demonstration of great technique against Azmaiparashvili. There was nothing spectacular in this game, just a flow of very strong moves, in the true style of Capablanca. On the second board Jobava inflicted on Dreev an unpleasant defeat. The Russian got the upper hand in the middle-game out of an inferior opening position. But he proceeded inaccurately and then erroneously sacrificed his knight. The young Georgian, who just won a strong tournament in Denmark, refuted the sacrifice and duly won.

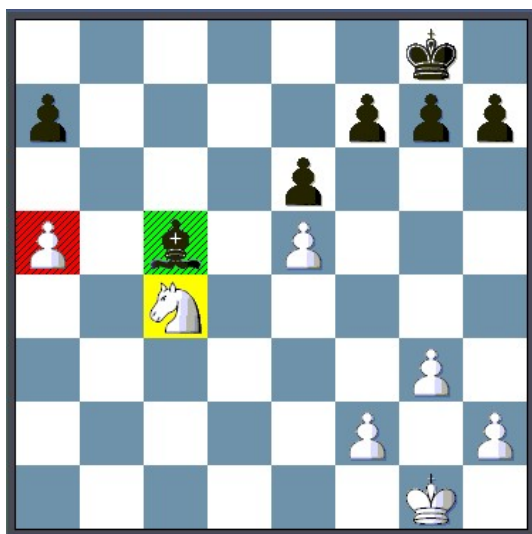
Morozevich got nothing out of the opening and called it a day with a draw in 30 moves. So everything depended on the last board.

Pantsulaia sacrificed a pawn in the opening and exerted strong pressure on the queenside. Bareev decided to give the pawn back and then sacrificed another one for the sake of initiative. Now it was White's turn to return the pawn, but it didn't help him solving all the problems.

Pantsulaia (Georgia) – Bareev (Russia)



Levan Pantsulaia: *What shall I do with that bishop?*

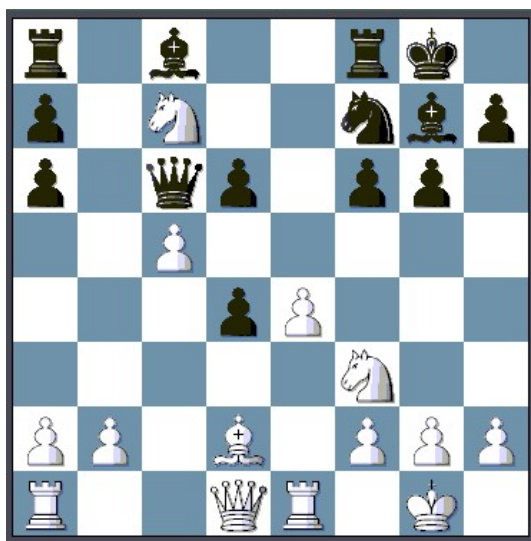


The bishop is stronger than the knight and White's a' pawn is potentially weak. Bareev brought his king to d5, gradually pushing the white pieces away, and then attacked his opponent's pawns. It took him 30 more moves to win.

Israel may have counted on an easy win today, but the Chinese women fought relentlessly. It was Smirin who eventually ensured the team victory after another King's Indian win (one which was far more difficult than yesterday's).

On the second board Avrukh didn't have to sweat much.

Avrukh (Israel) – Huang (China Women)

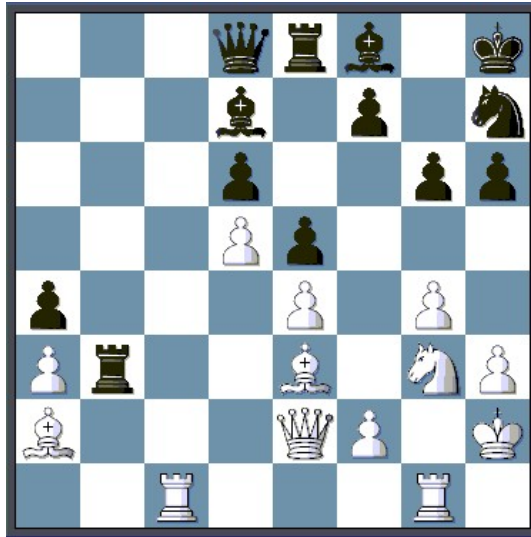


After 16.Nxa8 dxc5 Black gets some (not enough) counter-play, so Boris finds a more convincing continuation: **16.Nd5! Kh8 17.Nxd4 Qxc5 18.Bb4**. Black resigned because after 18...Qc4 19.b3, her queen is trapped.

Today the Chinese women achieved their first individual win. And it was a worthy one.

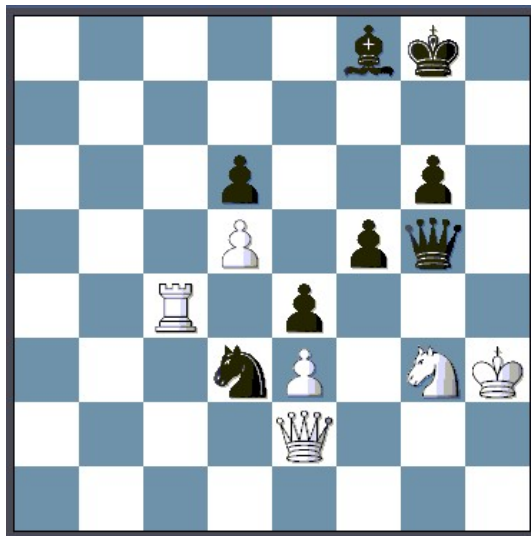
Sergey Erenburg (Israel) – Shen Yang (China Women)





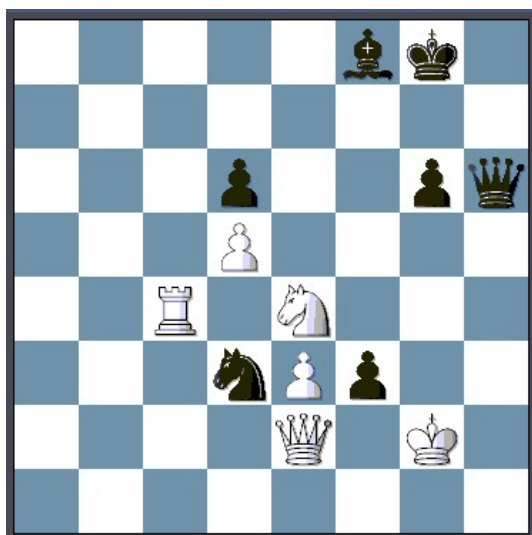
Black played here **30...Rxa3! 31.Qb2 Rxe3 32.fxe3 Qh4 33.Kg2 h5** and got a strong initiative.

Twenty moves later the following position has been reached.



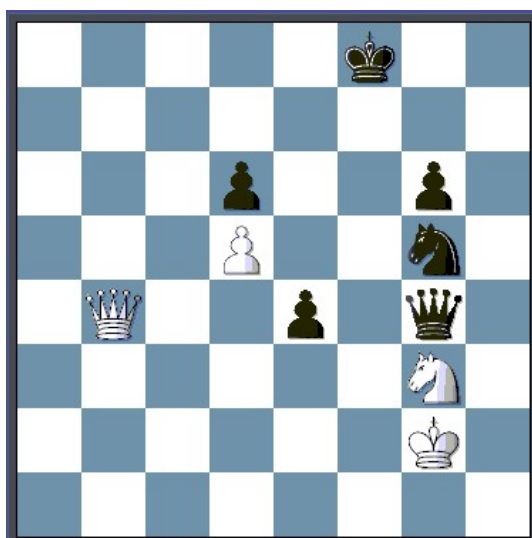
Shen continued **51...Ne5**, and missed a beautiful combination: **51...f4! 52.Nxe4 Qh6+ 53.Kg2 f3+!!**

(Analysis diagram)



and White loses the queen (54.Qxf3 Ne1+, or 54.Kxf3 Qh5+).

But her move was good enough and she shortly got a winning position. Then White set his last trap.



Black can win the knight in two symmetrical ways: 59...Qf3+ and 59...Qh3+. But after 59...Qf3+ 60.Kh2 Qf2+ 61.Kh1 Qxg3?? White saves himself with the "desperado" sacrifice 62.Qb8+ Kg7 63.Qh8+ with a stalemate. The Chinese played therefore **59...Qh3+ 60.Kf2 Qh2+ 61. Kf1 Qxg3 and White resigned.**

After this round the Russians lead with 8 points, half a point clear of Armenia and China. But the Chinese, who are very impressive so far, scored their points in two matches only!

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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News

05/11/2005 @
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Round 4: Important Wins for Russia and China

Russia beats Ukraine 2.5:1.5 and looks unstoppable; China continues its great performance with a minimal win against Israel; The matches Armenia-USA and Georgia-China Women finish in dull draws; Eljan

The tiredness and the tension took their toll today in Beer-Sheva, as there were much more mistakes than in previous rounds.

Armenia and the USA decided that two free days are not enough and made four short draws.

The Chinese women continued their recovery with a draw against Georgia. The Georgians were determined to win and exerted pressure on all boards, but the Chinese fought back. On the top board Jobava misplayed a superior position and collapsed in time trouble. Mchedlishvili equalized the result with a win on the third board and the outcome of the match depended on the game Huang-Pantsulaia.



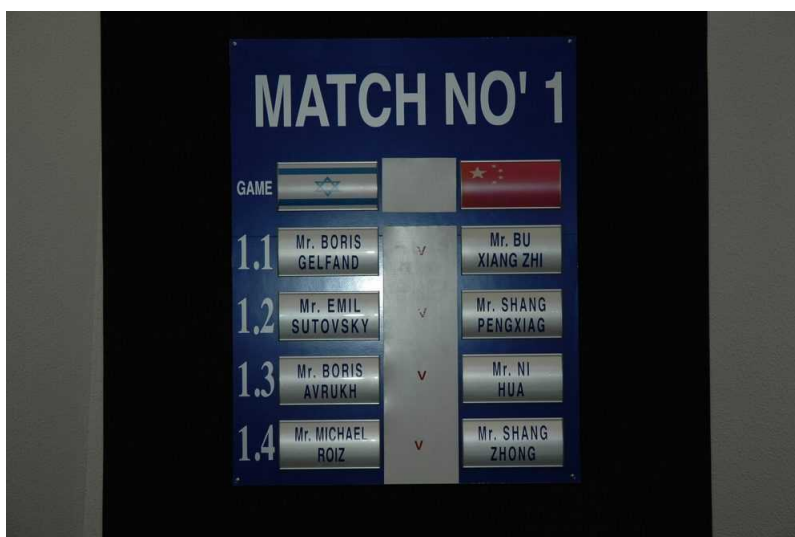
Levan Pantsulaia: *What shall I do with that photographer?*

Pantsulaia, who played with sun-glasses today, seized the initiative but pushed too hard with an inaccurate piece sacrifice. His opponent missed a win and the game and the match ended peacefully.



Georgian-Chinese Friendship

The Chinese men had their first real challenge today. They played Israel, which is a bit disappointing so far.

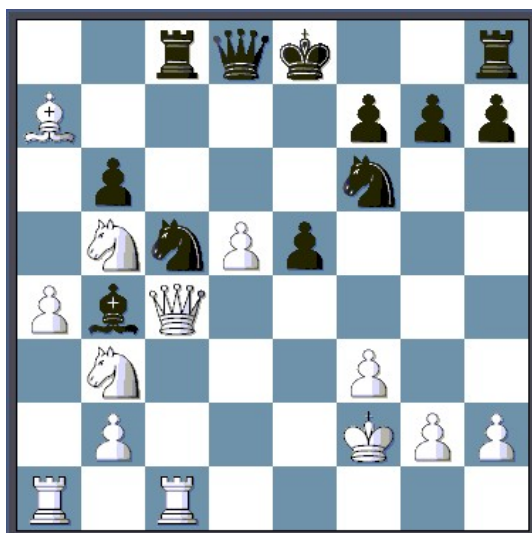


On top board Gelfand got very little out of the opening. But he constantly deprived Bu of a clear plan. This strategy paid off and the young Chinese committed several mistakes, which cost him a pawn. That was enough for Gelfand, who converted his advantage in a rook endgame.

Sutovsky is usually playing for a win, regardless of the color of his pieces. Today he obtained a strong initiative with the black pieces after a mere fifteen moves. But when a simple continuation was called for, he strived for more and ruined his position.

Zhang Pengxiang (China) – Sutovsky (Israel)





After 18...0-0 19.Kg1 Nxd5 Black has a large advantage, mainly thanks to White's awkward bishop. For example: 20.Rd1 Ne3 21. Rxd8 Nxc4 and Black will probably net the b2 pawn. But Sutovsky is a king-hunter and he opts for the attack.

18...Nce4+? 19.fxe4 Rxc4 20.Rxc4 0-0 (There is no time for 20... Ba5, because of 21.Nxa5 bxa5 22.Bc5) **21.Rxb4 Ng4+ 22.Ke2 Qf6 23.Rf1 Qh6 24.Nd2!**

In spite of his king being in the center White easily repulsed the attack and his material advantage decided the issue.

Boris Avrukh had a clear advantage against Ni Hua on board three, but went astray and then had to escape with a draw.

The match has been decided on the fourth board. Zhang Zhong played energetically against Roiz's French defense and was in the driver's seat during the whole game. Black's position didn't improve also after the queens swap and eventually Roiz succumbed the pressure.



The match of the day was Russia-Ukraine. Svidler had no problems against Ivanchuk's Giuoco Piano (Italian game) and their game was soon drawn.

After two good games, Volokitin played really badly today. He chose an ill-reputed variation in the opening and went on with an utterly mistaken plan. As a result, his knight has been stuck at the edge of the board and Grischuk got a mighty center. And when Black managed to regroup his pieces somehow White launched a decisive kingside attack. Volokitin sacrificed a piece in order to get some counter-play, but to no avail.



This game actually decided the match, but the two remaining games turned to be extremely interesting.

Bareev unleashed an interesting theoretical novelty in the Meran variation of the Slav Defense, but Karjakin reacted carefully and rightly refrained from accepting the offered piece. Then Bareev

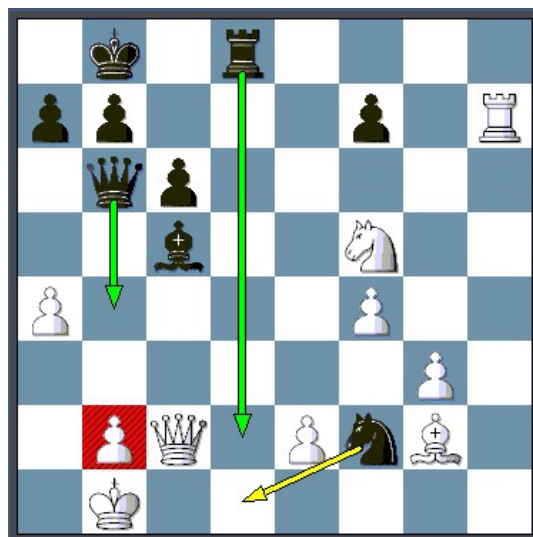
avoided repetition of moves and once more sacrificed a piece. The consequences of the knight capture would have been unclear but the Ukrainian prodigy preferred to decline the second offer as well. The resulting endgame was slightly better for Bareev, but just before the time control Karjakin blundered a pawn. Fortunately for him, his position was still defensible and he ultimately forced a draw with two pawns down.

The game of the match, of the day, and in fact of the whole event up to now was Eljanov-Morozevich.



"Moro" played his pet line in the Slav (11...g5) and Eljanov came up with a novelty (15.0-0-0). The game proceeded normally but suddenly the Russian sacrificed a pawn (19...Nc5). Initially it seemed that Black had no compensation for the pawn, but Morozevich probably knows the intricacies of the variation better than anyone else.

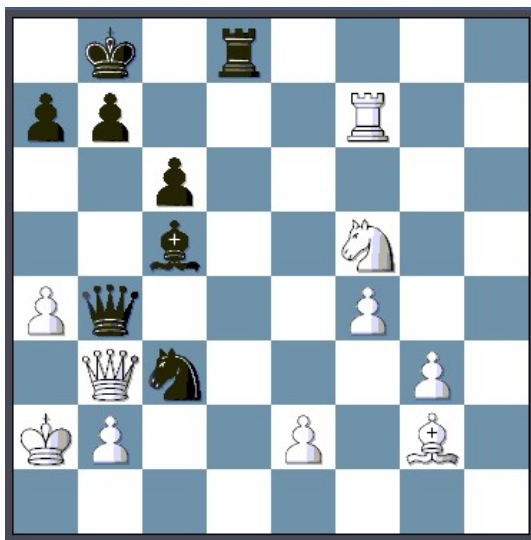
Eljanov (Ukraine) - Morozevich (Russia)



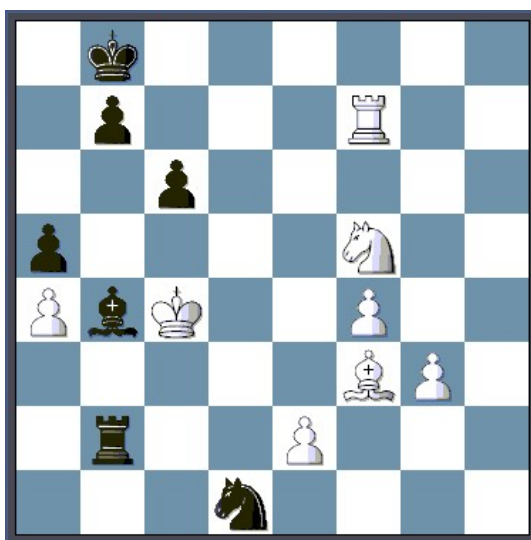
Black plans Qb4, followed by Rd2 and Nd1, with a strong pressure on b2.

If White grabs yet another pawn now, he falls into a cunning trap: 23. Rxf7 Qb4 24.Ka2 Nd1 25.Qb3 Nc3+! and wins (26.Qxc3 Qxa4+; 26. bxc3 Rd2+).

(Analysis diagram)

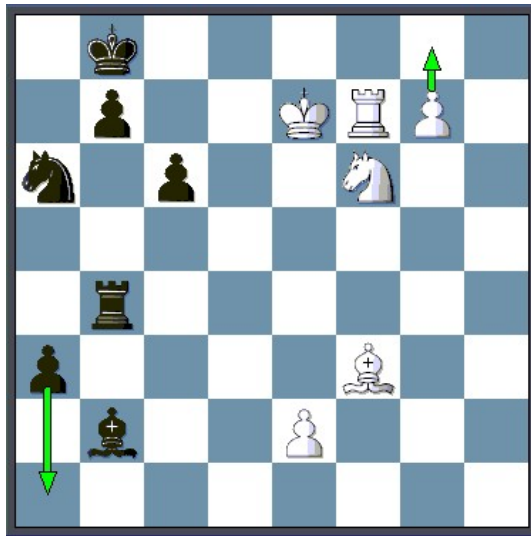


Eljanov played **23.Ka2!** instead and there followed **23...Qb4 24.Qb3 Rd2 25.Qxb4 Bxb4 26.Kb3 a5 27.Rxf7 Nd1 28.Bf3 Rxb2+ 29.Kc4**

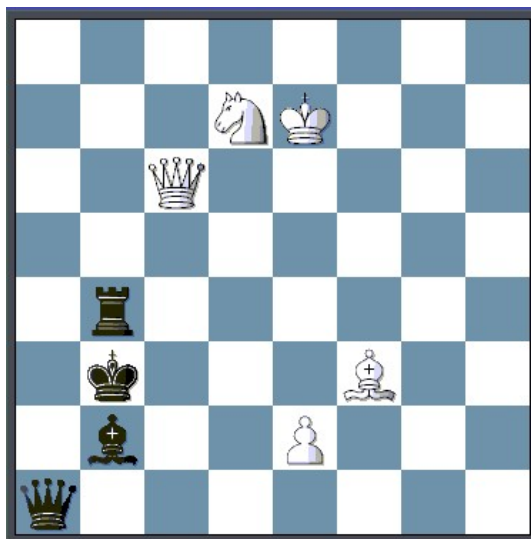


The game is double edged, the players pinning their hopes on pawns advance on opposite wings. But since White's pawns are farther advanced, his prospects look better. It was advisable for Black therefore to lock his opponent's king on the queenside with 29...Rd2! A plausible continuation in that case was 30.g4 Ka7! 31.g5 Ka6 (threatening 32...b5+) 32.Rf6 Rc2+ 33.Kd3 Rd2+ 34.Ke4 Bc3 35.Rd6 Nf2+ with a perpetual.

But Black played **29...Rc2+?** instead, and a mutual pawn race ensued. When the smoke faded away, immediately after the first time control, the following position has been accepted:



Morozevich played here the natural move **41...a2?!** which is, surprisingly enough, inaccurate, as it allows White extra winning chances. Better was 41...Ka7 42.g8=Q (42.Rf8 Bxf6+) a2. Now Black queens by force, but White has an interesting resource at his disposal: 43.Nd7 a1=Q 44.Rf8 Nc7 45.Ra8+! Nxa8 46.Qb8+ Ka6 47. Qxa8+ Kb5 48.Qxb7+ Kc4 49.Qxc6+ Kb3.

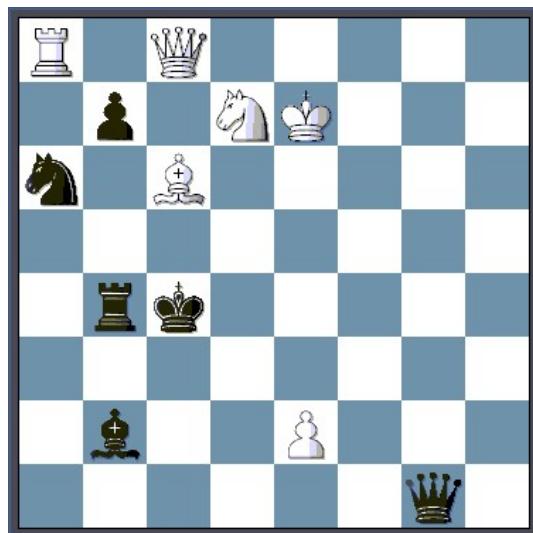


It seems that Black can hold this study-like position, e.g. 50.Nc5+ Kc3
51.Ne4+ Kb3 and I see no way to win.

In the game Eljanov jumped at the chance and played **42.Rf8+!** after
which Moro panicked with **42...Kc7?**

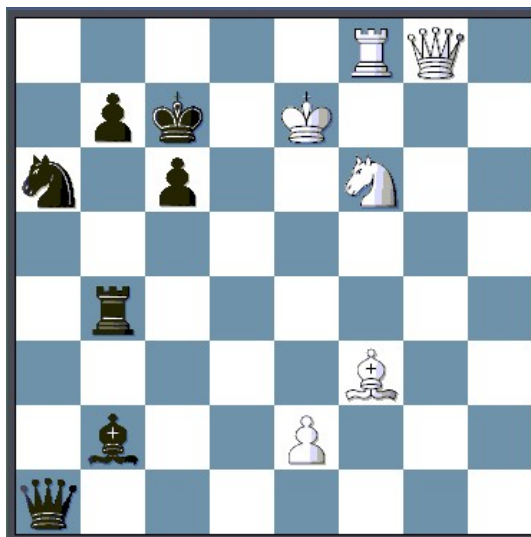
He had to go 42...Ka7 instead, and after 43.Ra8+! Kb6 44.Nd7+ Kb5
45.g8=Q a1=Q Black's position is probably defensible. For instance:
46.Qc8 Kc4 47.Bxc6! and here 47...Qg1!! amazingly saves the day.

(Analysis diagram)

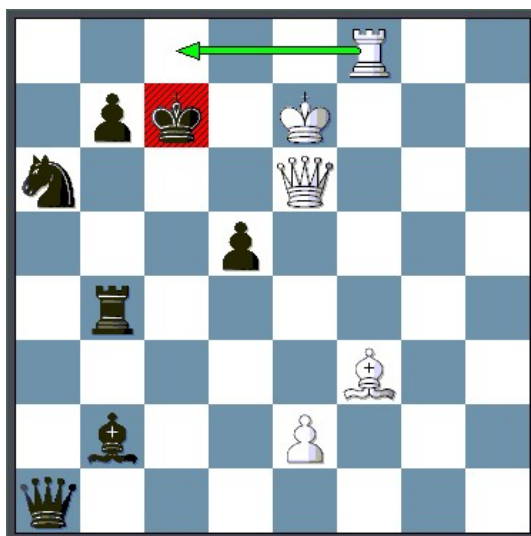


Such a picturesque position is rarely seen in practice!

There continued **43.g8=Q a1=Q**



And here Eljanov "found" a forced win: **44.Nd5+?** Correct was 44. Nd7 (threatening Rc8 mate) and Black is really busted. **44...cxd5 45. Qe6**



An inevitable mate?

45...Bf6+! No!! White played **46.Rxf6**, and realizing that there is nothing after 46...Kb8, he offered a draw, which Black obviously accepted.

After the fourth round Russia leads with 10.5 points, before China -10 (out of three matches!), Armenia -9.5 and Israel -7.5.

The main match tomorrow will be Russia-U.S.A. It used to be an emotionally loaded one, but nowadays it's a purely sportive struggle of players who share the same mother tongue.

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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News

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Round 5: Another Brilliant Victory for China

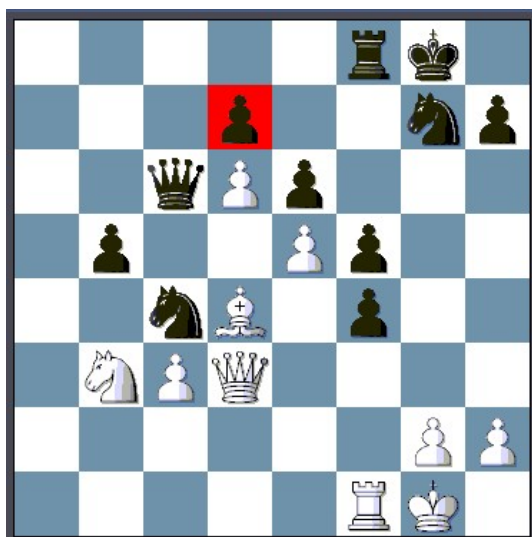
China overwhelms Georgia 3.5:0.5 and consequently leads the event in spite of playing a match less than runner-up Russia; Minimal wins for Russia and Israel against USA and Cuba respectively;

In his book ***Chinese School of Chess*** national head coach Liu Wenzhe predicts that in 20-50 years the Chinese school will dominate the chess world. The developments in the World Team Championship in Beer-Sheva may suggest that it will happen much earlier. Going into the free day China's men team leads the tournament with an astonishing score of 13.5 points out of 16 games!!

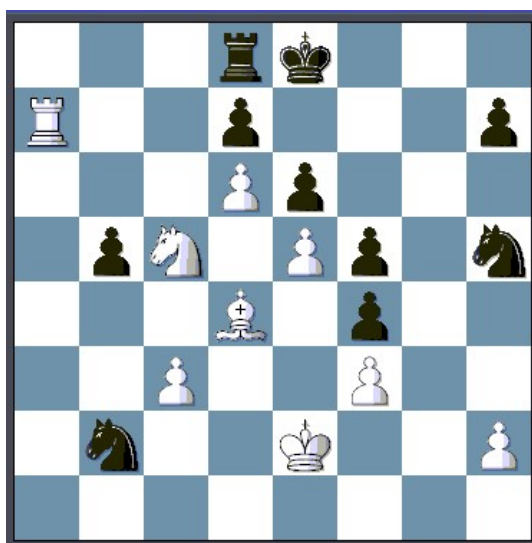
In round 5 the Chinese stunned Georgia 3.5:0.5. The Georgians, again without Azmaiparashvili, had reasonable positions, but suddenly collapsed. Jobava suffered another defeat, this time from the hands of Bu. On the third board Ni Hua sacrificed a pawn and seized the initiative. The position was unclear but Mchedlishvili played inaccurately and got into trouble.

Ni Hua (China) – Mchedlishvili (Georgia)





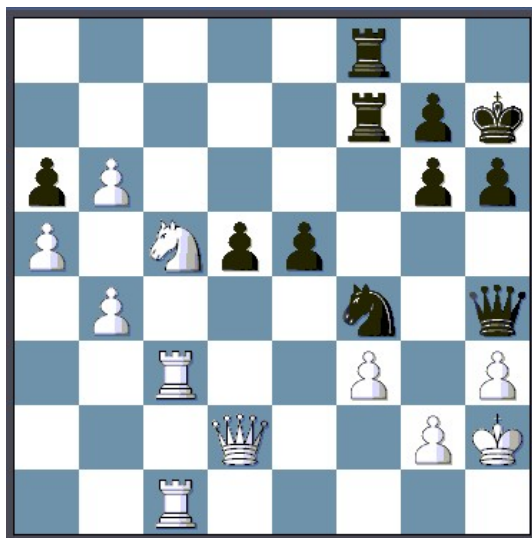
28.Qf3! Black's main weakness is d7 and the best way to attack it is by swapping queens. **28...Qxf3 29.gxf3 Rc8** (in order to parry the threat 30.Nc5) **30.Ra1 Kf7 31.Ra7 Ke8 32.Kf2 Nh5 33.Ke2 Nb2 34.Nc5 Rd8**



35.Nxe6! dxe6 36.Re7+ Kf7 37.Rxh7 and Black resigned. He is losing the whole house.

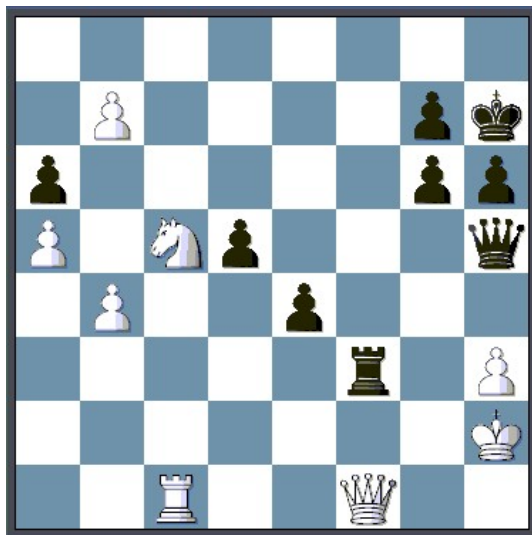
Things were more complicated on board four:

Gagunashvili (Georgia) – Zhang Zhong (China)

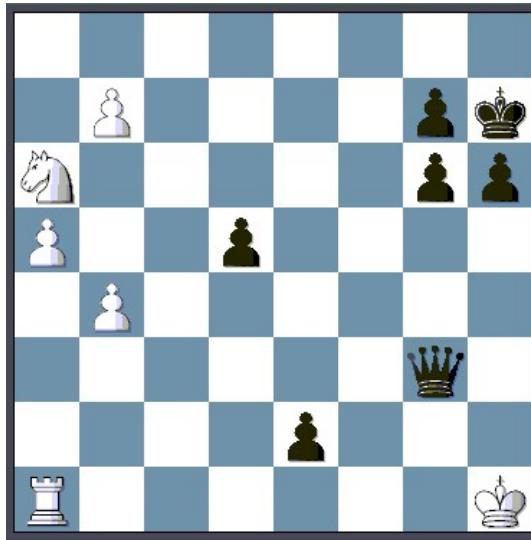


White has a decisive advantage on the queenside so Black must attack his opponent's king without delay.

34...e4! The immediate 34...Nxh3? would have been refuted by 35. Qe1! Qh5 36.g4 Qg5 37.Ne6 etc. **35.b7** (35.fxe4 Nxg2) **Nxh3!** **36. Qe1** [After 36.gxh3 Black obtains a mating attack: 36...Rxf3 37.Rxf3 Rxf3 38.b8=Q (38.Qg2 Qf4+) Rxh3+ 39.Kg2 (or 39.Kg1 Rh1+ 40.Kg2 Qh3+ 41.Kf2 Qf3#) Qg4+ 40.Kf2 Qf3+] **36...Qh5** **37.gxh3** [37.g4 doesn't help either: 37...Qe5+ 38.Kxh3 Rxf3+ 39.Rxf3 Rxf3+ 40.Kg2 Qf4 41.b8=Q (forced) Qxb8 and the queen returns to f4 with a decisive attack.] **37...Rxf3** **38.Rxf3** **Rxf3** **39.Qf1**



39...Qe5+ 40.Kh1 Qf4! 41.Kg1 Rxf1+ 42.Rxf1 Qg3+ 43.Kh1 Qxh3+ 44.Kg1 Qg3+ 45.Kh1 e3 46.Nxa6 e2 47.Ra1 Qh3+ 48.Kg1 Qg3+ 49. Kh1

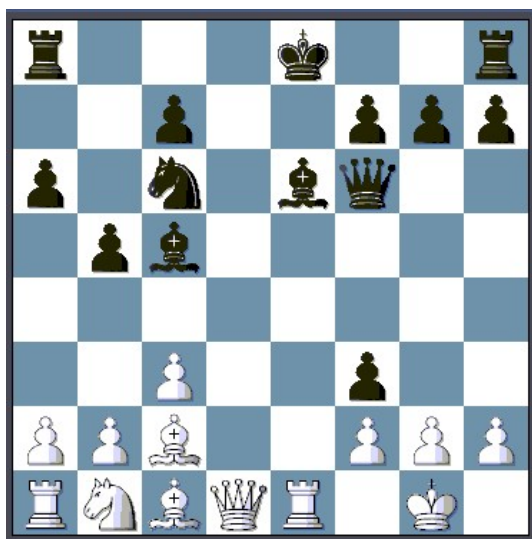


49...Qc3! The easiest win: the rook has no refuge. **50.Rb1 Qd3 51. Ra1 (or 51.Rc1 Qh3+ 52.Kg1 Qe3+) Qe4+ 52.Kg1 Qd4+, White resigned.**

Despite their great results the Chinese are still far away from winning the championship. Russia breathes down their neck after winning all its matches so far. This round the Russians beat U.S.A.

Svidler was stopped by Onischuk, who surprised his opponent in the opening.

Svidler (Russia) – Onischuk (USA)



On his last move Black played 11...Be6! After a lengthy thought Svidler continued **12.Nd2** and there followed **12...0-0-0 13.Qxf3 Qxf3 14.Nxf3 Bd5 15.b4 with a draw**. This in itself is far from exciting - the juicy part remained behind the scenes.

In the diagram position 12.Be4 apparently wins a piece, but Onischuk prepared 12...Bxf2+! 13.Kxf2 Qh4+ 14.Kf1 (14.g3 Qxh2+) Ne5! with a furious attack (Bc4+, Ng4, and Rd8 are coming). Well-done homework.

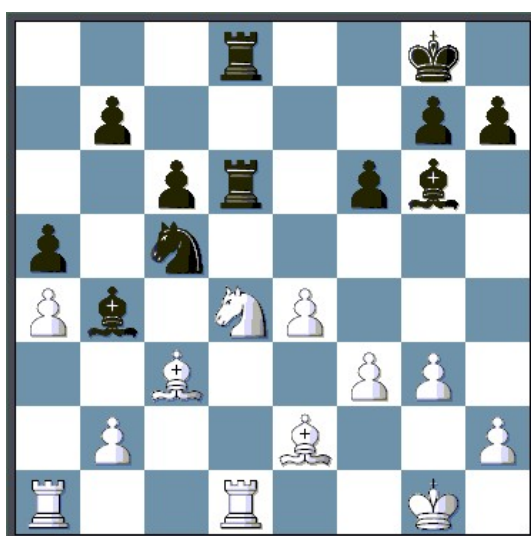


Diligent: **Alexander Onischuk**

Impressed: **Peter Svidler**

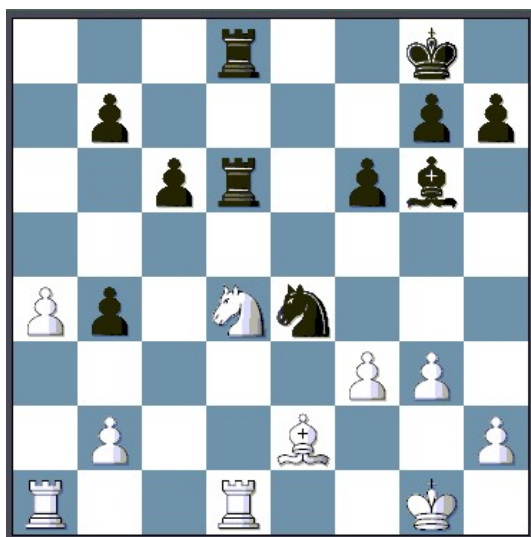
The match was decided on the fourth board.

Goldin (U.S.A) – Bareev (Russia)



24...Nxe4 Looks winning, but it may well be an inaccuracy!

25.Bxb4 (25.fxe4? Bc5) **axb4**

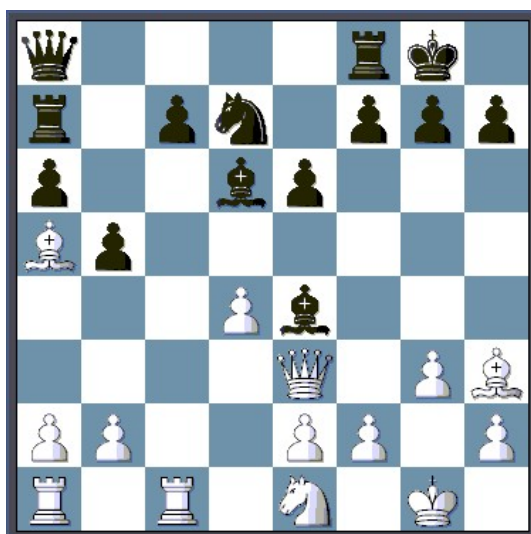


26.Nb3??

Leaving Black with a pawn up and a technically winning endgame. Goldin missed 26.Ne6! Re8 (26...Rxd1+ 27.Bxd1 is hardly better for Black) 27.fxe4 Rdx6 28.Bc4 Bxe4 29.Bxe6+ Rxe6 30.Rd7 and White has an advantage.

Israel finally won a match today. The three top boards saw uneventful draws and it was Avrukh who scored the goal.

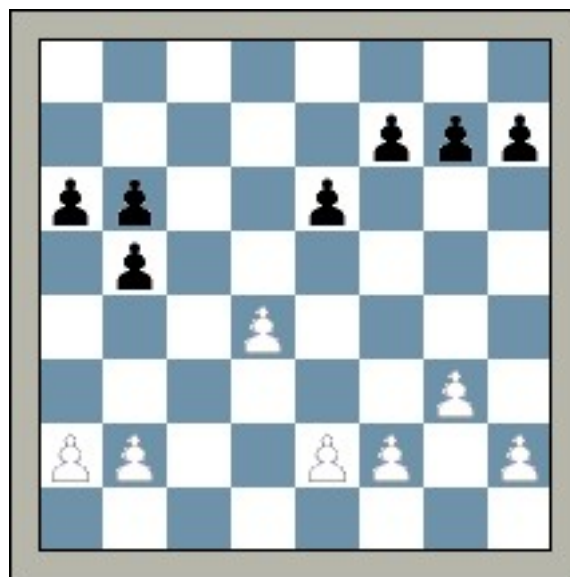
Avrukh (Israel) – Quezada (Cuba)



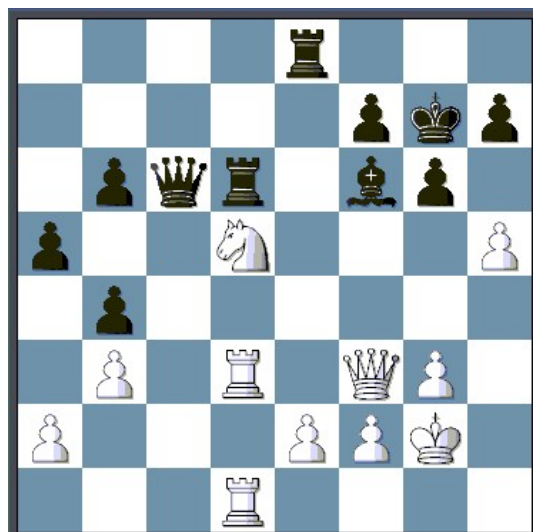
White has the advantage in a typical Catalan position, but Black's next move worsens the matters.

18...Nb6? 19.Bxb6 cxb6 20.Bg2! Bxg2 21.Nxg2

White has a significant advantage thanks to Black's compromised pawn structure.

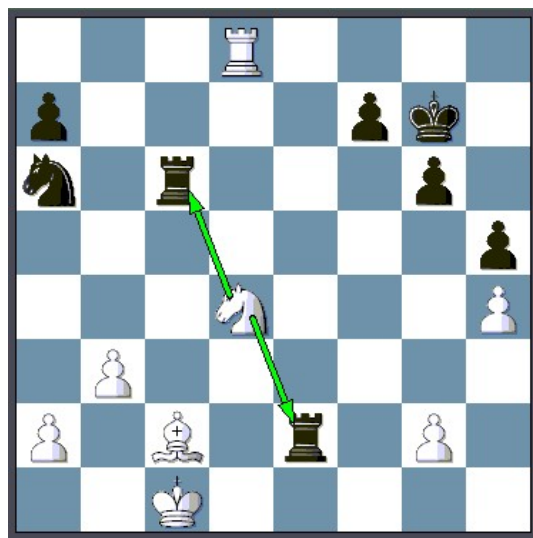


Virtually a pawn up, Avrukh exploited his majority advantage in the center and on the queenside, and a dozen moves later the following position has been reached.



Many spectators are sympathetic with the Chinese women team and with the fighting spirit of its players. But admittedly, they can't be serious opposition to the strongest teams. They were defeated today 3.5:0.5 by Ukraine and also Ivanchuk could have pressed for more.

Gong Qianyun (China Women) – Moiseenko (Ukraine)



Both Black's rooks are attacked, but Moiseenko ignores it with a nice touch.

36...Nb4! 37.Nxe2 Rxc2+ 38.Kd1 Rxa2 and Black won.

Tomorrow (Sunday) is a free day and the players will try to recharge

their batteries for the decisive rounds. We may expect an exciting race for the Gold between China and Russia.

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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News

08/11/2005 @
19:29:00

Round 6: The Taikonauts are not Stopping

China beats Olympic champion Ukraine 2.5:1.5; Russia follows suit vs. Armenia; Georgia turns the tables and wins 3:1 against Cuba; USA disposes of China women.

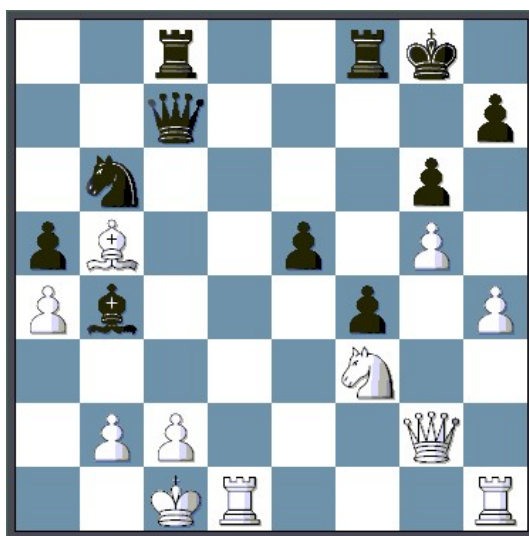
In the beginning it could have been argued that they defeated the weakest teams. Afterwards one could claim that Israel, their first strong victim, is out of form. But now there is no other explanation but their sheer strength. Because in round 6 today the Chinese beat Olympic champion Ukraine!



The Chinese Team

It was a well-deserved victory. Moreover, the Asian champions may justly feel a bit unlucky with the result, because of the following miss on the top board.

Ponomariov (Ukraine) – Bu (China)



Black can obtain a comfortable advantage with 25...e4 26.Nd4 f3 27. Qg4 Qf4+ 28.Qxf4 Rxf4, but Bu finds an even better continuation:

25...Bc3!

A powerful blow, which aims at a direct attack on the white king. It's amazing that White is virtually helpless against the threat of Bxb2+, followed by Qc3+ etc.

26.Qh3

After 26.Qe2 (26.bxc3 Qxc3 27.Ne1 f3 transposes to the game, whereas 26.Rd3 is strongly met with 26...Bxb2+ 27.Kxb2 e4) Bxb2+ 27. Kxb2 Qc3+ 28.Kc1 Nxa4 Black has a devastating attack.

26...Rf5! 27.Ne1

27.Rh2 is not better: 27...Bxb2+ 28.Kxb2 Qc3+ 29.Kb1 Qb4+ 30.Kc1 Qa3+ 31.Kb1 Nxa4 32.Bxa4 Qxa4 and wins.

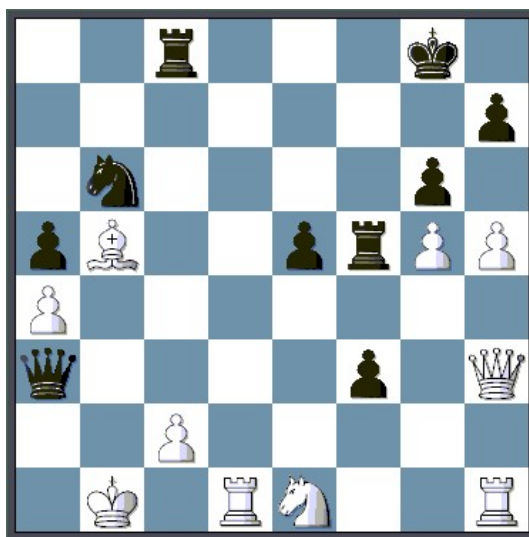
27...f3! (27...Bxe1 28.Qb3+) 28.bxc3 Qxc3 29.h5

Or 29.Rd3 Qa1+ 30.Kd2 e4 31.Rb3 Qd4+ 32.Kc1 Nxa4 33.Bxa4 Qxa4 34.Kb1 f2.

29...Qa1+ 30.Kd2 Qc3+ 31.Kc1 Qa3+ 32.Kb1

32.Kd2 Nd5! leads to a forced mate.

32...Qb4+ 33.Kc1 Qa3+ 34.Kb1



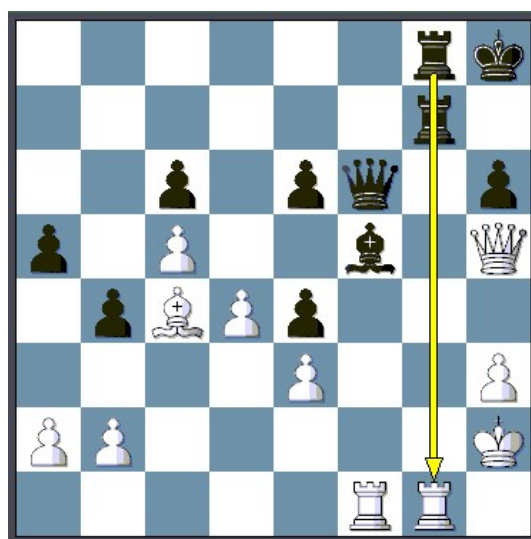
34...Qb4+?

In time trouble, Bu misses the logical culmination of his attack: 34... Nxa4 35.Bxa4 Qxa4 36.hxg6 [36.Rd3 loses as well: 36...f2 37.Rb3 (37. hxg6 fxe1=Q+ 38.Rxe1 Qb4+) Qe4! 38.Nd3 Qxh1+] Rb8+ 37.Kc1 Qa3+ 38.Kd2 Rd8+ 39.Nd3 Rxd3+! 40.cxd3 Qb2+ with a mate next move.

35.Kc1 Qa3+, Draw.

The match has been decided on the third board.

Moiseenko (Ukraine) – Ni Hua (China)



The struggle takes place on the g file. Black, with the move, exploits it with surprising ease.

29...Rg5! 30.Qe2?

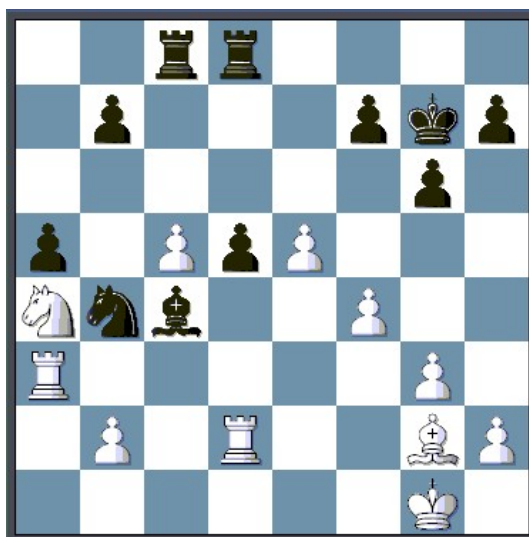
The least of evils would have been 30.Rxg5 Rxg5 31.Qd1! Qg7! 32.Rg1 Qc7+ 33.Kh1 Rg3 34.Rxg3 Qxg3 35.Qf1, which is also quite bad for White.

30...Qg6! 31.Rxg5 (31.Qf2 Qh5 32.h4 Rg4) Qxg5 32.Qf2 Qh5 33.h4 Rg4 34.Be2 Rxh4+ 35.Kg1 Rh1+ and White resigned.

But the task of the Chinese is not going to be easy, because the Russians scored their sixth consecutive win today – 2.5:1.5 against Armenia.

On the top board of this match two elite players discussed the pin motif.

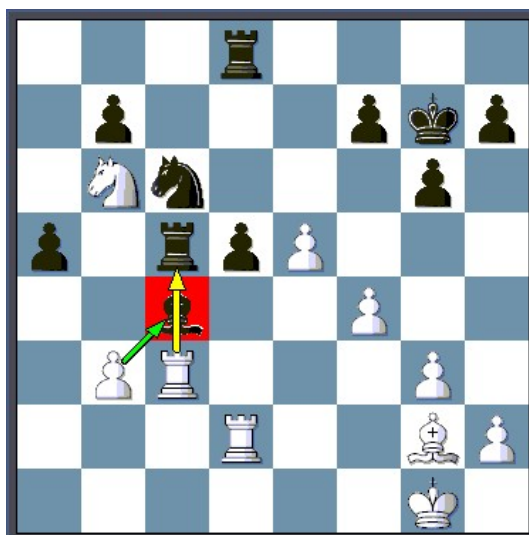
Aronian (Armenia) – Svidler (Russia)



25.Nb6! Rxc5 26.Rc3

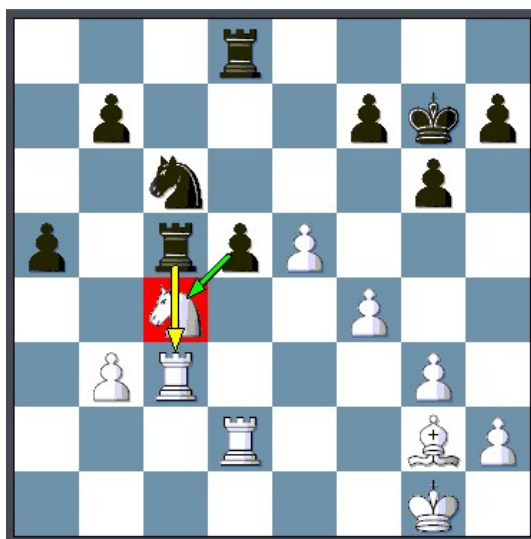
Black seems to be in trouble due to the threats of 27.Nxc4 and 27.b3, but...

26...Nc6! 27.b3



And what now, isn't the pinned bishop doomed?

27...Rb5! 28.Nxc4 Rc5! (28...dxc4? 29.Bxc6)



Yes, it is, but so is the white knight, which is incidentally pinned on the very same square!

29.Rcd3

After 29.Rxd5 Rxd5 30.Bxd5 Rxd5 31.Nd6 Rd2 32.Nxb7 Nd4, Black's counter-play is most probably sufficient for a draw.

29...dxc4 30.Rxd8 Nxd8 31.bxc4

Of course not 31.Rxd8? cxb3, when only Black has winning chances.

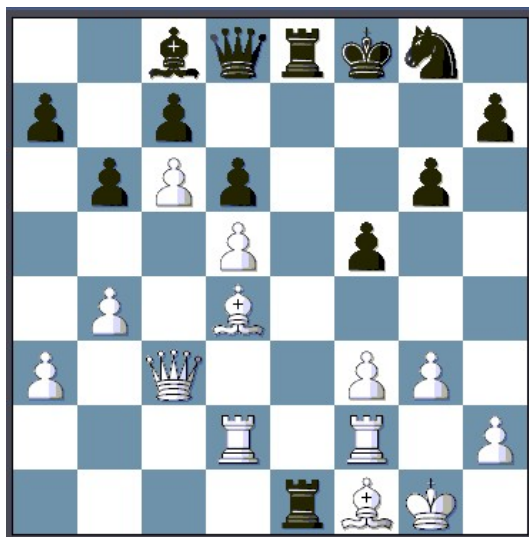
31...Ne6 32.Bd5 Nc7 33.Bxb7 Rxc4 34.Ra2 a4 35.Kf2 f6, Draw agreed.



Levon Aronian

As in the previous round, against USA, Evgeny Bareev brought the victory with the only decisive game of the match.

Bareev (Russia) – Anastasian (Armenia)



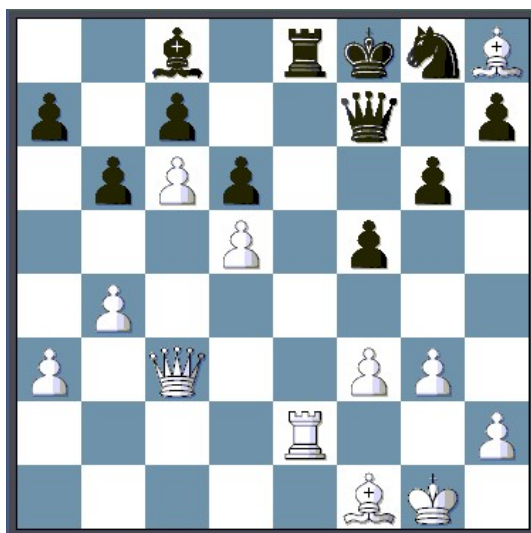
41.Bh8! Qe7?

He should have moved either rook to e7, but his position was extremely difficult anyway.

42.Rde2 and Black resigned.

Because of 42...Rxe2 43.Rxe2 Qf7

(Analysis diagram)



44.Bg7+! Qxg7 45.Rxe8+.



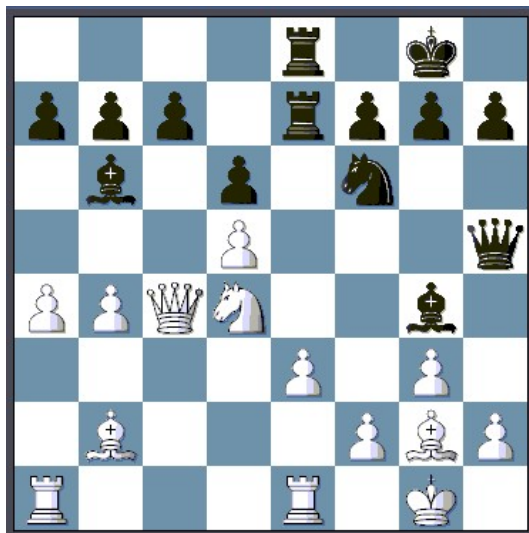
Winner: **Evgeny Bareev**

But the Russians must be disappointed with the result, because both Dreev (against Akopian) and Grischuk (against Asrian) misplayed winning positions with an extra pawn. The lost point might prove crucial in the forthcoming race for the title.

Still, nothing compares to the disappointment of the Cubans today. They lost 3:1 to Georgia after enjoying a clear advantage during most of the match. While Delgado lost correctly to Mchedlishvili, Noguieras failed to convert his extra pawn in the endgame and Dominguez spoiled a typical winning endgame emerging from the Berlin variation.

Yet, the biggest miss occurred on the first board.

Azmaiparashvili (Georgia) – Bruzon (Cuba)

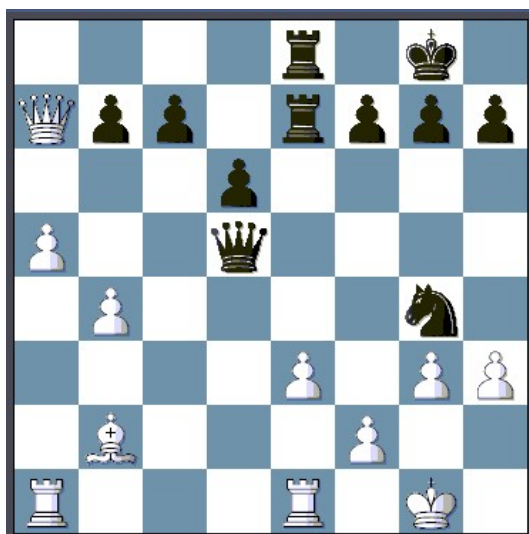


The seesaw began when in the diagram position White missed 21.Nb3! with a large advantage.

Instead, he played **21.a5?** and there followed **21...Bxd4 22.Qxd4 Bf3 23.Qxa7 Bxg2 24.Kxg2 Ng4!**

24...Qxd5+ 25.Kg1, with 26.Qd4 to follow, is fine for White.

25.h3 Qxd5+ 26.Kg1



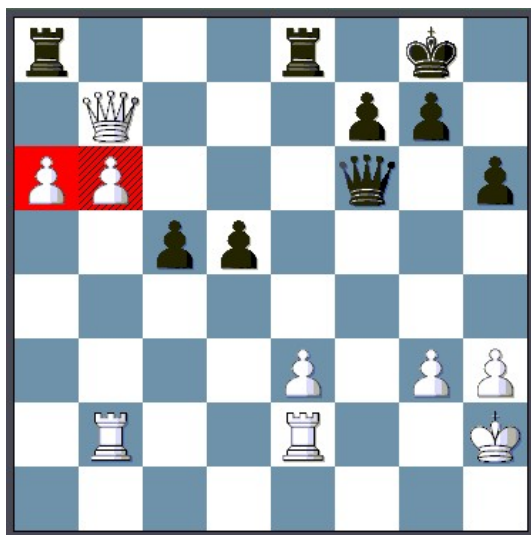
26...Nxf2! 27.Kxf2 Qf5+ 28.Kg2

After 28.Kg1 Qf3 Black threatens Qxg3+ and the rook joins the attack with great effect.

28...Qe4+ 29.Kf2 Qf5+ 30.Kg2 Qc2+ 31.Kg1 Qxb2 32.Qxb7 h6?

32...c5! Would have gave him good winning chances, e.g. 33.Qc6 cxb4 34.a6 Qe5! 35.Kg2 Ra7.

In the game White advanced his queenside pawns, which became unstoppable right after the time control.



Black resigned.



Zurab Azmaiparashvili at the holy Western Wall: The prayers might

have helped

USA beat China's women 4:0, but the result doesn't indicate the course of the match. As usual, the young Chinese fought very well and none of the games finished before move 50. Furthermore, the positions were unclear till the very end and on boards one and three the Chinese even had an extra pawn (in my opinion, Zhao Xue could have won against Gulko at one moment).

Tomorrow (round 7) Russia has a free day and China (playing USA) will undoubtedly take advantage of that to enlarge its lead.

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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News

09/11/2005 @
19:53:00

Round 7: China Shocks USA

China is leading, 4 points ahead of Russia; Ukraine escapes with a draw vs. Cuba; Georgia beats Israel 2.5:1.5; Armenia China women 3:1.

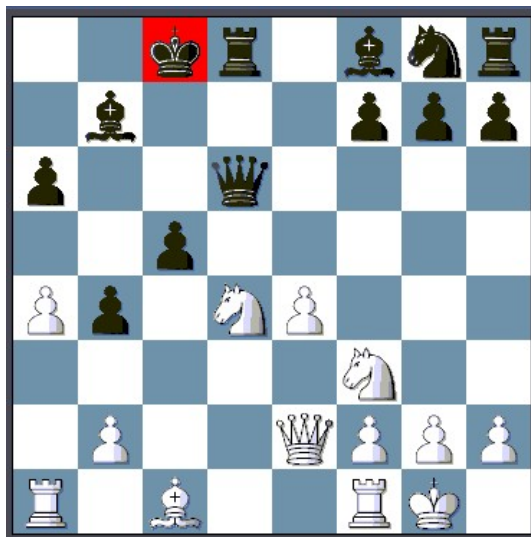
Round 7 of the World Team Championship in Beer-Sheva may become a milestone in the history of chess. Today China crushed USA 3.5:0.5 and made a huge step towards winning the world championship. This unprecedented demolition of a chess superpower is a symbolic point in the evolution of Chinese chess, very much like the game Liu Wenzhe – Donner, Buenos Aires Olympiad 1978.

GAME			
2.1	Mr. BU XIANG ZHI	v	Mr. ALEXANDER ONISCHUK
2.2	Mr. SHANG PENGXIANG	v	Mr. GREGORY KAIDANOV
2.3	Mr. NI HUA	v	Mr. ILDAR IBRAGIMOV
2.4	Mr. SHANG ZHONG	v	Mr. IGOR NOVIKOV

Many spectators couldn't believe their eyes when China led 3:0 and Bu was trying to convert his advantage on the top board. It was not far away from a colossal defeat, but Onischuk defended well and saved some of the American honor. Earlier, Kaidanov collapsed in time trouble vs. Zhang Pengxiang and Novikov blundered a pawn in a better position against Zhang Zhong. But the most convincing defeat

occurred on the third board.

Ni Hua (China) – Ibragimov (USA)



Ibragimov played carelessly and his king is dangerously exposed. Ni Hua wastes no time on petty things like saving a piece.

14.Rd1! cxd4

It was probably better to refrain from this capture, but then Black's position is just bad.

15.Rxd4 Qxd4

The best try, otherwise White's attack is terrible. For example: 15... Qc7 16.Rc4 Bc6 (16...Rd1+ 17.Qxd1 Qxc4 18.Bg5 Kb8 19.Rc1 is hardly any better for Black) 17.Bf4! Bd6 18.e5, followed by Rac1, or 15...Qb6 16.Rc4+ Kb8 (16...Kd7 17.Bf4) 17.Bf4+ Bd6 18.a5! Qb5 19.Rd1, or 15...Qe7 16.Bf4 Rxd4 17.Nxd4 Qxe4 18.Qc4+ Kd7 19.Qc7+ Ke8 20.Qb8+ Kd7 21.Nf3 etc.

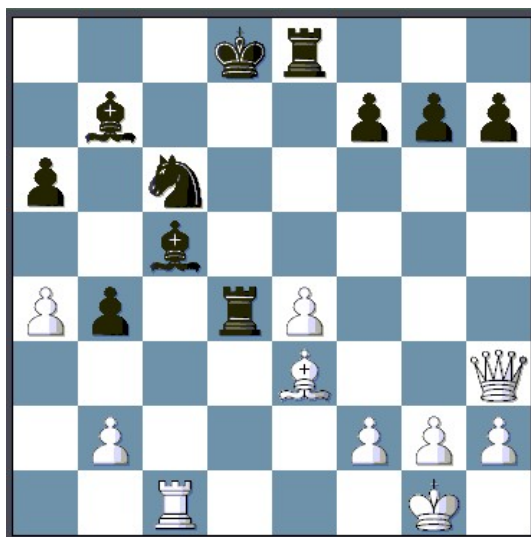
16.Nxd4 Rxd4 17.Bf4

The Black king is trapped under cross-fire and can't escape to the corner.

17...Ne7 18.Rc1+ Nc6 19.Qe3! Bc5!

The alternatives lose on the spot: 19...Rd7 20.Qb6, or 19...Kd7 20.Kf1! with the threat 21.Rxc6.

20.Qh3+ Kd8 21.Be3 Re8



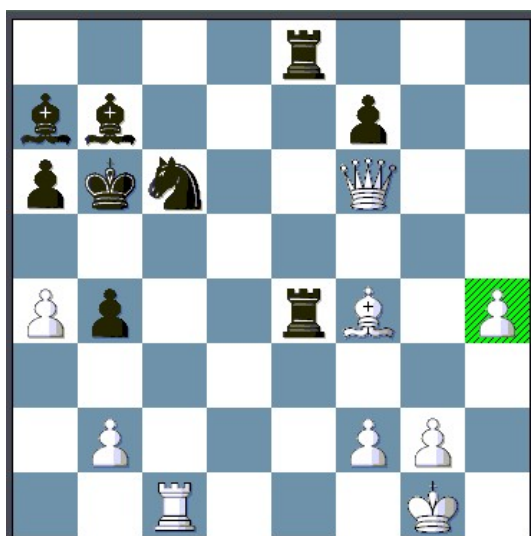
22.Qxh7!

There is no reason to hurry grabbing the exchange. In the meantime White collects some important pawns on the kingside.

22...Ba7 23.Qxg7! Rdx4 24.Qf6+

A very unpleasant check, against which Black can't defend properly.

24...Kc7 25.Bf4+ Kb6 26.h4



White's strategy has been fully rewarded.

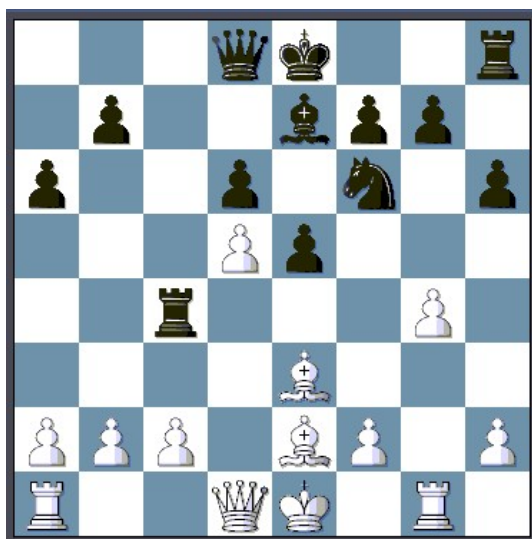
26...Re1+ 27.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 28.Kh2 Re6 29.Qxf7 Re7 30.Qd5 Bb8 31. Bxb8 Nxb8 32.Qd8+, Black resigned.



Leading scorer: **Ni Hua**

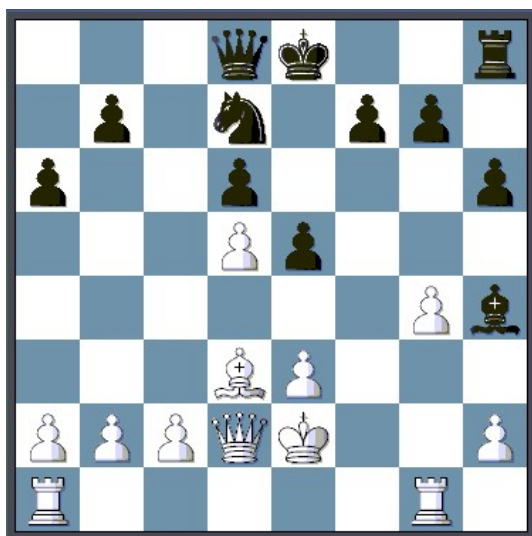
Today Cuba missed yet another win, this time against strong Ukraine. Playing with the black pieces, Dominguez and Arencibia easily held Volokitin and Karjakin respectively. On third board Nogueiras defeated Eljanov in positional style. So the outcome of the match was decided on the top board, where the "game of the day" has been played.

Bruzon (Cuba) – Ivanchuk (Ukraine)



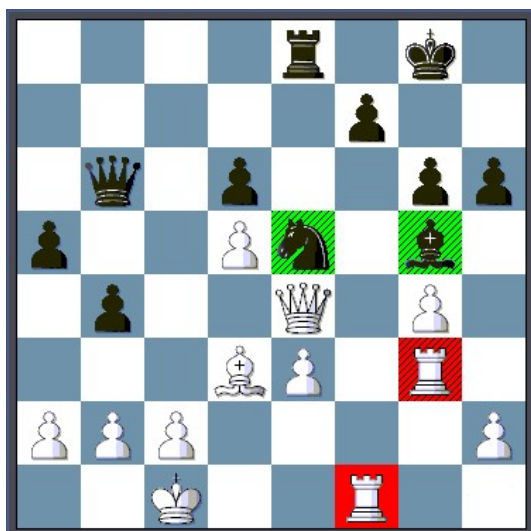
Ivanchuk played originally and was not content with equal material. In the diagram position he went for a positional exchange sac with **16... Re4!?** **17.Qd2 Nd7 18.Bd3 Rxe3+**

After **19.fxe3 Bh4+ 20.Ke2**

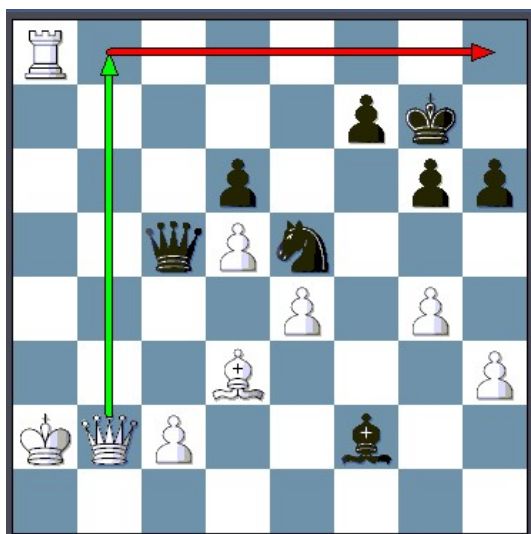


He obtained sufficient compensation for the exchange thanks to his very strong pieces and the awkward position of the white king. But this was not enough for "Chukky", who continued **20...e4!?**

Thus Black also took control of the beautiful post on e5 and completely dominated the dark squares. But not many players would be willing to pay so much material for such positional gains.



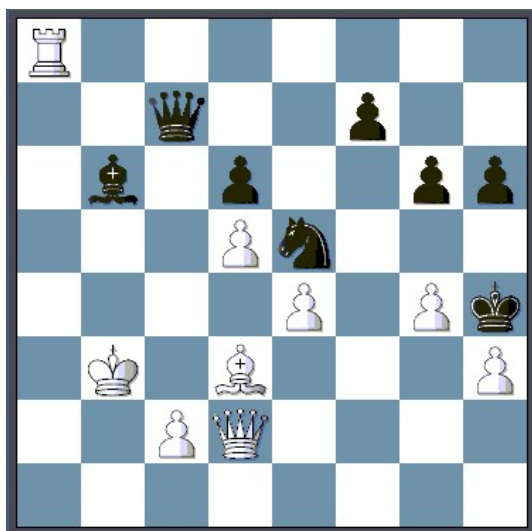
A few moves later Black's compensation became fully apparent. The white rooks are deprived of room for action and the black pieces are really powerful. But Ivanchuk decided to play for a win and that required the opening of the position on the queenside. As a result Bruzon managed to trade one rook and to activate the other one.



White threatens 46.Qb8 and his position is objectively winning. In this critical situation Ivanchuk makes a bold decision:

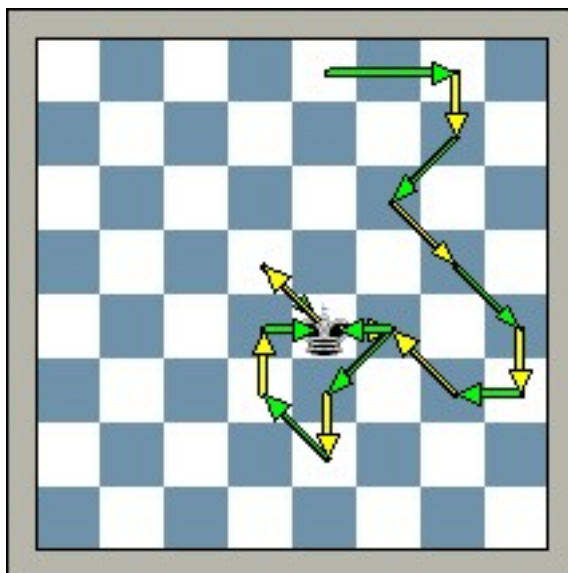
45...Kf6! The king leaves the corner and goes for pawn hunt on the kingside.

Five moves later the following position has been reached.



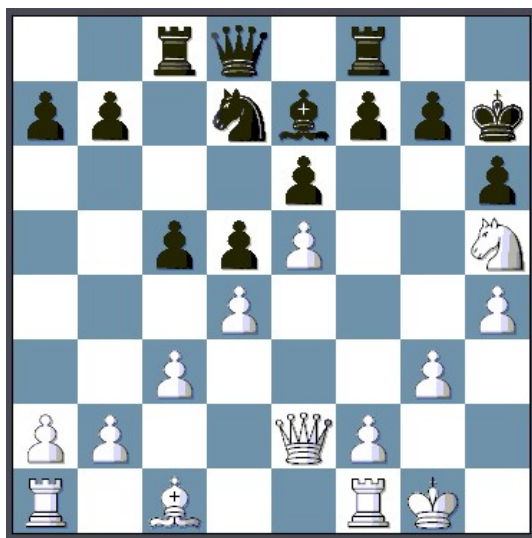
Bruzon played **50.Ka2?** missing the outright win 50.g5! (with the threat 51.Qf4+). Black should give away his beautiful knight then, and his position would have become hopeless.

But time pressure took its toll and White went astray. He erroneously swapped queens, after which the black king made a feast of pawns and the battle has been decided. The following diagram illustrates the extraordinary path of the black king in this game.



In this round the Georgians played their best match to date. They reproduced their win against Israel in Gothenburg three months ago, a result which deprived Israel of the Gold medal. The reproduction was so accurate that not only that the match result was the same, also the decisive individual result was similar.

Sutovsky (Israel) – Pantsulaia (Georgia)



White has a beautiful position and can slowly develop initiative on the kingside. But out of form Sutovsky conceives a wrong combination.

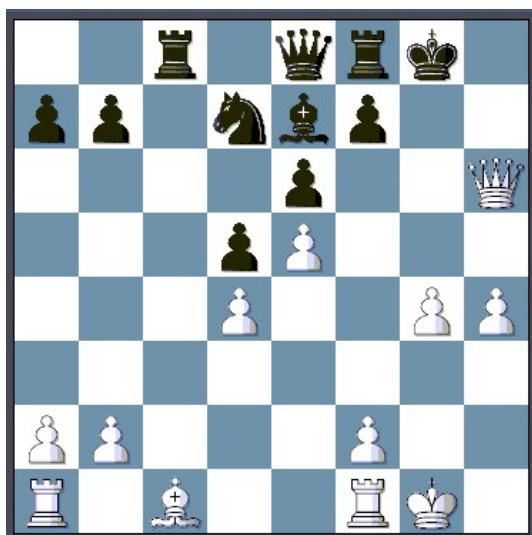
20.Nxg7? Kxg7 21.Qg4+ Kh7 22.Qh5 Qe8!

A strong defensive resource that White has missed. Black intends to meet the planned 23.Bxh6 with f5! therefore White's attack comes to a dead end.

23.Qxh6+ Kg8 24.g4

The only way to prevent 24...f6, which will be met with 25.g5! now.

24...cxd4 25.cxd4



25...Rc4 26.Be3 Nxe5! And Black won easily.

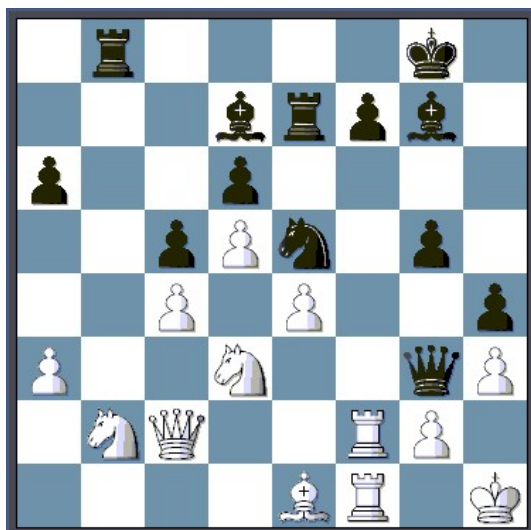


Looking after the dark squares: **Levan Pantsulaia**

It should be noted that the Georgians' win is fully justified, because they also had an advantage on two of the other games.

Armenia defeated China's women to qualify to third place. Curiously, the Chinese had no problems with the black pieces and drew comfortably on boards two and four. But they had no chance on the odd boards.

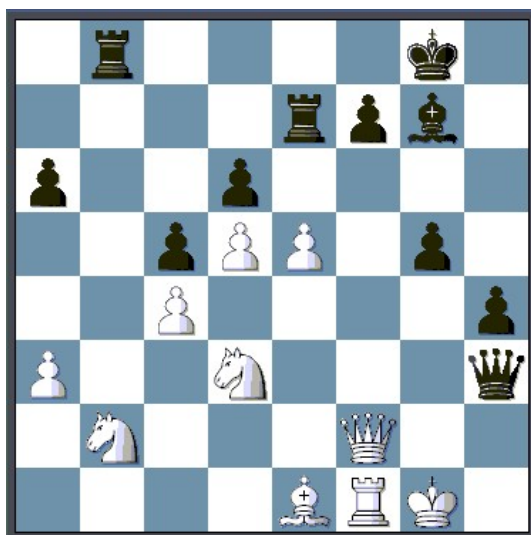
Zhao Xue (China Women) – Aronian (Armenia)



33...Bxh3! 34.gxh3

Not better is 34.Re2 Bxg2+ 35.Rxg2 Qh3+ 36.Kg1 Nf3+, but 34.Rf5!? is a possible improvement. For instance: 34...Qg4 35.gxh3+ Qxh3+ 36.Qh2 Qxh2+ 37.Kxh2 Ng4+ 38.Kg1 Bd4+! 39.Kh1 f6 and White can still fight, though Black has a large advantage.

34...Qxh3+ 35.Kg1 Ng4 36.e5 (else 36...Bd4) **Nxf2 37.Qxf2**



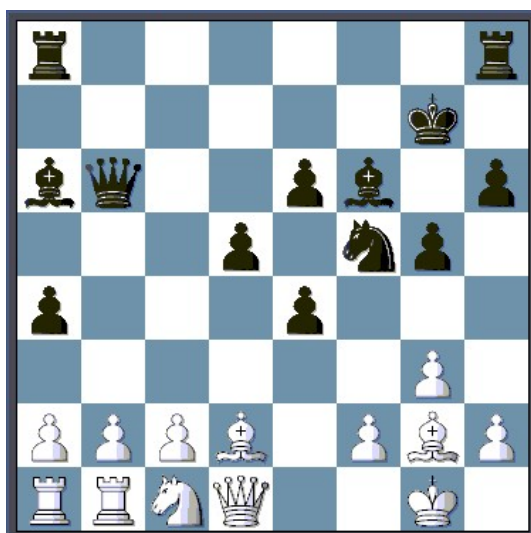
37...Rxb2! 38.Nxb2 Bxe5 39.Qd2 Bd4+ 40.Rf2 Re3, White resigned.



Zhao Xue-Aronian: Analyzing the game

From the third board game it is sufficient to show the position after move 21, which is a real picture.

Wang Yu (China Women) – Lputian (Armenia)



After their great win today the Chinese lead with 19.5 points, followed by Russia (15.5), Armenia (14) and Ukraine (12.5).

A four-point lead, with two rounds to go, is usually sufficient to ensure the victory. But in the penultimate round Russia plays China's women

and anything but a 4:0 result would be a surprise, whereas China confronts Armenia. I believe that everything is still open if the gap before the last round, in which the two leaders meet each other, will not be larger than 2 points.

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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WCC Israel 2005

News

10/11/2005 **Round 8: China Loses but Gets Closer to the Title**

@

06:21:00

First defeat for China - 2.5:1.5 against Armenia; China Women grab a point from Russia; Israel loses once more: 2.5:1.5 to Ukraine; USA and Cuba tie an exciting match.

The tension is rising in the World Team Championship in Beer-Sheva and the penultimate round was remarkable. There were a lot of exciting moments and at the end of the day China came very close to winning the championship, needing a mere point in its last round match against runner-up Russia.

Yet, today the Chinese suffered their first defeat in the event. The match against Armenia was balanced, and with the exception of a short draw on the second board, the games were hardly fought.

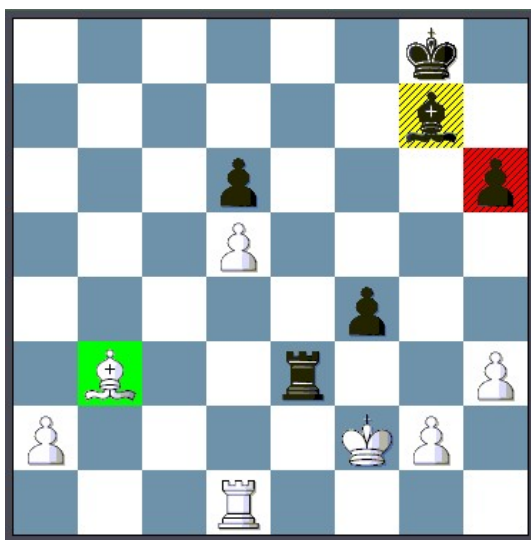
Bu came up with an interesting opening line against Aronian. After some mutual inaccuracies Aronian sacrificed the exchange, for which he obtained ample compensation. Again the players haven't played the best moves and the Armenian could have got some winning chances with 34.b3! After missing it the draw was inevitable.

Zhang Zhong seized the initiative against Lputian's French defense. With heavy pieces and bishops of opposite colors, he could have exerted prolonged pressure, but he allowed Black some favorable exchanges instead. Lputian proceeded accurately and eventually forced a perpetual.

The decisive game was Asrian-Ni Hua. It was a topical line in the Sveshnikov

variation, in which Black diverted from theory not sooner than move 22. His position looked fine but in fact his central pawns were vulnerable. White managed to attack them and Black pinned his hopes on an endgame with bishops of opposite colors. To that end he sacrificed a pawn and consequently the following position has been reached.

Asrian (Armenia) – Ni Hua (China)



39.Re1!

Interestingly, just by swapping rooks White can play for a win.

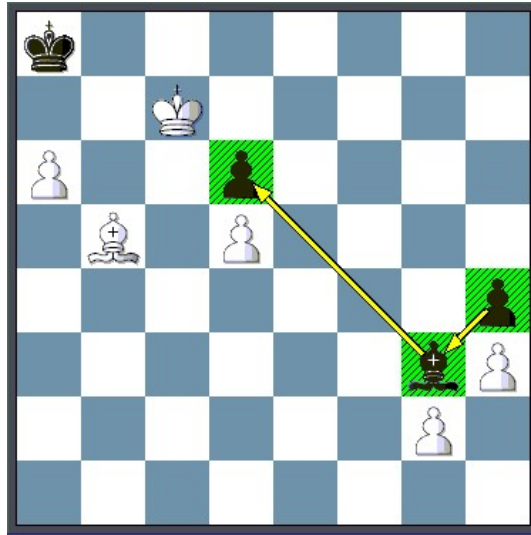
39...Rxe1

Bad is 39...Rc3 40.Re6 Bd4+ 41.Ke2

40.Kxe1 Bc3+?!

More logical is 40...Kf7. After 41.Kd2

(Analysis diagram)



Black mustn't move his bishop because of g4! hxg3, Bg2, But instead just oscillates his king between a8 and a7. The only way to prevent this is to bring the bishop to b7, but then the black bishop will be free, as g4 is no longer possible. So White can't make any progress.

The game continued **41. Ke2 Kf7?**

It was still not too late to play 41...h5, as after 42.h4 Kf7 43.Kf3 Be1 44.a4 Bxh4 45.a5 Bd8 46.a6 Bb6 47.Kxf4 h4, Black holds.

42.Kd3 Be1 43.Bd1!

Now White is winning.

43...Kf6 (43...Ke7 44.Kf5) **44.a4 Ba5 45.Kc4 Be1 46.Kb5 Ke7 47.Bg4! Kd8 48.Kb6 and Black resigned** (48...Bf2+ 49.Kc6 etc.).

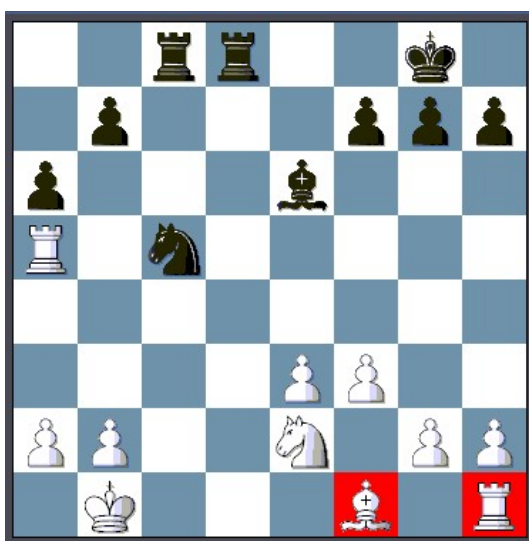


Karen Asrian

Russia was expecting a clean sweep of the Chinese Women team, but faced an unpleasant surprise. Morozevich won easily but on the other boards the Chinese resisted wonderfully.

Grischuk won on the top board after a long battle and Bareev's task was even tougher.

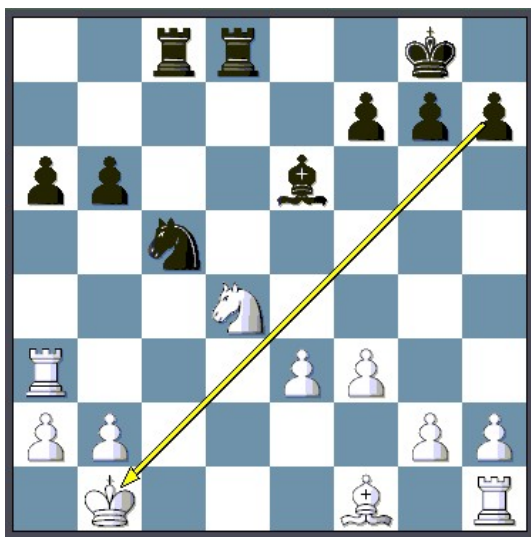
Bareev (Russia) – Gong (China Women)



Black had sacrificed a pawn and obtained great activity and development

advantage. White has to develop his kingside quickly, but after the natural 20.Nd4, there comes 20...b6 21.Ra3

(Analysis diagram)

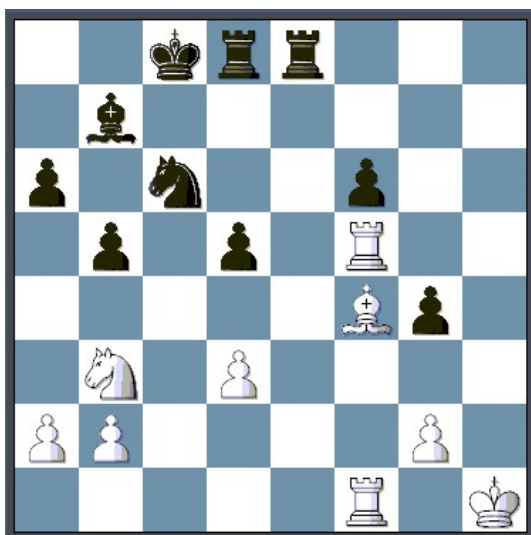


21...Rxd4! 22.exd4 Bf5+ 23.Ka1 (23.Kc1? Ne4+) Nb3+! 24.axb3 Rc1+ 25.Ka2 Bb1+ with a perpetual.

Therefore Bareev played the less desired **20.Nc3** and after **20...b6** sacrificed the exchange with **21.Rxa6** (21.Ra3?! b5 is great for Black) **Nxa6 22.Bxa6**. The resulting position is by no means better for White but Bareev exploited his opponent's inaccuracies and won with great technique.

But the biggest upset occurred on the fourth board. Rublevsky had the better game throughout but couldn't find a clear win. He got confused, declined move repetition and suddenly found himself in deep trouble.

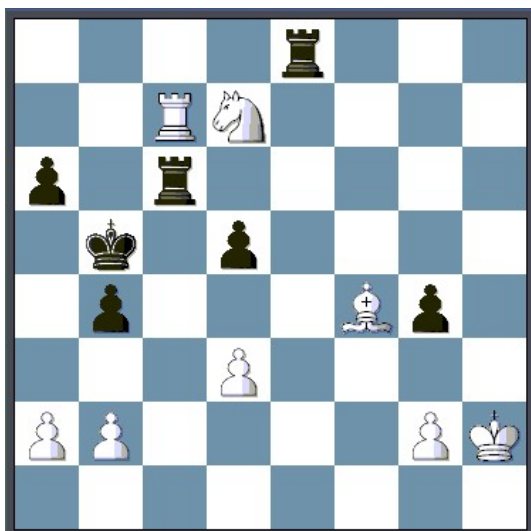
Shen Yang (China Women) – Rublevsky (Russia)



35.Rc1!

A decisive pin. Black can't avoid material loss. The next phase has been played in time pressure:

35...Rd7 36.Rxf6 Rde7 37.Rfxc6+ Bxc6 38.Rxc6+ Kb7 39.Na5+ Ka7 40.Kh2 b4 41.Nb3 Re6 42.Rc7+ Kb6 43.Nc5 Rc6 44.Nd7+ Kb5



45.a4+! bxa3 46.Rb7+ Ka4 47.b3+ and Black resigned.

It may turn out that this is the most crucial game in the entire tournament!



Shen Yang

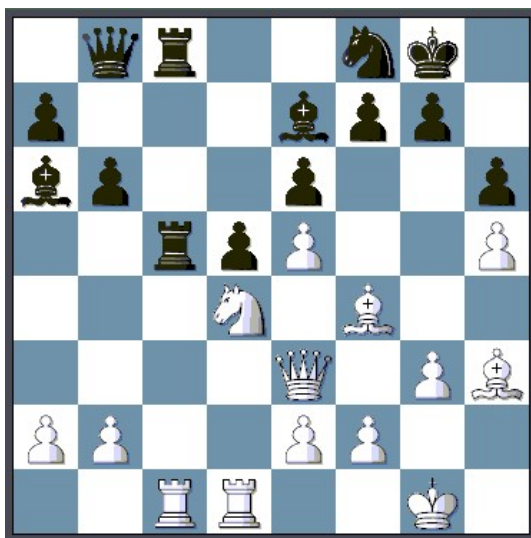
Ukraine recovered today with a minimal win against Israel. Thus the Olympic champions preserve some chances to take the Bronze.

It was an even struggle, with some Israeli advantage. Roiz held Volokitin on the third board, while Gelfand, Avrukh, and Erenburg enjoying more comfortable positions. The top Israeli played his beloved Najdorf and virtually refuted Ivanchuk's preparation. But when the time was ripe to play for a win a peace treaty has been signed.

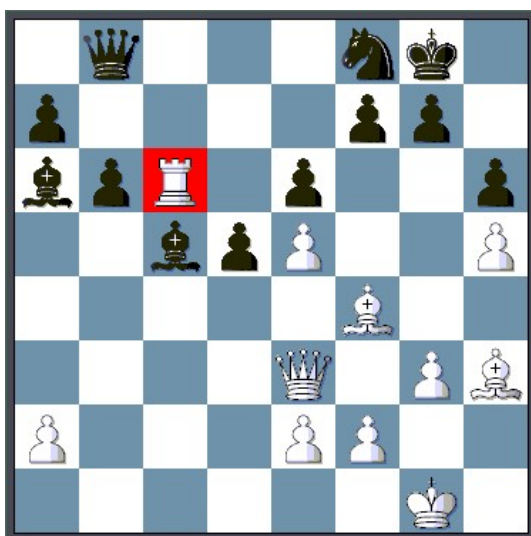
In another Najdorf it appeared that Erenburg didn't have much and a draw has been agreed just before the first time control.

Avrukh felt that his position is better and pushed too hard. This was the moment Ponomariov was hoping for.

Avrukh (Israel) – Ponomariov (Ukraine)



22..b4? Rxc1 23.Rxc1 Bxb4! 24.Nc6 Rxc6 25.Rxc6 Bc5



Suddenly the white rook is trapped and Black has the advantage. It is noteworthy that Ponomarev doesn't rush to capture the rook, rather he exploits its unfortunate position for tying the white pieces to the defense.

26.Qb3 Qb7! (26...Bb7 27.Rd6) 27.Qa4 Bxe2 28.Be3

Or 28.Bf1 Bxf1 29.Kxf1 Nd7, followed by Nb8.

28...d4 29.Bg2

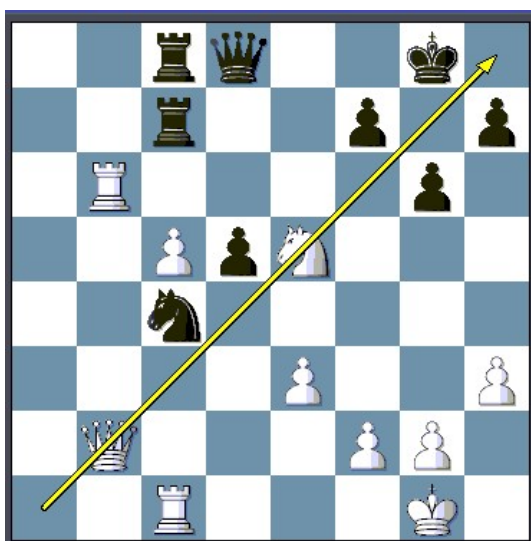
29.Bf4 Bf3 30.Bg2 (30.Rd6 Bxd6 31.exd6 Qd5) Bxg2 31.Kxg2 g5! 32.hxg6 Nxg6 leads to the same outcome.

29...dxe3 30.Rxc5 Bf3 31.Bxf3 Qxf3 32.Rc8 Qxf2+ 33.Kh1 e2, White resigned.

The match USA-Cuba was seemingly unimportant. But in fact, it produced the most fascinating chess in the round. All the four games were interesting and eventful.

The "game of the day" was Onischuk-Bruzon.

Onischuk (USA) – Bruzon (Cuba)

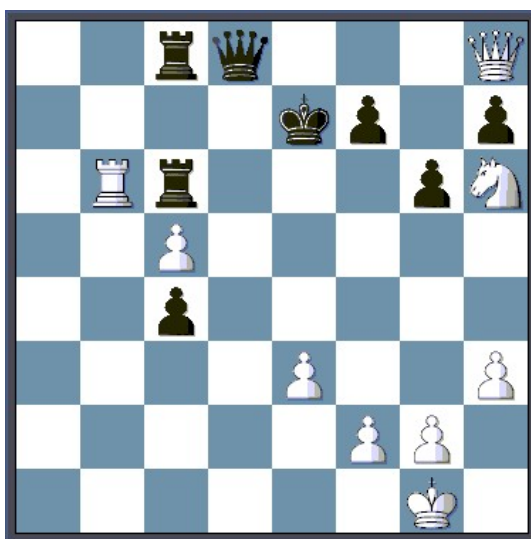


29.Nxc4 Rxc5 30.Rd1 Rxc4 31.Rb5 wins a pawn, but Black will be able to hold. Onischuk looks for more.

29.Rxc4!? dxc4 30.Ng4

Now White has attacking possibilities on the long diagonal.

30...Rc6 31.Nh6+ Kf8 32.Qh8+ Ke7 33.Qe5+ Kf8 34.Qh8+ Ke7



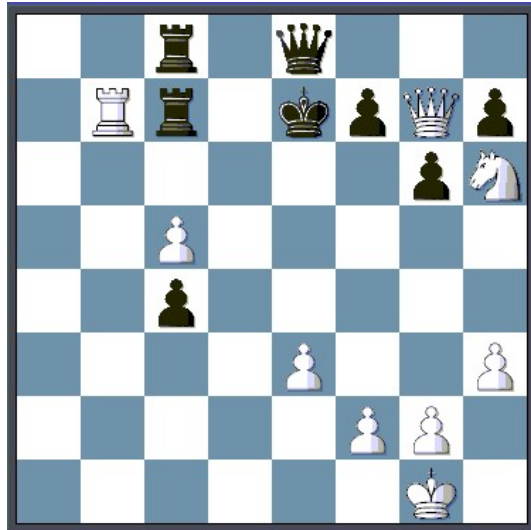
White is not content with a draw and continues sharply:

35.Qg7!? Qd1+!

The correct defense. After 35...Qe8? 36.Rb7+ White has a furious attack:

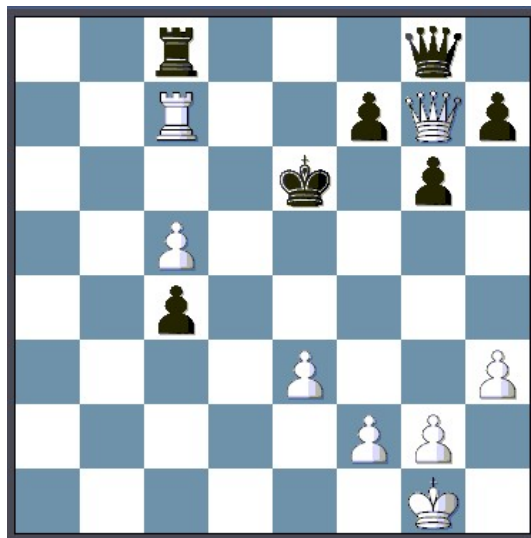
1) 36...R6c7?!

(Analysis diagram)



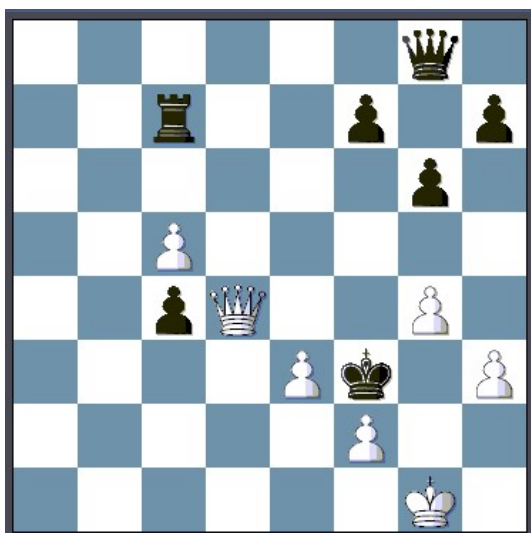
37.Ng8+! Qxg8 38.Rxc7+ Ke6

(Analysis diagram)



39.Qd4! Rxc7 40.Qd6+ Kf5 41.g4+ Ke4 (or 41...Kg5 42.Qf4 Kh4 43.Qh6#) 42. Qd4+ Kf3

(Analysis diagram)

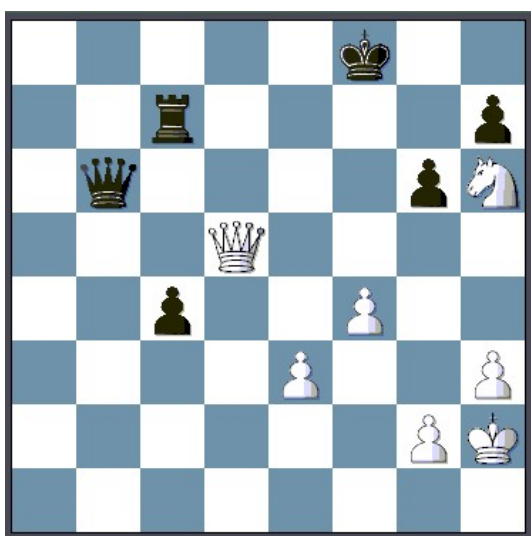


43.Kf1! with a mate next move.

2) 36...R8c7 37.Ng8+ and the attack goes on.

36.Kh2 Rxb6 37.Qxf7+ Kd8 38.cxb6 Qd6+ 39.f4 Qxb6 40.Qd5+ Ke7 41.Ng8+ Kf8 42.Nh6 Rc7?

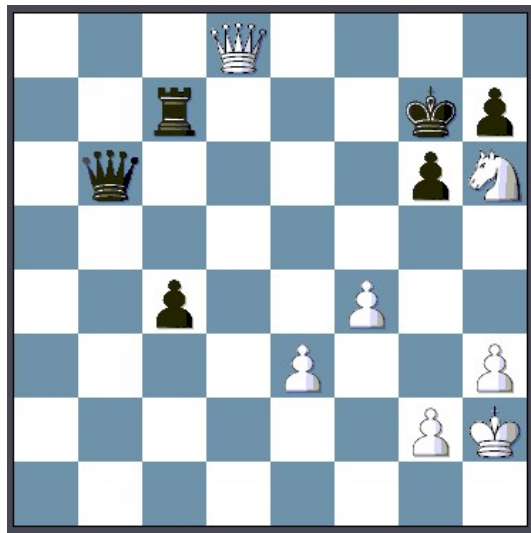
42...Ke7, with a probable repetition, was called for.



43.Qg8+

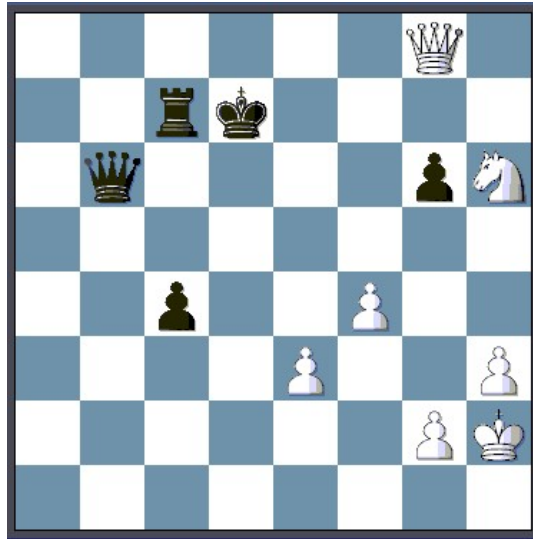
Better was 43.Qd8+ Kg7

(Analysis diagram)



And now: 44.g4!! Rb7 (44...Kxh6 45.Qf8+ Rg7 46.g5+ Kh5 47.Qxg7 etc.) 45.Qg8+ Kf6 46.g5+ Ke7 47.Qh7+ Kd8 48.Qg8+ Ke7 49.Qxc4 and wins.

43...Ke7 44.Qxh7+ Kd8 45.Qg8+ Kd7? (45...Ke7)

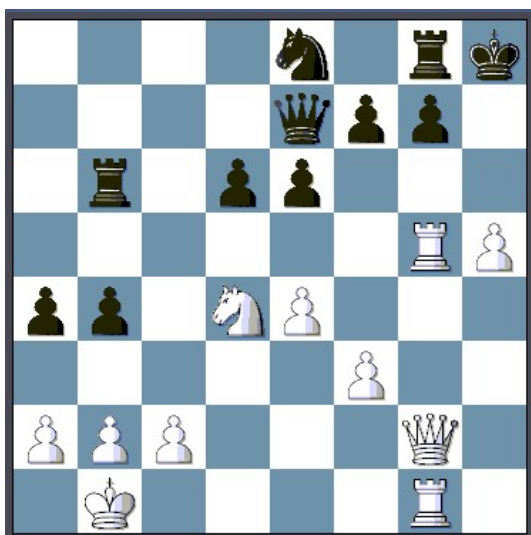


46.Ng4! Kc6 47.Qxc4+ and White won.

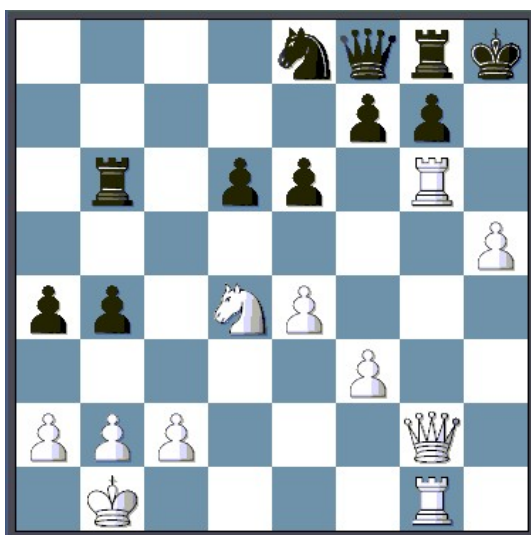
The Cubans struck a balance with the following game.

Dominguez (Cuba) – Gulko (USA)





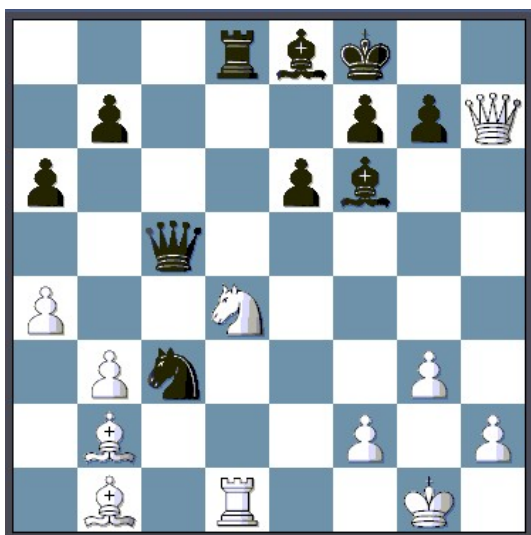
29.Rg6! (with the threat 30.Rh6+) **Qf8** (29...fxg6 is hardly better)



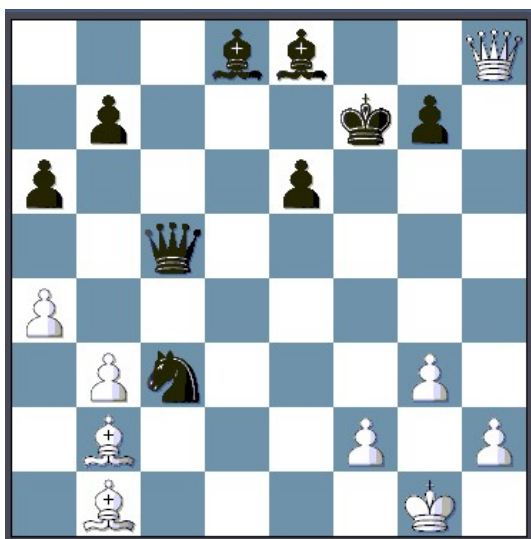
30.Nxe6! fxe6 **31.h6 Qf7 32.Rh1**, Black resigned.

The two other games in the match ended in a draw, but they were anything but boring. In both of them White made a fine combination, but then failed to convert the advantage.

Kaidanov (USA) – Nogueiras (Cuba)



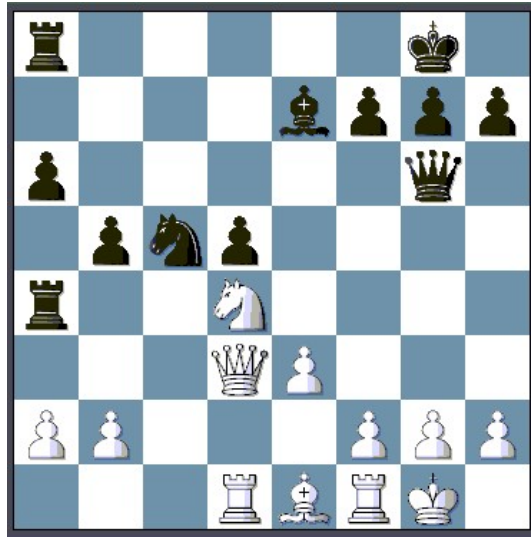
24.Nxe6+! fxe6 25.Rxd8 Bxd8 26.Qh8+ Kf7



27.Bg6+! Kxg6 28.Qxe8+ Kh7 29.Qxd8

White obtained a decisive advantage but later went astray.

Arencibia (Cuba) – Goldin (USA)



23.Nf5! Bf8 24.Qxd5

White is a pawn to the good but the game was eventually drawn.

Now everything is set for the decisive last round. The leading standings are: 1) China - 21 points; 2) Russia - 18.5; 3) Armenia - 16.5; 4) Ukraine -15.

Russia has to beat the Chinese not less than 3.5:0.5, in order to overtake them. This looks utterly unattainable, but as we all know, everything can happen in chess!

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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News

11/11/2005 @
04:32:00

Round 9: Russia After All

Russia overtakes China with a great win 3.5:0.5; A short draw with Cuba secures Armenia the Bronze; Minimal wins for Ukraine and USA against Georgia and Israel respectively.

The end is already known: Russia is the Team World Champion! In a dramatic last round the Russians accomplished the inconceivable and scored the 3.5 points required for the title.

All the attention in the Yad Labanim hall in Beer-Sheva has been focused today on the decisive match between Russia and China. It seemed that the other teams wanted to clear the stage and join the spectators of that thriller. Armenia made a short draw against Cuba, a result that practically ensured the former the third place. Ukraine beat Georgia 2.5:1.5 thanks to Karjakin's one-sided win against Mchedlishvili. USA defeated Israel with the same score after Ibragimov beat Erenburg and Gulko missed a win against Smirin. This match concluded a very disappointing tournament for the local team.



But the main action was elsewhere. The Russians came highly motivated, knowing that they can't concede more than half a point. The Chinese were just eager to get the required point and successfully conclude their most brilliant performance ever. This put enormous pressure on both teams, but it seems that the experienced Russians were psychologically better prepared.

The first game to finish was Bu-Svidler. The Chinese had a slight advantage but decided to repeat moves in order to bring the title a bit closer. It was a reasonable decision as half a point more, out of the remaining three games, would ensure the Chinese the Gold medals.

But it shortly turned out that this task was far from easy. The Chinese were clearly tensed and played much below their normal standard.

The first to get into trouble was Zhang Zhong, who faced a strong novelty on the fourth board.

Bareev (Russia) – Zhang Zhong (China)



13.Rd1 (after which 13...Ng3? fails to 14.Qc3) has been played many times in this position, but Bareev comes up with an improvement.

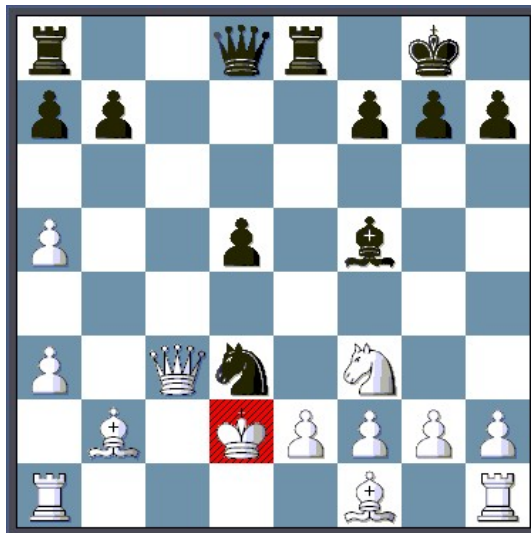
13.Qb3!

White simply wants to play e3 and complete his development, whereupon his extra pawn will tell. But he has to take in mind Black's reply.

13...Na5!? 14.Qd1!

It looks a strange maneuver, but White actually takes advantage of the knight moves in order to occupy the important d4 square. The alternative 14.bxa5? is very dangerous: 14...Nxc5 15.Qc3 Nd3+ 16.Kd2

(Analysis diagram)



16...d4! 17.Qxd4 (17.Nxd4 Nxf2) Nxb2, with a strong initiative (quite reminiscent of Bareev's game yesterday!).

14...Nc4 15.Qd4 Nf6?!

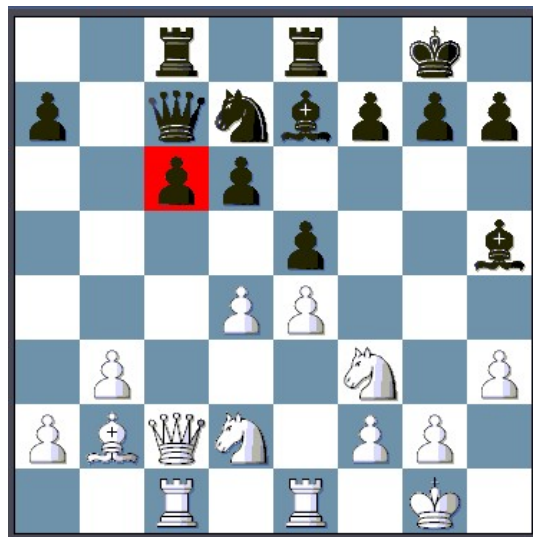
White already has the advantage, but 15...Nxb2 16.Qxb2 Ng5 offers Black more chances.

16.e3 Re4 17.Qc3 b6 18.Nd4 Bg6 19.Bxc4 dxc4 20.0-0 (20.Qxc4 is good as well) **axc5 21.bxc5**

White is a pawn up and his position is technically won. Bareev converted the advantage without problems.

At the same time Zhang Pengxiang has been positionally outplayed by Grischuk. The Russian wisely went for a strategic battle in the Rossolimo variation of the Sicilian, where his opponent was short of tactics. Under the circumstances, this sort of game proved particularly unpleasant for the Chinese.

Grischuk (Russia) – Zhang Pengxiang (China)



c6 is Black's main weakness and White goes for it without delay.

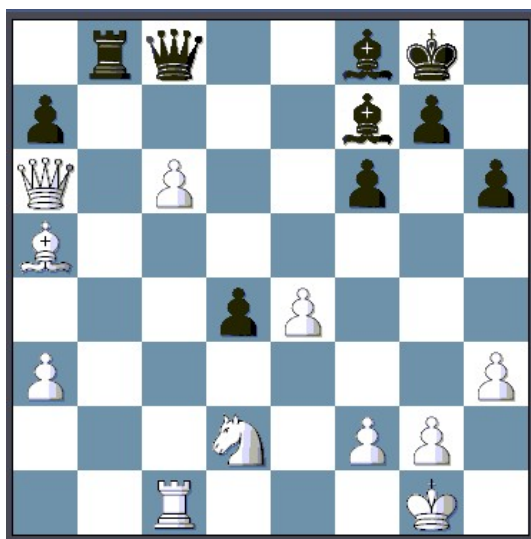
17.Re3! f6?

He has to play 17...exd4 instead, when a consequent Bf6 yields Black some counter-play against e4.

18.Rc3 c5 19.dxc5 dxc5 20.b4! Bf7 21.Ba3

White won a pawn and obtained a huge advantage.

A dozen moves later the following position has been accepted.



So everything depended on the confrontation between Ni Hua and Morozevich, the two stars of their teams. Ni Hua, a very gifted tactician, made a psychological mistake when he deviated from his normal aggressive repertoire in favor of a more peaceful opening line. While understandable, this approach just played into the Russian's hands. Morozevich is a very tough strategist and is more than happy with long maneuvering battles.

Ni Hua (China) – Morozevich (Russia)



16.Qxe5?

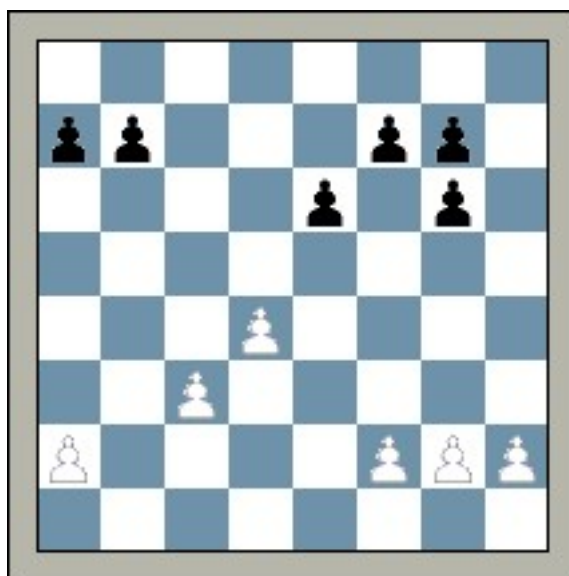
A positional mistake, which leaves the weak isolated pawn. After 16. dxe5 (idea Ne4-d6) Ng6 (16...Nxc3? loses to 17.Bxh7+) 17.Nxd5 Bxd5 (or 17...Qxd5 18.f4) 18.Be4, White maintains a small advantage.

16...Qb6 17.Qh5 Ng6 18.Bxg6?!

A typical decision when one plays for a draw. White longs for a position with bishops of opposite colors, but this way he deprives himself of any winning chances and makes Black's task easier. Now it's a game with just two plausible results.

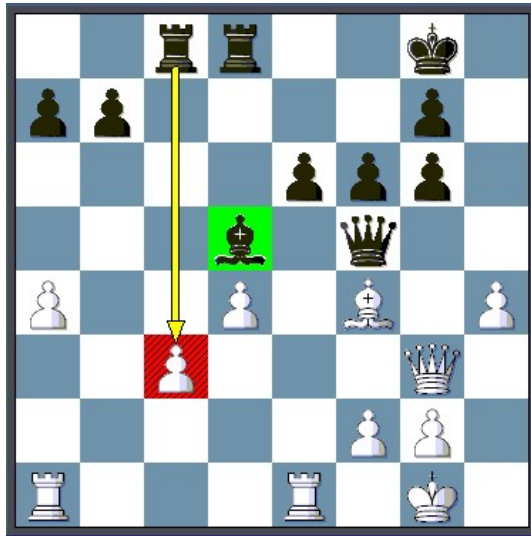
18...hxc6 19.Qh4 Nxc3! 20.bxc3

As a rule, what counts in positions with heavy pieces and opposite-color bishops, is the safety of the king and the pawn structure.



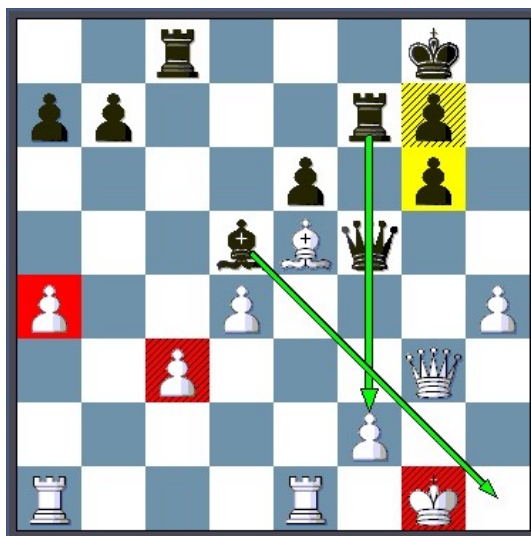
Here White has two weaknesses (c3 and a2) whereas Black's pawn array is immune.

20...Qb5! 21.Re1 Rac8 22.Qg3 Rfd8 23.h4 Qf5! 24.Bf4 f6 25.a4
Bd5



With simple and strong moves Black has consolidated a considerable advantage. His mighty bishop controls all the key squares and his rooks are targeting White's weaknesses. Instead of standing still White initiates some complications now. Alas, they are favorable for Black.

26.Bd6?! Bxg2! 27.Be7 (27.Kxg2 Qd5+) Rd7 28.Bxf6 Bd5 29.Bd5
Rf7

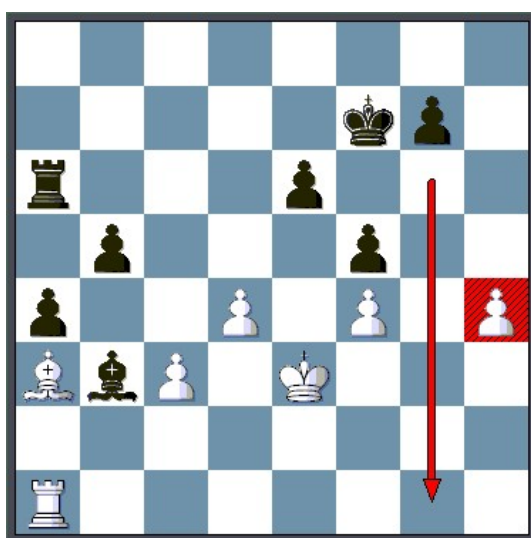


Now also the white king is endangered (Black already threatens 30...

Rxc3!) while the double g' pawns condense the defense of the Black king. Therefore Black enjoys a clear advantage.

Consequently Ni has tried to simplify the position by swapping queens. It cost him a pawn but gave him some hopes of building a fortress.

By this time all the other games had been finished and the exciting event reached a proper climax. A single game is being played in front of a huge audience. In case of a draw – China wins the championship; if Black wins, Russia becomes the world champion.

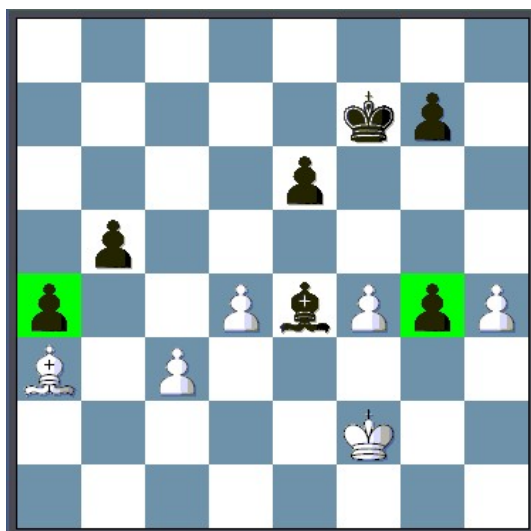


In order to make progress, Black has to activate his rook. Morozevich locates the only open file, from which the rook can invade.

44...Ra8 45.Kf2 Rh8 46.Rh1 Bd5 47.Rh3 Be4 48.Ke3 Rh6! 49.h5

After 49.Kf2 Rg6 50.Rg3 Rg4! 51.Rxg4 fxg4

(Analysis diagram)

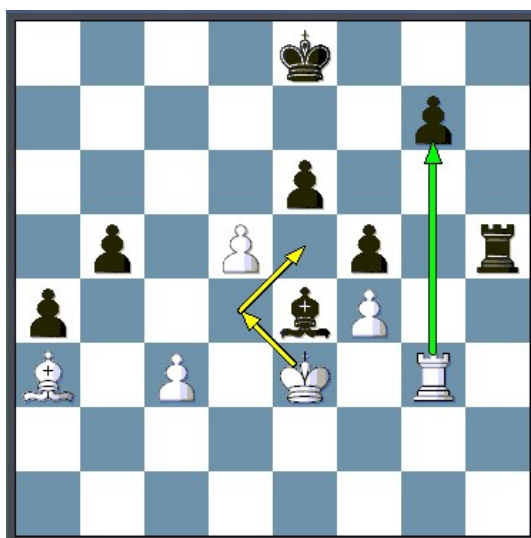


Black easily wins thanks to his two passed pawns. His king will simply go to b3.

49...Ke8!

Now the king heads for c4, so White is forced to look for counter-play. But this way he allows the invasion of the Black rook.

50.Rg3 Rxh5 51.d5!? In order to activate his king, as 51.Rxg7 Rh3+ was just hopeless.



51...g5!

The clearest way to the win: Black creates another passed pawn.

52.dxe6

Or 52.Rxg5 (52.fxg5 e5) Rxg5 53.fxg5 e5 54.d6 Bc6 and Black wins easily by advancing the central pawns and attacking the g' pawn.

52...g4 53.Kd4 Rh3 54.Rg1

54.Re3 was better but the position is totally lost anyway.

54...g3 55.Ke5 g2 56.Rd1 Rh1 57.Rd7 g1=Q 58.Bd6 Bc6 and White resigned.



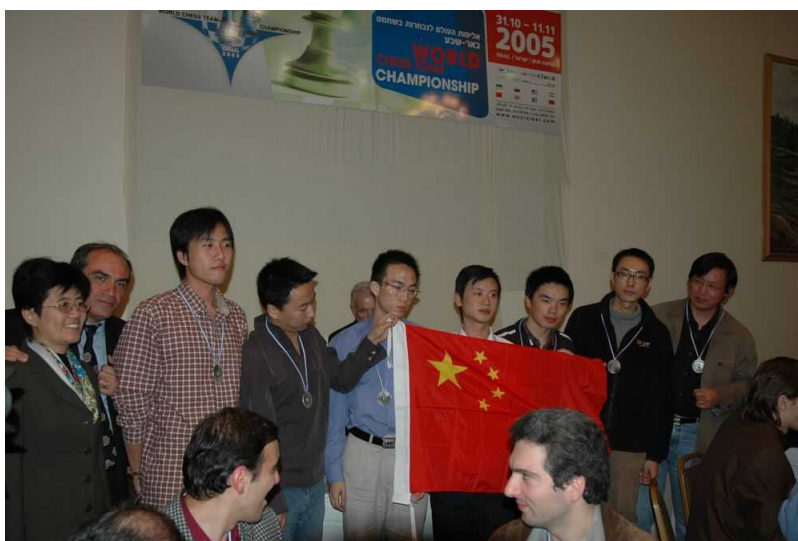
Winner's joy

Thus the Russians fulfilled their goal, which became all the more important after the Gothenburg fiasco. They were probably not the team who played the best chess in Beer-Sheva, but it takes a champion's character to win a decisive match like that.



Champion: Russia

The Chinese must be extremely disappointed after already having the world title in the bag. But they played absolutely brilliantly throughout the event and proved that they belong to the top of the top. And nothing, not even such a dreadful defeat, can overshadow their performance.



Runner up: China

Report by Alon Greenfeld

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