



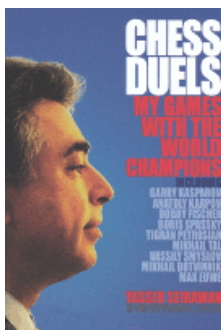
COLUMNISTS

Inside Chess

Yasser Seirawan



Translate this page



Play through and download the games from [ChessCafe.com](#) in the [ChessBase Game Viewer](#).

Free Shipping!
On all Orders
More than \$95!

UPS GROUND or Media Mail.

Inside Chess, 1998/11

S.W.I.F.T. World Cup I, Part Two
by Yasser Seirawan

Round Three

The three decisive games of this round made a strange impression. Sokolov seemed to have only the smallest of edges against Nikolic. It was very surprising to see Predrag getting ground down. Portisch was ambushed as White against Sax in a topical Catalan. From a totally winning position Gyula played progressively worse, ending with a fat zero for his opening efforts. After this game, much of Gyula's ambition got zapped and he was never really the same for the rest of the tournament.

Salov enjoyed the same kind of good fortune as Portisch. Winants surprised Salov by playing the ...Bc5 variation of the Ruy Lopez. Luc had a very good position when he made a romantic exchange sacrifice. Had Luc continued with 20...Rd7, then Salov would've been in big trouble. As it was, Salov made the most of his chances and followed up with a piece sacrifice. In the end, Luc's king was driven from g8 to b3, where he finally came to rest.

There were four pretty standard GM draws: Tal-Karpov, Ljubojevic-Speelman, Nogueiras-Andersson, and Timman-Seirawan.

There were also two hard-fought draws. Nunn-Kortchnoi was an amazing game. Viktor completely overlooked a pawn in the opening and was stone-cold lost. Combining this with the fact that John had a scintillating attack, we all expected a quick resolution. John began to lose his way as Viktor was forced to play more resourcefully. Eventually, in a harrowing time scramble, John was a piece down and lost. A few lemons by Viktor at the end of the time scramble gave John new life and the game was agreed drawn.

This round's fare is an interesting strategic struggle between Big Al and the very creative Rafael Vaganian.

Beliavsky, Alexander (2645) – Vaganian, Rafael (2625)
S.W.I.F.T. (3) 1988
Catalan [E05]

1.d4 e6 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bd2



[FEN "rn1q1rk1/1bp1bPPP/p3pn2/1p6/3P4/5NP1/PPQBPPBP/RN3RK1 b - - 0 10"]

So far we're in a standard variation of the Catalan. White's last move is an

Purchases from our [chess shop](#) help keep [ChessCafe.com](#) freely accessible:



[Chess Informant 112](#)
by Chess Informant



[No Fear of 1.d4, Vol. 1: Catalan & Queen's Indian](#)
by Sergei Tiviakov



[Chess King Training: Strategy](#)
by Chess King

idea introduced by GM Genna Sosonko. The whole position turns on Black's ability to get in the freeing break ...c7-c5. If Black fails to get this move in, he is usually tortured in a positional vise. The standard way for Black to prepare ...c7-c5 is to play ...Nbd7, against which White's last move is directed. White would follow with the unusual idea of 11.Ba5, pinning the c7-pawn. The drawback of 10.Bd2 is that the bishop stands passively while the immediate Ba5 is not a threat because of ...Nc6. White's other idea is Rc1, pressuring c7, as well as aiming to control the c5-square. For this reason Black often continues with 10...Be4, provoking Qe1, then retreats with 11...Bb7. A strange way to ask White what he's doing.

10...Be4 11.Qc1 Nbd7!?

Interesting. Black accepts White's challenge and asks him to prove that the bishop on a5 will be well placed. Most GMs have been loath to allow White to complete his restraining idea.

12.Ba5 Rc8 13.Nc3 Ba8 14.a4

The most aggressive. White had another, more positional, option with 14.Qc2 Bd6 15.b4 Qe7 16.a3 e5 17.e4. The position is rich in plans. Once White plays a4, it becomes far more difficult to restrain ...c7-c5 with b2-b4, as the b-pawn can no longer be supported by a pawn.

14...Rb8 15.axb5 axb5 16.b4

White burns his bridges anyway. With the queenside temporarily locked, the action shifts to the center, with the struggle revolving around the advance of the e-pawns.

16...Bd6 17.Qc2

My choice here is 17.Qb1. In that case White would play e2-e4 and swing his queen's rook to a2-d2.

17...Qe7 18.Rab1 e5 19.e4 g6!



[FEN "br3rk1/2pnqp1p/3b1np1/Bp2p3/1P1PP3/2N2NP1/2Q2PBP/1R3RK1 w - - 0 20"]

Black prepares to capture on d4 and follow through with ...c7-c5. First, he takes precautions against a possible Nxd4-f5 maneuver.

20.Rfe1 c6!

A difficult move to size up. Black voluntarily buries his bishop on a8 while adopting a wait-and-see approach to the position. It is equally difficult for both players to build their positions any further. Note that active play with 20...exd4? allows 21.e5! Nxe5 22.Nxe5 Bxe5 23.Bxa8 Rxa8 24.Nxb5, when Black is in a lot of trouble.

21.Rbd1 Rfe8 22.dxe5 Nxe5 23.Nxe5 Bxe5 24.h3 Qa7!

One of those small but all-important moves. Black wants to play ...c6-c5, but also wants to avoid the problems associated with leaving his queen in the center. For example, 24...c5 25.Nd5 Nxd5 26.exd5 cxb4 27.d6 with a big

edge. Black gains a tempo because of his transparent threat Bxg3.

25.Kh2 c5! 26.Nd5 Bxd5 27.exd5 Bd6!



[FEN "1r2r1k1/q4p1p/3b1np1/BppP4/1P6/6PP/2Q2PBK/3RR3 w - - 0 28"]

Again, careful but excellent play. The d-pawn is blockaded while Black's threats of ...c5-c4 and ...cxb4 have become more significant than the passed d-pawn.

28.bxc5 Qxa5 29.cxd6 Rxe1 1/2-1/2

A likely continuation would be 30.Qc7 Qxc7 31.dxc7 Rc8 32.Rxe1 Rxc7 33.Rb1 Rb7 34.d6 Rd7 equal. A difficult and invigorating struggle.

Round Four

A GM playing the black pieces must always walk a fine line when facing an IM spoiling for an upset. On the one hand, a victory is often crucial for top honors. On the other, a loss means a poor tournament. So does a GM have to play provocatively to win, or should he play solidly in hopes a mistake will come his way? In Winants-Speelman, Jonathan clearly crossed the line. He was dead. Crunched and destroyed. Then came one of the most amazing resources played in the entire tournament:



[FEN "r3q3/1b4Bk/pNpR2pp/Q7/2P3n1/1P2p3/P3N1PP/6K1 b - - 0 32"]

32...Rd8!!, turning a lost game into a murky one that was still lost. Luc went berserk and had to resign before getting mated. This game had a critical affect on both players. It pushed Speelman into clear first and exploded Luc's balloon. After this loss, Luc played some bad chess.

As Vaganian-Timman and Nikolic-Ljubojevic ended in quick draws, the rest of the games approached time pressure. In Andersson-Tal, White held a nice structural advantage throughout the game. Tal had to play very well to draw. Sax-Beliavsky was a delayed Spanish with d2-d3. This slow treatment also has venom. Despite having a more comfortable game, Gyula was probably content to draw after the previous round's disaster.

Kortchnoi-Sokolov was an important game for the gambit variation in the Catalan. Viktor always had compensation for his pawn. When he won it back there was nothing left in the position.

Salov-Nogueiras had both come thoroughly prepared to dispute a mainline Meran. Nogueiras came with more fireworks and deserved to win a thriller of a game. By crafty means Salov managed to save it.

Karpov-Portisch was a very strange affair. Karpov was playing in his typical push-the-pieces-around-the-board style when, just after the time control, he completely overlooked Lajos' threat from a fairly equal position. In order to avoid getting mated down the h-file, Karpov was forced to sacrifice a pawn, after which he was dead lost. Lajos found some absurd moves, giving Karpov just enough counterplay for a draw. An incredible escape.

This round's entertainment was brought to us courtesy of the good Dr. Nunn. But let's have Nunn speak for himself. See "Nunn's Swifties," page 16.

Round Five

The players got a nasty shock today during the afternoon buffet. Rafael Vaganian withdrew from the tournament and flew back to Erevan. His brother had been ill for some time. This meant that Rafael's result in the tournament didn't count.

This was a great day for the players with the white pieces. The three decisive games were won by white. The big news was Beliavsky-Karpov, It was a real wear-'em-down, hard-fought battle. It was a marvelous victory for Big Al and our featured game this round. Timman-Sax was a smooth win for Jan. Poor Gyula was vacillating about how to conduct his defense. After wasting a lot of tempi he was relieved of the decision about how to defend. Nogueiras-Winants was a one-sided affair. Luc had been working with Genna Sosonko prior to the tournament, and as a result usually performed admirably for the first fifteen moves or so. Today was a different case. Luc fell for a well-known opening trap and never recovered.

Ljubojevic-Kortchnoi was a strange game. Viktor seemed to go berserk in the opening and Ljubo was happy to watch Viktor hang himself. The position was completely winning for Ljubo when Viktor began defending like a tiger. It should've been too late, but Viktor outplayed Ljubo in the ending and the game was drawn by repetition.

Sokolov-Seirawan, Speelman-Nikolic, and Tal-Salov were all dull affairs with no real dangers for anybody. Portisch-Andersson dragged out for a long time. Apparently Lajos has won a number of endings against Ulf and hoped to add to his collection. Ulf had other ideas and at the very end stood better, but not enough for victory.

Beliavsky, Alexander (2645) – Karpov, Anatoly (2715)

S.W.I.F. T. (5) 1988

Catalan [E05]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bd2 Nc6?!



[FEN "r2q1rk1/1bp1bPPP/p1n1pn2/1p6/3P4/5NP1/PPQBPPBP/RN3RK1 w -- 0 11"]

Vaganian choice, as we've seen, is 10...Nbd7. I don't understand how the text fits in Black's plan of securing the break ...c7-c5.

11.e3?

A bad move that justifies Black's last. White had two distinctly better choices: 11.a3 and 11.Rd1. My preference is 11.a3, preventing Nb4 while preparing Bc3 and Nbd2. Also, 11.a3 prepares a possible b2-b4. The threat to the d-pawn is illusory: 11.a3 Nxd4? 12.Nxd4 Bxg2 13.Nxe6 fxe6 14.Kxg2 Qd5+ 15.f3 yields White an advantage for two reasons: his structure is superior and he's going to pick up some tempi against Black's queen. Because of this variation, I can see why some players might prefer 11.Rd1.

11...Nb4! 12.Bxb4 Bxb4 13.a3 Bd6 14.Nbd2 Rc8?!





[FEN "1q1r1k2/1bQ1bPPP/4pn2/1p1PN3/rP2P3/6P1/3N1PBP/1R2R1K1 w - - 0 24"]

Handing back the initiative. White's position looks convincing enough, but in fact he has no advantage at all. Anatoly complained to me at lunch the following day that 23...Ra7 is dead equality: 24.Qb6 (26.dxe6? Rxd2!-) 24...exd5 25.exd5 Bxd5! (25...Nxd5 26.Qxb5) 26.Bxd5 Rxd5. I agreed. After 23...Qb8, Black regains material equality, but finds that White's passed d-pawn is superior to his own passed b-pawn.

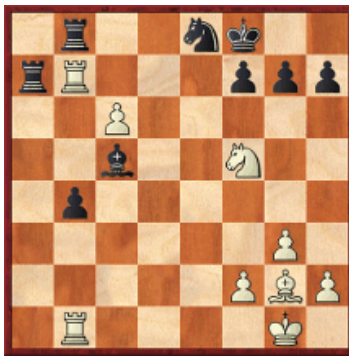
24.Qxb8 Rxb8 25.Nb3 Bxb4 26.Rec1

Interesting. When first analyzing the game, I couldn't understand why Big Al didn't play the more direct 26.Red1. Later, I realized that he first wants to entice Black's bishop to a3, so that Black can't drop anchor with a possible ...Bc3 and b5-b4.

26...exd5 27.exd5 Ba3 28.Rd1 Bd6 29.Nc6 Bxc6 30.dxc6 Ne8

White enjoys a big advantage. The opposite-colored bishops work in White's favor, as Black can't challenge White, the aggressor, on the light squares.

31.Nd4 b4 32.Nf5 Bc5 33.Rd7 Ra7! 34.Rb7!



[FEN "1r2nk2/rR3ppp/2P5/2b2N2/1p6/6P1/5PBP/1R4K1 b - - 0 34"]

An excellent move. Beliavsky rightly avoids 34.Rc1 b3! 35.Be4 Nf6 36.c7 (36.Rxa7 Bxa7 37.c7 Rc8=) 36...Rxc7 37.Rxc7 b2 38.R7xc5 bxc1=Q+ 39.Rxc1 Nxe4=.

34...Rd8?

In severe time pressure Karpov misses his best chance. He had to try 34...Raxb7 35.cxb7 Nd6. White now has his choice of two very pleasant positions, either an opposite-colored bishops ending, or a better pawn ending: 36.Nxd6 Bxd6 37.Rc1 Ke7 38.Bd5 Black's activity is limited. Let's say Black pushes ...f7-f6. White can then play Rc8 and remain there unchallenged, as ...Kd7 and ...Rxc8 is never a threat due to Be6+. I like White's chances. The real question is whether White can win if Black keeps his pawn on f1. Others might prefer 36.Rc1 Nxf5 37.Rxc5 Nd6 38.Rc7 b3 39.Rc3 Ke7 40.Rxb3 Kd7 41.Bd5 f6 42.Kg2 Kc7 43.Kf3 Nxb7. Now, should White exchange immediately or try 44.Be4? If Black pushes another pawn, the pawn ending holds more chances for White. So, maybe Black should keep minors on by 44...Nd6. Readers are asked to comment on the pawn ending. In any case, if

Anatoly's intentions were to save himself from being tortured, he was successful. The text loses.

35.Rc1 Ra5 36.Bh3!

Controls the queening square and prevents the threatened Bxf2+ and Rxf5.

36...g6 37.Nh6 Nd6 38.Nxf7! Nxf7 39.c7 Re8 40.c8Q?



[FEN "2Q1rk2/1R3n1p/6p1/r1b5/1p6/6PB/5P1P/2R3K1 b - - 0 40"]

Al was in a bit of zeitnot also, so we should forgive his eagerness. But 40.Rb8 Nd6 41.Bd7 is immediately decisive. It is surprising to see Karpov playing on so long.

40...Rxc8 41.Bxc8 Nd6 42.Rb8 Ke7 43.Re1+ Kf6 44.Be6 Ra3 45.Kg2 Ra7 46.Bd5 Nf5 47.Re6+ Kg7 48.Rc6 Be7 49.h4 Ra5 50.Bc4 Ra7 51.h5 Nd6 52.hxg6 hxg6 53.Rxb4 Ra1 54.Bd3 g5 55.Rd4 Nf7 56.Rd7 Re1 57.Bc4 Kf8 58.Bxf7 Kxf7 59.Kf3 Ke8 60.Ra7 1-0

Karpov was annoyed with himself for this loss and went on a rampage for the rest of the tournament.

A PDF file of [this month's column](#), along with all previous columns, is available in the [ChessCafe.com Archives](#).

Comment on this month's column via our [Contact Page](#)! Pertinent responses will be posted below daily.

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

 [ABOUT THE CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[ChessCafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Review\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)
[\[Endgame Study\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[ChessCafe Archives\]](#)
[\[ChessCafe Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About ChessCafe.com\]](#)
[\[Contact ChessCafe.com\]](#)

© 2012 BrainGamz, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
"ChessCafe.com®" is a registered trademark of BrainGamz, Inc.