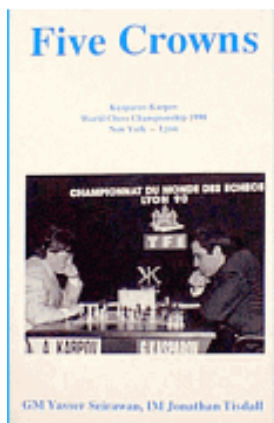


Inside Chess

Yasser Seirawan

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Yasser Annotates:

Karpov-Gelfand
Sanghi Nagar (2) 1995

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.Bg2 d5 5.cxd5 cxd5

Anatoly has often used this quiet line against both the Grunfeld and KID. He is a master at squeezing the most from a symmetrical position.

6.Nf3 Bg7 7.Nc3 Ne4! 8.Qb3 Nxc3 9.bxc3 Nc6

I don't believe that this particular position is dangerous for Black, but his last move overlooks the danger to his King. An immediate 9...O-O 10.Nd2!? e6 11.e4!? Nc6! seems fine for Black.

10.Nd2 e6 11.Ba3!

White's point. His Bishop has found a most pleasant diagonal. White also has the levers e2-e4 and c3-c4 to open the position, while Black doesn't have similar possibilities.

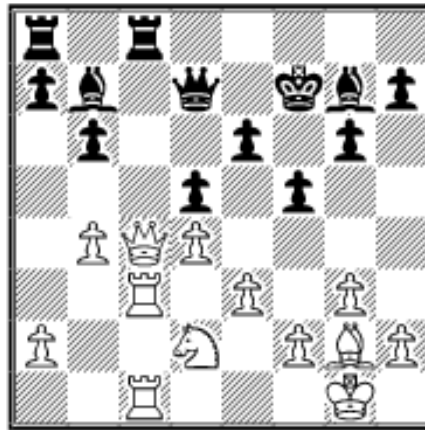
11...f5

A brave, maybe even rash, decision born of necessity. White's e2-e4 was just too unpleasant to face. While the text slows e2-e4 down, Black is now playing either a horrible Dutch Defense or at best a misguided Leningrad Dutch (or is that the St. Petersburg Dutch now?).

12.e3!?

Understandably, White is anxious to crack Black open with c3-c4. Nothing wrong with that, though 12.O-O! b6 13.f3, winding up for the big e2-e4, looks terrific.

12...Na5 13.Qb2 b6 14.Bb4 Nc6 15.c4! Nxb4 16.Qxb4 Bb7 17.Rc1 Qd7 18.O-O Kf7 19.Rc3 Rhc8 20.Rfc1



White has emerged from the opening with a sizable advantage. Positional threats abound. Black might be left with a hard-to-defend d5-pawn, an impotent g7-Bishop or White might succeed in seizing the c-file when it's all over. Facing so many difficulties isn't easy.

20...Kg8

Trying to ensure the safety of his

King.

21.R1c2!!

Very nice. Anatoly is playing for a version of "Alekhine's gun." That is, tripling on the c-file with the Queen as the back up or trigger. After Qb4-b2-c1, a Rook invasion to the seventh is curtains for Black.

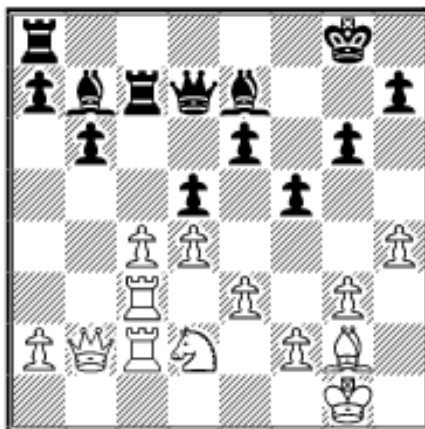
21...Bf8 22.Qb2 Be7

Black's game is becoming desperate. There is nothing to do but defend. The text envisions the need for ...Be7-d8.

23.h4!

Playing to create weaknesses on both sides of the board. The text is a useful mechanism for escaping any back rank checks and for securing the f4-square. The immediate 23.Qc1? is hit with ...Be7-b4, and an exchange on d2.

23...Rc7



24.Nf3?

After carefully crafting a huge advantage, White gives a lot back. The direct 24.cxd5 Rxc3 25.Rxc3 Bxd5!? 26.Qc2 Bxg2 27.Kxg2 (27.Rc7!?) 27...Bb4 28.Rc7 Qd5+ 29.Nf3 is a strategic win due to White's mastery over the c-file.

24...Bf6 25.cxd5 Rxc3 26.Rxc3 Bxd5 27.Qc1 Bb7!

Anatoly might've missed this shot when playing 24.Nf3. Now Black is

given a chance to exchange his passive a8-Rook. He still has problems, but things aren't as bad as they were.

28.Ne1! Rc8 29.Bxb7 Rxc3 30.Qxc3 Qxb7 31.Nd3 Kf7 32.Nf4

White has managed to achieve the favorable Q&N combination versus Q&B, but Black has no weak d5-pawn, nor is there a Rc3-c7 menace.

32...Qd7 33.a4! h6 34.Qc4 g5

A necessary weakening. White was threatening d4-d5, breaking open Black's King position. The text makes the f5-pawn particularly vulnerable to g3-g4 possibilities. Despite his best efforts, Black is still in a lot of trouble.

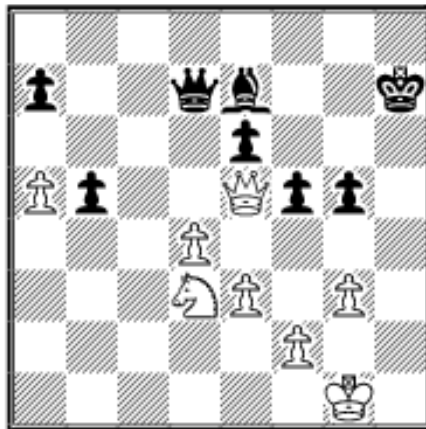
35.hxg5 hxg5 36.Nd3 Kg7 37.a5

This seems a little rushed to me. Black's queenside is going nowhere. I'd prefer 37.Kf1 and Ke2 before deciding on the text. Exploring the resulting position with Qc4-b5 looks like a nice torture.

37...b5

This had to be done. Allowing White to play a5-a6 and to worm a Knight to c6 or a Queen to b7 is death. At least now Black can cling to the hope that the b5-pawn can perform a miracle.

38.Qc5 Be7 39.Qe5+ Kh7



40.Nc5??

The last move of the time control and a real clunker. If the text doesn't win by force, then it's simply bad, as it allows Black to trade his lousy Bishop for a great Knight. White can massage the position by 40.Qb8, intending a5-a6 and Qb8-b7 at a future moment. The attractive 40.g4 Bd6 41.Qf6 Qe7 allows Black to exchange Queens.

40...Bxc5 41.Qxc5

Anatoly must've realized his miscue. If 41.dxc5 b4 42.Qd6 Qxd6 43.cxd6 b3, both players Queen.

41...a6! 42.g4 fxg4 43.Qxg5 b4! 44. Qh5+ Kg8 45.Qg5+ Kh7 46.Qh5+ Kg8 Draw

Black's passed b4-pawn is sufficient counterplay. It's not everyday that Karpov misplays an advantage this big.

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