

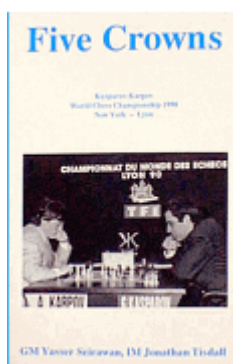


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## Yasser Annotates:

Timman - Karpov, Hoogeveen 1999

*Jan Timman-Anatoly Karpov*

Nimzo-Indian E21

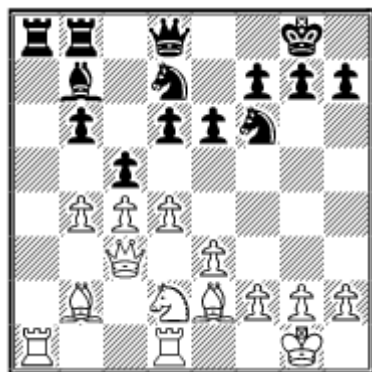
**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 b6 5.Qb3**

Imitation is said to be a sincere form of flattery and I was rather pleased to see Jan playing one of my favorite systems against the QID. A pity I couldn't convince him to do that in 1993 during his FIDE Championship match with Anatoly!

**5...Qe7?!**

Not the most challenging line, White gains the two bishops and a small, but nagging, advantage.

**6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.Qxc3 Bb7 8.e3 O-O 9. Be2 d6 10.O-O Nbd7 11.b4 c5 12. Bb2 a5 13.Rfd1 axb4 14.axb4 Rfb8 15.Nd2 Qd8**



**16.f3!**

A key move, as White effectively neutralizes the b7-bishop and the f6-knight. Apparently, Karpov is comfortable here, but Vladimir Kramnik, for one, has shown that even the ever resilient Karpov can have difficulties holding such positions.

**16...Rxa1 17.Bxa1 Ra8 18.Bd3 Qc7 19.Bc2!**

White's position isn't exactly bursting with ideas, but using the light-squared bishop to keep the a8-rook under control is quite important. The bishops operate on the long diagonals in combination with the queen, enabling White to generate threats, thus combining offense and defense.

**19...Rc8?!**

Karpov seems a bit adrift here. More purposeful was 19...Ne8, covering the d6-pawn and detangling the knights.

**20.dxc5 dxc5**

The imbalance after 20...bxc5 21.b5 favors White, but that may have been a better choice.

### 21.b5!

Shutting down play on the queenside and ensuring himself an enduring plus.

### 21...Ne8

An indication that Black's life isn't a comfortable one. The text aims to play ...f7-f6 and set up a long-diagonal blockade similar to White's. After 21...e5 22.Bf5, White has a pleasant advantage.

### 22.Ne4 f6 23.Qd3!

A powerful shift, White now threatens to invade on the d6-square.

### 23...Bxe4

This unfortunate capture seems necessary. After 23...Nf8 24.Nd6 Rd8 25.Nxe8 Rxe8, 26.Qd6 is a decisive invasion, as the b6-pawn will be lopped off. But now White is left with the two bishops and greater space.

### 24.Qxe4 Nf8 25.Qd3!

Keeping the squeeze on the e8-knight. The shift ...Ne8-d7-f7, increasing the knight's activity and enabling Black to challenge the d-file, is prevented.

### 25...Kf7!

Karpov earned his reputation as a tenacious defender and here he shows that, despite the awkward position, he is prepared to resist as best he can. The king emerges from his lair in order to cover entry squares on the d-file, while supporting a hop of the e8-knight. If Black is ever able to trade the major pieces, he will have a fine game.

### 26.Bc3! Ke7

A tough decision. Perhaps better was 26...Ra8, covering the a-file.

### 27.Ra1 Rd8 28.Qe2 Nd6 29.f4 Kf7

Black's restricted position is hampering the effectiveness of his pieces. But 29...Nf7 30.Qg4 would provoke weaknesses in Black's camp.



### 30.e4!

Simply seizing more space, while looking for an opportunity to crack open the position with pawn trades. There is a danger that White will block the diagonals for his bishops, but this is outweighed by the desire to further clamp down on Black's position.

**30...Nc8 31.e5 f5 32.Qf3**

Admirable restraint, Jan must have been sorely tempted to play 32.g4, in order to rip open the position. In that case, 32...Ne7 33.gxf5 Nxf5 34.Bxf5 exf5 35.Qh5+ g6 36.Qh4 Qe7 is no certainty for White. The e6-square will offer Black's knight a terrific view of the position.

**32...Ne7 33.h3 Kg8 34.Kh2 Nfg6 35.g3 Kf7?! 36.h4 Kg8 37.h5**

