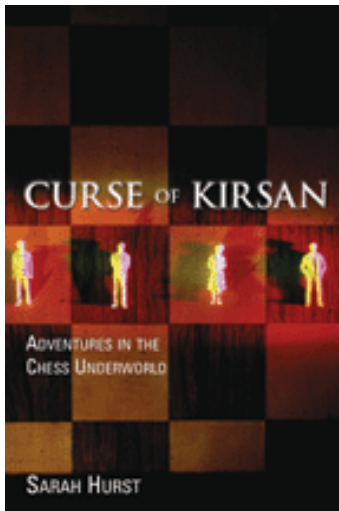




COLUMNISTS

Misha Interviews...

Misha Savinov



Interview with Yelena Dembo

Yelena Dembo WGM, IM. Born in 1983. Current FIDE rating 2461. Ranked #19 on women's rating list. Bronze medalist of the 2005 European Women's Championship. Lives in Greece.

Misha Savinov: Where were you born?

Yelena Dembo: I was born in Penza (which is south-east of Moscow) in December, 1983. I'm a Sagittarius with all the traits typical for this sign.

MS: You come from a chess-playing family – tell us about your parents.

YD: My mother, Nadezhda Fokina, finished secondary school and music school for piano with top grades, receiving a gold medal for excellence, and she graduated with honors from Rostov University, philological faculty. But her main achievements were in chess. She received gold and silver medals playing for the Military Forces team in the 1966 USSR Team championship and the Russian team in the 1967 USSR Spartakiad. Other players in those teams included Spassky, Polugaevsky, Geller, Vasiukov... What names! After the university my mother started working as chess trainer. Her pupils played very well! When we moved to Israel, she played on their team at the 1992 Chess Olympiad in Manila.

My father, Vladimir Dembo, graduated with excellence from Leningrad Conservatory as a pianist. He taught piano in a music school, and toured with concerts, playing as a soloist and in ensembles. He was also my mother's chess trainer after they got married, assisting her to advance from first category to the national master title! My father was also interested in journalism and psychology. He often lectured in colleges and schools, and his favorite topic was "How to develop talent in ordinary kids"!

MS: Do you remember when you were taught chess? You began at an unusually young age. How can one maintain a child's interest, especially after losses?

YD: Unfortunately, I don't remember my debut – more than 20 years has passed since! The question of how to teach children is incredibly interesting!



However, it is also vast, and it can't be discussed seriously in a couple of sentences. Those people who are really interested should consider taking lessons from me or my father. It is a science! As for losses: of course, a kid *must not* lose!



MS: As a youngster, did you want to become a professional player?

YD: No, I never thought of my future. It was a bit early...

MS: Did your parents completely form your chess preferences?

YD: First, I want to make it clear that the only trainer I have had since the age of 3 was my father. Of course, he began forming my chess beliefs from the very first lessons. Once again, it is a science. Teaching a kid, developing a style, developing views on chess and life in general – these are very complex tasks. Father “fed” me with Capablanca and Fischer, but he also created a number of special exercises. He used to say: “You don’t have to become a chess player, but you have to be smart.”

MS: When did you start reading? What kind of chess literature did you prefer?

YD: At 2½, I read Russian fluently and could read a little in English. Many found this shocking or looked upon me with suspicion. I started reading about chess at 5 or 6, together with my father. At that time my favorite player was Robert Fischer. And, of course, we examined games and game fragments of hundreds of excellent players. First and foremost, we sought art in those games – like in music or painting.

MS: What does your experience suggest about the optimal age to become acquainted with chess?

YD: Of course, the sooner one starts, the better it is! The main issue is how

to conduct the lessons. We started with half-a-minute and one-minute sessions, and these had to end on a high note in order to make me eagerly anticipate the next lesson. Teaching a child requires great skill. My father says that the younger a pupil, the more skilled his pedagogue has to be at teaching children. One does not need to have a sky-high Elo rating, but the ability to teach a child difficult concepts is critical.



MS: When did you start playing in tournaments?

YD: I played my first tournament at 3 years and 9 months against boys of 9-12 years old. At 4 years and a month I fulfilled the 4th category requirements, and was featured on local TV. There was also a big newspaper article, written by the head of psychology and pedagogy department of the Kuibyshev University.

MS: Did you write down the moves of your games? Do you still have the scoresheets?

YD: I did not keep the score of the earliest games, but I began writing the moves when I turned 5. My parents managed to save four copy-books of my games – despite emigration! It is amazing study material! Using this tool, one could make a talented player of anyone.

MS: Could you discuss your most memorable failure?

YD: There were no real failures in my life.

MS: Your family traveled extensively. Was it intended to assist your chess development?

YD: When I was 7, we immigrated to Israel. Of course, my parents took my chess career into consideration, but mainly we escaped the terrible chaos of the country. The shelves in the shops were always empty. It took three hours just to buy meat and there was a militiaman with a gun patrolling the line. Well, we just had to leave.

So, we settled in the best district of Tel Aviv. Not because my parents were very rich, but they wanted me to attend the best schools and to be able to play in Tel Aviv tournaments – in short, to stay in the heart of the country. My parents eventually opened a private chess school which “cooked” an incredible number of national champions in various ages: thirty! OK, I was a 5-time national champion, but the other 25 titles were won by other kids.

However, it became clear that we must move to Europe for me to keep progressing. So when I was 14, we moved to Hungary in order to accelerate my chess career. Budapest is clearly one of the chess centers of Europe. We arrived at a tournament where I made my first WIM norm, and within a month we had bought an apartment and thus our Hungarian life began. However, it was far from easy. We were never able to get a residency permit because the Hungarian Chess Federation did not want to assist us. They said that if I achieved an Elo of 2500+, they might consider it, and Daddy replied that if I had 2500+, we would think seriously about whether or not to join the federation. At that time I was approaching 2400 and was only 17.

MS: In which countries was it easier to improve? And where is it easier to earn a living from chess?

YD: There is no place where it is easy to improve (smiles). However, of course, it is easier in countries that hold many tournaments. In our case, Budapest was a much better place for playing chess than Tel Aviv. In Israel I almost exclusively played in men’s opens. Imagine being rated 1900 or so and getting paired against a grandmaster like Smirin or Golod in the first round, then an unrated opponent in the second round, then a 2350+ player, and then a 2000-rated opponent in the next round, etc. Such a swing occurred in every tournament – what’s the point? In Hungary I was able to participate in the First Saturday events, and travel all over Europe to play in various leagues and other tournaments, which was a different thing altogether.



As for making a living, one can earn good money everywhere, but a high chess skill is required to win good prize money, just as a love of teaching and the ability to instruct makes someone a successful trainer.

I would like to say that I am not only a professional player, but also a professional teacher. I have been teaching since the age of 13. My school's principal even allowed me to miss classes because I was teaching in the 11th-12th grades, and, of course, all my classmates were extremely envious of it (smiles). Upon our arrival in Budapest, I started teaching players rated 2100-2300, and quickly observed a noticeable improvement. We worked on openings, middlegames, endgames, psychology and preparing for particular opponents. This work also benefited me greatly! I continue to teach extensively and I have become an official vendor on the ICC and Playchess.com where I have many students!

MS: What countries culture do you most have an affinity with?

YD: This question is both simple and hard. My mother tongue is Russian and I have an Israeli passport with a Greek residency permit. I've lived in Greece for two years already, since I got married, and in a few years I'll receive Greek citizenship. I think the term "citizen of the world" would match me best.

MS: How many languages do you speak?

YD: I speak Russian, English and Hebrew fluently (plus read and write it, of course). I spoke Hungarian fairly well when I lived there. I even gave lessons in this very difficult language. I also know a little German, Serbian and Greek.

MS: Unlike most other players, you were rather selective about your tournaments, taking part almost exclusively in official events (world and European championships) and round-robins. Would you recommend such an approach to others?

YD: I do think that playing in championships and round robins is the best approach. My parents decided upon it when I was struggling in opens in Israel. However, I do not dare to give universal advice to everyone. Each particular case is different; I can recommend or even insist on something only with my students.

MS: During your career you won many medals in various events, is there one most memorable achievement that you could discuss?

YD: I won 8 medals on European and world championships and have more than 30 cups for top spots in various tournaments (mostly men's). The most memorable of them is, of course, the bronze cup in the 2005 European women's championship. Everything went well for me in Kishinev. First I qualified for the coming world championship, and then got into tie-breaks for the 3rd-6th places. I scored 3½-½ in those four games. My last move in the championship was a queen sacrifice that led to a checkmate! And before that I sacrificed a knight. Thus French WGM Collas finished 4th and I obtained my bronze medal!



MS: You finished third in the European championship and achieved your first (men's) GM norm. Which is more important for your career?

YD: Both are important. Why should one be inferior to another?

MS: What makes you play chess? Can one express one's character through playing?

YD: Chess is my life. I greatly enjoy the game – its beauty, and the opportunity to express myself.

MS: Where do you find creativity in chess?

YD: I think chess creativity is an attempt to express your character through chess. Of course, everybody does it in their own way. The more interesting personality a player has, the more interesting his or her chess is. It applies not only to players, but also to trainers. Their concepts and views on chess is how they express their characters.

MS: What is luck?

YD: Luck is a sudden chance that can be used by a strong player. This is why the saying goes: "Strong players are always lucky." Right! Weak players often can't use the chance!



MS: When playing, do you take psychological considerations into account?

YD: Of course. The extent to which I can deviate from the objectively best continuation depends on my opponent and the tournament situation.

MS: Could you give some practical examples?

YD: No, I'd prefer not to... These are my professional secrets (smiles), and I do not want to disclose them to the world.

MS: Do you feel timid when playing clearly stronger and more experienced opponents? I noticed that you don't perform as well against 2500+ opposition. Or is this caused by your unwillingness to play for a draw?

YD: No, I have never felt any timidity; this feeling is foreign to me (smiles). I can feel great respect, but I do not fear anyone. Prior to 2005 my results against 2500+ players is unimpressive. Unlike those who were content with uneventful draws, I wanted to learn from these games. And I think I really did; look at my results in 2005: +1-2=5 against such players as Kempinski, Rozentalis, Baramidze, Hector, Stefanova, Kosteniuk, etc. – not a bad result for a master. Moreover, only one of those five draws was relatively short, the other four were long and fighting. Yet, this result can and should be improved. So I will keep trying (smiles).

MS: How much time do you spend preparing for a game?

YD: It depends on whether I know the opponent well, or whether I want to invent something in the opening.

MS: What is your attitude to short draws?

YD: I am always willing to play, so I reject them! The only exception is the situation when a draw is required to make a norm. In that case I tend to avoid unnecessary risks.

MS: Is it easier or more difficult to play against friends?

YD: It makes no difference to me. One must arrive at the table with a desire to win!

MS: Can you recall some funny episode that occurred at a tournament?

YD: There were plenty of funny episodes! Here is one that first comes to mind:

When I was 16, I went to Rostock, Germany to play in a men's IM-norm tournament, and prior to the event I played for a local club. I attacked like crazy and ended up in a lost position, but my opponent spent so much time repulsing my attacks that he got into terrible time trouble. In the end I sacrificed both rooks and a knight, and he forced a draw, instead of giving a mate-in-four by sacrificing his own queen. The game was absolutely wild, and Polish IM Czerwonski was one of the most attentive spectators. I could see that he was very impressed by the events on board.

The drawing of lots for the tournament was held the next morning and it turned out that Czerwonski and I were to meet in the first round. I was shocked to hear him exclaim to an arbiter: "I am not going to play her." The arbiter just showed him the number and invited him to the table. This episode seemed funny to me, but Czerwonski lost in 23 moves...



MS: Is your style of play balanced?

YD: I consider my style well-balanced. It makes no difference whether I must play in a dry positional manner, exerting pressure against critical squares, or need to attack with wild sacrifices. I enjoy the fight in all phases of the game. The most important thing is to have a better position and to understand what I have to do.

MS: Recently you published your first book. What drove you to write it and what makes it special?

YD: Oh, this is a big and interesting question! I'll try to be as brief as possible (smiles). In 1992, my father, the best children's trainer I've seen (and I've seen many of them) invented a very interesting teaching method. It is a system of views on life, struggle and art. My father started to create special chess rules ("Dembo-rules"), which assist one to think correctly at the board and to find original ideas. Following this method, I became a WGM at 17 and an IM at 19. Gradually I took the baton from him. It is natural – I became a better player and kept developing the system as a teacher. Thus I decided to write a book about the middlegame.

My book is called *The Very Unusual Book About Chess*. It is special because:

- it is written about the middlegame, the stage that is least covered in chess literature.
- it is written by a woman, and women do not write chess books too often.
- it contains the "Dembo-rules" – which are very clear aphorisms that help one react correctly in different situations.
- it has chapters dedicated to special playing methods – Gifted Moves (Gifted Ideas), Kasparov's Rook, g6 followed by h6 with Opposite-Side Castling, Kings Can Do Even The Impossible!, f4-f5 in the Sicilian, etc.
- it also has a special section that is dispersed throughout the book (Easy, But Nice), featuring positions that reflect the beauty of chess!

I wrote it for players rated 1500-2500. Everyone can find something interesting and useful. Many titled players (including GMs like Shirov, Avrukh, Halikias, etc.) and amateurs already purchased it...

I really enjoyed writing this book. Furthermore, I recently accepted an offer from a chess publishing house to write a series of opening books. The contract should be signed in a couple of weeks.

MS: Whom do you support among modern players? Whose games do you like best?

YD: I support Topalov, his play is very interesting!

MS: Does an optimistic attitude help in chess?

YD: Optimism is a great help in chess as well as in life. Playing on a high level is very difficult. And for me it is especially so, as I take part mostly in men's tournaments. However, optimism must not result in underestimating the opponent, problems arising in the game or your own drawbacks.

MS: You play combative chess, where does your strength and energy come from?

YD: Your question reminds me of an episode that occurred when I was 15. I participated in an IM-tournament, and Leonid Kritz, a very good German GM, played at the same venue in a GM-tournament. After the round I was asked to demonstrate my just completed game against IM Drjamin. It was wild and thrilling encounter. I sacrificed two pawns, then a bishop, then a knight, then a rook and a bishop, and eventually won. Leonid was among the spectators. After I finished the demonstration, he congratulated me and said: "You played like young Tal!" This made me very happy!



With regards to strength and energy – I never feel tired. I keep in shape by walking frequently and training in a gym with my husband.

MS: On your [website](#) you very briefly list your interests. Could you tell me more about them? What are your favorite books and writers? Etc.

YD: I like to relax by reading or listening to music. I also enjoy good movies. Recently, I've read a few books by Dan Brown, as well as *Cleopatra* by Karen Essex. Now I am reading *The Court of the Red Tsar* by S.S. Montefiore – about Stalin.

My favorites are *Master and Margarita* by Bulgakov, *12 Chairs* by Ilf and Petrov, along with many others. In books I appreciate humaneness, kindness, depth, humor and a thrilling plot.

I enjoy classical music – Chopin, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Mozart, Grieg... it is difficult to list them all and Borodin's *Prince Igor* or Glinka's *Ruslan and Liudmila* are by no means inferior! Then there are other genres such as Celine Dion, Mariah Carey, Elvis Presley, Barbara Streisand, R&B, pop music, etc.

In cinema I love old Soviet actors: Mironov, Smoktunovsky, Evstigneev, Kramarov, Leonov, and Shirvindt. My favorite Hollywood stars are Robert De Niro, Harrison Ford, Morgan Freeman, Matt Damon, Nicole Kidman, Jack Nicholson, and Jackie Chan. It goes without saying that neither list is

complete! Some of my favorite films are: *Irony of Fate, or Enjoy Your Bath!*, *17 Moments of Spring*, *Gladiator*, *The Day After Tomorrow*, *The Lord Of The Rings*, *Terminator*, etc.

MS: Do you play any musical instruments?

YD: When I was 3 or 4, I played a little piano, but now I do not play at all. I don't want to play badly (smiles), and one has to study seriously to play well.

MS: How do you see your future in chess? Will you play all your life or will you solely focus on being a trainer?

YD: I don't want to think much about the future just yet. It goes without saying that I want to play and play and play! I am already pretty much occupied with coaching, which I enjoy very much! If we combine it with journalism and writing books, the resulting picture looks really appealing to me! And we'll see where it goes (smiles)!

MS: Is there a possibility of leaving chess entirely?

YD: God forbid!!

MS: Could you become a FIDE president?

YD: (Laughs) See the answer above!

Yelena Dembo Annotates

This game is taken from Yelena's book: *The Very Unusual Book About Chess*.

Castaneda,N (FM-2340) - Dembo,Y (WIM-2390)

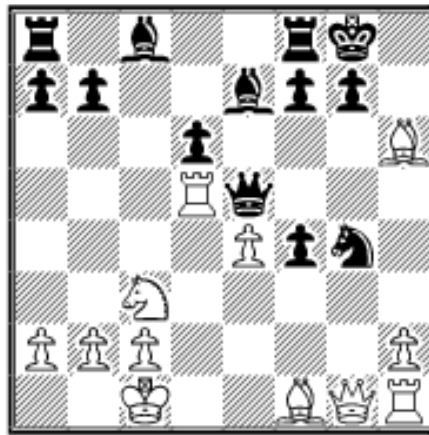
First Saturday GM, Budapest (1) 2001 [B65]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.f4 Nxd4 10.Qxd4 h6 11.Bh4 Qa5 12.g4 e5 13.Qg1 exf4 14.g5 hxg5 15.Bxg5 Qe5 16.Bh6 Ng4 17.Rd5

As is ordinary, I am playing in a men's event (I am only sixteen) but, in contrast to previous tournaments of mine, this one is much more complicated. Mostly grandmasters and international masters are participating.

The first round starts and I am ready for an uncompromising struggle! Maybe that's why the game was so complicated, tense and interesting. Here is some homework for you: please count how many pieces and pawns were

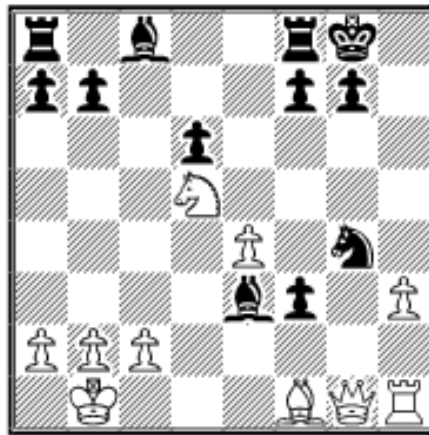
sacrificed by Black in this game and in the accompanying variations!



17...Nxb6!!

A very interesting move, for the sake of which, I decided to aim for this position earlier. In the years since this game was played I have encountered several grandmasters and masters (male, of course!) who insisted that my queen sacrifice was incorrect. I didn't argue, but asked them to refute my idea with concrete variations. As it turned out, after 2-3 hours of sometimes very intense analysis they had to concede that Black had plenty of compensation in all lines and that the position was unclear. Black enjoyed an enduring initiative and plenty of tactical possibilities. What else can one wish for as Black? These factors greatly appealed to me during the game! Moreover, this unexpected turn of events drove my opponent into serious time-trouble.

17...Qf6? 18 Bg5 (18...Qe6 19 Bxf4 +=; 18...Qxg5 19 Rxc5 Bxc5 20 h3) 18...f3+ 21 Kb1 Be3 22 Nd5!!+-.



18 Rxe5 dxe5

How should we evaluate this position? The material is about equal. So everything will depend on the potential of each side's pieces and the coordination between them.

For the moment the only active white piece is the knight, but it can immediately occupy the best square on the board (d5) and control a lot of territory from there! This piece will probably turn out to be Black's "enemy number one"! The white queen is presently passive, but at the same time Black must not forget about his pawn on a7. White's rook and bishop have no clear prospects at the moment .

What can we say about Black?

- Black has 12 "battle units" against 10 of White's. This can prove important at some moment!
- Black's bishop-pair helps to control squares of both colors.
- At some point the advance of the front f-pawn may become possible, with the aim of queening it.
- Black may also use the c-file for attacking purposes.

- Unfortunately, for the time being both rooks are inactive and the future of the Nh6 is unclear. In any case, in general there is nothing bad in Black's position!

19 Nd5

Yes, the knight has occupied its best square!

19...Bd8

The only move. 19...Bd6 20 Qg5 xg7; 19...Bh4 20.Nc7 Rb8 21 Qxa7±.

20 Qc5

The queen has reached a very active position.

20...Be6

Black wants to exchange the white knight. Of course it is a pity to give up the advantage of the bishop-pair, but the white knight, controlling many important squares from its centralized position, is very strong.

21 Be2

A logical move in accordance with another "Dembo-rule": *don't allow your opponent to make a good move!* From here the bishop underlines the unsuccessful position of the knight on h6 and prevents its emergence.

21...b6

Black solves the problem of his a-pawn and asks the white queen to clarify its intentions. 21...Bb6!? 22 Nxb6 axb6 23 Qxe5 Rxa2 is unclear.

22 Qd6

...which turn out to be very aggressive!

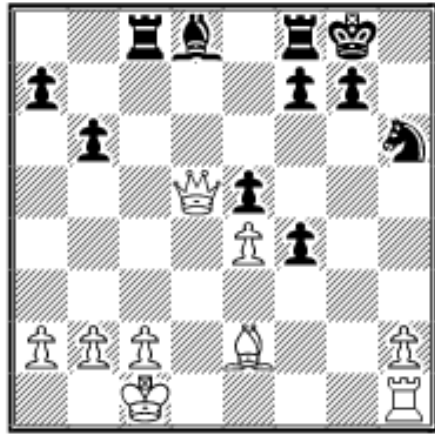
22...Bxd5

This exchange was planned several moves back.

23 Qxd5

Of course, White doesn't want to recapture with the pawn as then he would lose control of f5 and allow Black a couple of protected passed pawns.

23...Rc8!



Again a very interesting move or, to be exact, a move with a very interesting idea! Have you already spotted it? The rook is ready to come to the fifth rank and attack the white king from there.

24 Rg1

Now Qxe5 is a real threat.

24 Qxe5?! Rc5:

a) 25 Qd4 Bf6 with an attack;

b) 25 Qxf4?? Bg5 -+;

c) 25 Qd6 Bf6 with compensation (25...Bg5 26 h4±).

24...Bf6

24...Rc5 25 Qb7, and now:

a) 25...Bh4 26 Qxa7 (26 Rf1 Rfc8 27 c3 R5c7 with compensation)

26...Rfc8 27 c3 Bf2 28.Rd1 Ra5 with compensation;

b) 25...Rc7! with the idea ...Bh4.

25 Qb7

The rook on c8 now commences its glorious career. It will make 11 out of Black's next 17 moves and, at the end of this sequence, Black will be winning! Still, all this is a long way off and for now the position remains very complicated. I spent several minutes trying to decide what to play here. How to defend the queenside pawns? Maybe ... not to defend them. Of course!

25...Rc5!

Once more "Kasparov's rook" comes to my aid! The rook proves very dangerous on the fifth rank! 25...Rfd8 26 Qxa7 (26 Kb1!?) 26...Ra8 27 Qxb6 Rxa2 is unclear.

26 Qxa7 Ra5

It is too late to worry about pawns!

27 Qxb6 Rxa2

Intending 28...Bd8 29 Qc5 Be7! 30 Qf2 Bh4! and if 31 Qxh4 then Ra1=.

28 Kd2

Threatening Qxf6. 28 Qxf6 Ra1+ 29 Kd2 Rxc1.

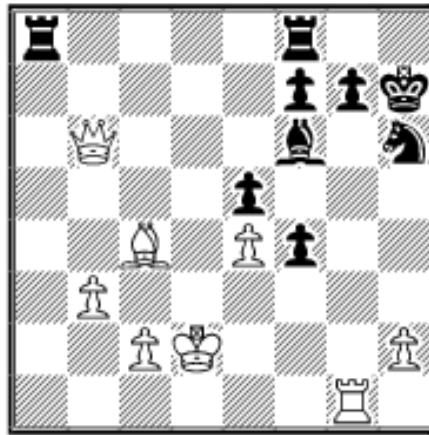
28...Kh7

Once and for all evading the aforementioned threat.

29 Bc4 Raa8

The naive 29...Rd8+?? would lead to a drastic conclusion: 30 Qxd8 Bxd8 31 Bxa2+-.

30 b3?!



My opponent was in time pressure and it was difficult for him to find the best moves. This one had the idea of pushing the passed pawns.

30...Rad8+ 31 Ke2

31 Bd5 Nf5!? xd4, e3.

31...Rd4!?

forward!

The restless rook once again charges

32 Bd5

1) 32 Bd3 Rfd8:

A) 33 Ra1 Ng4;

B) 33 h3 Nf5 34 exf5 e4

B1) 35 Bxe4? Rxe4+ 36 Kf3 Rdd4! -/+;

B2) 35 Bc4? Rd2+ 36 Kf1 Rd1+ 37 Kg2 R8d2+ 38 Kh1 Bd4 -+

B3) 35 Rd1 f3+, a) 36 Ke3 Bg5+ 37 Kf2 Bh4+ 38 Kf1 e3 (38...exd3!?) 39 Kg1 e2 -+ (39...Rxd3 -+), b) 36 Kf1 exd3 37 Rxd3 Rxd3 38 cxd3 Rxd3 with compensation;

C) 33 Qa5! g6 34 Kf3 Bh8 (34...Bg7);

2) 32 Kf3!? Rfd8 (32...Rd2 33.Rg2 Rd1 with compensation).

The move 32 Bd5 looks like it will bring a happy end to the game in view of the threat 33 c3, but...

32...Nf5!

...it suddenly turns out that Black still has a knight, which joyfully announces its presence!

33 Qc5

Why not 33 c3? It would be met as in the game, one move later...

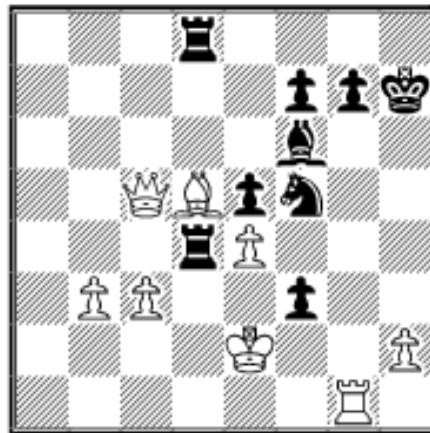
33...Rd8

The other rook joins the fray.

34 c3

It is very dangerous to take the pawn on f7 as then all of Black's pieces would attack the white king with great vigour.

34...f3+!



Again "blow back"! It is pleasant to make such moves when the opponent has just about one minute left until the 40th move.

35 Kxf3 Rd2!

Of course not 35...Rd3+ 36 Ke2 and White wins easily.

36 h3 Nh4+ 37 Ke3 (37 Kg4!?) 37...Rh2 38 Rg3 Ng2+

Just some time ago this knight was on h6!

39 Rxd2

39 Kd3 Bh4 with strong attack.

39...Rxd2

In time pressure White decided to get rid of the bothersome knight and Black's attack against his king.

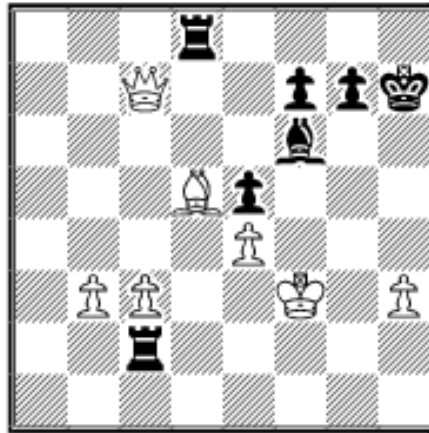
40 Kf3

40 Bxf7 Bg5+ 41 Kf3 Rdd2-+.

40...Rc2

Evidently my opponent was tired because of the furious time-pressure he had just been through and the unusual course of the game. He immediately made his next move...

41 Qc7??



Here I had seen a very interesting idea! The c3-square is a “point of intersection.” The rook on c2 and the bishop target it. If there were no white pawn on e4, I would be able to strike a blow on c3. So the pawn on e4 is my “enemy.” How to force it to evacuate the e4-square? Of course...

41...Rxd5!!

And again the rook is on the fifth rank!

The black rooks act like “hooligans” in this game!

42 exd5 Rxc3+!

The first blow on the point of intersection.

43 Qxc3 e4+

And an additional blow.

44 Kxe4 Bxc3-+ 45 d6 Kg6! 46 d7 f5+ 47 Kd5 Ba5 48 b4 Bd8 49 b5 f4 50 Kc6 (50 Ke4 Kg5-+) 50...f3 51 b6 f2 52 b7 f1Q 53 b8Q Qc4+ 54 Kb7 Qb5+ 55 Kc8 Qxb8+ 56 Kxb8 Kg5 57 Kc8 Bf6 58 Kc7 Kh4 59 Kd6 Kxh3 60 Ke6 Bd8! (60...Kg4?? 61 Kf7! =) 0-1

Admittedly, Black played this game in a style resembling piracy. Homework answer: Black sacrificed the queen, two rooks, the knight and six pawns.

Dembo, Y (2441) - Hector, J (2509)

Open A Hamburg GER (4), 04.10.2005 [C56]

I was very happy with this tournament. I achieved my first men’s GM norm and I placed 7th out of 297 players, ahead of dozens of GMs and many IMs. Plus, I played several good games.

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4

I think this move was a big surprise for my opponent. Before this game I mostly played the Spanish. But during my preparation (and a very serious

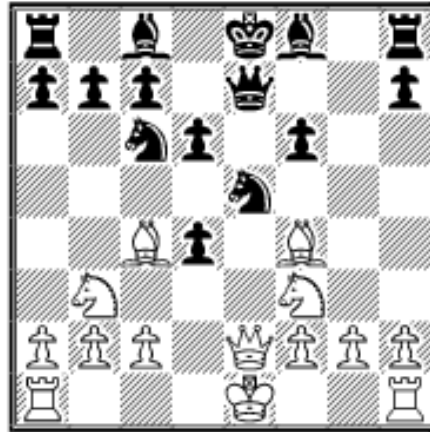
one at that!) I decided to strive for the position that arose in the game.

3...Nf6 4 d4 exd4 5 e5 Ng4 6 Qe2 Qe7 7 Bf4 f6 8 exf6 gxf6 9 Nbd2

9 Bxc7?! d6 10 Qxe7+ Bxe7 11 Bb5 Kd7 (11...Bd7!?) 12 Ba5 a6 13 Bxc6+ bxc6.

9...d6 10 Nb3 Nge5

10...Nce5 11 0-0-0±.



11 0-0-0

This is the position I wanted to get! White is much better because Black's king is still in the center, his development is terrible, and the d4-pawn is falling.

11...Be6?

This move is bad as White gets many tempi. Better is 11...Bg4 12 h3! Bxf3 13

gxf3 or 11...Nxc4 12 Qxc4±.

12 Bxe6 Qxe6 13 Kb1

Even stronger was 13 Nfxd4!, but I thought White's king would be in danger after 13...Nxd4 14 Nxd4 Qxa2. Still, White is better after 15 Qb5±±.

13...Bg7?!

This is not good as Black doesn't really have time to castle in peace! 13...d3! was better, not letting the knight take on d4 with tempo.

14 Nfxd4 Qd7 15 Qh5+ Ng6

15...Qf7 16 Ne6!+-.

16 Nxc6 0-0

16...bxc6 17 Nc5+-.

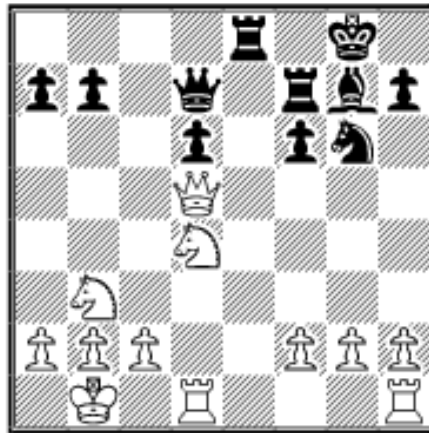
17 Bxd6!+-

“Mr. Fritz” evaluates this position as winning for White and I fully agree.

17...cxd6 18 Qd5+

Centralization!

18...Rf7 19 Ncd4 Re8 20 Qb5!



A very important chess rule: exchange pieces when you are ahead material! Especially the opponent's most dangerous ones!

20...Re5 21 Qxd7 Rxd7 22 g3!

To prevent ...Nf4. One very important "Dembo rule" is: *don't allow your opponent to make a good move!*

22...Ne7 23 f4

Forcing the black rook to a poor location.

23...Rd5 24 c4 Rh5 25 h4

Threatening g4 and f5, locking the rook on h6.

25...f5 26 Nb5 Nc8 27 Rhe1

All the pieces must play!

27...Kf7 28 Nc5 Re7 29 Rxe7+ Kxe7 30 Re1+ Kf7 31 Nxb7 1-0



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