

gained and capitalised on, with the final error ruthlessly exploited.

Biel, 1976:

ENGLISH OPENING
B. Larsen (Denmark) L. Portisch (Hungary)
1. c4 e5
2. Nc3 Nf6
3. Nf3 Nc6

Aptly named "the four knights variation".

4. d3 d6
5. g3 g6
6. Bg2 Bg7
7. Rb1 a5
8. a3 Nd4!
9. Nd2 O-O
10. O-O c6
11. b4 a×b4

12. a×b4 Bg4
13. h3 Bd7
14. Kh2

Psychological chess! Instead of immediately doing anything himself Larsen tempts Portisch to find a plan.

14. . . . Nh5

Now, with the knight on the edge of the board, Larsen plays in the centre.

15. c5! d5
16. e3 Ne6
17. Na4 f5
18. Nb6 Rb8
19. e4!

Another novel Larsen idea, inviting this time 19 . . . f×e4. 20. d×e4 d4? 21. N(d)c4 with the prospect of two magnificent knight outposts on b6 and d6. Portisch finds a cunning reply.

19. . . . f×e4
20. d×e4 Nc7!

For if Larsen plays for the variation 21. e×d5 c×d5. 22. N×d5 Bb5. 23. N×c7 B×f1? 24. Qb3 ch Kh8. 25. Ne6 R×f2! 26. N×f1! and wins. He meets a nasty surprise in 23 . . . Q×c7! 24. Bd5 ch Kh8. 25. Bc4 e4! with good attacking chances: eg 26. B×b5 R×f2 ch! 27. R×f2 Q×g3 ch. 28. Kh1 Q×h3 ch. 29. Kg1 Ng3 and mates. Or 26. Qe2 e3! would please Tal!

21. N×d7 Q×d7
22. Nc4 Qe6
23. Nb6

White has the advantage, thanks to his strong knight outpost and "the two bishops". (A bishop pair is almost always stronger than a bishop and knight because they combine so well.)

23. . . . Nf6
24. e×d5 N(c)×d5
25. Qb3 R(b)e8
26. N×d5 N×d5
27. Bd2 Kh8
28. R(b)e1 Qd7
29. Bc1 Nc7
30. Qc4 Nb5
31. Bb2 Qc7
32. Kg1 Qf7
33. Q×f7 R×f7
34. Re4 Rd8
35. R(f)e1 Rd2
36. R(4)e2 R×e2
37. R×e2 Nd4
38. Re4 g5

Played to prevent 39. f4 this move makes the black bishop "bad".

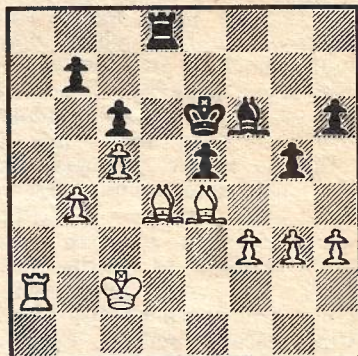
39. Re3 Rf8
40. Be4 Bf6
41. Kf1 h6

The sealed move

42. Ra3 Rb8
43. Ra7 Nb5
44. Ra1 Nd4

45. Ke1 Kg8
46. Ra7 Nb5
47. Ra2 Kf7
48. Ke2 Ke6
49. Ke3 Nc7
50. Kd3 Rd8 ch
51. Kc2 Nb5
52. f3 Nd4 ch
53. B×d4!

BLACK



WHITE

The transfer of advantages. White gives up the bishop pair in return for a superior rook and bishop ending. But Larsen thought even that might not have been winning if Portisch had recaptured correctly.

53. . . . R×d4??

At this level a losing move. But the question is why did Portisch take with the rook and leave his bishop completely out of the game? A well blockaded, isolated pawn is generally considered inferior to a mobile pawn majority, which White would have after 53 . . . e×d4. Portisch subconsciously knew this but failed to calculate that the pawn majority would be relatively ineffectual and because Larsen also had control of the "a" file he could not bring himself to give up the "d" file and have a completely passive position. I think he used the nine minutes on this move convincing himself to take with the rook.

54. Kb3 Be7
55. Ra7 Rd7
56. g4 Rc7
57. Ra8 Kf7
58. Rb8 Bf6

The game was adjourned again. Larsen came out of the hall: "I could not believe it when he took with the rook. He has left his bishop like a pawn!" Larsen told me the position was now an easy win and he was true to his word when they continued.

59. Ka4 Rd7
60. Bf5 Re7
61. Bc8 e4
62. f×e4 R×e4
63. R×b7 ch Be7
64. Bd7 Re3
65. B×c6 R×h3
66. Bd5 ch Kf6
67. Rd7 Resigns.

The "c" pawn must queen.

MURRAY CHANDLER

Chess

Beware: Great Dane

ONE OF THE STRONGEST grandmasters and possibly the world's best non-Soviet player is the Dane Bent Larsen.

I met Larsen while he was playing in Switzerland. He is a fascinating person with a lively personality which carries over to his chess, occasionally with the un-

fortunate side-effect that he loses games because he tries to beat everybody — even with black!

His game with grandmaster Lajos Portisch was neither a brilliant tactical win, nor a positional masterpiece. It was a hard fought game typical of the interzonal; a slight advantage

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