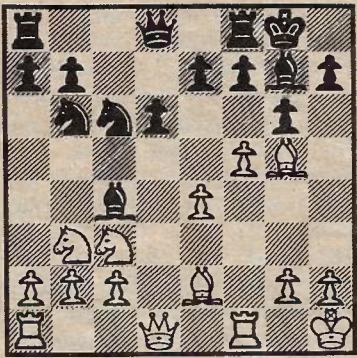


Dragon traps

LAST WEEK I featured the Karpov-Martin game, in which the Spanish IM was properly worked over by Karpov's pet new counter to the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence, beginning 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be2 Bg7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Bg5! Nc6 9.Nb3 Be6 10.Kh1! a6 11.f4

b5 12.Bf3 Rc8 13.Nd5! with advantage.
In theoretical circles this line created more than a few raised eyebrows, and at the Bad Lauterberg tournament in Germany both Miles and Sosonko were hard at work looking for antidotes. Their problem was to find a good plan for Black that prevented White playing the very cramping Nd5 at an early stage.
Position after 10.Kh1!

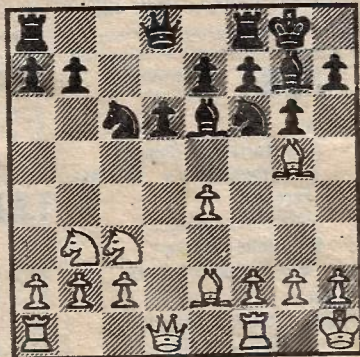


This is all exactly the same as Karpov-Sosonko except for the omission of the moves a5 and a4. Because these pawns have not moved, White no longer has the finesse 13.Bxc4! followed by 14.Qe2 because the knight has an escape square on a4 after 14... Nxb2. Thus Sosonko can occupy the superior post on d7 with his knight, where in addition to controlling e5 it pro-

pects Black's f6 square.
13. a4 a6
14. a5 Bxe2
15. Qxe2 Nd7

The position is equal. White's space advantage is counterbalanced by Black's control of e5 and his domination of the long Black diagonal.

MURRAY CHANDLER



Miles had a try at 10... Qc8?! but after 11.f4 Rd8 12.Bf3 Bc4 12... Bg4 13.Nd5 with advantage) 13.Rf2 e6 14.Rd2 Karpov simply piled up on his d-pawn, eventually winning both that and the exchange.

Sosonko, also against the World Champion, tried a different path with 10... a5 but he too was left with an inferior position after 11.a4 Nd7 12.f4 Nb6 13.f5 Bc4 14.Bxc4 Nxc4 15.Qe2! Nb6 (if 15... Nxb2 White wins the unfortunate beast with 16.Nd5 followed by 17.c3 while 15... N4e5 is well countered by 16.Nd5 with the initiative) 16.Qb5 Nd4 17.Nxd4 Bxd4 18.Rad1 Bg7 19.Be3!

Well, I thought, all this looks very exciting — think I'll try it out in the New Zealand congress if anyone ventures into a dragon. The first was Roger Perry.

M. Chandler	R. Perry
1. e4	c5
2. Nf3	d6
3. d4	cxd4
4. Nxd4	Nf6
5. Nc3	g6
6. Be2	Bg7
7. 0-0	Nc6
8. Nb3	0-0
9. Bg5	a6

Now where do I go? I'm sure there was something in my informant...
10. f4 b5
11. a3?!



I knew in my bones this was wrong. Obviously 11.Bf3 is the correct way to proceed but I couldn't see an advantageous continuation after 11... b4. Eg 12.Nd5 Nxd5 13.exd5 Na5 14.Nxa5 Qxa5 15.Bxe7 Re8! and now 16.Bxd6? Qb6 ch wins the bishop, while a retreat with 16.Bh4 is met with 16... Bxb2 with at least equality. The game concluded according to plan however.

- 11. ... Bb7
- 12. Kh1 Na5
- 13. Nxa5 Qxa5
- 14. Bf3 b4
- 15. axb4 Qxb4
- 16. Qe1! e6?
- 17. Bxf6 Bxf6
- 18. Nd5!

After the game I found that White can play 11.Bf3 allowing 11... b4. After 12.Nd5 Nxd5 13.exd5 Na5 White can afford the luxury of 14.Rb1 defending his b-pawn, followed by Qe2 and Re1, exploiting Black's backward e-pawn.

Onward to Robert Smith in round four!

- 1. e4 c5
- 2. Nf3 d6
- 3. d4 cxd4
- 4. Nxd4 Nf6
- 5. Nc3 g6
- 6. Be2 Bg7
- 7. 0-0 0-0
- 8. Bg5 Nc6
- 9. Nb3 Be6
- 10. Kh1 a5

Following the Sosonko game, but Smith decides to merge several plans.

- 11. a4 Qc8
- 12. f4 Nb4
- 13. Bf3 Bc4
- 14. Rf2 Rd8
- 15. Rd2 e5?

This loses a pawn but Black's game was difficult anyway. I had used only a few minutes of clock time at this stage, yet another case of the advantage of having studied similar positions that can arise from the same opening.

- 16. fx e5 dxe5
- 17. Rxd8 ch Qxd8
- 18. Qxd8 ch Rxd8
- 19. Nxa5.

And White eventually won on the 48th move.

But the question still remains: What is Black's best course against the system? Sosonko tried again at Bad Lauterberg, this time against Filipino Eugene Torre.

Torre	Sosonko
1. e4	c5
2. Nf3	d6
3. d4	cxd4
4. Nxd4	Nf6
5. Nc3	g6
6. Be2	Bg7
7. 0-0	0-0
8. Bg5	Nc6
9. Nb3	Be6
10. Kh1	Nd7!
11. f4	Nb6
12. f5	Bc4