

# Salvaging draws

A MIRACLE draw they called it, when challenger Viktor Korchnoi drew the 20th match game with champion Anatoly Karpov by extricating himself from what we all considered a completely lost position. The next day, with the white pieces, the 47-year-old challenger decisively outplayed the 27-year-old champion to score a momentous victory and keep alive his chances of staying in the race for six wins. After the win he trailed by two

wins to four. During the following game Karpov received his third successive setback in a week. After producing some of the best chess of the match in the 22nd encounter, he once again faltered at the winning post and Korchnoi salvaged a crucial draw. "What kind of world champion is this?" commented Korchnoi afterwards. "In the last five games he has had three winning positions and has messed them all up."

Despite Karpov's fine play in the early stages of the 22nd game, the standard of chess was clearly going down. Argentine grandmaster Oscar Panno likened the players to two punch-drunk and groggy boxers, the question being, of course, which would hit the canvas first? A week earlier, even his own seconds were wondering if Korchnoi had the strength to put up a fight after eight weeks of gruelling battle. It seemed that, in an unlimited

length match for the world championship, a 20-year age handicap was proving to be just too great. But after the week of dramatic setbacks for Karpov, we were speculating that Korchnoi, fired by years of top match play, had found an inner strength and determination. Karpov has played only four top-class matches in his life, and it was at about this stage in the 1974 match against Korchnoi that the champion began to crack up. But there was a 24-game limit

in that match and he played for draws in the last games, eventually winning by a one-point margin. When asked here, immediately after his 21st game win, if this could be the start of an incredible comeback, Korchnoi evaded the question. The 23rd game, however, featured some skilful defensive play by the champion, and after gaining the advantage Korchnoi was never quite able to find a breakthrough.

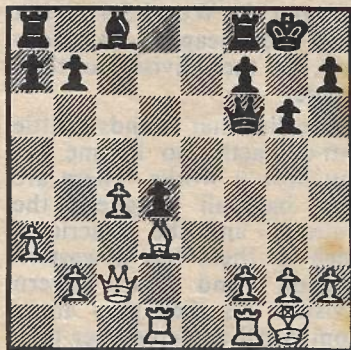
## QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

<b>KORCHNOI</b> Stateless	<b>KARPOV</b> USSR
1. c4	Nf6
2. Nc3	e6
3. Nf3	d5
4. d4	Be7
5. Bf4	0-0
6. e3	c5
7. dxc5	Bxc5
8. Qc2	Nc6
9. Rd1	Qa5
10. a3	Be7

In the 21st game Karpov had tried 10... Re8 11.Nd2 e5 12.Bg5 Nd4? which looked deceptively strong, but after 13.Qb1! Bf5 14.Bd3 e4 15.Bc2 Korchnoi forced the winning of a pawn and exploited this for his dramatic late victory.

11. Nd2	e5
12. Bg5	d4
13. Nb3	Qb6
14. Bxf6	Bxf6
15. Nd5	Qd8
16. Bd3	g6
17. exd4	Nxd4
18. Nxd4	exd4
19. Nxf6 ch	Qxf6
20. 0-0	

**KARPOV**



**KORCHNOI**

They were still in known theory at this point, and had taken only a few minutes each. The game, Forintos — Smederevac, Wijk aan Zee, 1970, now proceeded 20... Bd7 21.Be4 Bc6 22.Bd5 Rad8 23.Qe4 with a big advantage to White. Karpov's 20th leaves White with a slight but enduring advantage.

20... Be6

Korchnoi was sitting pondering his next move when he suddenly gesticulated wildly at Karpov, talked to the arbiter and stalked off to his side-stage armchair and it appeared he was refusing to move. Afterwards it was revealed that he was complaining about Karpov making a swivel with his chair, an incident that had threatened to disrupt the match a few weeks earlier. Schmid then asked Karpov if he could possibly play more quietly and Korchnoi was cajoled into returning to the board and making his 21st move.

21. Rfe1	Rac8
22. b3	Rfd8

The champion gave me the impression of wanting to expend as little energy as possible during this game, and he only thought at all when it was clearly necessary. Times at this stage, Korchnoi: 60 minutes; Karpov: 10!

23. Be4	Rc7
24. Qd2	Bg4
25. f3	Be6
26. a4	b6
27. a5	

Although he had spent a lot

of precious time Korchnoi had come up with a good plan for advancing his majority on the queenside.

27... b5
28. cxb5 Bxb3
29. Rb1 Bd5

29... Rc3 is also possible. The challenger now pressed on with an idea that definitely worried the Russian seconds and Soviet head of delegation Viktor Baturinsky who were munching cakes in the coffee shop downstairs.

30. b6	axb6
31. Rxb6!	Rc6!

Forced. In the heat of the moment almost all the analysts thought Korchnoi could win with 31.Bxd5 Rxd5 32.Re8 ch Kg7 33.Rb8 which seemed dangerous for Black until we found 33... Qg5! when it is White who must be careful.

32. Rxc6 Bxc6
33. Bd3 Bd7

The challenger had 20 minutes left on his clock for the next seven moves, but wasn't really pressured. Karpov, as usual, had ample time.

34. a6	Bf5
35. Qf4	Kg7

36. Bx15

Afterwards, analysing the game Korchnoi said he had planned to play 36.a7! Bxd3 37.Qb8! but now he saw a startling saving resource for Black in 37... Be2!! 38.Rxe2 d3 and draws.

The game now became a drawn rook and pawn endgame.

36... Qx15
37. Qx15 gx15
38. Ra1 d3

If White tried instead 38.Kf2 Black secures the draw with 38... d3 39.Ke3 d2.

39. Kf2	Re8
40. Ra2	Re7
41. Rd2	Re6

Korchnoi wrote "draw" in Russian on his scoresheet and waited for Karpov to do likewise. Afterwards Korchnoi remained staring at the chess board for several minutes, frustrated and upset he had not scored a win. But later he said he was also pleased he had kept Karpov on the run throughout the game.

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