

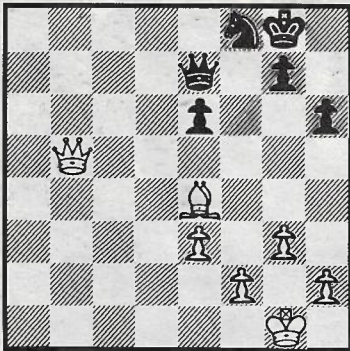
CHESS

The last game

by Murray Chandler

GARRI KASPAROV and Anatoly Karpov seem unable to finish a World Championship match predictably. After 22 games of their 24-game match in Seville the score was level and there had been six draws in succession. With a tied match in his favour, all Kasparov needed was another couple of draws to secure his hard-won title for three whole years. In game 23 Karpov maintained pressure until after the adjournment, but Kasparov appeared to be successfully holding. Then, suddenly, the champion embarked on a spectacularly unsound rook sacrifice — which Karpov promptly refuted with a bishop offer of his own. It was a hallucination which most present believed would cost Kasparov his title.

Kasparov, playing White, began game 24 with the Reti opening — a quiet system which avoids early piece exchanges. Karpov effectively equalised, but began falling a few minutes behind on the clock. The tension mounted as the time control at move 40 loomed. On move 31 Kasparov offered a pawn sacrifice. Karpov grabbed it. Kasparov threatened to penetrate with his queen. It was half bluff, but with only seconds left Karpov was scrambling to defend and lost two pawns back.



This was the adjourned position that evening, which even Kasparov knew he had only a 50-50 chance of winning. With all the pawns on the same side of the board, it is unclear if White can break a Black blockade. Here, from the diagram position, is the slow-motion finish.

42. Kg2

...
A non-committal sealed move. There now follows a little manoeuvring before Kasparov advances his h-pawn. There is no hurry for White in such endgames, as all Black can do is sit.

42. ... g6
43. Qa5 Qg7
44. Qc5 Qf7
45. h4 h5?

This move was later branded a serious error, as it fixes the Black pawns on white squares. Karpov obviously wanted to set up an impenetrable fortress, but this fails.

With the pawn left on h6 Black is more flexible, and might even venture g5 at some

stage. The two players analysed this position at great length with each other after the game. They concluded that White should probably win, but there are enormous technical difficulties.

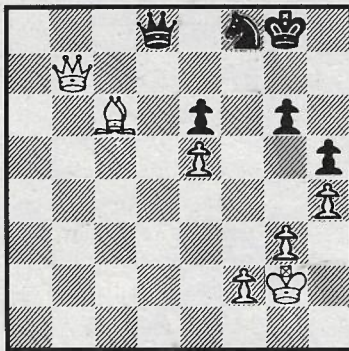
46. Qc6 Qe7
47. Bd3 Qf7
48. Qd6 Kg7
49. e4 ...

Now the e-pawn sets off for e5, further to constrict Black's pieces.

49. ... Kg8
50. Bc4 Kg7
51. Qe5 ch Kg8
52. Qd6 Kg7
53. Bb5 Kg8
54. Bc6 Qa7
55. Qb4 Qc7
56. Qb7 ...

The knight v bishop endgame would be lost so any queen exchange must be avoided.

56. ... Qd8
57. e5!



Black is now in zugzwang — meaning that any move he plays makes his position worse — 57. ... Kh8 58. Qf7 is winning, or 57. ... Nh7 58. Qd7 forces a decisive queen swap. If 57. ... Qd3 58. Be8 Qf5 59. Qf3! does

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
Kasparov	½	0	½	1	0	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	1	12
Karpov	½	1	½	0	1	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	0	12

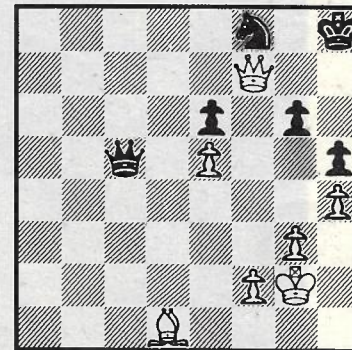
likewise, and 57. ... g5 58. h×g5 Q×g5 59. Be8 Qf5 60. Qf3 is similar.

In despair, Karpov sat thinking for 45 minutes in the hushed Lope de Vega Theatre, all hope of regaining his title painfully ebbing away.

57. ... Qa5
58. Be8 Qc5
59. Qf7 ch

White's queen is now in a dominant position.

59. ... Kh8
60. Ba4 Qd5 ch
61. Kh2 Qc5
62. Bb3 Qc8
63. Bd1 Qc5
64. Kg2 Resigns



Karpov does not wait for the bishop to come to e4, followed by capture of the black pawn on g6. The conclusion received a 20-minute ovation from the spectators as the two grandmasters sat discussing the game on stage.

As usual B T Batsford have published an excellent and entertaining instant book on the match, *Showdown in Seville*, by Keene, Goodman and Spanier. Capturing a copy is highly recommended. ■