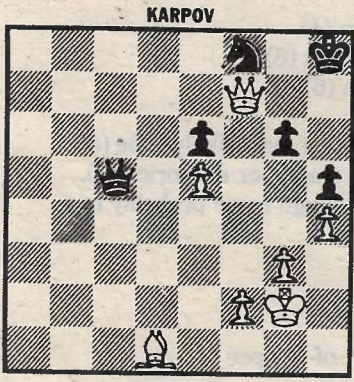


CHESS

A last trap for Karpov

by Murray Chandler

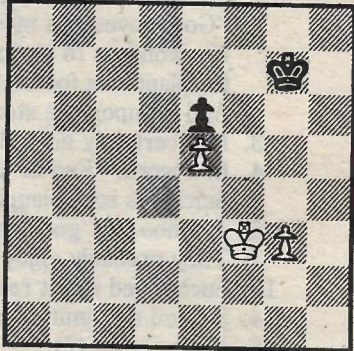


The point of these manoeuvres becomes apparent: 8... Qh1 ch 9. Kxh1 is no longer stalemate as the Black h-pawn can move. In order to keep protecting his remaining two pawns Black has to offer a queen swap.

- 8. ... Qg4
- 9. Qxg4 hxg4
- 10. f3

White can also win with 10. Kf1 Kg7 11. Ke2 Kg6 12. Kd3 Kg5 13. Kc4! in a similar fashion to the column continuation.

- 10. ... gxf3 ch
- 11. Kxf3 Kg7

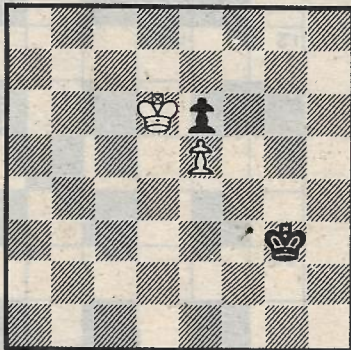


Here a recent issue of Schachwoche, the Swiss/German weekly, claimed a win for White with the variation 12. Kg4 Kg6 13. Kh4 Kf5 14. Kh5 Kxe5 15. g4. Subsequently they amended this to a draw when the defence 15... Kf6 16. Kh6 Kf7! 17. Kh7 Kf6! was pointed out. In fact White can win, but only by accurately marching his king up to d6 as follows:

- 12. Ke4 Kg6
- 13. Kd3!

Not 13. Kd4 Kf5 and White loses his e-pawn. Now 13... Kg5 is met by 14. Kc4.

- 13. ... Kf5
- 14. Kd4 Kg4
- 15. Kc5 Kxg3
- 16. Kd6



And White wins by capturing the e-pawn, and pushing his own e-pawn to promotion.

The million-dollar question (indeed, rather more was at stake) is whether Karpov saw these variations, but considered Kasparov would never fall for the stalemate trap. I don't believe it. I think that Karpov, along with all the assembled spectators, journalists and commentators, had simply overlooked that final chance.

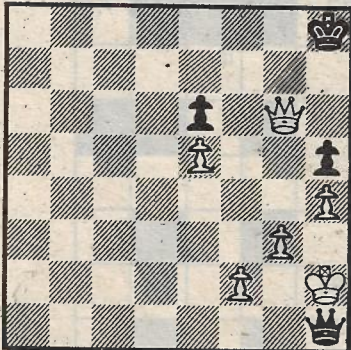
Is it possible, then, that, given the chance, Kasparov might have impatiently grabbed the g-pawn? Normally, of course, no. But under the extraordinary pressure of the circumstances — and given that Black could not have defended the pawn even if he wanted — who knows? The blunders are all there waiting to be made ... if your opponent doesn't resign first! ■

THIS WAS the position Anatoly Karpov resigned in the final 24th game of the Seville World Championship clash with Garri Kasparov. It was a game that Karpov only needed to draw to win the match and regain his title. But excellent endgame technique by Kasparov had forced Black into passivity, and it seemed a second black pawn was doomed once the white bishop manoeuvred to e4. What nobody seemed to notice at the time was a final trap for Karpov. Even after avoiding the trap White would still have had to win a delicate pawn endgame. The game could have continued:

- 1. ... Qd5 ch
- 2. Bf3 Qc5
- 3. Be4 Qb4
- 4. Bxg6??

If Kasparov had fallen for this he would have had nightmares about it for three long years.

- 4. ... Nxg6
- 5. Qxg6 Qb7 ch
- 6. Kh2 Qh1 ch!!



7. Kxh1 stalemate

So Black draws! If White cannot capture on g6 with his bishop in some positions, we see that the win becomes much more difficult. He has to play (instead of 4. Bxg6??):

- 4. Kh2! Qc5
- 5. Bb1! Qb4
- 6. Bxg6 Nxg6
- 7. Qxg6 Qxh4 ch!
- 8. Kg2!

