

(The annotations to this game, by L. A. Shamkovich, are from the Soviet yearbook, *Shakhmatnyi Ezhegodnik – 1960* (Fizkultura i Sport, Moscow 1962). The translation from the original Russian is by Douglas Griffin.)

### Bronstein – Shamkovich

8<sup>th</sup> round, 27<sup>th</sup> USSR Championship, Leningrad, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1960

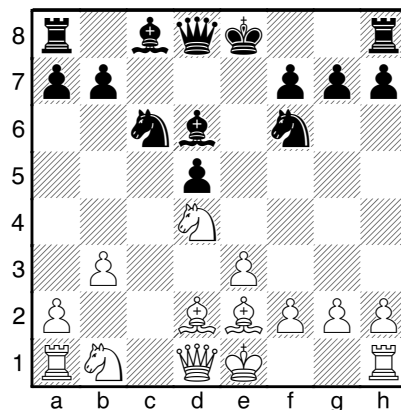
1.c4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.e3 Nf6 4.b3 c5 5.cxd5 exd5 6.d4

More in keeping with the spirit of the Réti-Nimzowitsch set-up chosen by White is 6.Bb2 Nc6 7.Bb5, continuing to begin a struggle for the squares d4 and e5 and holding back for the time being from the move d2–d4.

Now Black equalises the game without difficulty.

6...Nc6 7.Be2 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bd6!

A 'deception' manoeuvre, typical of the modern treatment of the opening stage. White's queen's bishop, which would by itself have chosen the 'classical' b2–square, occupies a clumsy position, getting in the way of its own pieces. Subsequently White, in order to transfer the bishop to b2, goes in for the loss of two tempi.



10.Nxc6

A mistaken exchange, reinforcing the d5–pawn and facilitating the active positioning of pieces by Black.

10...bxc6 11.Nc3 0–0 12.0–0 Bf5

Black's pieces have taken up excellent positions. The only weakness in his camp – the c6–pawn – is for the time being not in danger and is easily defended. White, however, has an extremely cramped and fragile position – the king's flank is clearly insufficiently-defended. Therefore the centre of the action is soon transferred to this flank.

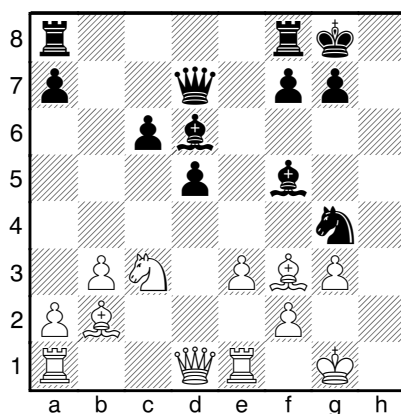
### 13.g3

It was perhaps worth not hurrying with this in general useful defensive move. Deserving attention is 13.Be1, having in mind in some cases the move Qd4.

### 13...Qd7 14.Re1 h5

In White's camp real weaknesses have appeared, and Black proceeds to the attack. Bad is 15.Bxh5 on account of 15...Nxb5 16.Qxh5 Bg4 17.Qg5 f6 18.Qg6 Bf3, and the deadly threat of ...Qh3 is irresistible. (*Translator's note:* Possible here is 19.Qd3 (and on 19...Qh3, 20.Qf1). However, Black clearly has strong positional compensation for the missing pawn.)

### 15.Bc1 h4 16.Bb2 hxg3 17.hxg3 Ng4 18.Bf3



The position of the white king gives rise to serious concerns – crushing sacrifices at e3 or g3 are about to follow. The only possibility of active counter-play is associated with the break e3–e4, but for the time being it is impossible. For example, 18.e4 Bc5!, and on 19.exf5 there follows 19...Bxf2+ 20.Kg2 Ne3+ 21.Kxf2 Nxd1+ 22.Raxd1 Qxf5+, and Black should win. Altogether bad is 20.Kh1 Ne3! 21.Qd3 Qd6, and Black wins.

Previously, I had recommended (bulletin *XXVII championnat SSSR*, № 10) the continuation 19.Bxg4 Bxg4 20.Qd3, but it is clearly unsatisfactory on account of 20...f5! 21.exd5 f4 22.Qc4 fxg3 23.dxc6+ Qf7 24.Qxf7+ Rxf7, and Black's attack decides. Nor is anything given by 18.Na4 on account of 18...Rae8 (but not 18...Bxg3? 19.Bxg4 Bxg4 20.Qd4, and it is White who wins), increasing the pressure.

### 18...Rae8 19.Rc1

19.e4 still does not work on account of 19...Bc5 20.Re2 Ne5!. Or 20.Rf1 Qc7! 21.Kg2 Bxf2 with a rout.

### 19...Qe6

By threatening the transfer of the queen to the h-file, Black forces the following developments, in

the course of which White obtains serious practical counter-chances. Was it possible to strengthen Black's position by other, quieter, ways? Hardly. On 19...Ne5, for example, possible is 20.e4 Nxf3+ 21.Qxf3 Bg4 22.Qd3, and Black's attack is repulsed.

Evidently, the present position is one of those in which the further development of the offensive is impossible without a share of risk.

### 20.e4

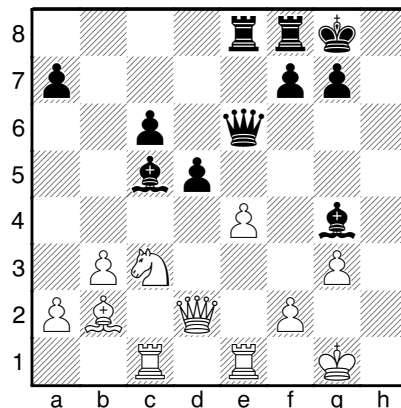
White has achieved what he set out to do. However, he already had no choice.

### 20...Bc5! 21.Bxg4!

Avoiding a hidden reef: on 21.exf5 there follows 21...Bxf2+ 22.Kg2 (or 22.Kf1 Qh6 23.Rxe8 Rxe8 24.Bxg4 Qh2 25.Ne2 Be3, and mate is inevitable) 22...Qd6! 23.Ne2 Rxe2!, and Black wins. Also in his favour is 21.Rc2 Ne5!.

### 21...Bxg4 22.Qd2

This is stronger than 22.Qd3 on account of 22...f5! 23.exd5 Qxe1+ 24.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 25.Kg2 f4, and White stands badly.



The culminating moment of the struggle has been reached. The advantage is on the side of Black – this is unquestioned, but its realisation involves enormous difficulties. Very tempting appears the transfer of the queen to the h5-square. But this is not a simple matter: on 22...Qe5 possible is 23.Ne2! Qh5 24.Nf4 Qh6 25.Qc3, and White has the initiative. (*Translator's note:* In fact, after 25...Bb4! Black wins material, as 26.Qxb4 leads to mate after 26...Bf3 27.Ng2 Qh3. Thus, this direct course may well be the best approach for Black.)

The aim is achieved by 22...Qg6! with the possible continuation 23.Qf4 Qh5 24.exd5 g5! 25.Ne4! (otherwise 25...Bf3 is immediately decisive) 25...Rxe4 26.Qxe4 Bf3 27.Qxf3 Qxf3 28.Rxc5 cxd5, and Black has real chances of victory.

However, the continuation chosen by Black also does not slip the advantage.

**22...Bf3 23.Qf4 f5!**

Only with such a method is it possible to maintain the attack. The opening of the f-file is ruinous for White: 24.Qxf3 fxe4 and 25...Rxf2. White is forced to advance the e-pawn, releasing the tension in the centre.

**24.e5 Be4**

Now White seemingly has nothing with which to oppose the obvious plan of the opponent – ...Qg6, ...Be7 and ...Bg5 trapping the queen, the withdrawal of which opens the ‘sluices’ of the attack (...f5–f4!).

All the same White finds a hidden resource of counter-play.

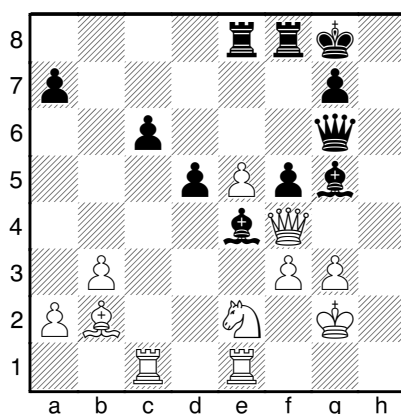
**25.Ne2**

Deserving attention is 25.Nxd5 (later indicated by Bronstein), but in this case too after 25...Bxf2+ 26.Kxf2 Black retains the initiative with 26...cxd5. (*Translator’s note:* This course of action for White would certainly seem to have been preferable.)

**25...Be7 26.f3 Qg6!**

Exploiting the fact that White cannot now take the ‘heroic’ bishop: 27.fxe4 fxe4 28.Qd2 Rf3 with a strong attack.

**27.Kg2 Bg5**



**28.Rxc6!**

A brilliant, although also forced, counter-blow. However, to Black it seemed like a ‘dying flash’, and without particular hesitation he continued:

**28...Qh5?**

Failing to see through the remarkable idea of the opponent, Black unexpectedly falls into a difficult situation. Analysis shows that he ought to have renounced the 'Greek gift', limiting himself to the win of the exchange: 28...Qxc6 29.Qxg5 Qc2. In this case Black retained the advantage. For example:

30.Bd4 Re6! 31.fxe4 Qxe4+ 32.Kf2 f4! 33.gxf4 Rg6, and Black wins;

30.Qc1 Rc8 31.Qxc2 Rxc2 32.Ba3 Bd3 33.Bxf8 Kxf8 34.Kf2 d4 35.f4 Bxe2 36.Rxe2 d3 with the same result;

30.Qc1 Rc8 31.Qxc2 Rxc2 32.fxe4 Rxb2 33.exd5 Re8 34.e6 Rd2 with winning chances for Black;

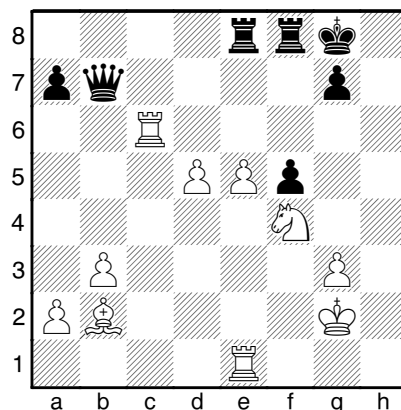
30.Ba3 Rf7 31.fxe4 f4! 32.gxf4 Qxe4+ 33.Kf2 (33.Kg3 Re6) 33...Rxe5! etc.

### 29.fxe4!! Bxf4 30.Nxf4 Qf7 31.exd5

Within the course of a few moves a fantastic turnaround of the situation has taken place. For the queen White has two active pieces and a pair of formidable passed pawns.

### 31...Qb7

In the opinion of Bronstein, stronger was 31...Rc8, after which the outcome of the battle would have been unclear.



### 32.Ba3?

It transpires that the fate of the game was in the 'hands' of the inexorable clock, on the dial of which grandmaster Bronstein had remaining no more than two minutes. After the stronger 32.Rg6! Black would hardly have been able to save himself: 32...Qb4 33.Re2 Rf7 34.e6 Rc7 35.Be5 etc.

### 32...Rc8 33.Rec1 Rfe8 34.e6 Rxc6 35.Rxc6?

A new and this time decisive mistake. After 35.dxc6 Qa6 the chances would still have been on the side of White. (*Translator's note:* This is at least debatable. Thus, after 36.c7 Rc8 37.e7 Kf7 38.Re1 Qc6+ followed by 39...Qxc7, it is difficult to see how White holds on.)

**35...g5!**

In turns out that on the retreat of the knight (36.Ne2) there follows 36...Rxe6!. For example:  
37.Nd4 Re5 38.d6 Re4 39.Rc7 Re2+, mating.

**36.e7 gxf4 37.gxf4 Qb5**

Here White could have lay down his arms. There still followed:

**38.Rf6 Qxd5+ 39.Kh3 Qf3+ 40.Kh2 Qxf4+ 41.Kh3 Qg4+ 42.Kh2 Qh4+ 43.Kg2 Qxf6**

White resigned.