

(The annotations to this game, by L. A. Shamkovich, are from *Shakhmaty v SSSR* (№ 4, 1955). The translation from the original Russian is by Douglas Griffin.)

Taimanov – Shamkovich

8th round, 22nd USSR Championship Semi-final, Leningrad 1954

1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 c6 4.d4

This move gives Black the possibility of beginning active play in the centre, exploiting the unsteady position of the white queen.

4...exd4 5.Qxd4 d5 6.Bg5

On 6.Bg5 there would have followed 6...dxc4 7.Qxc4 Be6, and Black does not experience the slightest difficulties. Now, however, 6...dxc4 is weaker in view of 7.Qxd8+ Kxd8 8.e4! Be6 9.f4.

6...Be7

Resuming the threat of the capture on c4.

7.cxd5

After this exchange, freeing the c6-square for the knight, Black's initiative becomes dangerous. He ought to continue 7.Bg2 dxc4 8.Qxc4 Be6 9.Qa4.

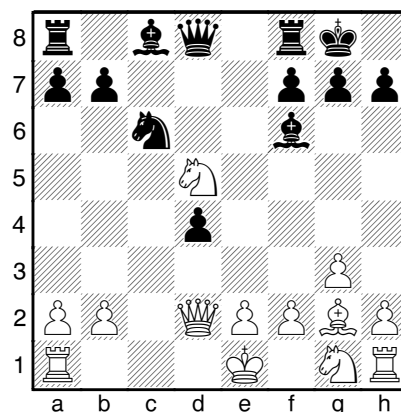
7...cxd5 8.Bg2 Nc6 9.Qd2

On 9.Qa4 there could have followed either 9...d4 or 9...0-0 with an active game.

9...d4! 10.Bxf6

A forced exchange. Bad is 10.Nb5 Qb6 11.Bxf6 gxf6!, and the b5-knight perishes.

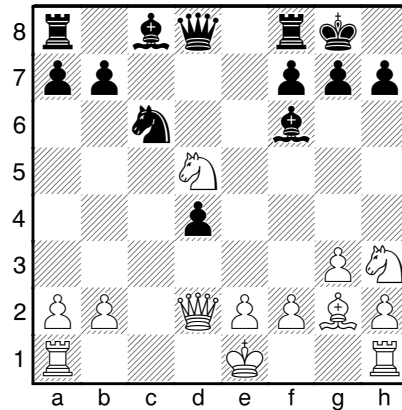
10...Bxf6 11.Nd5 0-0



The opening has ended in favour of Black, who has noticeably outstripped White in

development. For instance, bad now is 12.Nxf6+ Qxf6 13.Nf3 Bg4 14.0-0 Rfe8 15.Rad1 Rad8 16.Rfe1 in view of 16...d3!.

12.Nh3

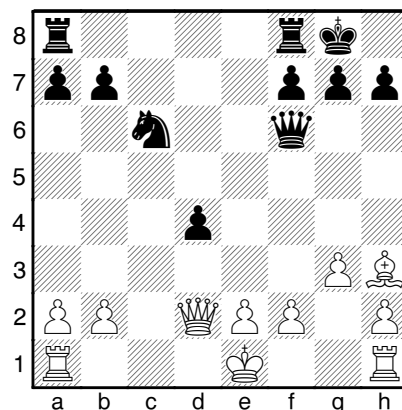


12...Bxh3

Black should not hurry with this exchange. It was necessary to carry out his intended break immediately (12...d3!), after which it is difficult for White to defend against the dangerous threats.

- I. 13.Qxd3 Bxb2 14.Rb1 (or 14.Rd1 Nd4 with the threats of ...Bxh3 and ...Bf5) 14...Bd4! 15.Nhf4 Qa5+ 16.Qd2 Bxf2+!.
- II. 13.exd3 Bxh3 14.Nxf6+ Qxf6 15.Bxh3 Nd4 with a very strong attack.
- III. 13.0-0 dxe2 14.Qxe2 Nd4 15.Qd1 (if 15.Qd3, then 15...Bf5; it is precisely on account of this that it was necessary to hold back with the exchange of the c8-bishop) 15...Bxh3 16.Nxf6+ Qxf6 17.Bxh3 Rad8 18.Bg2 Rfe8 19.Kh1 Re2 and White has a difficult position.

13.Nxf6+ Qxf6 14.Bxh3



14...d3! 15.0-0

It was dangerous to take the pawn: 15.Qxd3 Rad8 16.Qc3 Nd4 17.Bg4 h5! 18.Bxh5 Rc8 and Black wins.

15...dxe2 16.Qxe2 Nd4 17.Qg4?

This activity proves to be out of place. Correct was 17.Qd3! and on 17...Rad8 – 18.Bg2 Rfe8 19.Rfe1!, which led to approximate equality.

Now Black wins an important pawn.

17...Nf3+ 18.Kh1 Nd2 19.Rfe1 Qxb2 20.Rac1 Rad8

It is essential to reinforce the position of the d2–knight, which deprives the white pieces of important squares. The continuation 21.Rc7 is not dangerous on account of 21...Qb6.

21.Bg2 b5

The advance of the b-pawn puts White in a difficult situation.

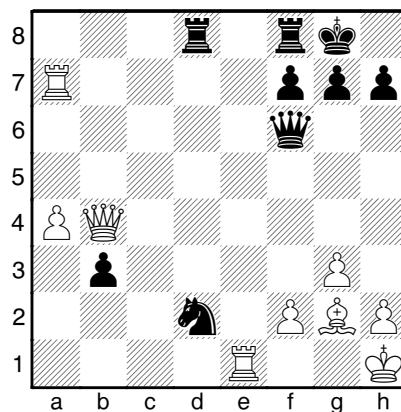
22.a4 b4 23.Rc7 b3 24.Qb4

But not 24.Rxa7 Qc2, and the b3–pawn cannot be stopped.

24...Qf6

The critical moment of the game. The plan which Black associates with this move proves to be mistake. The win is achieved most simply of all with 24...Qd4 25.Qxd4 Rxd4 26.Rb7 (26.Rxa7 Rb4! etc.) 26...a5 27.Rb5 Rb4 28.Rxb4 axb4 29.Bd5 Rd8 30.Re2 b2.

25.Rxa7



25...Qxf2?

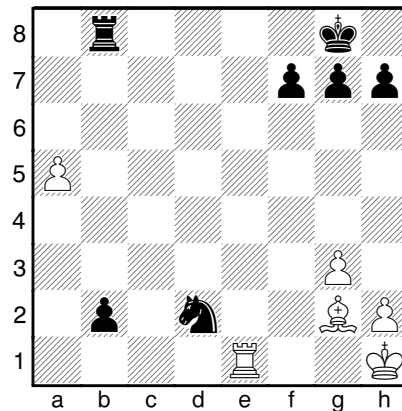
A mistake, letting slip the win that was still to be achieved with 25...b2 26.Kg1 b1=Q 27.Rxb1 Nxb1 28.Qxb1 Rd2. With the combined action of the queen and rooks Black would have effortlessly organised a decisive attack; for instance: 29.Qe1 Qd4 30.Bf3 (30...Qxa7 and 30...Rd1

were threatened) 30...Rd3! 31.Be2 Re8 32.Qf1 Ra3.

26.Rae7 Rb8

Black cannot strengthen his position in any other way, since 27.R8e2 is threatened.

27.Qxb8 Qxe1+ 28.Rxe1 Rxb8 29.a5 b2



The impression is such that it is time for White to resign, but...

30.Bb7!!

Black had not considered this cunning move in his preliminary calculations. The a5-pawn will cost Black just as dearly as the b2-pawn does White!

30...Kf8

There was hardly any point in complicating the play with 30...Nb3 31.a6 Nc1 32.a7 Rf8 33.a8=Q b1=Q 34.Qa7 Qb2 35.Bd5: the activity of the white pieces would have counter-balanced the absence of a pawn.

31.a6 Re8 32.Rd1 b1=Q 33.Rxb1 Nxb1 34.a7 Ke7 35.a8=Q Rxa8 36.Bxa8 Kf6 37.Kg2 Ke5 38.Bc6 g5 39.Be8 f5 40.Bc6 Nd2 41.Kf2 Nb3

Here the game was adjourned. Analysis showed that there is not path to victory for Black. For White it is sufficient to adhere to waiting tactics. Therefore, without resuming the game, the opponents agreed to a draw.