



#3 – January 2, 2003

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Our first subscriber-only issue! Thank you for signing up, you are brilliant, good-looking, and have great taste. Let's make 2003 a Ninja year for you at the chessboard. Two new sections this week and many more to come. Also new is the handy PGN download link on the right.

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NINJA NEWS



Which players and writers would you like to see contribute to Black Belt? If you have a favorite, let us know at the [Black Belt message board](#). Upcoming contributors include Vishy Anand, US Champion Larry Christiansen, former US champ Joel Benjamin, and IM Sofia Polgar! Who else? You decide.

The Master Writes



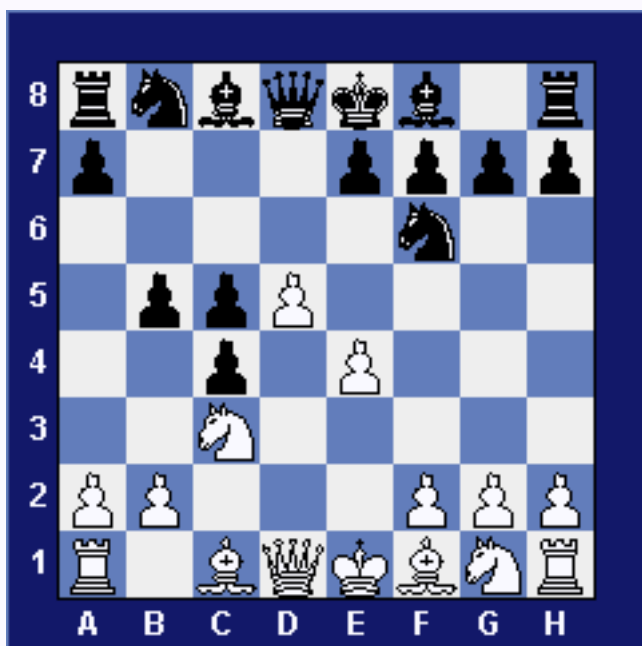
We are pleased to welcome back International Master Cyrus Lakdawala of Southern California

Nielsen,P (2620) - Karjakin,S (2527)
[D20] Premier Hastings ENG (1), 28.12.2002



1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 The Queen's Gambit Accepted is one of the toughest tests for white to extricate an advantage. **3.e4** A confident choice against his 12-year-old GM opponent, who was Ponomarev's second in the last FIDE World Championship finals vs. Ivanchuk. Nielsen picks the sharpest line and risks walking into Ponomarev's analysis.

From what I have seen most child prodigies display extraordinary tactical gifts, and lag behind considerably in quiet positions requiring schematic thinking. For this reason it may have been an idea to play like Kramnik did vs Kasparov in their 2000 World Championship match with the line **3.Nf3 e6 4.e3 c5 5.Bxc4 a6 6.O-O Nf6 7.dc5 Qxd1 8.Rxd1 Bxc5. 3...c5 4.d5 Nf6 5.Nc3 b5!?** The wildest line. **5...e6** is a quieter alternative. This is a line where both sides better have done their homework.



6.Bf4 6.e5 b4 7.exf6 bxc3 8.bxc3 exf6 9.Bxc4 Bd6 scores well for black. White's healthy queenside majority is offset by black's piece activity. **6...Ba6** One slip is such a position and black gets crushed. For example: **6...b4? 7.Nb5 Na6 8.Bxc4 Nxe4 9.Qe2! g5 (9...Bf5? 10.f3 Nf6 11.Nd6+)** **10.Qxe4 gxf4 11.d6 Rb8 12.Nc7+! Nxc7 13.Bxf7+! Kxf7 14.Qxf4+** is no fun at all for black.

7.Nf3 b4 8.Bxb8! bxc3 [8...Rxb8? 9.Qa4+ Qd7 10.Qxa6 bxc3 11.bxc3 Nxe4 12.Ne5 Qf5 13.Qa4+ Kd8 14.f4! and it becomes pretty clear that black's king is in much greater danger than white's king.] **9.Qa4+ Qd7 10.Qxa6 cxb2** A logical theoretical novelty.

[10...Rxb8 11.Ne5 cxb2 12.Rb1 Qc7 13.Qa4+ Nd7 14.Nxc4 g6 15.Qc6 Kd8 16.e5 ½-½
 Fellner,W-Olbrisch,M/GER-ch23 sf9 corr 1991/Corr 2000 left black better in the final position. after 16...Bh6. Karjakin probably feared a prepared improvement from Nielsen.]
11.Rb1 Rxb8



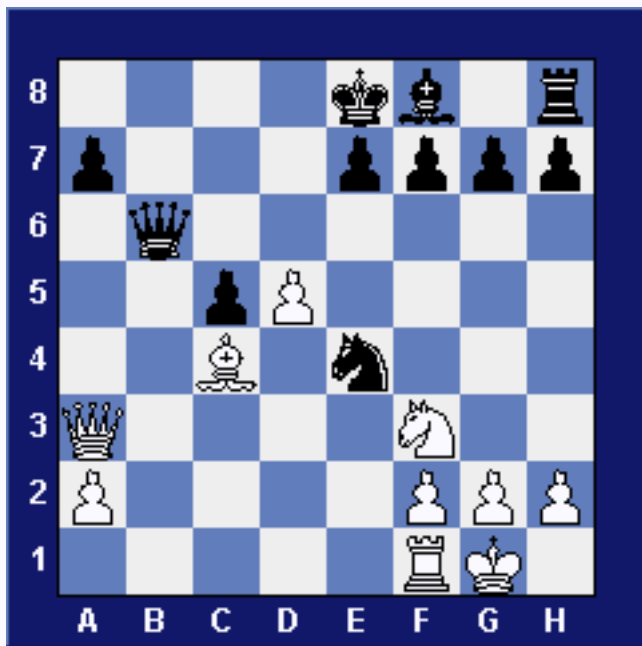
12.Bxc4! But this is the real TN! 12.Ne5 would have transposed into the Fellner-Olbrisch game.

[12.Ne5 Qb7?? (12...Qd6 13.Qa4+ Nd7 14.Nxc4; 12...Qc7 13.Qa4+ Nd7 14.Nxc4 g6 15.Qc6 Kd8 16.Qxc7+ Kxc7 17.Rxb2 Rxb2 18.Nxb2 1-0 in 72 moves. Ivanisevic,I-Chatalbashev,B. Antalya 2002) 13.Rxb2 1-0 Shirov,A-Motylev,A. Moscow 2001]

12...Rb6 13.Qa3! [13.Ne5?! Qb7! 14.Qa4+ Nd7 15.Nd3 g6 Leads to a balanced position where black's passed b-pawn limits white's ability to exploit his development lead.]

13...Nxe4? Black goes adrift with this natural looking move. 13...Qb7! 14.Bb3 e6! He needs to free his kingside pieces. 15.Qa4+ Nd7 16.dxe6 fxe6 17.0-0 Rb4 18.Qa5 Qc6! Looks like it should favor white. But black's passed b-pawn still keeps the balance in a very complex situation.

14.Rxb2 Qb7? Karjakin didn't like the looks of 14...Nd6 15.Rxb6 axb6 16.Ne5 Qb7 17.Ba6! Qb8 (17...Qxd5?? 18.Qa4+) 18.Qb3 where his position leaks on the light squares and he is alarmingly behind in development. But what transpires is a lot worse! **15.Rxb6 Qxb6 16.0-0**



Karjakin probably wanted to resign here. Perhaps the only thing that stopped him was the reality that he didn't want to lose a 16-move game. **16...f6 17.Qa4+ Kd8 18.d6!** Much stronger than the obvious continuation [18.Qc2?! Nd6 19.Rb1 Qc7 20.Bd3 g6 21.Nd2 and white still has some work ahead of him to convert to the full point.]

18...e5 The alternatives bring no relief. For example: 18...Nxd6 19.Be6! Nb5 (19...Qc7 20.Rb1+- leaves black helpless against 21.Rb8+.) 20.Rd1+-; 18...exd6 19.Be6! Qb7 20.Re1 Ng5 (20...d5 21.Bxd5 Qxd5 22.Rd1 also wins.) 21.Nxg5 fxg5 22.Bf5! Be7 23.Rb1 Qc7 24.Rb8+!

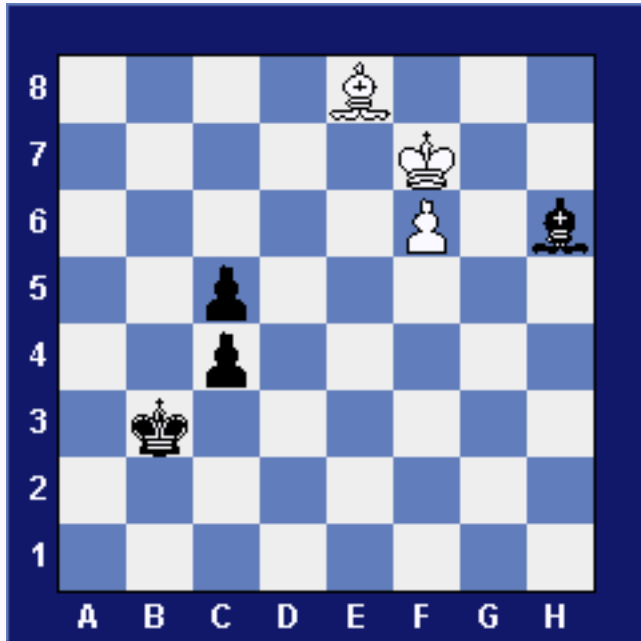
19.Be6 Qb7 20.Qa5+ 1-0 20...Qb6 21.Rb1! Qxa5 22.Rb8 mate is a pretty finish.

[View game online](#)

Puzzled



More than light entertainment, a good study can also teach you a great deal about the power of the pieces. Like Reti, the composer Selesniev was excellent at finding beauty in realistic positions. This is a fine example. By the way, with all due respect to Fritz, Junior, and Shredder, your computer won't help you much with this one! The solution is at the bottom of the page.



Study by A. Selesniev

White to play and draw

[View solution online](#)

Super Structure



In this section we'll examine one of the things that separates the best from the rest. Even if you can calculate like Fritz and know your openings, positional play can remain a mystery. Let's take a look inside the magician's bag of tricks to see how it's done.

Bent Larsen (2585) - Oscar Panno (2540)

[A11] Buenos Aires, 1980

[Mig]

These two legends need no introduction. Both were candidates for the world championship in the 1970s. I have had the honor of losing to both of them! We will focus on the elements of position mastery demonstrated in this game, including the points in which even a legend goes wrong. **1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 c6 3.b3 g6 4.Bb2 Bg7 5.Bg2 d5 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 Bg4 8.d3 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Re8 10.Nd2 a5 11.a3 Na6 12.Bg2 Qd6 13.Qc2 Rec8**

Black plays a maneuvering game, avoiding the loose pawns that would result after ..e5.

[13...e5 14.cxd5 cxd5 15.Rfc1] **14.Rac1 Qd8 15.Rfd1 Nc5** [15...b5!? 16.Qb1] **16.d4 Ncd7 17.Qd3** GM Chekhov considers this position to contain a slight plus for white. His space advantage, bishop pair, and queenside plans look promising.



17...e6 18.Rc2 Qe7 19.e3 Rd8 Panno likes his solid position and again doesn't play the thematic ..e5 break. He has more preparation to do.
[19...e5!? 20.cxd5 cxd5 21.Rxc8+ Rxc8 22.dxe5 Nxe5 23.Qb5 Rc5] **20.Qe2 Ne8**

21.h4!? Ah, Bent Larsen and his famous wing pawns! With no discernable provocation he launches his h-pawn forward. If a beginner did this you would say it weakened the kingside, particularly g3 and g4. But when Bent Larsen plays it you have to imagine he wanted to slow any black kingside expansion. White's king is in no danger. **21...f5 22.Nf3 Nd6 23.Ne1 a4?!**

Inviting White to expand on the queenside, but forcing a rigid structure. The great Oscar Panno, known as "the Engineer" in Argentine chess, is a positional master among masters, so it is hard to call this a mistake. It is likely that he thought his center and kingside push would be faster than Larsen's push on the queenside. White's marvelous 27th move puts this into doubt. **24.c5**



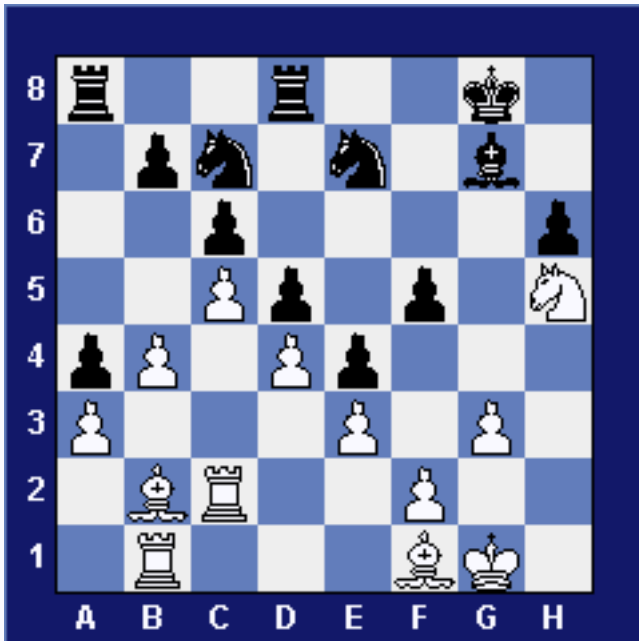
Defining the structure for the rest of the game. White will work to enforce b5, creating a weak pawn on either c6 or b7. The pawn on a4 will be isolated and White's rooks are ready to take over the b-file. Remember this plan through the game and especially at the end!

24...Nb5? The knight is offside here and will become a target. Playing it to e4 was more logical. [24...Ne4!? 25.b4 planning b5.] **25.b4 h6 26.Bf1** [26.Nd3!? A much messier alternative. 26...e5 27.dxe5 Nxe5 28.Nxe5 Bxe5 29.Bxd5+ Kh7 30.Bc4 Bxb2 31.Rxb2 Rxd1+ 32.Qxd1 Nxa3 33.Bd3 planning h5.]

26...e5 27.h5! The type of move that separates the greats from the rest of us. White blows up the nice black pawn chain and gains time for his own queenside advance. If Black pushes the g-pawn then White gains time by attacking the undefended f-pawn. **27...e4** [27...g5 28.Qf3 Uncovering an attack on the knight with tempo. 28...Qf7 29.dxe5 Nxe5 30.Bxe5 Bxe5 31.Bxb5 cxb5 32.Rcd2 Bc3 33.Rd3 A solid plus for White.]

28.hxg6 Qg5 29.Ng2 Now White's advantage is clear. The tide of black pawns has become a trickle and White has good squares for his pieces. With nothing to fear on the kingside Larsen can turn his attention to the queenside, where he has an advantage in space and a weak black a-pawn to attack.

29...Nf8 30.Nf4 Nc7 31.Qh5 With queens off the board there are fewer tactical chances. White's positional/structural advantages become even clearer. **31...Qxh5 32.Nxh5 Nxc6 33.Rb1 Ne7**



34.b5! Another sort of move that you see in Master games all the time but rarely appear in amateur games. Larsen grabs the chance to bust open the b-file, knowing that he will quickly get the pawn back.

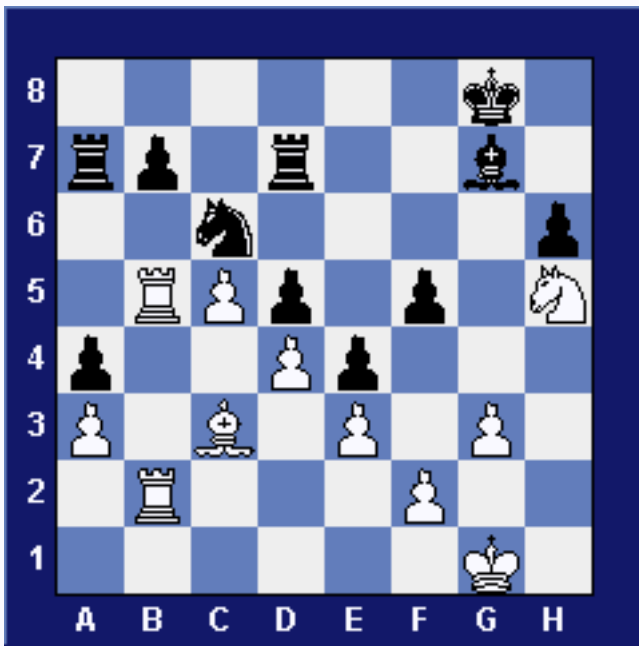
It might look like a simple move order reversal (instead of first Bc3) and that is often true. But here if Bc3 Black can play the knight back to b5. If you CAN play the most forcing move first, do so instead of giving your opponent time for his own plans. [34.Bc3 Nb5]

34...cxb5 35.Bc3 Nc6 36.Bxb5 Nxb5 37.Rxb5 Ra7 38.Rcb2 Now we get to see Larsen grind Black like a coffee bean. The weak pawns on a4

and b7 are a good start. White also has a powerful knight and no attackable weaknesses of his own. (Smack yourself if you wanted to trade the knight for that useless bishop on g7.) True, White's bishop isn't doing much more than playing defense so far.

38...Rd7 Now the trick: Black has successfully defended his weaknesses, so how to make progress? The answer is a familiar one. While Black's pieces are tied down defending one thing, White's more active pieces run over an attack something else.

The old saying is that one weakness is not enough to lose a game. Larsen goes after another weakness, the f-pawn. The famous chess coach Dvoretsky has called this "the rule of two weaknesses," but this common sense concept goes back at least to Staunton.



39.f3 exf3 40.Rf2 Ra8 41.Rxf3 Rf8 42.Nf4 Bf6 43.Nd3 Bd8 44.Rb1 Rf6 45.Kg2 Re6 46.Kf2 Bg5 47.Re1 Rf7 48.Nb2 White keeps probing, now it's the a-pawn's turn. **48...Ne7 49.Rb1**

[49.Nxa4? Don't rush! 49...Ra6 50.Nb6 Rxa3 And one black weakness has been eliminated.]

49...Ra6 50.Ke2 Rff6 51.Nd3 Ra7 Black can't do much more than try to cover all the holes in the roof with his fingers. But Larsen is creating more holes and Panno is running out of fingers! White steadily finds better squares for his pieces, including the king.

52.Ne5 Re6 53.Kd3 Kg7 54.Bd2 Rea6 55.Rff1 Heading back to the queenside! With each shift in direction the defense loses a step or two.

55...Bf6 56.Nd7 Re6 57.Rb5 Rc6 58.Rb4 Kg6 59.Rfb1 Rc7 60.Nb6+- The positional domination is complete and it is time to finally reap the material gains. The a-pawn is the first to go. **60...Bg5**



61.Rh1 I absolutely love this move, maybe just because it would never have occurred to me. The one problem with capturing the a-pawn immediately is that the black king makes a run for the weak white g-pawn. This prophylactic move stops Black's only counterplay. [61.Rxa4 Rxa4 62.Nxa4 Kh5 Chekhov]

61...Rc6 62.Bc1 Protecting the a-pawn before capturing on a4. This yet again emphasizes that White is in no hurry. [62.Rxa4? Rxa4 63.Nxa4 Ra6 And the white a-pawn falls.]

62...Re6 63.Rxa4 Rxa4 64.Nxa4 Ng8 65.Nb6 Nf6 66.Rf1 Re8 Due to the annoying c-pawn it takes Black two moves to protect his d-pawn with

his rook to free his knight. White uses this time to

create fatal threats with his a-pawn. **67.a4 Rd8 68.a5!** Not giving Black time to counterattack. The threat is a6 bxa6 c6, winning. **68...Ne8** Black never had time to use that lovely e4 square.

[68...Ne4 69.a6 bxa6 70.c6 Nxg3 71.Rf2 Ne4 72.Rc2] **69.Bd2 Be7 70.Na4 Rd7 71.Rb1 Nf6 72.a6!** Larsen is done with patience, it's time to score the point! Someone less certain of their calculations would have first played Nc3 and Rb6.

72...bxa6 73.Ba5 Ra7 74.Rb8 A beautiful finishing series of moves. White clears the path for the c-pawn. Total triumph for his queenside plan and the advanced c-pawn. **1-0** [74...Nd7 75.Rc8 Kf7 76.c6 Nf6 77.Bb6]

As a bonus, here's a more recent game that saw similar structural plans.

Lesiege,A (2582) - Bruzon Bautista,L (2568) [D63]

Capablanca mem Elite Varadero (7), 14.05.2000

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 0-0 6.Nf3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 a6 8.c5 c6 9.b4 a5 10.b5 e5 11.bxc6 bxc6 12.Qa4 exd4 13.exd4 Ne4 14.Be3 Qc7 15.Nxe4 dxe4 16.Nd2 f5 17.g3 g5 18.Bc4+ Kg7 19.d5 cxd5 20.Bxd5 Nb6 21.Qc6 Nxd5 22.Qxd5 Ra6 23.c6 Bf6 24.h4 Rd8 25.Qb5 gxh4 26.Bf4 Qf7 27.gxh4 Ra8 28.Rg1+ Kh8 29.c7 Rf8 30.Nc4 Be6 31.Nd6 Qh5 32.Be5 [32.Qe5! Bc8 33.Qxf6+ Rxf6 34.Be5] 32...Qxh4 33.c8Q Raxc8 34.Rxc8 Rxc8 35.Nxc8 1-0

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Assume the Position



An interesting discussion arose in the message boards about why we do not tell you which side is to move in Assume the Position. To summarize, the idea is to force you to think objectively about the positional and tactical elements of the position and stop worrying about lines and calculating variations. Of course the next move can change many things, but it's hard to focus on planning and imbalances if you look at every diagram like a puzzle.

Below is your homework from last week. This position comes from a critical must-win game between Vishy Anand (white) and Anatoly Karpov. It was the final game in the 1998 FIDE KO world championship super-final and Anand was trailing by one point.

Anand,V (2770) - Karpov,A (2735)

[A45] FIDE-Wch k.o. f Lausanne (8.6), 08.01.1998

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 e6 3.e4 h6 4.Bxf6 Qxf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Qd2 g5 7.Bc4 Nc6 8.Nge2 Bg7 9.Rd1 Bd7 10.0-0 0-0-0



Black already has the beginnings of a pawn storm on the kingside. His king is far away and his g and h-pawns are ready to advance. The h8 rook is well placed without having moved. White will have to attack on the queenside.

Pieces aren't going to be enough since Black has several defenders around his king. Both sides have to be alert for pawn pushes in the center. In particular, the d5 push by White can drive away the defending c6 knight, but at the cost of opening the a1-h8 diagonal.

11.Nb5! As Anand put it in his annotations, White must provoke weaknesses in the black queenside before pushing his own queenside pawns. Playing

the immediate pawn push b4-b5 will allow Karpov to play his knight to a5 and White won't be able to make progress.

11...a6 White was threatening d5. But at the cost of several tempi the white b-pawn has a target. **12.Na3 g4!** Black can't sit still. Karpov immediately begins kingside expansion.

13.f4 Anand didn't want to allow Black to play his queen to the dominating g5 square.

13...gxf3 14.Rxf3 The rook's powerful placement compensates for the open g-file.

14...Qe7 15.c3 h5 16.Rdf1 Rdf8 17.b4 Na7 Anand criticizes this move as being too passive. Remember that Black is happy with a draw, while White must win to force a playoff.

18.Nc2 Bh6 19.Qe1 Kb8 20.Bd3 Bc6! Black tries to utilize one of his advantages, the bishop pair. White's next moves are directed toward neutralizing the bishops. **21.Nf4 Rfg8 22.d5 Be8**



23.Qf2 Instead of blindly continuing on the queenside, Anand sees that he now has good attacking possibilities on the f-file. Black has prevented queenside expansion, but at the cost of sidelining his knight and taking his light-squared bishop out of play.

The game has now strayed from the plans we looked at before move 11, or has it? You cannot expect your opponent to sit and wait for you to execute your brilliant plan from beginning to end! (Especially when your opponent is Karpov.) White's queenside initiative was countered successfully so Anand had to look elsewhere, and he found strong kingside play. In short, White's plan worked very well!

23...Bg7 24.Nd4 Bd7 25.dxe6 Bxd4 26.cxd4 fxe6 27.e5 Bc6 28.Ng6 Qd8?? This blunder decides the game. The efficient mop-up by Vishy is given without comment. [28...Rxc6 29.Bxc6 Bxf3 30.Qxf3 dxe5 31.dxe5 Nc6 32.Qf6] **29.Nxh8 Bxf3 30.Nf7 Qh4 31.Qxf3 Qxd4+ 32.Kh1 d5 33.Rd1 Qxb4 34.Rb1 Qa4 35.Qxh5 Nc6 36.Qe2 Ka7 37.Qf2+ b6 38.Rc1 Kb7 39.h3 Rc8 40.Qf6 Nd4 41.Nd8+ Kb8 42.Nxe6 1-0**

[View game online](#)

The Answers You Seek



Puzzled

Study by Selesniev - White to play and draw

1.Kg6 Bf4 [1...c3 Your chess computer will think this move is winning! Even with so little material it can't figure out that its extra queen cannot win against the white f-pawn. It can check forever and so won't find out that it's just a perpetual. 2.Kxh6 c2 3.f7 c1Q+ 4.Kg7 Qg5+ 5.Kh7=]

2.Bf7! Kb4 3.Bxc4 [3.Bd5? c3 4.Be4 Kb3 5.Kf5 Be3 6.Ke6 Bh6 7.Kd5 Bf8 and Black wins.] **3...Kxc4 4.Kf5 Bd6 5.Ke6** Thanks to the c5 pawn, the bishop never has enough room to escape the white king. A positional draw. **5...Bf8 6.Kf7 Bh6 7.Kg6** ½-½

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