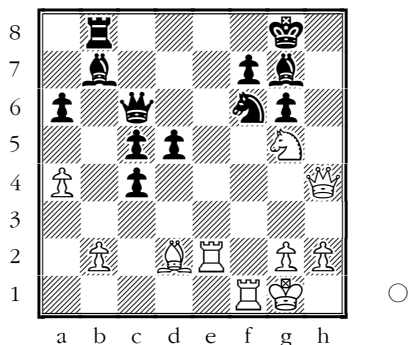


Chess Quiz

Cherepkov – Mochalov Vilnius, 1983



Chess News

Women World Championship 2004 Moves to Batumi

The Russian news agency *Interfax* has [informed](#) us that the Women's World Championship will take place in Batumi (Georgia) in May-June this year. It was originally planned to be organised in Tbilisi.

Icelandic Championship

In the first game of the finals GM Hannes Stefánsson beat GM Helgi Grétarsson.

[Official website](#)

San Sebastian Open

Before the last round 9 players are sharing the lead:

1-9. Korneev (RUS 2573), Veingold (EST 2464), Cheparinov (BUL 2555), Andres Gonzalez (ESP 2397), Spraggett (CAN 2564), Cifuentes Parada (ESP 2506), Conquest (ENG 2524), Komljenovic (CRO 2454) and Palac (CRO 2565) – 6 points out of 8.
96 participants

[Official website](#)

Press-conference about the Kramnik-Leko Match

We received information from the organisers of Kramnik-Leko match that a press-conference will take place on Wednesday, May 12 at Raffles Hotel, Vier Jahreszeiten, in Hamburg, Germany. It will be conducted between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

The Classical World Chess Championship will be held at the Centro Dannemann in Brissago, on the shores of the Lago Maggiore, Switzerland, from September 25 until October 18, 2004. A total of 14 games is to be played under classical time controls.

At the press-conference journalists will be able to meet the following guests:

- Vladimir Kramnik (World Champion)
- Peter Leko (Challenger)
- Joel Lautier (President of the ACP)
- Hans Leusen (President of Dannemann Brasil)
- Representative of the Swiss region Ticino

For more information go to:

www.centrodannemann.com and
www.chess-players.org

Yesterday we were informed about death of Mr. Jean-Claude Loubatière. I met him on several occasions in France and it was always a pleasant experience. Today I received the following message from one of our readers:

"Dear Alexander,
Thank you [for] writing about Jean-Claude. He was a very avid reader of *Chess Today* and right up to end he used your paper to keep up with the latest chess news. It is a very big loss for our Federation.

Yours Truly, Stephen Boyd"

Then Stephen kindly sent us the following piece:

Jean-Claude Loubatière

Jean-Claude Loubatière died on April 7, 2004 after a very long battle with cancer. He was President of the French Chess Federation since 1989 after first being its technical director. He was also President of Zone 1.1 in Europe until 1993.



Jean-Claude was a tireless worker for chess, putting his incredible organisational talents at its service. He made the French Chess Federation the modern and dynamic Federation it is now. Under his leadership:

- The French Federation has become one of the top 10 in the world both in membership and in strength
- Chess was officially recognized as a sport in France in 2000
- The French Federation exceeded 50,000 members in 2002
- Our National magazine *Echec et Mat* was created and developed

He was truly devoted to Chess and his qualities of determination, courage and innovation will be greatly missed by our Federation.

On a personal level, this is a great loss for all of us at the French Chess Federation. Jean-Claude was our leader and our guide. We are thankful to him to have given us a chance that our passion could also be our profession.

Stephen Boyd,
French Chess Federation Office

On This Day...

Alfred Diel, editor of *Deutschen Schachblatter* magazine, was born in 1924.

Eric Andersen was born in Gentofte, Denmark 100 years ago. He was Danish champion 12 times.



Letters to the Editor

In CT-1248 we published an Open Letter from FIDE World Champion Ruslan Ponomarev. Here are two replies to that letter:

"Dear Alex,

Concerning Ponomarev's letter I would like to state a few things:

1. Nobody says that he 'cancelled' the match against Kasparov. He however **did not sign** the bloody **contract** in time.

2. It was most probably just Danailov (everybody's manager) and other irresponsible characters who influenced Ponomarev to play with fire until he got burned. Now they all pretend to be surprised by the logical consequences.

3. I respect Ponomarev for becoming the K.O. Champion. I don't bother checking his place in the Elo list - it's not all that important. But if somebody is **number one** for 20 (twenty!) years like Kasparov, it is like Bobby Fischer's 6-0 victories against Taimanov and Larsen! Ruslan does not seem to realize that. Too bad.

4. I'm 54 now. I used to be younger and at those times I wanted to be a Champion myself. But I was not strong enough for that. I only reached the *Candidates* (it meant the best 8 then)

5. Respecting others (elders) does not make anybody smaller. Acting differently is a safe way to lose sympathy of the people who did so much for chess as you, Ruslan, must go a long way to catch up!

Greetings to everybody!
GM András Adorján, the Father of
BLACK is OK thesis"

And here is another, quite lengthy letter. While I don't agree with the author on several points, his views are shared by many chess fans and are worth showing here:

"Hi, Alex!

Ruslan Ponomarev is realizing that no one misses him. FIDE's decision to cancel the match was completely justified. He simply refused to play the match against Gary Kasparov. If FIDE can default Bobby Fischer, they certainly can default Ruslan Ponomarev. He is now realizing that FIDE Knockout champions are easily replaced and forgotten. You can easily get a new FIDE champion by holding another grab bag, blitz crazed FIDE Knockout Tournament. True World Champions are neither easily forgotten nor easily replaced. Bobby Fischer and Anatoly Karpov are cases in point.

As I recall events:

- 1) Kasparov signed the contract, Ponomarev did not.
- 2) Ponomarev held up the reunification process over unreasonable demands.
 - a) Ponomarev wanted draw odds.
 - b) Ponomarev did not want to use standard time controls, 40 moves in 2 hours. He wanted 90 minutes and 30 second increments per move.
- 3) If Ponomarev wants to defend his title under similar conditions, then he should play in the next FIDE Knockout Tournament.
- 4) Ponomarev passed up a great opportunity to play the strongest player in the world for a nice sum of money. Ponomarev would have been seeded in the next few future world championships. Ponomarev passed up a 'no lose' situation.

Ponomarev took unreasonable stances on basic issues. The first being time control. He did not want to play

using standard time controls. True World Championship matches have been played using standard time controls, 40 moves in 2 hours. The sixth World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik stated, "World Championship matches are of competitive and creative importance". So why not use the slower standard time controls and allow these matches to be decided by the strongest player playing the strongest chess. This issue should not have been a showstopper.

Ponomarev other unreasonable demand was that he wanted draw odds, just like Kramnik has with his match against Peter Leko. In order to answer this draw odds question, we must compare the two titles. Kramnik got his title by beating the man who beat the man who beat the man. In 2000, Kramnik defeated then World Champion Gary Kasparov, greatest World Champion ever, in a match by a score of 2 wins, 13 draws, and zero losses. This was truly a great accomplishment – Kramnik had climbed the Chess Olympus. Ponomarev's title was won in the knockout tournament, which was missing two best players in the world – Kasparov and Kramnik. Kramnik's title follows rich tradition. It would be unconscionable to give Ponomarev draw odds against the player who dominated chess for 20 years and who defended his title for 15 years in numerous matches. This issue should not have been a showstopper either.

Ponomarev failed to realize that a victory over Gary Kasparov would have given some legitimacy to the FIDE Knockout Championship. It would have catapulted Ponomarev to chess stardom. It would have increased his marketability for big dollar matches. If Ponomarev wants to defend his title under the same conditions he won it, then he should play in the upcoming FIDE Knockout Tournament in Libya in September.

Ponomarev wonders why the FIDE knockout tournaments prize funds are shrinking. This can easily be explained. How can FIDE hold

championships when the top players don't play in them? Ex Champion and number one player in the world, Gary Kasparov and current World Champion Vladimir Kramnik will not play in the FIDE Knockout Championship. The FIDE process is not worthy of world championship selection. The other reason for poor sponsorship is player like Ponomarev, who make unreasonable demands and cause postponements of chess events. Sponsors need to know who will play and when these events will take place.

All is not lost for Ponomarev – he is still a young and talented player. He could become a true World Champion some day.

Matt Traynor, New Jersey, USA"

Annotated Game

by GM Alex Baburin

Once in a while I like to annotate games in the style of Irving Chernev's 'Logical Chess' – when almost every move is explained. Today is just that kind of a day!

White: Pavel Blatny (2494)

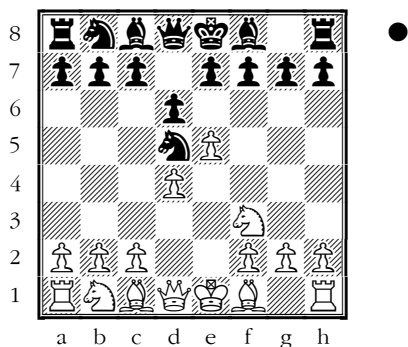
Black: Alex Baburin (2541)

North American Open, Las Vegas USA (3), 28.12.2003

The Alekhine Defence –[B04]

1.e4 ♖f6

The Alekhine Defence. I know many players who prefer this move after 1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 (and those tend to be higher rated guys!), but brave people are not afraid to let the knight into the wild! ☺ **2.e5** The critical move. White gains space and time. Black won't have real problems after 2.♗c3 e5 or 2...d5. **2...♗d5 3.d4 d6 4.♗f3 (D)**



The most solid system – White is happy with some extra space and wants to develop harmoniously.

Far more ambitious is 4.c4 ♗b6 5.f4 – the Four Pawns Attack. But few White players venture into this riskier line. Nowadays 5.exd6 is very popular – White hopes to get a small plus without much trouble.

4...dxe5

Black gets rid of the e5-pawn. He has many other options here. The main one is 4...♗g4, followed by ...e6 or ...c6. Also popular is 4...g6, taking care of the g7-bishop first. Tony Miles and I experimented a lot with 4...c6. This move vacates the c7-square for the knight. But as Tony once told me, "the knight could be just as ugly on c7 as it is on b6!". ☺

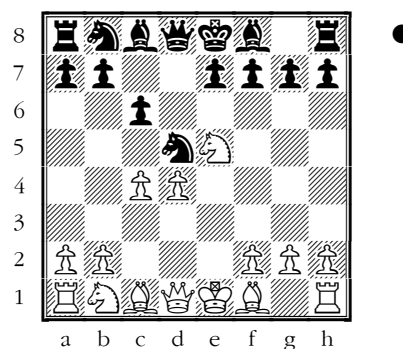
5.♗xe5

If White takes back with the pawn – 5.dxe5, after 5...♗g4 the e5-pawn could later turn into a weakness. Meanwhile the line 6.c4 ♗b4 7.♖xd8+ ♗xd8 is safe enough for Black.

5...c6

Black supports the d5-knight. Long time ago Larsen invented 5...♗d7. Then White can choose between crazy complications after 6.♗xf7 ♗xf7 7.♖h5+ ♗e6 or the solid and simple 6.♗f3, with some edge. More common is 5...g6 – another invention of Larsen.

6.c4?! (D)



White wants to gain more control in the centre. The c2-c4 is very common in the Alekhine Defence, but here it has a tactical flaw. Better is 6.♗e2.

6...♗b4! 7.♗e3

7.a3? ♖xd4!

7...♗f5 8.♗d3?!

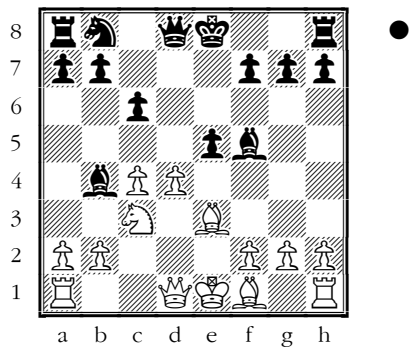
As Pavel told me after the game, he did not mind a draw. But this move actually gets White into trouble – he is breaking one of the basic rules –

develop pieces in the opening! Better was 8.♖a3 although White won't have any advantage then.

8...e5!

Black protects the b4-knight and puts White's centre under pressure. White expected only 8...♗xd3 9.♗xd3 ♖xd3+ 10.♖xd3 or 9...e5 10.♗e4, with some advantage for him.

9.♗xb4 ♗xb4+ 10.♗c3 (D)



Black has a slight lead in development, but this can evaporate quickly after Be2 and 0-0. Black must create some threats urgently.

10...♖a5! 11.♖b3

11.♖c1? drops a pawn after 11...♖xa2, while 11.♖d2 does not look attractive as later the queen on d2 might come under attack on the d-file.

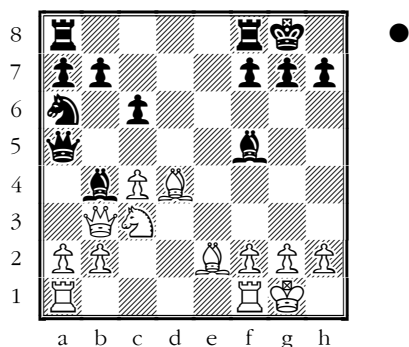
11...0-0

Also possible is 11...exd4 12.♗xd4 0-0

12.♗e2

Black would also keep some initiative after 12.dxe5 ♖d7 13.a3 ♗c5 14.♗xc5 ♖xc5. The following line shows that White should be careful here: 12.a3 exd4 (12...♖a6 13.0-0-0 ♗e7! (13...exd4? 14.axb4 ♖a1+ 15.♖d2 dxe3+ 16.♖xe3!+-)) 13.♗xd4 ♖a6 14.0-0-0 ♖c5 15.♖xb4 ♖xb4 16.axb4 ♖b3#.

12...exd4 13.♗xd4 ♖a6 14.0-0 (D)



14...♗c5!

The best move - Black exploits the

somewhat shaky position of the enemy queen.

15.♗e5

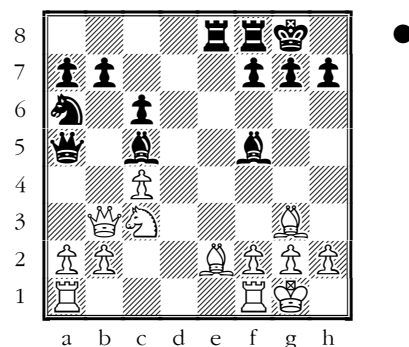
Two months later I won another game in this line: 15.♗xc5 ♖xc5 16.♖a3 (16.♖d1 ♖ad8 17.♖c1 ♖d3 18.♗xd3 ♗xd3 leaves White a pawn down.) 16...♖xa3 17.bxa3 ♖fd8 and Black eventually won this endgame in Collins-Baburin, Bunratty 2004. The funny thing was that it took me nearly 40 minutes to recall how I had played in the game vs. Blatny!

Probably better was 15.♖ad1, although Black keeps the initiative after 15...♗xd4 16.♖xd4 ♖c5 17.♖d1 ♖ad8. I also looked at 15.♗e3 ♗xe3 16.fxe3 ♖c5 17.♖xf5? ♖xb3 18.♖xa5 ♖xa1 and Black is better - it's not easy to get his knight! (18...♖xa5? 19.b4!)

15...♖ae8!

Of course, I would have preferred to develop the other rook - 15...♖fe8, but that would allow 16.♖xb7

16.♗g3 (D)



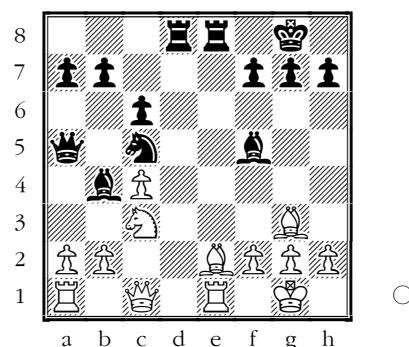
16...♗b4!

This clever move seals Black's advantage. By playing ...♗b4-c5-b4 Black has forced the enemy dark-squared bishop to a passive position on g3.

17.♖d1 ♖d8 18.♖c1 ♖fe8!

Renewing the threat of ...♗xc3 and ...♖xe2. Rooks belong to open files!

19.♖e1 ♖c5 (D)



Black has a considerable advantage here as all his pieces are in the game, while White has no use for his a1-rook yet. **20. ♖h4**

Maybe White had to try 20.a3, although after 20...♙xc3 21.♖xc3 ♗xc3 22.bxc3 ♖e4 he cannot save the c3-pawn - 23.♞ac1 ♖xc3 (23...♖xg3!? 24.hxg3 ♗f8+) 24.♞xc3 ♞xe2 25.♗f1 ♞xe1+ 26.♗xe1 c5, with good winning chances.

20...f6 21. ♖h5?

White wants to induce the crisis, but that won't be good for him!

21...♞xe1+ 22. ♗xe1 ♖d3 23. ♗e2 (D)



Pavel offered a draw here, but it was not hard to resist that offer - Black is totally winning!

23...♖xb2

Most practical move. Also winning was 23...♖f4 24.♗f3 g5 or 23...♙xc3 24.bxc3 ♖f4 25.♗f3 g5.

24. ♞e1 ♖d3

24...♙xc3?? 25.♗e8+ ♞xe8 26.♞xe8# is not hard to spot.

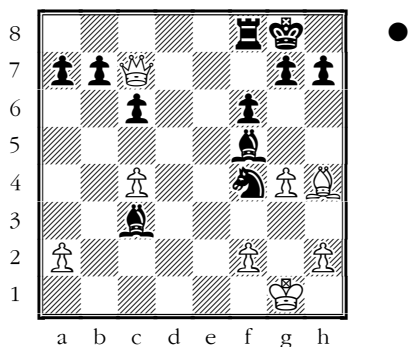
25. ♞d1 ♙xc3 Time to harvest!

26. ♗e7 ♞f8 27.g4 ♖f4! 28. ♖f7+

White wins a queen but the price he pays for it is too high. **28...♞xf7**

29. ♞d8+ ♗xd8 30. ♗xd8+ ♞f8

31. ♗c7 (D)



31...♙e5! 32. ♗xb7 ♞b8! 0-1.

Solution to our quiz:

Cherepkov-Mochalov: **29. ♞e6!! 1-0**

Contact information. Have some comments about Chess Today? [E-mail us](mailto:ababurin@iol.ie) - we appreciate your feedback!

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Technical editors: Graham Brown and Ralph Marconi.

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