

**GARRY
KASPAROV
ON MY GREAT
PREDECESSORS
PART II**



POPULAR CHESS

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Introduction

Dramas of Chess Kings

In Volume 1 of *My Great Predecessors* I talked about the chess kings of the distant past, about the first four official world champions – Steinitz, Lasker, Capablanca and Alekhine and their outstanding opponents. The second volume that you now have before you is devoted to the lives and games of the next four champions – Euwe, Botvinnik, Smyslov and Tal, and also Keres, Bronstein and Geller.

I should remind you that compiled in this book are not only the best games of the former stars, analysed anew with the help of a computer, but also the ‘sore points’ of chess history – the critical, turning points of matches for the world championship. In chess the champions changed for various reasons, but the primary one was usually historic: the continuous and rapid development of the game itself.

As my second Yuri Dokhoian wittily expressed it, with the years each world champion begins to ‘calcify’ – in other words, to become inflexible and be transformed into a living monument.

That is, he gradually ceases to add something new to chess and to grasp the dominating tendency of its development. And sooner or later the inevitable retribution sets in, since the young challenger, on the contrary, usually makes a step forward.

This pattern can be traced in many matches for the world championship, beginning even with the unofficial Morphy-Anderssen match (1858), in which the American genius undoubtedly played the chess of the future. Later Steinitz accomplished a genuine revolution, creating a theory of positional play and putting opening play onto more or less serious, scientific lines. However, in his matches with Chigorin he ‘calcified’, not because of his advanced age, but on account of his terrible obstinacy, as he tried to uphold his principles in extremely dubious positions. His adherence to dogmas cost him many lost points, and he remained on the throne only thanks to his enormous practical strength; had Steinitz played in a more flexible manner, his superiority

over his contemporaries would have been undisputed. But then a highly talented pupil appeared – the ultra-flexible and ultra-resourceful Lasker, and the now thoroughly inflexible Steinitz was unable to cope with him.

Lasker reigned for so long, for the reason that he was completely omnivorous and universal, assimilating and making use of any new chess trends. It is a pity, of course, that in 1912-14 he did not play a match with either Rubinstein, or Capablanca. I don't know how these duels with the shining leaders of the new generation would have ended, but one thing is clear: at that time Lasker was still in excellent form and had retained his real practical strength.

The First World War significantly changed the balance of power in the chess arena. Lasker lived in poverty, Schlechter died, and Rubinstein became a pale shadow of his former self. Alekhine's progress was seriously delayed, as a result of which he matured much later than nature had intended; given normal development, without the War, imprisonment and the Revolution, Alekhine would already have been a quite worthy challenger by 1920.

Only Capablanca was not affected by the War, and he was able to develop as a player. Although, in fact I think that in those years he was no longer developing, but at least he lived comfortably, prepared little by little, played in American tournaments – and retained his former strength. In the 1921 match with the shaky Lasker he gained a confident victory, but chess lost much

due to the fact that such a genius as Capa did not have to extend himself fully. The ease of his victories, especially in New York 1927 (where Lasker, Réti and Bogoljubow were absent, and Alekhine was thinking only of second place), lulled the Cuban, and he came to his senses only towards the end of his match with Alekhine, when the score was 2-4. However, he was no longer able to save his crown: he was let down by his being unaccustomed to hard work, and in addition the genie had escaped from the bottle!

Of course, in the 1927 match Capablanca had 'calcified', and this was observed by Lasker, who saw in Alekhine's victory 'a rejuvenation of the culture of the game itself, which has clearly become necessary, to avoid the stagnation threatening our art'. Yes, Capa was the last representative of the classical chess, stemming from Steinitz and Lasker, and in it he was invincible. He was the ideal player of that era! However, the Cuban overlooked the arrival of a new generation in chess and he was too late in adopting the ideas propagated by Nimzowitsch and Réti, and brought to the fore by Alekhine. A classical wrestler encountered the unusual techniques of judo and karate...

These hypermodern revelations – the Nimzo-Indian and Grünfeld Defences etc. – swiftly conquered the chess world, as play now extended beyond the bounds of the Queen's Gambit, Tarrasch Defence, Ruy Lopez and Italian Game, and the late 1920s was marked by a flourishing of chess thinking. New people arrived

– a new game began! Alekhine was the catalyst of this process (40 years later Fischer was a similar catalyst). The great Russian master, after absorbing and enriching the ideas of hypermodernism, played a different, more complicated form of chess and accomplished an unparalleled feat by succeeding, after all the adversity that had befallen him, in reaching the top.

Alas, Capablanca was unable to regain his former halo of invincibility: after his defeat at the hands of Alekhine the deference for the ‘chess machine’ disappeared, and even grandmasters who had been defeated many times by the Cuban began playing much more confidently against him. And as for the young players led by Botvinnik and Keres, he altogether could not keep pace with them. In short, in the new form of the game Capa was somewhat lost...

But what about Alekhine? After crushing Bogoljubow in the 1929 match and scoring brilliant victories in San Remo 1930 and Bled 1931, he too little by little began to ‘calcify’! All the summits had been conquered and he had apparently lost his sense of purpose. He also won London and Bern 1932 ‘on autopilot’ and then set off on an endless round-the-world trip with simultaneous displays: USA, Mexico, Cuba, Hawaii, Japan, Shanghai, Hong Kong, the Philippines and so on. Meanwhile, life was not standing still and a new era was beginning in chess.

The 1934 match with Bogoljubow already showed the onset of a crisis in Alekhine’s play: the champion

experienced colossal opening problems. He played in an audacious and bizarre manner, and often ended up in indifferent positions – but extricated himself thanks to his enormous practical strength! Bogoljubow lacked the consistency and accuracy to punish his opponent.

And then came Euwe – the leader of a new generation, born at the start of the 20th century, a player who was perhaps not so striking as Bogoljubow, but highly erudite and extremely consistent, rational and methodical. It was precisely this style that was the most unpleasant for Alekhine, and in the 1935 match, to everyone’s surprise, there was a change of champion. A detailed account of how Euwe managed to wrest the title, and why he again conceded it in the 1937 return match, will be found in the chapter about the fifth world champion.

Whereas the first half of the 1930s was a period of stagnation as regards the emergence of new, young contenders to the throne (Euwe, Flohr and then complete quiet), in the second half of the decade the splendid next generation loudly announced itself – Botvinnik, Keres, Fine, Reshevsky... The declining, almost 50-year-old champion faced a difficult match for the crown, but a world war again interfered with the course of chess history. This was a pity, since a match between Alekhine and either Botvinnik or Keres would have been very interesting and important for chess.

The war again sharply changed the balance of power in the chess arena. Following Lasker and Capablanca, the

exhausted but also undefeated Alekhine passed away. Keres came under the Soviet-Nazi machine, Reshevsky was out of practice, Fine gave up the game altogether, Euwe had fallen hopelessly behind, while the young Smyslov and Bronstein, by contrast, had not yet caught up... In short, by 1948 of the top-class fighters only Botvinnik remained. For him the Second World War played the same role as the First did for Capablanca: it cleared the way to the throne. The wars removed their main rivals: the First World War – Rubinstein, and the Second – Keres. It is probable that both Capa and Botvinnik would all the same have become champions, but with a natural course of events there would have been both a different configuration, and a different struggle.

In the Botvinnik era there occurred the second, after Steinitz, revolutionary change in approach to opening theory. Steinitz's ideas had an enormous influence on at least two generations of players. They all played the classical schemes (Queen's Gambit, Steinitz Defence to the Ruy Lopez etc.), and were guided by common sense: why seek 'disreputable', risky openings, if there was a simple way of obtaining a safe position?! The classical theory of the early 20th century developed at a rapid pace, and its prime mover was Rubinstein. A serious expansion of the range of openings began with Alekhine and the hypermodernists, and was continued by the energetic efforts of the great methodologist Euwe, but a genuinely revolutionary leap was

accomplished by Botvinnik, who had carefully studied the experience of his predecessors, in particular Rubinstein, Alekhine and Euwe.

They all thought schematically and endeavoured to link the opening with a subsequent plan in the middlegame. But whereas earlier it was customary with Black to play strictly for equality, Botvinnik went further and created a system of opening preparation, with which Black plays to seize the initiative from the very first moves. He showed that this is possible! Botvinnik deliberately disrupted the positional balance, choosing sharp, committal variations, but ones that he had studied deeply – and he achieved excellent results. Botvinnik created some original opening systems, and in addition he reinterpreted a number of typical positions, forcing them to be looked at anew – for example, those with an isolated d4-pawn. And in general he had a different, far more global approach to the solving of opening problems.

The next four world champions – Smyslov, Tal, Petrosian and Spassky – did not achieve any radical progress in the opening and they developed theory along the lines of the Botvinnik era, which thus continued to the end of the 1960s. Finally, Fischer created the next revolutionary leap forward, for the first time demonstrating the entire power of opening preparation for both colours, sharply expanding the range of openings studied and, in effect, laying the foundations of present-day professional chess. Moreover, initially Fischer, like

Steinitz in his time, was extremely obstinate in his choice of opening setups, but then he found in himself the strength to become more flexible and made himself almost unbeatable...

Note what an interesting line can be traced: Steinitz (1st champion) – Botvinnik (6th) – Fischer (11th), that is, a revolution was accomplished by every fifth champion!

Incidentally, in the second half of the 20th century too, the champions who became complacent and ceased to be the obvious leaders of chess thinking, also lost their title. It is always difficult to catch up with time, since the leaders of new generations introduce into chess their ideas and particular styles, and more easily solve those playing problems that were previously considered complicated.

Thus, whereas in the late 1940s Botvinnik was superior to everyone, in the early 1950s a very powerful new generation had emerged and its leader Bronstein almost took the title from the champion, who had not played for a long time (1951). Botvinnik realised that he was falling behind, and he again began working and threw himself into tournament play. In the next match, with Smyslov (1954) he had almost ceased to 'calcify' and he confidently remained on the throne.

Then Botvinnik twice conceded the crown – to Smyslov (1957) and to Tal (1960), but unfortunately for them they both had stopped moving forward and a year later they each lost to their mighty opponent, who had learned the

lessons from his defeat and modified his play. But in the match with Petrosian (1963) Botvinnik no longer knew how to overcome his impregnable opponent, and it is doubtful whether anything would have changed, even if they had played a return match.

In turn, Petrosian logically conceded the throne to the dynamic Spassky (1969), and he to the irrepressible Fischer (1972). However, in the second half of the 1970s it would have been rather hard even for Fischer to combat the young Karpov. But in 1985, strangely enough, even Karpov began to 'calcify' very slightly. True, after losing the crown he as though came to his senses, and for a long time afterwards he demonstrated good results and excellent play (for which the author of these lines is also hoping, after slightly 'calcifying' before the 2000 match with Kramnik – but that is the topic of another book).

I will talk in detail about the chess careers of Petrosian, Spassky, Fischer and Karpov in subsequent volumes, but in the present one I invite you to enjoy the games of their remarkable predecessors.

In conclusion, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to USSR Honoured Trainers Alexander Nikitin and Mark Dvoretzky for their help in the concluding stage of preparation of this volume.

Garry Kasparov
October 2003



Euwe in 1948

could have done after the resumption, but here he suffered another black-out...

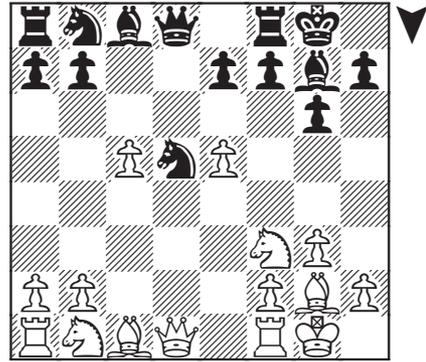
Game 64

M.Botvinnik-D.Bronstein

World Championship Match,

Moscow 1951, 19th game

Grünfeld Defence D74



1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6

Black is tired of 1...e6, and of 2...e6.

3 g3 ♙g7

The 23rd game went 3...c6 4 ♙g2 (if 4 d5 Black had prepared 4...b5!?) 4...d5 5 cxd5 cxd5 6 ♘c3 ♙g7 with a solid but tedious position. Later Bronstein criticised himself for this choice: 'My thinking began to doze, like a pike on the riverbed... Of course, I should have played 3...♙g7 4 ♙g2 d6, boldly following the King's Indian motifs of the 21st game.' In my opinion, this prescription would also have been good for the present encounter.

4 ♙g2 d5 5 cxd5 ♘xd5 6 ♘f3 0-0 7 0-0 c5

The alternative 7...♘c6 8 e4 ♘b6 9 d5 ♘a5 10 ♘c3 c6 with equality is currently fashionable.

8 e4

Instead the capture 8 dxc5 (Botvinnik-Zuidema, Amsterdam 1966) 8...♘a6 etc. is unclear.

8...♘f6

8...♘b6?! 9 d5! was good for White in Botvinnik-Novotelnov, Moscow 1947.

9 e5 ♘d5 10 dxc5

If 10 ♙e2 (Najdorf-Boleslavsky, Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1948), then 10...cxd4! with equality.

10...♘b4?!

This leads to Black falling behind in development. 10...♘c6 11 ♙e2 also favours White, as in the training game Botvinnik-Ragozin (Nikolina Gora 1951), but it is better to play 10...♘a6! with the idea of ...♘xc5, equalising. Black's error is easy to explain: the theory of this variation was only beginning to be developed at that time.

11 ♘c3 ♘8c6 12 a3

'It is useful to drive the enemy knight away from the c2-square, especially since White's queenside pawn majority is his main trump.' (Botvinnik)

12...♘d3

If 12...♙xd1 13 ♙xd1 ♘c2 14 ♙b1 ♙f5 Botvinnik suggests 15 ♘h4, and if 12...♘a6?! – 13 b4 ♘xe5 14 ♘xe5 ♙xe5 15 ♙b2 with a growing initiative.

13 ♙e3 ♙g4

But not 13...♘xb2? 14 ♙e2 ♘d3 15 ♙fd1 and wins. 'Black is aiming for control of the key d4-square. Nowadays I would not have exchanged my light-squared bishop for no reason at all, but in those distant times I still believed in the triumph of the dark-squared strategy.' (Bronstein) However, White has the better chances in any case.

14 h3 ♖xf3 15 ♗xf3 ♘dx5 16 ♗e4 ♗d3

'White's centralised queen is so well placed that Black has no alternative – he has to exchange it.' (Botvinnik) But according to Bronstein, '16...♗d7 was the more circumspect move.'

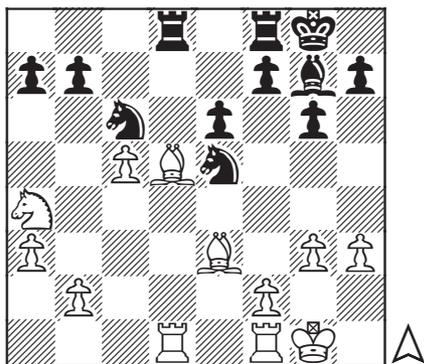
17 ♗a4 ♗c4

There is no choice: 17...♘c4? 18 ♖ad1 ♘xb2 19 ♖xd3 ♘xa4 20 ♘xa4 and wins.

18 ♖ad1 ♖ad8 19 ♖d5

Depriving the black knight of the c4-square.

19...♗xa4 20 ♘xa4 e6



21 ♖a2!?

'I considered it essential to retain control of the c4-square. After 21 ♖g2 ♘c4 22 ♖c1 ♘d4 23 ♖xb7 ♘e2+ 24 ♖g2 ♘xc1 25 ♖xc1 ♘xb2 White has no advantage.' (Botvinnik) However in the variation 26 ♘xb2 ♖xb2 27 ♖c4 ♖e5 Black still has to demonstrate a draw. As is also the case after 22...f5 23 ♖fe1 ♖xd1 24 ♖xd1 ♖d8 25 ♖xd8+ ♘xd8 26 b3 ♘e5 27 b4 ♘ec6 28 ♖g5 ♖f7 29 b5 ♘e7 etc.

In any event, the two bishops in an open position should promise White an enduring initiative.

21...♘f3+

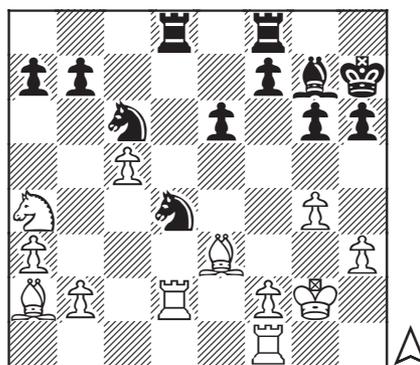
Aiming for the cherished d4-square. Bronstein recommended 21...♖xd1!? 22 ♖xd1 ♖d8 23 ♖xd8+ ♘xd8 followed by the march of his king to c7, but I think that here too after 24 b4 ♘f3+ 25 ♖f1 ♘c6 26 ♖c4 White has some advantage.

22 ♖g2 ♘fd4 23 g4!

Not allowing the knight to go to f5.

23...h6 24 ♖d2 ♖h7!

Despite the opponent's prophylactic measures, Black is ready to begin active counterplay with ...f7-f5. It seems to me that this is the most correct course. Bronstein recommended 'coolly waiting – 24...♖d7 25 ♖fd1 ♖fd8 26 b4 ♘b8 27 ♖c4 ♘c2 etc.,' but 26 ♘c3!? is stronger. Passive defence would have suited Botvinnik perfectly well.

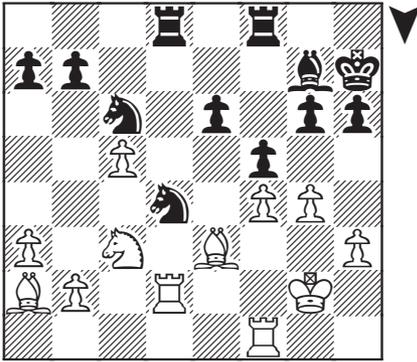


25 f4?!

'White should have played 25 ♘c3 f5 26 f3! followed by ♖fd1, when he retains all the advantages of his position.' (Botvinnik) Had his bishop been at g2, it would have been easier to maintain the offensive. In any case, Black's position would have retained a certain reserve of solidity.

25...f5 26 ♘c3

26 ♖fd1? ♘c2!.



26...e5

Black has been successful in creating tension on the kingside. Now simplification is inevitable.

27 fxe5 ♖xe5 28 ♘d5

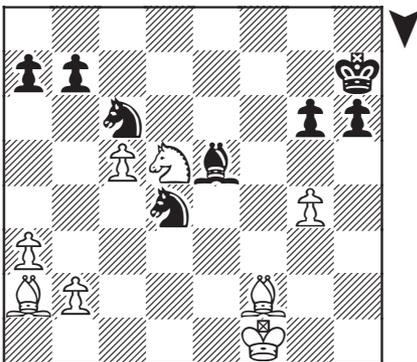
Preventing ...f5-f4.

28...fxg4

28...♔g7 would equalise, but the exchange is also not bad.

29 hxg4 ♜xf1 30 ♔xf1 ♜f8+ 31 ♜f2 ♜xf2+ 32 ♙xf2

32 ♔xf2? did not work because of 32...♘c2 (33 ♙c1 ♙d4+).



32...a6?!

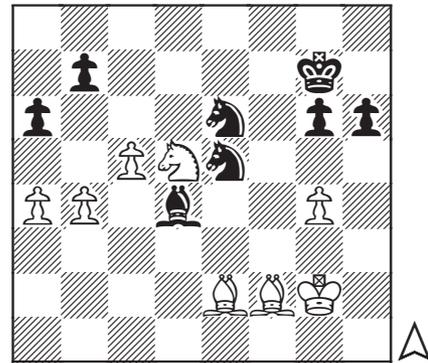
'A loss of time. The immediate 32...h5! was correct, creating an outside passed pawn.' (Bronstein) Although the game

is very close to a draw in any case: for the moment White's two bishops are not felt, and he is unable to latch on to the b7-pawn – there is no way that his bishop can reach c8 from a2.

33 ♔g2 ♔g7 34 ♙c4 ♘e6 35 b4 ♙b2!?

Black is looking for tactical resources, but... 'It would have been simpler to exchange White's last pawn on the kingside by 35...h5.' (Botvinnik)

36 a4 ♘e5 37 ♙e2 ♙d4



38 ♙g3!

'This move wins the game, not in itself, but taking account of the psychological state of the players. White avoids a draw (38 a5 ♙xf2 39 ♔xf2 ♘d4 40 ♙d1 ♘dc6 41 ♔e3 ♘d7 42 ♙a4 ♘de5 – G.K.), Black becomes frightened of ghosts, commits one mistake after another, and... loses a valuable point.' (Bronstein)

It is interesting that, as also later in the 23rd game, Botvinnik holds on to the two bishops – apparently, based on the law of averages: he thinks that sooner or later the bishops are bound to tell. And it was in these games with Bronstein that they did so!

38...a5!?

This is acceptable, but again 38...h5! was simpler, with a straightforward draw after 39 gxf5 gxf5 40 ♔xh5 a5 41 bxa5 ♖xc5 42 ♕e8 ♖e4. Here I tried to manoeuvre with the bishops, but without success – there is too little material: 43 ♕e1 ♖f6 44 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 45 ♕b5 ♗e6 or 43 ♕h4 ♖c4 44 ♖c7 ♕c3 45 ♖e6+ ♗g8 46 ♕g6 ♖ed2 47 ♗f2 ♕xa5 48 ♗e2 ♖e5 49 ♕f5 ♗f7 and Black gradually unravels himself.

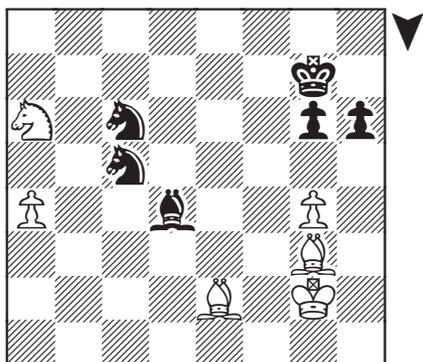
39 bxa5 ♖xc5 40 ♖c7 ♖c6

In my opinion, 40...♗f6!? 41 a6 bxa6 42 a5 ♖c6 43 ♕e1 h5 would also have led to a draw. At this point the game was adjourned and White sealed an obvious move.

‘Just as the win for White in the adjourned position of the previous game seemed obvious, so too no one was in any doubt that the present encounter would end in a draw. Indeed there are so few pieces and pawns on the board...’ (Botvinnik)

41 a6 bxa6 42 ♖xa6

And here, as in almost every adjournment session in this match, sheer miracles began to occur.

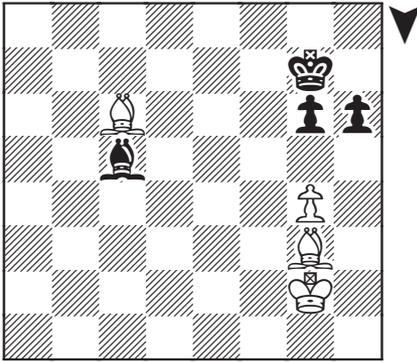


42...♖e4?

It is incomprehensible why, after many hours of analysis, Black did not simply play 42...♖xa4! To be honest, Bronstein's explanation shocks me:

‘A strange move, similar in quality to the king move in the sixth game. During a long night I managed to go through all the variations of this fairly straightforward ending in detail. And my first thought was to sacrifice a knight: 42...♖xa4! 43 ♕b5 ♖c5 44 ♖xc5 ♕xc5 45 ♕xc6 h5 46 gxf5 gxf5 with a draw. But just before the resumption, when I was checking the variation, I accidentally placed the white king on f3 and to my surprise noticed (or more correctly, devised) a mistake – after 46 g5, 46...♕e3 was not possible, I would have to play 46...♕e7, but then Botvinnik would play 47 ♕f4 and for a long time would move hither and thither. You can imagine my astonishment when, arriving for the resumption of play, I discovered that I had set up the adjourned position incorrectly. Of course, even after 42...♖e4 the draw is easily obtainable, but my thoughts were a long way from reality.’

This last allusion(?) merely obscures the picture... Firstly, to ‘go through all the variations... in detail’ of the adjourned position with five pieces, it had to be set up correctly – this was, after all, a match for the world championship! Secondly, let us study more carefully the situation after White's 45th move – the resulting ending is of importance for endgame theory.



Analysis diagram

It is immediately apparent that the suggested move 45...h5?? loses to the simple 46 g5! ♖e3 47 ♖e5+ ♖h7 48 ♖f6. And if in his analysis Bronstein ‘accidentally placed the king on f3’ (it would be interesting to know, where were his seconds?), then after 46...♖e7 47 ♖f4 it is not clear what is meant by the phrase ‘Botvinnik for a long time would move hither and thither’: here too White most probably wins, by taking his king to e6 followed by ♖e5+ etc.

Also insufficient is 45...♖e7? 46 ♖f4 ♖f6 47 ♖f3 ♖e7 48 ♖e4 ♖f6 49 ♖e8 ♖c3 50 ♖d5 ♖f6 51 ♖e6 ♖c3 52 ♖c6 ♖b2 53 ♖e4 ♖c3 54 ♖e7 (54 ♖c2!?) 54...♖f6+ (White’s task is simplified by 54...g5 55 ♖g3 ♖f6+ 56 ♖e8 ♖c3 57 ♖d5 ♖f6 58 ♖f7 ♖e5 59 ♖f2 ♖c3 60 ♖c5 ♖e5 61 ♖f8 ♖f4 62 ♖h5 and wins) 55 ♖e8 and Black is in zugzwang: 55...♖d4 56 ♖d6 ♖f6 (56...h5 57 g5) 57 ♖e7+ ♖g7 58 ♖f8+, or 55...♖h4 56 ♖d6 h5 (56...♖f6 57 ♖e7+ ♖e5 58 ♖xg6!) 57 ♖f8+ ♖g8 58 gxh5 gxh5 59 ♖d5+ ♖h7 60 ♖f7, mating. A pretty win, and a rare material situation!

And only the accurate 45...♖e3! (suggested by Goldberg, Botvinnik’s second) leads to the desired draw:

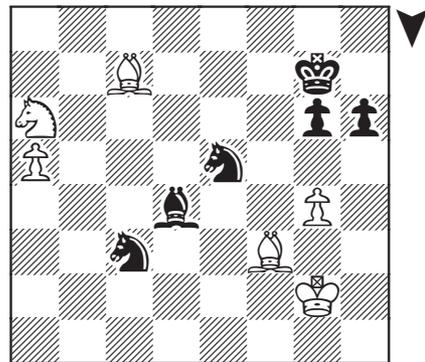
1) 46 ♖e5+ ♖f7! (but not 46...♖h7? 47 ♖f6 or 47 ♖e4+) 47 ♖d5+ ♖e7 48 ♖f3 ♖g5 49 ♖f4 ♖xf4 50 ♖xf4 ♖f6 51 ♖e4 g5+ 52 ♖g3 h5 with a draw;

2) 46 ♖h4 h5 47 g5 ♖c1 48 ♖f3 ♖d2 49 ♖e4 ♖c1 50 ♖e5 ♖d2 51 ♖e6 ♖c1 with a draw (the black bishop cannot be separated from the g5-pawn);

3) 46 ♖f3 ♖g5 47 ♖f4 ♖xf4 48 ♖xf4 g5+ 49 ♖f5 h5! with a draw (Goldberg), or 47 ♖e5+ ♖f7! 48 ♖d5+ ♖e7 49 ♖f4 ♖xf4 50 ♖xf4 ♖f6 51 ♖e4 g5+ 52 ♖g3 h5 with a draw.

Bronstein’s assertion about an ‘easily obtainable’ draw after 42...♖e4 is also questionable: White does after all have a passed pawn, and the draw is achieved by a series of virtually only moves.

43 ♖c7 ♖c3 44 ♖f3 ♖e5 45 a5



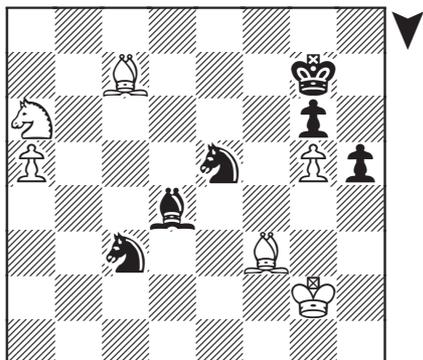
45...h5?!

‘The simplest way to draw was by 45...♖xf3 (45...♖f7? 46 ♖b6 – G.K.) 46 ♖xf3 ♖f6! and only then ...h6-h5 (but not immediately 46...h5?! 47 g5!). Then Black could have calmly given up a piece

for the a-pawn.’ (Botvinnik) The move played does not yet lose, but it creates unnecessary difficulties.

46 g5

White preserves his last chance.



46...♞c4?

‘A suicidal decision! Both of Black’s knights lack strong points and they are unable to oppose the active white bishops.’ (Botvinnik) However, here 46...♞xf3 47 ♞xf3 is now in White’s favour, and therefore, according to Bronstein, 46...♞b5! was necessary, although the drawing path is no longer so simple:

1) 47 ♞d8 ♞f7 48 ♞e7 (48 ♞b6 ♞xg5) 48...♞c3 49 ♞b4 ♞xg5 50 ♞e2 ♞c7 51 a6 ♞xa6 52 ♞xa6 ♞f6 with a draw;

2) 47 ♞b6 ♞c4 48 ♞c7! (stronger than 48 ♞d8 ♞c3, as given by Bronstein) 48...♞xb6! (by sacrificing a piece, Black creates a fortress) 49 ♞xb5 ♞e3 50 axb6 ♞xb6 51 ♞d6 ♞e3 52 ♞e4 ♞f4 53 ♞e2 ♞c1 54 ♞g3 ♞e3! (latching on to the g5-pawn and forcing White to guard it with his knight or king) 55 ♞h4 ♞f8 56 ♞c4 ♞g7 57 ♞e6 ♞f8 with a draw.

47 ♞b4 ♞b5 48 ♞d8 ♞f8

‘It was not yet too late for the manoeuvre 48...♞c3 49 ♞c6 ♞d4 50 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 51 a6 ♞d6 52 ♞c6 ♞c8 53 ♞d7 ♞a7, blockading the a-pawn.’ (Bronstein) Alas, it is too late – this position is lost: 54 ♞e7! ♞f7 55 ♞d6 ♞e3 56 ♞f3 ♞d4 57 ♞e4 ♞f2 58 ♞d5 ♞b6 59 ♞c5 ♞xc5 60 ♞xc5 ♞e7 61 ♞h3. It is also possible simply to win a piece by 50 ♞f6+ ♞h7 51 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 52 ♞xd4 ♞xa5 53 ♞d5 and the knight is offside.

49 ♞c6 ♞c5

The best chance, not mentioned by the commentators, was 49...♞e8, although after 50 ♞e4! ♞d7 51 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 52 ♞f6 ♞c6 53 a6 White wins all the same.

50 ♞e2

As Botvinnik writes, the pursuit of the knights begins.

50...♞e3+

It was no better to play 50...♞bd6 51 ♞e7+ ♞e8 52 ♞xc4 or 50...♞cd6 51 ♞e7+ ♞e8 52 ♞xb5.

51 ♞f3 ♞d4+ 52 ♞xd4 ♞xd4 53 ♞d3

Or 53 ♞b6! and wins.

53...♞g4

53...♞f7 54 ♞b6!.

54 ♞xg6 ♞e5+ 55 ♞e4 ♞c6

After 55...♞xg6 56 ♞xd4 the a-pawn cannot be stopped.

56 ♞b6

But not 56 ♞xh5? ♞xd8 57 ♞xd4 ♞c6+.

56...♞xb6

Or 56...♞c3 57 a6 ♞d2 58 ♞f5 ♞e7+ 59 ♞e6 ♞c6 60 ♞e4.

57 axb6 h4 58 ♞f5 ♞e7 59 ♞f4 ♞d6 60 ♞e4 1-0

A gripping duel!

In the 20th game there was a quiet, although by no means peaceful draw, and in the 21st the challenger finally chose his favourite King's Indian Defence: **1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♗c3 e5 4 ♗f3 ♗bd7 5 g3 g6 6 ♙g2 ♙g7 7 0-0 0-0 8 e4 c6 9 h3** (9 d5 cxd5 10 cxd5 ♗c5 11 ♖c2 a5 with equality, Botvinnik-Bronstein, 14th USSR Championship, Moscow 1945) **9...♗h5?!** (again with the aim of confusing the opponent) **10 ♙e3 ♖e7 11 ♗h2?!** (11 ♖e1!) **11...♙h8 12 ♖e1 a6 13 a3?! ♗b8 14 ♙f1 ♗hf6 15 ♖d2 b5 16 cxb5 axb5 17 ♖ad1 ♗b6 18 ♙h6? ♙xh6 19 ♖xh6 ♙e6 20 ♗f3 ♙b3 21 ♖d2 ♗fd7** and Black converted his positional advantage. The scores were now equal again: 10½-10½.

It is strange that Bronstein did not play the King's Indian from the very start of the match: after all, it would have helped him to exploit his better training more effectively. Botvinnik, educated on the classics of that time, played this dynamic opening uncertainly, as is shown by his later games with Geller (*Game No.93*), Smyslov (*Game No.106*) and Tal (*Game No.127*). Only many years later did Bronstein disclose that his seconds had forbidden him to employ his favourite schemes (fearing that these would not work against Botvinnik), and he admitted: 'Of course, I should have played both the King's Indian, and 1 e4 – this was my most powerful weapon, and my imagination shows itself best of all in the open games.'

Anyway, in the 22nd game the discussion in the Dutch Defence was renewed. Holding the psychological initiative and

bearing in mind his opponent's extreme fatigue, Bronstein again transferred the weight of the struggle to the pre-time-trouble phase, postponing decisive action until the fifth hour of play.

Game 65

D.Bronstein-M.Botvinnik
World Championship Match,
Moscow 1951, 22nd game
Dutch Defence A91

1 d4 e6 2 c4

2 e4!?

2...f5

Something of a *tabiya* of this match.

3 g3

Copying Botvinnik's play in the first and ninth games of the match. Before this Bronstein himself had unsuccessfully tried 3 ♗c3 (10th game) and 3 e3 (12th game).

3...♗f6 4 ♙g2 ♙e7 5 ♗c3

5 ♗f3 is more standard.

5...0-0 6 e3

The ninth game went 6 d5 (a novelty!) 6...♙b4 (6...e5!?) 7 ♙d2 e5 8 e3 d6 9 ♗ge2 a6!? 10 ♖c2 ♖e8 11 f3 b5 with double-edged, to some extent 'King's Indian' play.

6...d5

In the first game Bronstein replied 6...d6 and after 7 ♗ge2 c6 8 0-0 e5 9 d5 ♖e8! 10 e4 ♖h5 11 exf5 ♙xf5 he achieved an excellent position, again in the spirit of King's Indian set-ups! For his part, Botvinnik twice preferred to switch to the 'stonewall'.