

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #242

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions - news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to B.C. players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net) or sign up via the BCCF webpage (www.chess.bc.ca); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright

HERE AND THERE

Edmonton International (June 27 - July 2)

The seventh edition of the Edmonton International is currently taking place and will end on Monday. The top section is a ten-player round robin, including GMs Nigel Short, Anton Kovalyov and Victor Mikhalevski and IMs Irina Krush, Edward Porper and B.C.'s Leon Piasetski. After four rounds Mikhalevski and Kovalyov lead with 10 points (3 points for a win, 1 for a draw) ahead of Short on 9 and local hopeful Robert Gardner on 8. Piasetski has three draws and a loss for 3 points with five rounds yet to play. [Festival website](#), including live games, standings, photos, and PGN file

Piasetski, Leon - Krush, Irina [A25] Edmonton int 7th (3), 28.06.2012

1.c4 e5 2.g3 Nc6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nc3 Bg7 5.e3 d6 6.Nge2 f5 7.d3 Nf6 8.f4 O-O 9.O-O Be6 10.Nd5 Bf7 11.Nec3 Qd7 12.Qa4 a6 13.Bd2 Rfd8 14.Rab1 Rab8 15.Nxf6+ Bxf6 16.Nd5 Bg7 17.b4 Ne7 18.Qxd7 Rxd7 19.Nxe7+ Rxe7 20.b5 axb5 21.Rxb5 e4 22.Rfb1 b6 23.Ra5 exd3 24.Ra4 Rd8 25.Bd5 Kf8 26.Ra3 Bxd5 27.cxd5 Ke8 28.Rxd3 Ra8 29.a3 Kd7 30.Bb4 Re4 31.Rc1 b5 32.Rb3 Rc4 33.Bd2 Rxc1+ 34.Bxc1 c6 35.dxc6+ Kxc6 36.Bd2 1/2-1/2

UBC Thursday Night (May 24 - June 21)

Omar Jessa made it two in a row at the May/June UBC Thursday Night Swiss, winning first place outright this time with 4.5/5. Max Gedajlovic was clear second a half point back, while Constantin Rotariu and Peter Broz shared third, each scoring 3.0 points. Ashley Tapp took the U1400 prize. Thirteen players participated; the TD was Aaron Cosenza. [Crosstable](#)

Nigel Short Simul (June 18)

As mentioned above Nigel Short is currently playing in Edmonton, but on his way to Alberta the former world championship challenger gave lectures and simultaneous displays in Toronto and Ottawa. Victoria's Rowan James, six years old, played in Short's simul at the Annex Chess Club in Toronto. He lost his game, but then so did the other nineteen players who also faced Nigel that evening. [Report](#)

June Active 2 (June 17)

Ties were the order of the day at the second June Active, played as usual at the Vancouver Bridge Centre. The twenty-three player event had a six-way tie(!) for first place, between Butch Villavieja, Dragoljub Milicevic, Janak Awatramani, Joe Soliven, and organizer/TD Luc Poitras; each received \$34 for their efforts. The U1900 prize was shared by Omar Jessa, Andrew Lee, and Luke Pulfer. The big money winner of the day, comparatively speaking, was Lionel Han, who won the U1500 prize all by himself, while Kevin Low was the recipient of the biggest upset award. [Standings](#)

National Open (June 14-17)

Held as usual as part of the Las Vegas International Chess Festival, this year's National Open included a number of B.C. players who made the trek southwards to Sin City, and several of them won money. Brian McLaren and Jason Cao scored 4.0/6 points in the U2200 Section to tie for twelfth place, Jofrel Landingin tied for second in the U2000 Section with 5.0 points, and in the U1600 Section Doug Sly tied for sixth with 4.5 points. Other B.C. participants were Harold Nishida, Jill Ding, and Constantin Rotariu, all in the U2000 Section. The Open Section was won by GM Aleksandr Lenderman of New York with 5.5/6; the highest Canadian was IM Eric Hansen who tied for fifth with 4.5. [Festival website](#)

Travel Bursaries

At the BCCF Annual General Meeting, held between rounds of the Keres Memorial tournament, the following motion was passed: "That the BCCF budget \$100 each to the BC Champion, BC Junior Champion and BC Women's Champion (or designated runner-up), contingent on BCCF finances, [for support to play in the Canadian Closed, Canadian Junior, or Canadian Women's Championship respectively,] and that each indicate their attendance in advance." The first recipient of such an award, retroactively, was BC Junior Champion John Doknjas, who participated in the Canadian Junior Championship this past January.

Creekside Community Recreation Centre Chess

A new place to play chess in Vancouver is at the Creekside Community Recreation Centre near Science World (1 Athletes Way, at the north foot of Ontario Street). Drop in chess, usually involving a blitz event but also casual play, takes place on Friday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30. Drop in fee is \$2. Please bring your own set and clock (if you have one).

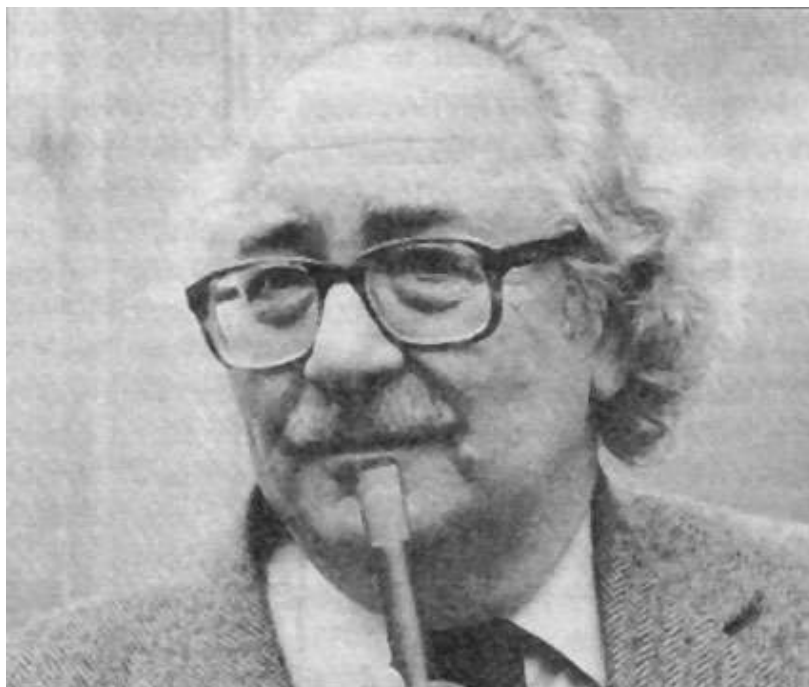
BC Chess Group on Facebook

Facebook users might like to note there is an open group for chess players in British Columbia, Canada. Vancouver, Victoria and all around the province, [Chess in BC](#). For information purposes, the group was created by Konstantin Pyryaev (leader of the Chigorin Chess Club) and is administered by Joe Roeback and Len Molden. Prominent members include: Alexandra Kosteniuk - 12th Women's World Chess Champion, IM Tom O'Donnell, IM Edward Porper, IM Stan Kriventsov, Maxim Doroshenko, Valeria Gansvind, Branimir Brebrich, Jonathan Berry, Brian McLaren, Dan Scoones and others.

NATHAN JOSEPH HARRY DIVINSKY (29 October 1925 - 17 June 2012)



Saskatoon, 1945



It is with sadness that we note the passing of Dr. Nathan Divinsky, a larger-than-life figure with many contributions to the Canadian chess scene; he was eighty-six.

Born in Winnipeg to Yiddish-speaking immigrant parents from Poland and Ukraine. Educated at St. John's High School, Divinsky earned degrees from the University of Manitoba and University of Chicago, graduating with a Ph.D. from the latter at age twenty-four in 1950. After a year at Ripon College, Wisconsin he returned to the University of Manitoba as an Assistant Professor of Mathematics. In 1959 he moved to Vancouver to take up a similar post at the University of British Columbia, retiring as Professor Emeritus in 1991. Divinsky was active in local politics in Vancouver, serving as a member of the school board and as an alderman. During the years 1972-1983 he was married to future Prime Minister Kim Campbell. Divinsky was part owner of the Granville Island restaurant Bridges and wrote a guide to good food in the Vancouver area ("an intellectual gastronomic piece of gossipy good fellowship"). Possessor of a resonant baritone voice, Divinsky was also an amateur pianist of note and was particularly fond of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Apart from chess Divinsky's other 'hobby' was bridge, at which he also excelled. He became a life master in 1972 and was the Canadian Bridge League's contract bridge champion in 1987.

Divinsky's chess accomplishments were also wide ranging and multi-faceted. He was taught the game at age six by his father; after initial setbacks at school he improved his play by reading Tarrasch's *The Game of Chess*. In 1940-42 he helped organize the St. John's High School Chess Club and was its champion; subsequently Divinsky played on several University of Chicago teams and founded a club at Ripon College. Provincially he came second in the Manitoba Championship in 1945 and won the event in 1946 and 1952. In three appearances in the Canadian Championship his best showings were joint third at Saskatoon 1945 (behind Yanofsky and Yerhoff) and clear fifth at Vancouver 1951. Divinsky served as second reserve on two Canadian olympiad teams; at Amsterdam 1954 he only played one game (a draw), but in Havana in 1966 he scored plus one in

eight games. His only other international event appears to be Bognor Regis 1966, the Churchill Memorial tournament, where he finished tied for seventh in the seventy-four player field behind Karaklaic and Matanovic, but ahead of Golombek and Wade. Divinsky's other over-the-board play was restricted to local team matches and simultaneous displays, both giving and on the receiving end (Reshevsky, Bisguier, Kasparov). He was active as a player as late as 2004, when he participated with Doug Freeman in a fundraising pairs event for the 2005 Macskasy Memorial (see [Bulletin #42](#)). Divinsky was also part of the UBC team which defeated a team from the University of Moscow 1.5-0.5 in a correspondence match 1964-68.

In the realm of chess administration Divinsky served two terms as president of the CFC (1953, 1993) and was FIDE representative 1987-1992 and 2004-2007; he also represented Canada in official capacities many times, most recently as captain of the women's team at the Calvia Olympiad in 2004. Divinsky achieved considerable popularity as a media figure in 1986 when he commented on the London leg of the Kasparov-Karpov world championship for BBC television. Divinsky's other major area of involvement in chess was in writing. He began contributing game annotations and other reports to *Canadian Chess Chat* in the 1950s, and subsequently served as its editor from 1959 until the early 1970s. Divinsky wrote two relatively short-lived chess columns, both called Chess Charivari, one for the *Winnipeg Tribune* 1953-1964 and the second almost exactly ten years later for the *Vancouver Province*, 1963-64 (see [Bulletin #173](#)). Divinsky also authored four books on chess: *Around the Chess World in 80 Years* in two volumes (1961 and 1965), *Warriors of the Mind* (with Raymond Keene, 1989), *The Batsford Encyclopedia of Chess* (1990), and *Life Maps of the Great Chess Masters* (1994). During the last decade of his life Divinsky's main research interest was the nineteenth-century German player, author, historian and diplomat von der Lasa; it was said that a book was forthcoming in collaboration with Peter Stockhausen, but presumably this project will now remain incomplete.

[Interview](#) with Nathan Divinsky
[Chesstalk](#) thread on his passing

Hindle ,Owen - Divinsky, Nathan [C56] La Habana ol fin (5), 1966

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.0-0 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.e5 d5 7.exf6 dxc4 8.Re1+ Be6 9.Ng5 Qd5 10.Nc3 Qf5 11.Nce4 0-0-0 12.g4 Qe5 13.Nxe6 fxe6 14.Bg5 g6 15.Nxc5 Qxc5 16.Bh6 Qd5 17.f7 Ne5 18.Rxe5 Qxe5 19.Qf3 Rhf8 20.Rd1 c5 21.h4 Qd5 22.Qf6 e5 23.Bxf8 Rxf8 24.Re1 Qxf7 25.Qxf7 Rxf7 26.Rxe5 b6 27.Kf1 Kd7 28.h5 Kd6 29.hxg6 hxg6 30.Re8 d3 31.cxd3 cxd3 32.Rd8+ Rd7 33.Rg8 Ke5 34.Ke1 Rd6 35.Rf8 a6 36.Kd2 c4 37.g5 b5 38.f4+ Kd4 39.a3 a5 40.Rb8 Rd5 41.Rb6 Ke4 42.Rxg6 Kxf4 43.a4 Re5 44.Rf6+ Kxg5 45.Rc6 Re2+ 46.Kd1 Rxb2 47.axb5 Kf4 0-1

Reshevsky, Samuel - Divinsky, Nathan [E95] Simul Winnipeg, 13.02.1954

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.0-0 e5 8.Re1 c6 9.Bf1 Ne8 10.Bg5 f6 11.Be3 Nb6 12.Qd2 Be6 13.b3 f5 14.Ng5 Bd7 15.exf5 exd4 16.fxg6 dxc3 17.gxh7+ Kh8 18.Qe2 Nf6 19.h3 Qe8 20.Qd3 Qe5 21.f4 Qa5 22.Bd4 Bf5 23.Qxc3 Qxc3 24.Bxc3 Nxh7 25.Bxg7+ Kxg7 26.Re7+ Kg8 27.Rd1 Nng5 28.fxg5 Rab8 29.g4 Bc2 30.Rd2 Bb1 31.Re1 Bh7 32.Rxd6 Rbd8 33.Rh6 Bc2 34.c5 Nd5 35.Bc4 Kg7 36.Re2 Bb1 37.Kh2 Rde8 38.Rxe8 Rxe8 39.Bxd5 cxd5 40.Rd6 Re7 41.Rxd5 Bxa2 42.Rd3 a5 43.Kg3 Rc7 44.h4 Kg8 45.Kf4 Kf8 46.h5 Rxc5 47.Rd8+ Ke7 48.Rb8 Rc7 49.h6 Bb1 50.Rg8 Rc6 51.h7 Bxh7 52.Rg7+ Kf8 53.Rxh7 Rb6 54.Rh3 Kg7 55.Kf5 (White offered a draw.) 55...Rb5+ 56.Kf4 Rb4+ 57.Kf5 b5 58.Rc3 a4 59.Rc7+ Kg8 60.Kg6 Kf8 61.bxa4 bxa4 ½-½

Divinsky, Nathan - Helman, Abraham [C19] CAN ch Saskatoon (4), 1945

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 Nbc6 8.Bd3 Qc7 9.0-0 Bd7
10.Bd2 Ng6 11.Re1 a5 12.Be3 c4 13.Bf1 b5 14.Bd2 0-0 15.Ng5 f6 16.Nxh7 fxe5 17.Qh5 Nf4
18.Bxf4 Rxf4 19.Ng5 Ne7 20.Rxe5 Rf6 21.Qh7+ Kf8 22.Qh8+ Ng8 23.Nh7+ Kf7 24.Nxf6 gxf6
25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Rxe6 Ra7 27.Re3 Qb6 28.Rae1 Be6 29.Qg6 Re7 30.g3 Qd6 31.Bg2 Bf7 32.Qf5
Rxe3 33.Rxe3 Ne7 34.Qf4 Qxa3 35.Qxf6 Qa1+ 36.Bf1 Ng6 37.Rf3 1-0

BROWSING FOR ENDGAMES by Dan Scoones

["Browsing for Endgames" was the name of an occasional endgame column written by Dr. Divinsky for the CFC magazine, and is perpetuated now by Dan Scoones with the late Dr. Divinsky's permission.]

Very few of Nathan Divinsky's serious games have been preserved in the standard databases. Despite the paucity of material, some interesting endgames turned up among them.

We will start with his win over Dr. Fedor Bohatirchuk from the 1951 Canadian Championship in Vancouver. This game had a significant influence on the final outcome of the tournament and was given a prominent place by D.A. Yanofsky in his book *100 Years of Chess in Canada* (1967).

Bohatirchuk, Fedor - Divinsky, Nathan [C81] CAN ch Vancouver (3.5), 25.08.1951

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Nxe4 6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 d5 8.dxe5 Be6 9.Qe2 Na5
10.Nbd2 Nxd2 11.Bxd2 c5 12.Bxa5 Qxa5 13.c3 Be7 14.Rfd1 Rd8 15.a4 0-0 16.h3 Qb6 17.axb5
axb5 18.Bc2 Ra8 19.Qd3 g6 20.Qe3 Rxa1 21.Rxa1 Qb7 22.Qe2 b4 23.Qd2 bxc3 24.bxc3 Ra8
25.Rb1 Qa7 26.Bd3 Rb8 27.Rxb8+ Qxb8 28.Qa2 c4 29.Bc2 Bc5



White has been outplayed and has landed in a passive position with no meaningful prospect of activity. He decides to look for salvation by exchanging queens and going into an endgame.

For convenience our analysis is divided into three parts. We will look at the game continuation first, and then go back and look at two alternatives – one for each player.

The game continuation

30.Qa5 Qb6 31.Qxb6 Bxb6

White is now faced with the immediate problem of defending his weak pawns on c3 and e5. The only piece that handle the job is his knight.

32.Nd4

If 32.Nd2 Ba5 33. Nb1 then 33...Bc7 34.f4 f6! 35.exf6 Bxf4 followed by ...Kf7xf6, picking up a pawn and giving Black a winning advantage. White tries to avoid this line by repositioning his knight to e2, but Black has a surprise ready for him.

32...Bxd4!? 33.cxd4 Bf5!? 34.Bxf5

White cannot avoid the exchange of bishops. If 34.Ba4, then 34...c3 followed by 35...c2, and White must give up his bishop to stop Black's pawn from queening.

34...gxf5 35.Kf1 Kg7

The immediate 35...f4 36.Ke2 does not help Black very much.

36.Ke2 Kg6 37.Ke3 Kg5 38.g3

If 38.f4+ then 38...Kh4 followed by 39...Kg3, etc. “The text move seems to hold the situation, but this proves to be only wishful thinking on White's part,” wrote Yanofsky.



38...f4+!

Forcing a decisive weakening of White's kingside.

39.gxf4+ Kf5

White cannot defend his kingside pawns. The game lasted only a few more moves:

40.f3

No better is 40.Kf3 h6! 41.Ke3 c3 42.Kd3 Kxf4 43.Kxc3 Ke4 44.f4 Kxf4 45.Kd3 Kf3 46.h4 h5 and Black wins. After 40.Kf3 h6! the alternative 41.h4 c3 42.Ke3 h5 43.Kd3 Kxf4 44.Kxc3 Ke4 45.Kd3 Kf3 comes to the same thing.

40...h6 41.Ke2 Kxf4 42.Kf2 h5 0-1

Peelback #1

Let's go back to the position after Black's move 36...Kg6. Instead of allowing Black's sacrificial idea, White can play more directly and establish an immediate blockade.



37.f4!

This move ensures that Black's king cannot break through and attack White's kingside pawns. If Black is to win the game from here, there is only one possible plan. After a few preparatory moves he can try sending his king over to the queenside in order to execute the standard "turning" manoeuvre to win White's d-pawn. It looks promising but in this case there is a flaw, as we shall see.

37...h5!

Useless is 37...Kh5 38.g3 Kg6 39.g4 and now:

A. 39...fxg4 40.hxg4 h5 41.gxh5+ Kxh5 42.f5 Kg5 43.f6!



A positional draw, since neither side can make any progress. White's king must keep watch on Black's c-pawn, and Black's king must keep watch on White's e-pawn.

B. 39...h6 40.Kf2 fxg4 41.hxg4 f5 (41...h5 42.gxh5+ Kxh5 43.f5 Kg5 44.f6= as in Line A above) 42.exf6 Kxf6 43.Kf3 Kg6 44.Ke3 h5 45.gxh5+ Kxh5 46.Kf3 and neither side can win.

C. 39...h5 40.g5! Kg7 41.Kd1 Kf8 42.Kc2 Ke7 43.Kc3 Kd7 44.Kb4 Kc6 45.Ka4 Kd7 (45...Kb6? 46.e6! and wins) 46.Kb4 and again there is no progress to be made by either side.

38.h4!

The simplest move, preventing any kingside activity by Black. Alternatives:

A. 38.g3? turns out very badly for White after 38...h4! Black either obtains two widely-separated passed pawns, or successfully invades the kingside with his king.

B. 38.Kd1 h4 is similar to the main line with 38.h4.



With the kingside closed off, Black's king starts the long march to the queenside.

38...Kg7 39.Kd2 Kf8 40.Kc3 Ke7 41.Kb4 Kd7 42.Ka4 Kc6 43.Kb4 Kb6 44.g3 Kc6 45.Ka4



White's king is chained to the locus of squares around Black's c-pawn. Black could simply repeat moves and make a draw, but let us see what happens if he tries to break through by sacrificing his c-pawn.

45...c3!? 46.Kb3 Kb5 47.Kxc3 Ka4 48.Kc2 Kb4 49.Kd2



Black is all set to execute his idea. Unfortunately, it doesn't work.

49...Kc4? 50.g4!!

A brilliant countersacrifice, mobilising White's kingside pawns in surprising fashion.



50...fxg4

No better is 50...hxg4 51.h5 g3 52.Ke3, etc.

51.f5 g3 52.Ke3 g2 53.Kf2 Kb5 54.e6 exf6 55.f6!

The last precise move. Black can no longer prevent White from promoting a pawn. There is nothing left for Black but resignation.

After 49.Kd2 Black has only one move to hold the balance:



49...Kb5! 50.Kc3 Kc6 51.Kb4 Kb6

Neither side can make progress, and it is time to call a truce.

The conclusion is that the pawn ending that Black obtained by trading off all the minor pieces is in fact drawn with best play.

Peelback #2

Let us return to the position where Black went into the pawn ending and see if we can find something better for him.



If Black can tie up his opponent for a few more moves and activate his king before making further exchanges, it might be enough to tip the balance in his favour.

32...Ba5!

With this move Black forces his opponent to defend the c-pawn with his knight. This can be done in two ways, so there are two main variations:

Variation A

33.Ne2 g5!

Ensuring that White cannot adequately defend his advanced e-pawn.

34.f4

Or 34.f3 Bc7 35.Kf2 Bxe5, etc. And if 34.g3 then of course 34...Bxh3, etc.

34...gxf4 35.Kf2 Bc7 36.Nxf4 Bxe5 37.Ne2 Kg7

If unopposed, Black will either exchange light-squared bishops or play ...Bf5-d3xe2, picking up White's c-pawn, with a winning advantage in both cases.

38.Nd4 Bxd4+ 39.cxd4 h6



Compared to the game, Black has an extra pawn in a bishop ending instead of equal pawns in a pawn ending. Moreover, the kingside is open to invasion by Black's king.

40.Ke3 Kf6 41.Ba4 Bf5 42.g4 Be4 43.h4 c3 44.Ke2 Kg7 45.Bd7

45.Bb5 f5 46.gxf5 Bxf5 47.Bd3 c2 and Black wins.

45...Kf8 46.Bc8 f6 47.Ba6 h5 48.gxh5 Kg7 49.Kd1 Kh6 50.Be2 f4! 51.Kc1 f3 52.Bg4 f2!

Finally picking up White's bishop with an easy win for Black.

Variation B

33.Nb5 Bd7 34.Ba4 Kf8!

Black provides for the defence of his d-pawn so that he can safely exchange White's knight.

35.Kf1 Bxb5 36.Bxb5 Ke7 37.Ke2 Bxc3



There is a widespread misconception that having bishops of opposite colour guarantees the defender a draw even if he is a pawn down. When the attacker has connected passed pawns, it usually requires a miracle for the defender to save the game.

38.f4 f6! 39.exf6+ Bxf6



In this position White's only chance for a successful defence is to exchange his f-pawn for Black's g-pawn and then give up his bishop for Black's queenside pawns, leaving Black with the wrong bishop and h-pawn combination. Unfortunately for White, his opponent can easily prevent this plan.

40.g4 Kd6 41.g5

If 41.f5 then 41...g5!, preserving Black's g-pawn and avoiding the positional draw indicated in the previous note.

41...Bb2 42.Kd2 Kc5 43.Bd7 d4 44.f5 d3!

Definitely not 44...gxf5? 45.Bxf5 and White draws as indicated above.

45.f6 Kd4 46.Ba4 c3+ 47.Kd1 Ba3

After this White must keep his pieces trained on the square c2. Black can now walk his king over to the kingside and capture White's pawns. Eventually he will play ...c2+, winning White's bishop, so White should simply get it over with and resign here.

The conclusion is that Black obtained a winning advantage after the exchange of queens, but did not find the most precise way of realising it. However, this should not detract from the magnitude of Divinsky's sporting achievement in this game. It required hours of analysis to establish a true assessment and, as World Champion Mikhail Tal once observed, minutes of play and hours of analysis are hardly the same thing. Moreover, Divinsky's opponent, a Soviet emigre, was no mean chessplayer. In fact he was one of the very few masters to compile a plus score against another World Champion, Mikhail Botvinnik.

The second extract from the Divinsky database comes from a match game against his UBC colleague Dr Elod Macskasy. After a fast and furious King's Indian Defence the two players arrived at the following rook and pawn ending:

Macskasy, Elod - Divinsky, Nathan [E92] Interclub match Vancouver, 17.03.1960

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.Nf3 e5 7.d5 Nbd7 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 a5 10.Nd2 Nc5 11.0-0 Bd7 12.b3 g5 13.Bg3 Nfxe4 14.Ndxe4 Nxe4 15.Nxe4 f5 16.Bd3 fxe4 17.Bxe4 b6 18.Qh5 Be8 19.Qe2 Qf6 20.a3 Bg6 21.f3 Bf5 22.Be1 Qg6 23.Bd2 Bxe4 24.Qxe4 Kh7 25.b4 axb4 26.Bxb4 Rf4 27.Qxg6+ Kxg6 28.Rac1 e4 29.fxe4 Rxe4 30.Rfe1 Bd4+ 31.Kh1 Rae8 32.g4 Bc5 33.Rxe4 Rxe4 34.h3 Re3 35.Kg2 Bxb4 36.axb4



The first impression is that Black must have some advantage. White's pawn position is overextended and could be vulnerable to attack by Black's more active pieces. Black decides to bring up his king.

36...Kf6!?

White is now faced with a very difficult decision: how to defend? Should he try for a counterattack, or stay passive? Should he try to exchange rooks? It is likely that the time control was at move 40, and White was short of time...

37.Rf1+ Kg6!

If 37...Ke5?! then White counterattacks with 38.Rf7! Rb3 39.b5. In this line Black is losing his vital c-pawn, so the most reasonable outcome is a draw by repetition after 39...Rb2+, etc.

38.Rf3?

White has brought his rook to the f-file with gain of time, and under the influence of consistency he decides to offer the exchange of rooks. There was also the option of repeating the position with 38.Rc1. If Black wants to play for a win, then the only reasonable continuation is 38...Rb3. After that there are two main variations:

A) 39.b5 Re3 40.Rc2 h5!



A very powerful move. If undisturbed, Black will play ...h4 and ...Rg3+, chaining White's king to the square h2. Black will then bring up his own king to attack White's queenside pawns. If White tries a counterattack on Black's c-pawn, Black will switch to a direct attack against White's kingside. The only way for White to disrupt this plan is to prevent the move ..h4 by exchanging pawns on h5. However, that frees up Black's king and gives him some new attacking possibilities. Here are the main variations:

A1) 41.Kh2 h4! 42.Kg2 Rg3+ 43.Kh2 Kf6 44.Rf2+ Ke5 45.Rf7 Rc3 46.Rxc7 Rc2+ 47.Kg1 Kf4 48.Rc6 Kg3 49.Kf1 Kxh3 50.Rxb6 Kg3 51.Rxd6 h3 52.Rh6 Rxc4 53.d6 Rb4 54.d7 Rf4+ 55.Ke2 Rd4 56.Rh7 h2 57.b6 Rxd7 58.Rxd7 h1Q 59.b7 Qb1 60.Ke3 Kxg4 and Black is winning easily.

A2) 41.gxh5+ Kxh5 42.Rd2 Re4 43.Rc2 Kh4 44.Rc3 Re2+ 45.Kg1 Rd2 46.Kh1 Rf2 47.Kg1 Ra2! 48.Kh1 Ra4! 49.Kg2 g4 50.hxg4 Kxg4. Black's king will now head to the queenside and pick up all of White's pawns.

The conclusion is that passive defence with 39.b5 does not save the game for White. There is only one possibility left:

B) 39.c5!



With this active move White accepts the immediate loss of a pawn but obtains two things in return. His rook becomes more active, and he restricts Black to a single passed pawn on the queenside instead of two passed pawns as occurred in the game. This makes it easier for White to defend the position.

39...bxc5 40.bxc5 Rd3 41.cxd6 cxd6 42.Re1! Rxd5 43.Re6+ Kg7 44.Kf3!



White has activated his pieces and it is highly doubtful that Black can win the resulting position. To make progress, he will have to give up his pawn on h6. This in turn will allow White to liquidate the kingside pawns with the move h4. Once that happens White will obtain an ending of R vs R+P in which his king is in front of the pawn. Unless White has failed to study *Basic Chess Endings*, he should have no difficulty holding the draw.

Let us return to the game. After 38.Rf3? Black correctly avoids the exchange of rooks.

38...Re2+! 39.Kg3

Unfortunately for White, 39.Rf2? succumbs to a new danger: 39...Rxf2+ 40.Kxf2 b5!, destroying White's pawn position and allowing Black's king to move in. After 41.cxb5 Kf6 42.Ke2 Ke5 43.Ke3 Kxd5 44.Kd3 Ke5 45.Ke3 d5 White can resign.

39...Rc2 40.Re3 Rxc4 41.Re6+ Kg7 42.Re7+ Kf6 43.Re6+ Kg7 44.Re7+ Kf8!

After a minor repetition, Black finds the right idea, forcing White's rook to declare its intentions.

45.Rh7 b5!



Another fine move. When Black eventually captures White's d-pawn, both of his queenside pawns will be defended by his rook.

46.Kf3

White plays to activate his own king while keeping Black's king confined to the back rank. If he takes on h6 right away, then we get the following variation: 46.Rxh6 Kg7 47.Re6 Rxb4! 48.Re7+ Kf6 49.Rxc7 Rb3+ 50. Kg2 (or 50.Kf2 b4 51.Rb7 Ke5 52.Rxg5+ Kf4! 53.Rg8 b3! 54.Rb8 Kxg4 and Black wins) 50...b4! 51.Rb7 Ke5 52.Re7+ Kxd5 53.Rg7 Kc4 54.Rxg5 Rc3! 55.Rg8 b3 56.Rb8 Rc2+ 57.Kf3 b2 58.Kf4 (otherwise 58...Rc3+ and 59...Rb3, etc.) 58...Rf2+! (deflecting White's king) 59.Ke3 (or 59.Kg5 Kc3, etc.) 59...Rh2, picking up White's h-pawn and winning easily for Black.

46...Rxb4 47.Rxc7 Rd4 48.Rb7 Rxd5 49.Ke4 Re5+ 50.Kd4 Ke8 51.Rh7 Rc5 52.Rxh6

Black was going to to play his king to c8, driving White's rook off the b-file in any case. This would allow Black's b-pawn to advance.

52...Kd7 53.h4 gxh4 54.Rxh4 Kc6 55.Ke4 b4 56.Rh1 Kb5



57.Rg1

White cannot prevent Black's b-pawn from queening, so he tries to support his own g-pawn with his rook. If he tries to use his king for this purpose, then Black wins easily after 57.Kf4 b3 58.g5 Rc4+ 59.Kf5 Kb4 60.g6 b2 61.Rb1 Ka3. Also hopeless is 57.Rb1 Ka4 58.Ra1+ Kb3 59.Ra6 d5+ 60.Kd3 Rc3+ 61.Kd2 Rg3 62.Rg6 Kb2 63.Rg5 b3 64.Rxd5 Rxc4 65.Rd7 Rc4 66.Kd3 Rc8 and Black achieves the well-known Lucena position, which is an easy win for him.

57...b3 58.g5 Kb4! 59.g6 b2 60.g7 Rc1 61.Rxc1

If White queens his pawn right away, then Black queens with check and wins White's rook.

61...bxc1Q 62.g8Q



62...Qc4+! 0-1

The last finesse, forcing the exchange of queens. Black wins after 63.Qxc4+ Kxc4 64.Ke3 d5 65.Kd2 Kd4!, taking the opposition and ensuring the promotion of his last pawn. A brilliantly-played ending.

We conclude our set of endgames played by Nathan Divinsky with a more lightweight but still rather charming example.

Divinsky, Nathan - Chiaramonti, Jacques [C84] La Habana ol fin (4), 07.11.1966

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 exd4 8.e5 Ne4 9.Bd5 Nc5 10.Nxd4 Bb7 11.Bxc6 dxc6 12.Nf5 Ne6 13.Nc3 b4 14.Qxd8+ Rxd8 15.Ne2 Bf8 16.Be3 Rd5 17.f4 g6 18.Nfg3 Bc5 19.Bxc5 Nxc5 20.Rad1 Ke7 21.c4 Rd3 22.Nc1 Rxd1 23.Rxd1 Na4 24.b3 Nc3 25.Rd2 c5 26.Kf2 h5 27.Ke3 h4 28.Nge2 Ne4 29.Rd1 f6 30.Nd3 f5 31.Nf2 Nxf2 32.Kxf2



The knowledgeable reader will recognise this position as originating from a Spanish Game in which White has exchanged his light-squared bishop for a black knight on c6. By combining this manoeuvre with an exchange of his d-pawn for Black's e-pawn, White has acquired a kingside pawn majority that now includes a protected passed pawn. Black's corresponding queenside pawn majority is severely handicapped by the doubled pawns inflicted by White. The only spark of hope for Black is the possibility of attacking White's a-pawn with the manoeuvre ...Be4-b1xa2 and perhaps creating a passed pawn with ...a6-a5-a4. However, if White defends carefully this will only result in the bishop being trapped. The big leveling factor in the position is the presence of a pair of rooks on the board. Black's rook is useful in defence so he should definitely not acquiesce to trading it off. But for reasons that only Chiaramonti understands, his very first move is an offer to exchange rooks. Divinsky does not miss the opportunity!

32...Rd8? 33.Rxd8 Kxd8 34.g3!

This immediately sets Black a difficult problem. Should he push his pawn to h3, capture on g3, or leave White to capture on h4? The reality is that it doesn't matter what he does – the position is already losing for him.

34...h3

If Black captures on g3 then White's king gets to g5 and attacks Black's g-pawn: 34...hxg3+ 35.Kxg3 Ke7 36.Kh4 Kf7 37.Kg5



Now there are two main variations:

A. 37...Bf3 38.Nc1 Be4 39.Kh6 Bc2 40.e6+ Kf6 41.e7 Kxe7 42.Kxg6 Kf8 43.Kf6 Be4 44.h3 a5 45.Ke6 Kg7 46.Kd7 Kg6 47.Kxc7 Kh5 48.Kd6 Kh4 49.Kxc5 Kxh3 50.Kd4 Kg4 51.Ke3 Kh5 52.Nd3 and White's c-pawn will carry the day;

B. 37...Be4 38.h4 Bb1 39.e6+ Kg7 40.Ng3 Bxa2 (40...Bc2 41.h5 gxh5 42.Nxh5+ Kg8 43.Kf6 and wins) 41.h5 gxh5 42.Nxf5+ Kg8 43.Ne7+ Kf8 44.Ng6+ Ke8 45.f5 and White's f-pawn is promoting by force;

If Black ignores the pawn on g3 then White's free extra pawn merely adds to Black's problems: 34...Kd7 35.gxh4 Ke6 36.Nc1 Be4 37.Ke3! Black's c-pawn is weak and this will force him to capture White's knight when it gets to d3, leaving White with a winning K+P ending.

35.Ke3 Be4 36.Nc1 Bb1



37.Kd2

Also possible was 37.Nd3 Bxd3 (*Black might as well go into the pawn ending because 37...Bxa2 38.Nxc5 a5 39.Nb7+ is also losing for him*) 38.Kxd3 Ke7 39.Ke3 Ke6 40.Kf3 a5 41.g4 c6 42.Kg3 g5 43.fxg5 Kxe5 44.Kxh3 f4 45.Kg2 Ke6 46.Kf3 Ke5 47.h4 and White is winning easily.

37...Kd7 38.Nd3 Kc6 39.Nf2 1-0

In this hopeless position Black overstepped the time limit. He is losing at least a pawn for no compensation and can only sit and watch while White advances his kingside pawns.

I hope the reader has enjoyed this analysis of a few of Nathan Divinsky's more interesting endgames.

Your feedback on this column is always welcome. Email the writer at dscoones@telus.net.

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