

Chess

Botvinnik self-critically analyzed some of his recent games from a tournament in Yugoslavia for the readers of "Chess" (April-May 1970, pp. 269-280). One of his best, superbly annotated, is condensed here for your enjoyment and amazement at the depth of his approach to chess.

White: M. Botvinnik.

Yugoslavia, 1970.

Black: B. Kurajica.

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P-Q4	P-Q4	33 R-Q4!(j)	Q-R8ch
2 P-QB4	P-K3	34 K-B2	Q-B6
3 N-QB3	B-K2	35 Q-K7(k)	R-KN1
4 PxP	PxP	36 R-Q2	
5 B-B4	P-QB3	37 K-Q1 (l)	Q-B4ch
6 P-K3	B-Q3(a)	38 K-K1	Q-N5ch
7 B-N3		39 K-K2	Q-N8ch
8 N-B3	N-K2	40 K-Q3	Q-N5ch
9 B-Q3	0-0	41 P-K4	Q-B4ch
10 N-K5(b)	B-KB4	42 K-K2(m)	Q-B5
11 NxB	BxB	43 R-Q7	P-N5
12 Q-B3	N-B4	44 K-K1	Q-B6ch
13 BxB	P-KN3	45 K-Q2	Q-R8ch
14 P-KR4(c)	NxB	46 K-K2	Q-R3ch
15 P-R5	N-Q2	47 R-Q6(n)	Q-N3
16 P-R6(d)	P-KN4	48 PXP	P-N6
17 P-KN4	Q-K2	49 K-K1	Q-R4ch
18 0-0-0	Q-K3	50 K-Q2	Q-R8ch
19 Q-N2	QR-K1(e)	51 K-B1	Q-N7ch
20 K-N1	K-R1	52 R-Q1	Q-N8ch
21 NxN	N-K5(f)	53 K-N1	Q-K6ch
22 N-B5	PxN	54 R-QB1	Q-KB6
23 PxN	NxN	55 Q-K6(o)	P-KR4
24 Q-N3	R-Q1(g)	56 QxQBP	R-xP
25 RxR	R-Q6	57 Q-Q5	P-R5(p)
26 R-Q1	PxR	58 Q-B4!(q)	R-N4
27 Q-K5ch	Q-B5	59 P-B6	R-N2(r)
28 Q-B3	P-B3	60 R-N1	R-QB2
29 QxQP	QxNP(h)	61 RxR	R-KN2(s)
30 Q-Q7	Q-R4(i)	62 Q-QB1	Q-R8ch
31 QxNP	QxP	63 K-R1	Q-Pch
32 K-B1	Q-N3ch		Resigns
	Q-K5		

(a) A good plan for White to counter 6 . . . B-Q3 has not yet been found.

(b) The start of White's misadventures. White did not want to waste a tempo by 10 Q-B2; however, Black would then still not have resolved his chief problem, the role of his KB.

(c) The advance of the rook's pawn was the idea behind 11 NxB. But this all takes time, and White gets into a difficult position by rigidly carrying out his plan.

(d) Chancy and careless, and more loss of time.

(e) This is puzzling; 18 . . . N-K5! was extremely strong.

(f) Now the initiative reverts to White.

(g) Black's king is now insecure, White's RP proving useful after all.

(h) Black felt that the rook ending after 28 . . . QxQ 29 PxQ R-Q1 30 K-B1 would be unfavorable, but with the queens on, White has a lasting initiative.

(i) Black must liquidate this pawn for the safety of his king.

(j) In this ending, the position of the pieces and activity of passed pawns are more important than a material advantage. White should therefore capture the QBP, not the RP!

(k) The queen is beautifully placed here; Black may not play 35 . . . QxBPch due to 36 R-Q2.

(l) White tries to bring his king closer to the king's side, so that he can block Black's KRP if queens are exchanged. Black plays into his hands in the next few moves by giving unnecessary checks. It is unclear whether White could have counted on success after 37 . . . P-N5.

(m) Black had to seal in this position, with the choice between two moves: (a) 42 . . . Q-N5ch. After 43 K-Q3 Q-B6ch 44 K-B4 R-QN1! (or 44 . . . P-N5 45 K-N4!! and R-Q7) 45 R-Q8ch RxR 46 QxRch K-N2 47 Q-Q7ch K-R3 48 QxBP QxBP 49 Q-K6! QxNP 50 Q-R3ch K-N3 51 P-B6, White has a won queen and pawn ending; (b) 42 . . . P-N5, the move played.

(n) Black's last hope now rests in the opening lines by . . . P-N6, but this leads to loss of a pawn.

(o) Black's QBP is finally eliminated, and this decides the game.

(p) 56 . . . Q-Q6ch 57 K-R1 Q-Q5 58 Q-Q5! R-N8 59 K-N1 also loses.

(q) There is no answer to the advance of the BP.

(r) Or 58 . . . P-R6, 59 P-B6 P-R7 60 P-B7 P-RQ/8 (60 . . . R-N1 61 QxRch) 61 P-B8/Q K-R2 62 Q-KB7ch.

(s) 60 . . . R-B1 61 Q-B7 allows mate.