GARRY KASPAROV ON MODERN CHESS
PART FOUR

KASPAROV VS KARPOV 1988-2009

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Foreword

The concluding volume of the trilogy covering my duels with Anatoly Karpov is devoted to our tournament games, beginning in 1988, and to our fifth match for the world crown (1990).

The three years after the Seville match (1987) were notable for the unprecedented enlivenment of international chess life. This was the heyday of the Grandmasters Association (GMA), which succeeded in organising the World Cup – the first time in history that a tournament championship of the leading chess players on the planet had been held. It need hardly be said that this new competition was also marked by my sharp rivalry with Karpov. As, however, was the 'stellar' 55th USSR Championship (1988), which ended in a share of first place and a major scandal.

In the meantime Karpov won three Candidates matches and again gained the right to battle for the championship title. By that time the GMA had united nearly all the grandmasters in the world, it had powerful potential sponsors, and it was ready to take on the running of the world championship, as expressed in a resolution of the GMA General Assembly, which was approved by an overwhelming majority of votes on 18 December 1989 in Mallorca. Chess had acquired a real chance of ridding itself of the FIDE dictatorship and moving onto professional lines. But Campomanes & Co. would not accept this. Six months later a part of the GMA management board, including Karpov, suggested leaving the running of the world championship with FIDE, and the next assembly in the Spanish town of Murcia approved this by a majority of just a few votes. From that point on the activity of the GMA was gradually reduced to nothing...

My fifth duel with Karpov (New York/Lyon 1990) turned out to be the last classical match for the world championship held under the aegis of FIDE. I won 12½-11½. As always, the match took a very tense course, but, for all the wealth of ideas demonstrated, its influence on the development of chess was not so significant as our previous four matches, which by

the early 1990s had produced a powerful new generation: Anand, Ivanchuk, Gelfand, Short, Kamsky, Shirov, Kramnik, Topalov... The composition of the chess elite underwent a drastic change, and Karpov and I were no longer able to dominate unconditionally in tournaments. Previously it was unimaginable that neither of us would take first place, but in 1991 at the super-tournaments in Linares, Amsterdam and Reggio Emilia, we were overtaken by the new wave.

I was able to readjust and win twice in succession at Linares (1992 and 1993), but Karpov, unable to overcome the crisis, suffered a sensational defeat against Short in their semi-final Candidates match in the spring of 1992. Then Short won the final against Timman and... unexpectedly suggested to me that we should play our match for the world championship outside of the FIDE framework. Deciding that this was a convenient opportunity to finally place chess on a professional basis, I agreed. And the Kasparov-Short match (1993) took place under the aegis of a new organisation created by us – the Professional Chess Association (PCA). In response, FIDE deprived me and Short of the rights of champion and challenger, and organised a match 'for the world championship' between the two reserve candidates, who had lost in the qualifying cycle – Timman and Karpov.

The sudden opportunity to regain the crown, even if only the FIDE version, literally revived and transformed the ex-champion. In the spring and summer of 1993 he finished first in Dos Hermanas and Dortmund, and in the autumn, when I had overcome Short, he did not allow Timman any chances, and, after winning the title created by FIDE, he won a strong knock-out tournament in Tilburg. Then came the triumph of Linares 1994, where Karpov attempted to demonstrate that his official title meant no less than my historic one – and he won with the outstanding score of 11 out of 13.

At the end of 1994, after numerous problems, a declaration of collaboration between FIDE and the PCA was signed, providing for a unifying match between the winners of the two forthcoming world championship cycles. In the final I won the PCA version against Anand (1995) and Karpov won the FIDE version against Kamsky (1996).

But our sixth match, alas, did not in fact take place. At the super-tournament in Las Palmas (December 1996) I finished first, but Karpov shared last place and ceased to be regarded as a real contender for the crown. Sponsors lost interest in a match between the two 'K's', and the new FIDE President Ilyumzhinov began actively promoting 'one-off' knock-out world championships. The chess paths of Karpov and me diverged, and with the exception of Linares 2001 we never again met in classical tournaments. However, we played a number of rapid and blitz games, with which this volume concludes.

Autumn 2009 was – just imagine! – the 25th anniversary of the start of the first Karpov-Kasparov match. Putin's Russia and FIDE 'forgot' about this date, but the Spanish marked it with a colourful chess festival in Valencia. The new meeting of the 12th and 13th champions reminded many of their fierce duel, which was unique not only for chess, and also for top-class sport as a whole – five matches for the world championship in the space of six years!

I should like to express my gratitude to my former trainers Alexander Nikitin and Alexander Shakarov for their help in the preparation of this manuscript for publication.

Chapter One

Tournament Races

For the first time after Seville

By winning the last, decisive game of my fourth match with Karpov on 19 December 1987, I did that which my opponent had failed to do in 1985: I drew the match and retained my title. Now, at last, I had the prospect of three quiet years at the chess summit. 'I don't know how easy they will be,' I stated in an interview after the match, 'but at any event this will be three years without a match for the world championship. Playing such a match every year is pretty tiring. As for my plans... I want to play. I will play as much as I am able. I am reaching the age when I am obliged to try and realise my full potential, to achieve the maximum I can in the game.'

But apart from this I also had plenty of other obligations. Wishing the readers of the magazine *Shakhmaty v SSSR* a Happy New Year in 1988, I wrote: 'I believe in the democratic principles of chess life, for which I have fought; I believe that justice will triumph everywhere. I think that in the next few years we will witness the construction of a new chess world, in which chess will fully conform to its moral status of a clean and honest game. Chess will proceed to a new qualitative level. And for this I will do everything I can.'

I was talking mainly about the creation the previous year of the international Grandmasters Association (GMA), which was embarking on the running of the World Cup, and about the prospect of creating an independent Union of USSR chess players. Engrossed in these various problems, for nearly five months after the Seville match I did not take part in any competitions (with the exception of the FIDE knock-out blitz championship in the Canadian city of Saint John, from which Karpov and I were eliminated before the semi-finals), whereas in January 1988 Karpov won in Wijk aan Zee – 9 out of 13 (+6–1=6), in March he shared 2nd-3rd places in the Euwe Memorial – 3½ out of 6 (+2–1=3), and in April he won the first stage of the World Cup in Brussels, where the first GMA Assembly was also held (cf. the chapter 'The Fate of the GMA and the World Cup'.).

In the middle of May I also plunged into

tournament play – and immediately came a clash with Karpov, with not just one game, but a whole mini-match! We took part in a four-cycle match-tournament of four grandmasters in Amsterdam, where we were assisted by our regular trainers: Karpov by Igor Zaitsev, and I by Alexander Nikitin.

Nikitin: *'Our stars were opposed by the two strongest Dutch players – Jan Timman and John van der Wiel. The idea of the organisers was that the event should not only trivially arrange the contestants on four steps, but as though continue the Seville match of the two great "K's" against the background of a contest between the two leaders of the Dutch team and a kind of USSR-Holland match. The opening ceremony was colourful: after an original drawing of lots, two mime artists provoked laughter by resurrecting the sufferings of the contestants in the Seville match, familiar to us from videos...'*

Zaitsev: *'Amsterdam greeted us with hot, blindingly sunny weather and the radiant smile of the marble foyer of the Barbizon Hotel. The opening ceremony was on a par with the standard of the tournament. The drawing of lots was highly unusual. About three weeks beforehand, each of the four was invited to guess the exchange rate of the Dutch Guilder against the American Dollar on 12 May 1988. The most far-sighted proved to be van der Wiel, who was exactly right – 1.825. Then came Timman, Karpov and Kasparov. It was in this order that they chose their numbers in the tournament table (of course, only the first three "chose" – the world champion had to take what was left). Once again displaying insight and far-sighted modesty, van der Wiel chose number 4 (within a couple of weeks this "prognosis" of his was also confirmed), Timman chose number 2, and Karpov, voluntarily condemning himself to two Blacks at the start, selected 3. Kasparov was left with number 1, to his satisfaction.'*

Yes, I took this to be a good sign – it was hard to imagine that the No.1 would remain unclaimed. But they all had their own reasons: perhaps Timman would not object to finishing second, while Karpov wanted to have White against me in the first cycle. This next encounter of the champions was undoubtedly the main intrigue of the match-tournament, and it created great interest not only in the chess world.

In the first two rounds we both defeated van der Wiel and drew with Timman. By the start of our individual encounter, the conference hall of the Barbizon Hotel was full to bursting point.

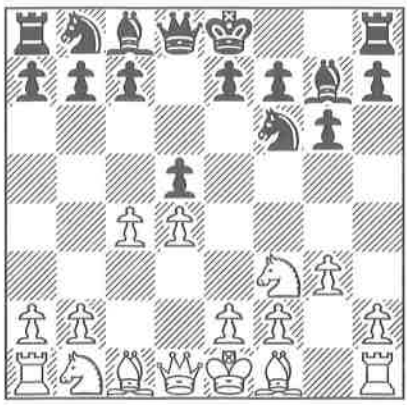
Game 1
A.Karpov-G.Kasparov
Amsterdam 15.05.1988,
1st cycle, 3rd round
Grünfeld Defence D76

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘f3

In our first game after Seville, Karpov avoids an immediate continuation of the dispute in the main lines – 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 (*Game Nos.3, 6, 16, 20, 22, 24*), 4 ♘f3 ♗g7 5 ♕b3, or 5 ♗f4 (*Game Nos.48, 50*). Occasionally he began with 3 g3, to which I replied both 3...c5 (Brussels 1987), and 3...c6 (1st and 3rd games of the 1987 match), and later 3...♗g7 4 ♗g2 d5 (*Game Nos.55, 57, 62, 66*).

3...♗g7 4 g3 (as we expected) **4...d5**

'A surprise' (Zaitsev). In the 1986 and 1987 matches I set up a 'rampart' here – 4...c6 5 ♗g2 d5, and White retained certain hopes of success. On this occasion a genuine Grünfeld had been prepared, leading to more lively play.

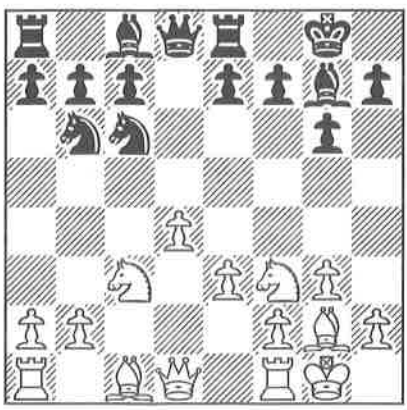


5 cxd5 (5 ♗g2 – *Game Nos.42, 47*) **5...♘xd5 6 ♗g2 ♘b6 7 ♘c3 ♘c6 8 e3 0-0 9 0-0**

One of the *tabiyas* of the g2-g3 system.

9...♖e8

Hort's preparatory move, known since 1965, although in 1988 Zaitsev wrote: 'Today this is considered to be the most flexible direction of theoretical thinking.' Earlier Black mainly employed 9...a5 or the straightforward 9...e5 – I once played this against Vaganian (Barcelona 1989), and after 10 d5 ♘a5 11 e4 c6 12 ♗g5 f6 13 ♗e3 cxd5 14 exd5 (14 ♗xb6! ♕xb6 15 ♘xd5 ♕d8 16 ♕c1!? and ♖d1 is better, Podgaets-Notkin, Moscow 1995) 14...♗g4!? 15 ♗c5 ♖f7 16 b3 f5 17 ♗b4 ♘ac4! 18 bxc4 e4 an interesting battle developed.



10 ♖e1

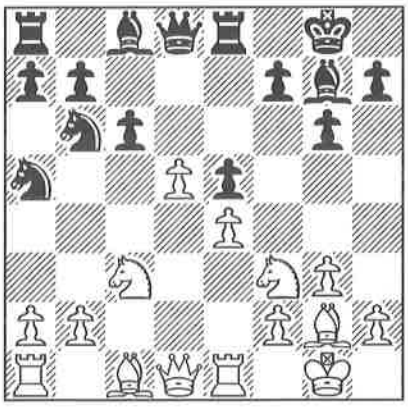
A symmetrical reply. White has also played 10 ♘e1 e5 11 d5 ♘a5 12 ♘c2 ♘ac4 13 e4 ♘d6 (Korchnoi-Hort, Luhacovice 1969) or 10 ♕e2 e5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 dxe5 ♗xe5 13 ♖d1 ♕e7 14 e4 h5!? (we also looked at this in our preparations) 15 ♗e3 ♗e6 16 ♗d4 ♗xd4 17 ♖xd4 c5 18 ♖d2 ♖ad8 (Smyslov-Korchnoi, Beer Sheva 1990), in each case with equality.

But the main line is 10 d5 ♘a5 11 ♘d4 ♗d7. Here White has tried 12 b4 ♘ac4 13 a4 a5 14 b5 ♕c8 (Portisch-Kasparov, Reykjavik 1988), 12 ♕e2 c6 13 dxc6 ♘xc6 (Portisch-Kasparov, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1988; Korchnoi-Kasparov, Tilburg 1989), 12 b3 c5 (Ljubojevic-Kasparov, Barcelona 1989), and 12 ♘b3 ♘xb3 13 axb3 c6 14 dxc6 ♗xc6 (Yusupov-Kasparov, Belgrade 1989), with an equal game in every case. But most often he plays 12 e4, after which 12...c6 is now preferred, although 12...c5 appealed to me, with the idea of 13 dxc6 ♘xc6 with equality (Hjartarson-Kasparov, Barcelona 1989), or 13 ♘b3 ♘a4!. A modern attempt to fight for an advantage is 13 ♘f3!? ♘bc4 (13...e6 14 ♗g5) 14 ♕c2 b5 15 b3 b4 16 bxc4 ♗xc3 17 ♗d2!?, sacrificing the exchange (Bologan-Svidler, Wijk aan Zee 2004).

10...e5

This undermining of the centre seems timely, but perhaps it is more accurate to make another patient move – 10...a5!?. Now 11 d5?! is weak: 11...♗xc3 12 bxc3 ♕xd5 13 ♘d4 ♕c4 (a recent example is Navara-Ivanchuk, 7th rapid match game, Prague 2009), while if 11 b3, then apart from 11...e5 (Hulak-Tal, Moscow 1990), 11...a4 is also good. It would seem that this emphasises most simply the harmless nature of 10 ♖e1.

11 d5 ♘a5 12 e4 c6



13 ♗g5

This developing move is the most natural. However, a novelty from the 21st century is stronger – 13 b3!? (crippling the black knights) 13...cxd5 14 exd5, and White has some advantage after both 14...♗g4 15 ♗a3 (Tkachiev-Iordachescu, Dresden 2007; Navara-Ivanchuk, 5th rapid match game, Prague 2009), and 14...e4 15 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 (or 15...♘xd5 16 ♗g5 f6 17 ♗d2) 16 ♖xe4 ♗xa1 17 ♗g5! ♗f6 18 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 19 ♖e8+ ♔g7 20 ♕e1 ♗g4 21 ♖xa8 ♘xa8 22 ♘e5 ♗f5 (22...♗c8?! 23 b4, Podgaets-Nedilko, Odessa 2007) 23 b4 ♕e7 24 bxa5 f6 25 ♘d3 ♕xe1+ 26 ♘xe1 ♘c7 – Black is obliged to fight for a draw in an endgame where he is a pawn down.

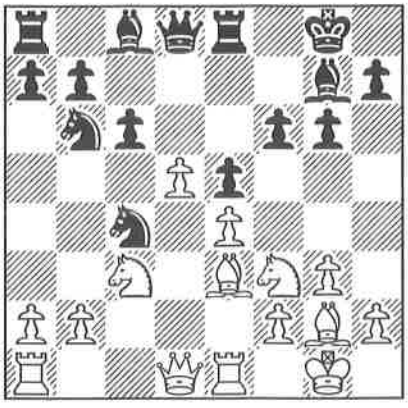
13...f6 (13...♗f6 14 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 15 b3 is better for White) **14 ♗e3 ♘ac4**

Two other replies come into consideration:

1) 14...♘bc4 15 b3 ♘xe3 16 ♖xe3 cxd5 17 ♘xd5 ♗e6 (intending ...♘c6-d4) 18 ♖d3 f5 19 ♘d2!? (but not 19 ♘c3 ♕e7 20 ♘d5 ♕d8 with equality, Grachev-Shipov, Sochi 2004) 19...♗f7 20 ♘c4 ♘xc4 21 bxc4, or 19...♘c6 20 exf5 gxf5 21 ♘f4 ♘d4 22 ♘xe6 ♖xe6 23 ♘f3, and White's chances are somewhat better;

2) 14...cxd5 15 ♗xb6 axb6 16 ♘xd5 ♗e6 17 ♕e2!? (17 h4 ♗xd5!, Korchnoi-Smirin, Biel 2003) 17...♗xd5 18 exd5 f5 19 b4 e4 20 ♖ac1 exf3 21 ♕xe8+ ♕xe8 22 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 23 ♗xf3, and White's advantage is largely symbolic (Ivanchuk-Dominguez, Sofia 2009).

But I chose the most energetic continuation, involving a pawn sacrifice.



15 dxc6!

Otherwise it is difficult to hope for any advantage at all.

15...♘xe3!

Only this move is a novelty. 'Black agrees to give up a little material, merely to avoid any defects in his pawn structure. At the same time he markedly activates his forces.' (Zaitsev). Indeed, there is no reason to leave himself with a weakness at c6 after 15...♕xd1 and ...bxc6 or 15...bxc6 16 ♗c1 (Kasparov-Pares Vives, Barcelona simul' 1988).

16 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 17 cxb7 ♗xb7

'Black could also have considered the variation 17...♘xg2(?) 18 bxa8♕ ♘xe1, but the crude 19 ♕xa7 destroys all the charm.' (Zaitsev)

18 ♖xe3 ♗h6 19 ♖ee1

As a result White has reached an endgame with an extra pawn, but Black's activity promises him equal chances.