

2016 WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 10

By: Amon Simutowe

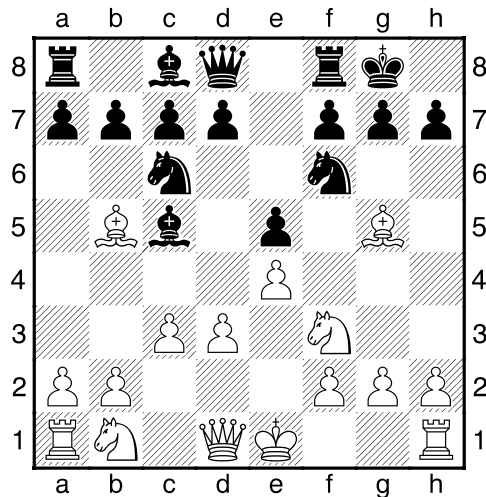
ROUND 10

Even though the dynamics of the match suggested that it had started going Karjakin's way, Carlsen made a comeback and won in round 10. This was not very surprising. Even though I have been significantly impressed with Karjakin's performance in this match, I doubted that Carlsen would fail to at least win one of the last four games to tie the match. It's still possible Karjakin may win the match. He has fully settled into the match, a condition I wished for since it started. This means that if he loses the match, it won't be mainly due to insufficient match experience but because Carlsen tapped into his super powers as a world champion.

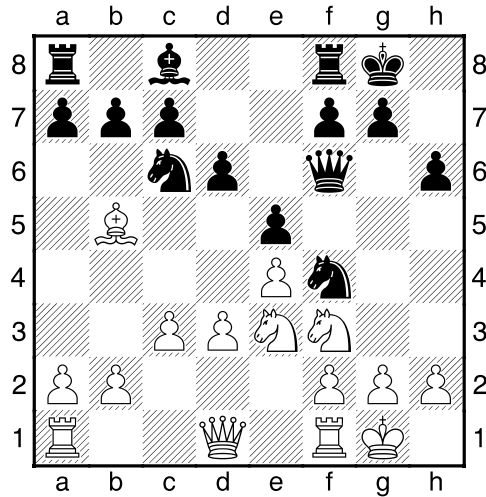
Karjakin had at least two chances to play drawing moves on moves 20 and 21 in game 10 but he missed the opportunity. In sum, Karjakin didn't play very well and it seems he was quite uncomfortable during the match. Even Carlsen made a few mistakes uncharacteristic of a player of his caliber. This may suggest both players are under immense pressure and at this point, I think the winner would be the player who wins the psychological battle.

Carlsen Vs Karjakin

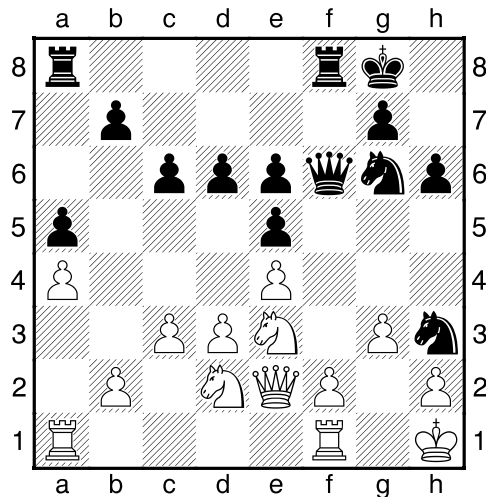
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 It seems the Berlin has become popular ever since Kasparov failed to breakthrough during the 2000 match with Kramnik **4.d3 Bc5 5.c3 0-0 6.Bg5** A rare line. Perhaps Carlsen was very conscious that his best chance lay in partially surprising Karjakin



6...h6 7.Bh4 Be7 8.0-0 d6 9.Nbd2 Nh5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.Nc4 Nf4 12.Ne3 Qf6

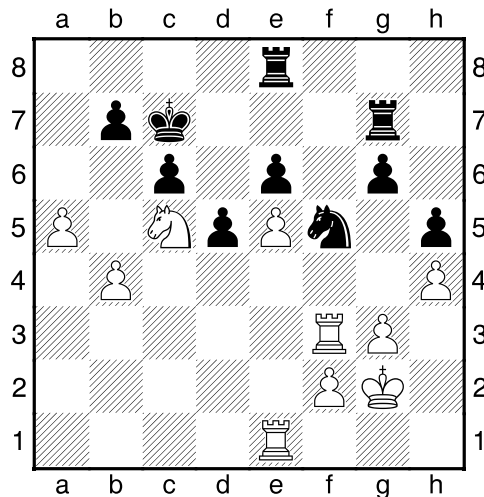


13.g3 Nh3+ 14.Kh1 Ne7 A normal continuation to prevent moves such as Nd5 and reposition the Knight for possible Kingside attacks in the future **15.Bc4 c6 16.Bb3** Karjakin spent a significant amount of time after this move. It seemed he had not thought much about Bb3 **16...Ng6 17.Qe2 a5 18.a4 Be6 19.Bxe6 fxe6 20.Nd2**

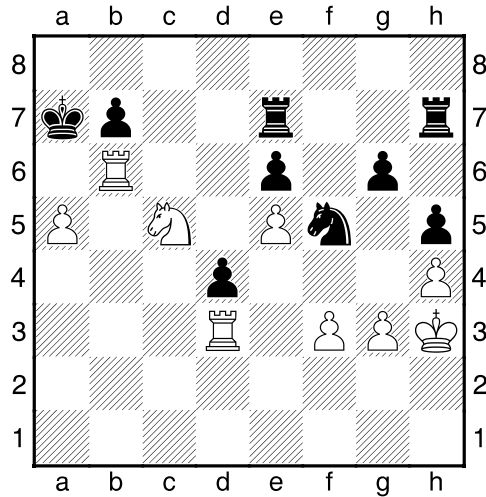


..d5 Karjakin surprisingly missed a draw. For instance [20...Nxf2+ 21.Kg2 (21.Kg1 Nh3+ 22.Kh1 if white plays (22.Kg2 Nhf4+ 23.gxf4 Nxf4+ 24.Rxf4 exf4 It's unlikely Carlsen would have tried his luck to go in this uncomfortable endgame particularly for him and thus would have taken a draw) 22...Nf2+) 21...Nh4+ 22.gxh4 (22.Kg1 Nh3+ 23.Kh1 Nf2+ 24.Kg1 draws and this is a line Karjakin should have been happy with) 22...Qg6+ leads to a better endgame for black. It's quite hard to explain why Karjakin missed this line but most likely pressure which can happen even among top players] **21.Qh5 Ng5** [21...Nxf2+ 22.Kg1 (22.Kg2 Qf7 threatening Nf4+ 23.Kg1 Qf6 threatening Qg5 and Nh3+ after a possible Qxg5 24.h4 Nf4 25.gxf4 Qxf4 would be unpleasant for white) 22...Qg5 23.Qxg5 Nh3+ 24.Kg2 Nxc5 is better for black] **22.h4 Nf3 23.Nxf3 Qxf3+ 24.Qxf3 Rxf3 25.Kg2 Rf7 26.Rfe1?** An inaccurate move which showed

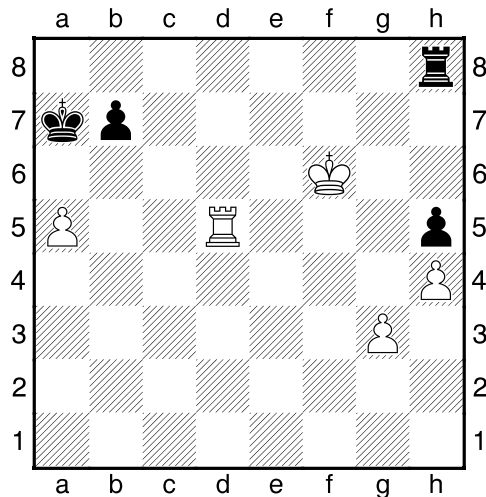
perhaps how much pressure the players are under. Karjakin could have continued [26...Raf8 27.Re2 (27.Rf1 may have been played indicating Carlsen had not intended Rfe1) 27...dxe4 28.dxe4 Nf4+ 29.gxf4 exf4 threatening taking the Knight on e3 and f4-f3 to capture the Rook. This means Carlsen would have likely had to play Rf1] **26...h5** while this move takes a good grip on the g4-square it weakens the g5-square, an important square but Karjakin didn't have many choices. **27.Nf1 Kf8 28.Nd2 Ke7 29.Re2 Kd6 30.Nf3 Raf8 31.Ng5 Re7 32.Rae1 Rfe8 33.Nf3 Nh8** In general, it's usually a bad sign if one has to play a move such as Nh8 **34.d4 exd4 35.Nxd4** threatening exd5 exd5 and then Nf5+ The move cxd5 after a potential exd5 leaves the b5 square chronically weak **35...g6 36.Re3 Nf7 37.e5+ Kd7 38.Rf3 Nh6 39.Rf6 Rg7 40.b4** A very strong move that comes to dominate the queenside **40...axb4 41.cxb4** From this position, it was quite clear it would take a lot of luck for Karjakin to draw. Carlsen was dominant both on the King and queenside **41...Ng8 42.Rf3 Nh6 43.a5 Nf5 44.Nb3 Kc7 45.Nc5** It's very difficult for Karjakin to defend this endgame since he has structural weaknesses on the queen and kingside and it's difficult for him to find moves.



45...Kb8 46.Rb1 Ka7 47.Rd3 Rc7 48.Ra3 [48.b5 may not be very effective at this point due to 48...cxb5 49.Rxb5 Ree7 And this could give Karjakin a relatively bigger opportunity to regroup] **48...Nd4 49.Rd1 Nf5 50.Kh3 Nh6 51.f3 Rf7 52.Rd4 Nf5 53.Rd2 Rh7 54.Rb3 Rhe7 55.Rdd3 Rh8 56.Rb1 Rhh7 57.b5 cxb5 58.Rxb5** And finally it's difficult for Karjakin to defend the pawn on b6 **58...d4 59.Rb6**



Rc7 60.Nxe6 Rc3 61.Nf4 Rhc7 62.Nd5 [62.Rxg6 Rxd3 63.Nxd3 Rc3 64.Rf6] 62...Rxd3 63.Nxc7 Kb8 64.Nb5 Kc8 Running away from a6 **65.Rxg6 Rxf3 66.Kg2 Rb3 67.Nd6+ Nxd6 68.Rxd6 Re3 69.e6 Kc7 70.Rxd4 Rxe6 71.Rd5 Rh6 72.Kf3 Kb8 73.Kf4 Ka7 74.Kg5 Rh8 75.Kf6**



Karjakin resigns 1–0

Even though Carlsen is back in control, I still think the match result is still fairly unpredictable unless Karjakin crashed after losing a game in which he had a couple of chances to draw. The only thing the chess fans can be sure of is an exciting ending.