

Michael Adams

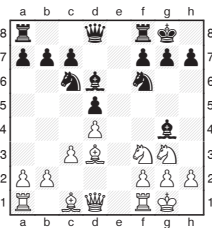


A master in the dark

Early last year, Stuart Conquest decided to visit Johannes Zukertort's grave at Brompton Cemetery, but was unable to locate it. After consultation with the cemetery authorities he was given permission to do a spot of digging on the site, and found the gravestone a few centimetres below the grass.

Thanks to the efforts of Conquest and Dr Marek Stella-Sawicki of the Polish Heritage Society, the now beautifully restored grave with a new prominent headstone was rededicated on June 26.

Zukertort, who was one of the world's leading players in the 1870s and 1880s, shows his well-developed sense of positional play here as he quietly overwhelms a good opponent by stealthily strengthening his position.



J. Zukertort - J. Mason
London 1887

10.. Nc6-e7
11.h2-h3 Bg4xf3
12.Qd1xf3 Ne7-g6
13.Bc1-g5 Bd6-e7
14.Ng3-f5 c7-c6
14...Nf6-e4 is relatively best, which says it all about Black's position.

15.Ra1-e1 Be7-d6
16.Re1-e2 Ra8-c8

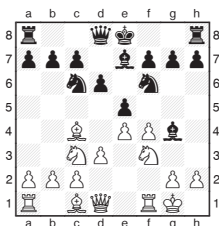
17.Rf1-e1 Bd6-b8
18.g2-g3

White could win immediately with 18.Nf5-e7+ Ng6xe7 19.Bg5xf6, but Zukertort continues reinforcing his position with black bound hand and foot.

18... Bb8-d6
19.h3-h4 Rc8-c7
20.h4-h5 Ng6-e7
21.Bg5xf6 g7xf6
22.Re2xe7

Black resigned, as 22...Rc7xe7 23.Qf3-g4+ leads to mate.

Zukertort specialised in blindfold simultaneous displays, and held the world record of 16 opponents, often much stronger than in the game below against an unknown adversary.



J. Zukertort - N. N.
Leipzig blindfold simul 1877

7... Nf6-h5
Not a good idea, but it allows Zukertort to wreak some havoc.

8.f4xe5
8.Bc4xf7+ Ke8xf7 9.Nf3-g5+ also wins.

8... Nc6xe5
8...d6xe5 9.Bc4xf7+ is equally catastrophic, 8...0-0 was better.

9.Nf3xe5 Bg4xd1
10.Bc4xf7+ Ke8-f8
11.Bf7xh5+ Be7-f6
11...Kf8-g8 12.Bh5-f7+ Kg8-f8 13.Ne5-d7+ Qd8xd7 14.Bf7-e6+ Be7-f6 15.Be6xd7 regains the material with interest.

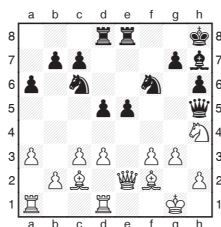
12.Rf1xf6+ g7xf6
12...Kf8-e7 13.Nc3-d5 is

mate. 12...Kf8-g8 13.Bh5-f7+ Kg8-f8 14.Rf6-f5 d6xe5 15.Bf7-b3+ Kf8-e8 16.Rf5xe5+ Ke8-f8 17.Bc1-e3 and 12...Qd8xf6 13.Ne5-d7+ win on material.

13.Bc1-h6+ Kf8-e7
14.Nc3-d5+ Ke7-e6
15.Bh5-f7+ Ke6xe5
16.c2-c3

Black called it a day in view of 17.Bh6-f4 mate.

We finish with a recent powerful finish from the budding excavator.



K. Arakhmia Grant - S. Conquest
Amsterdam Max Euwe Memorial 2011

The position is ripe for a breakthrough, and Stuart doesn't need to be asked twice.

24... e5-e4
25.d3xe4 Nf6xe4
26.Bc2xe4 Re8xe4
27.Qe2-d2 Re4xh4
28.g3xh4 Nc6-e5
White position is in ruins.

29.Qd2-f4 Kh8-g8
A shrewd practical choice, bringing his rook into the attack as well.

30.Kg1-f1 Rd8-f8
31.Qf4-d4 c7-c6
32.f3-f4 Ne5-f3
33.Qd4-e3 Rf8-e8
34.Qe3-c5 Nf3xh2+
35.Kf1-g2 Qh5-f3+
35...Re8-e2 was quicker.

36.Kg2xh2 Re8-e2
37.Rd1-g1 Re2xf2+
38.Qc5xf2 Qf3xf2+
39.Rg1-g2 Qf2xh4+
40.Kh2-g1 Bh7-e4
0-1