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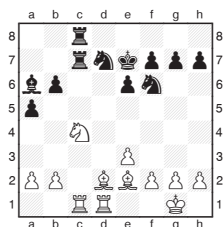
Karpov very much at home

There isn't much better than having an event named in your honour, but then playing in it and winning first prize makes the whole deal considerably sweeter. Anatoly Karpov's uncanny calmness as the seconds tick down and his infallible instincts mean he is always a formidable competitor at shorter time controls.

an outpost that has only recently become available.

17... Bb7-a6
18.Nb5xc7 Rc8xc7
19.Ra1-c1 Ra8-c8

Black has solved some of his difficulties with the piece swap, although in the long term the White bishop will prove valuable. Now Edouard should have played 19...Ra8-d8, when after 20.f2-f3 he is still suffering somewhat. Instead he allows a snap tactic that decides the game.



20.Nc4xb6 Ba6xe2
20...Rc7xc1 21.Nb6xc8+
Rc1xc8 22.Be2xa6 is also bad.

21.Nb6xc8+ Rc7xc8
22.Rc1xc8 Be2xd1
23.Bd2xa5

The knights are no match for White's active pieces and powerful passed pawns.

23... Nd7-e5
24.Ba5-c3 Nf6-d7
25.f2-f4

It was more effective to play 25.Bc3-b4+ Ke7-f6 26.Rc8-c7 Nd7-b6 27.Bb4-c3.

25... Ne5-g4
26.e3-e4 e6-e5
27.h2-h3

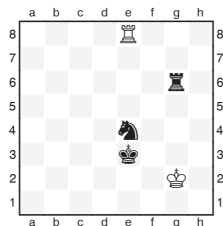
Both players err, as 27.Bc3-b4+ wins immediately here. 27...Ke7-f6 28.Rc8-c6 is mate.

27... Ng4-e3
28.f4xe5
28.Bc3-b4+ was again crushing as above.

28... Nd7-b6
29.Rc8-c7+
Black resigned, as 29...Nb6-d7 30.Kg1-f2 Ne3-c2 31.a2-

a4 leaves him powerless against the advancing pawn.

Karpov is always relentless in trying to grind out an extra half point and in the first game of the final he again shows excellent endgame savvy.



V. Ivanchuk - A. Karpov
Trophee Karpov Cap d'Agde 2012

64.Kg2-h3
Rook and knight against rook is normally simple to defend, but here Ivanchuk has stumbled into a tricky spot. 64.Kg2-f1 is the only move to keep the draw, 64.Kg2-h2 Ke3-f2 65.Re8-f8+ Ne4-f6 and 64.Kg2-h1 Ke3-f2 65.Re8-f8+ Ne4-f6 both win simply.

64... Ke3-f3
65.Kh3-h2 Rg6-g2+
66.Kh2-h3 Ne4-g5+
67.Kh3-h4 Ng5-f7

The most precise sequence of play is the neat 67...Ng5-h7 68.Kh4-h3 Rg2-g6 69.Kh3-h2 Kf3-f2 70.Kh2-h3 Nh7-f6 71.Re8-h8 Rg6-g3+ 72.Kh3-h4 Kf2-g2 when there is no good defence to the threat of Rg3-g4 mate.

68.Kh4-h5
68.Kh4-h3 was a tougher defence when Black should transpose to the line above.

68... Rg2-g5+
69.Kh5-h4 Rg5-g6
Again the rook is dominated by the knight and the game is over.

70.Re8-h8 Nf7xh8
O-1

A. Karpov - R. Edouard
Trophee Karpov Cap d'Agde 2012

Although this ending looks innocuous, in fact White can create some pressure. The subtle probing suits Karpov's style perfectly. He begins by targeting Black's bishop.

12.Nd2-b3 Bc5-d6
13.Nf3-d2 Bc8-b7
14.Nd2-c4

The other knight has slid over to continue the harassment, as Black's pieces struggle to find stable posts.

14... Bd6-c7
15.Bc1-d2
Developing and threatening a nasty check on b4.

15... a6-a5
16.Nb3-d4 Rh8-c8
17.Nd4-b5
Continuing to menace the insecure bishop from