

**Michael Adams**



## Kramnik's revenge on Ivanchuk

Vladimir Kramnik was the dominant winner of the knockout World Cup. His excellent preparation and strong practical play, exerting pressure on both the board and the clock, enabled him to stroll through the event undefeated.

His victory against Vasily Ivanchuk in the last 16 eliminated the Ukrainian from this cycle, in a mirror image of the costly last-round loss in the London Candidates which denied Vladimir another shot at the title.



**V. Ivanchuk - V. Kramnik**  
World Cup Tromso 2013

Up to this stage of the game, Kramnik had moved very swiftly and had achieved a comfortable position, most of his moves having been prepared at home. Vladimir now skilfully nurtures this small edge for a long time, preventing his opponent from completely equalising the game, reaping dividends when the cumulative pressure induces mistakes.

**24.Qa2-e2**

Black keeps some advantage after 24.Nf3-e5 Nd7xe5 25.d4xe5 Qc6xb5

26.e5xd6 Qb5-d3.

**24...**

**25.Rf1-b1**

Maintaining the tension as there isn't an obvious follow-up after 25...d4-d3

26.Qe2-e3.

**26.Nf3-e1**

**Nd7-c5**

**27.Ne1-d3**

**Nc5xd3**

**28.Qe2xd3**

**Qc6-c3**

The exchange of knights has eased White's problems, but his compromised pawn structure means he still needs to tread carefully.

**29.Rb1-d1**

**Rd6-e6**

**30.Rb5-e5**

If 30.Kg1-g2 Qc3-c6+ is a bit awkward.

**30...**

**Re6xe5**

**31.f4xe5**

**Qc3-b3**

31...Qc3xd3 32.Rd1xd3

Rc8-c3 33.Rd3xd4 Rc3xa3

34.Rd4-d8+ Kg8-h7 35.Rd8-

d7 Kh7-g6 36.Rd7-a7 will

soon lead to a draw, but

Kramnik's subtle finesse

keeps the pressure on.

**32.Qd3xd4**

Capturing immediately doesn't make life easier, as the outside passed pawn is extremely strong. It was better to improve with 32.h2-h4.

**32...**

**Qb3xa3**

**33.Kg1-g2**

Missing the chance to play

33.e5-e6 f7xe6 34.Qd4-d7

Rc8-f8 35.Qd7xe6+ Kg8-h8

when the reduced material

helps White to hold.

**33...**

**Qa3-b3**

**34.Qd4-d7**

**Rc8-a8**

**35.Rd1-d3**

**Qb3-e6**

**36.Qd7-b7**

The endgame arising after

36.Qd7xe6 f7xe6 37.Rd3-

a3 is unpleasant, as White's

rook is terribly passive.

**36...**

**Qe6-c8**

**37.Qb7-f3**

I think White should have

preferred 37.Qb7xc8+

Ra8xc8 38.Kg2-f3, but

choosing between two

uncomfortable options is

not easy.

**37...**

**Ra8-a5**

**38.Rd3-a3**

**Qc8-e8**

38...Qc8-c5 was also

interesting.

**39.Qf3-e4**

**g7-g6**

**40.f2-f4**

A big mistake on the last move of the time control, weakening White's king position considerably. This was the right moment for 40.h2-h4.

**40...**

**h6-h5**

**41.h2-h4**

**Kg8-g7**

**42.Qe4-b4**

Another error finishes the game immediately, but the stronger 42.Kg2-h2 Qe8-d7 also looks ominous, as Black will probe away until something gives.

**42...**

**Qe8-c6+**

**43.Kg2-f2**

43.Kg2-h2 Ra5-b5 is similar.

**43...**

**Ra5-b5**

**44.Qb4-d4**

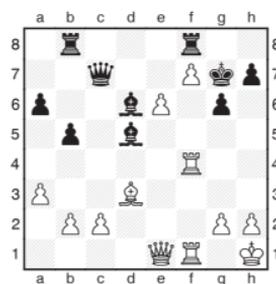
**Qc6-c2+**

**45.Kf2-f3**

**Rb5-b2**

**0-1**

Gata Kamsky concluded the most spectacular game of the event in style:



**G. Kamsky -**

**S. Mamedyarov**

World Cup Tromso 2013

**27.Rf4-h4**

**Bd6-e7**

There is no defence.

27...h7-h5 28.Qe1-f2

Bd6-e5 29.Rh4xh5 g6xh5

30.Qf2-f5 Rf8-h8 31.f7-

f8Q+ Rh8xf8 32.Qf5-h7

mate was another neat

finish.

**28.Qe1-e3**

**h7-h5**

28...Be7xh4 29.Qe3-d4+

Kg7-h6 30.Qd4xh4+ Kh6-

g7 31.Qh4-f6+ Kg7-h6

32.Rf1-f4 is decisive.

**29.Qe3-d4+**

**Kg7-h6**

**30.Rh4xh5+**

Black resigned, as

30...Kh6xh5 (or 30...g6xh5

31.Rf1-f6+ Kh6-g5 32.Rf6-

g6 mate) 31.Qd4xd5+

Kh5-h6 32.Qd5-e4 leaves

no good defence.