

# THE HAGUE-MOSCOW 1948

Match/Tournament for the World Chess Championship



**Max Euwe**

Foreword by Hans Ree

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32. ♖f4 1-0

And here Black exceeded the time control.

(8) *Euwe – Smyslov*

Ruy Lopez [C98]

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6  
4.♗a4 ♖f6 5.0-0 ♗e7 6.♞e1 b5  
7.♗b3 0-0 8.c3 d6 9.h3 ♘a5  
10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♚c7

As regards the opening, see Game 2.

12.♘bd2 ♘c6

Played to force White to show his hand. But the text move has a tiny drawback, as the further course of the game will show. Preferable is 12...♗d7, after which Black does not need to fear the advance d4-d5.

13.dxc5!

The exchange method, which yields White a slight positional advantage based on the fact that he now has the possibility to put a piece on d5 at some stage.

13...dxc5 14.♖f1 ♗e6 15.♘e3

Inferior is 15.♘g5 in view of 15... ♞ad8 16.♞e2 ♗c4 or 16.♞f3 ♗c8, with the threat of 17...h6.

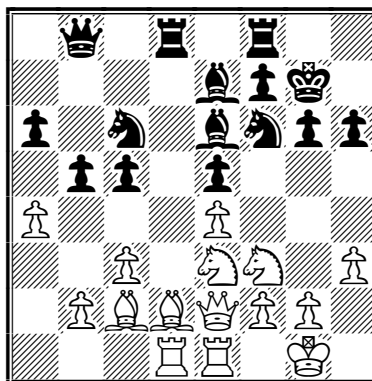
15...♞ad8 16.♞e2 g6

Preventing the combination that might arise out of a possible ♘e3-d5, for example 16...♘h5? 17.♘d5! ♗xd5 18.exd5 ♞xd5 19.♗xh7+ ♞xh7 20.♞e4+.

17.♘g5 ♗c8

17...♘h5 is met by 18.♘xe6 fxe6 19.g3!, with some advantage for White.

18.♗d2 ♞g7 19.♞ad1 h6 20.♖f3 ♗e6 21.a4 ♞b8 (D)



Black does not want to play 21...c4 here, because he is afraid – probably for no good reason – of the foray to d5: 22.axb5 axb5 followed by 23.♘d5. Here are some variations:

(1) 23...♘xd5? 24.exd5 and:

(1a) 24...♗xd5 25.♘xe5 ♘xe5 26.♞xe5+ ♞xe5 27.♞xe5 ♗f6 28.♞xd5! ♞xd5 29.♗xh6+;

(1b) 24...♞xd5 25.♗xh6+ ♞xh6 26.♞xd5 ♗xd5 27.♞d2+, with advantage for White;

(2) 23...♗xd5! 24.exd5 and:

(2a) 24...♘xd5? 25.♘xe5, again with advantage for White;

(2b) 24...♞xd5!:

(2b1) 25.♗xh6+? ♞xh6 26.♞xd5 ♘xd5 27.♞d2+ ♖f4! 28.♘xe5 ♗g5, and Black wins in view of the threat of 29...♘h3+;

(2b2) 25.♗e4 ♘xe4 26.♞xe4 ♞dd8! 27.♘xe5 ♘xe5 28.♞xe5+ ♞xe5 29.♞xe5, and Black is slightly better in view of the bishop on d2 being tied down.

But White can continue more simply and more strongly with 23.♗c1, after

## The Hague-Moscow 1948

which the leap to d5 remains within the realms of possibility.

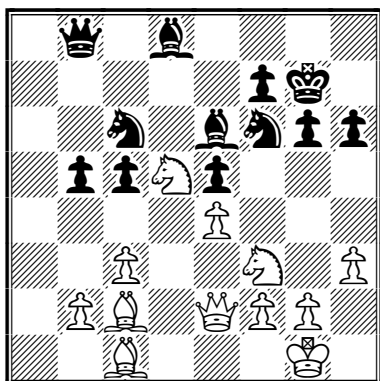
**22. ♖c1 ♜×d1**

Black, who was thinking he would simplify the game by exchanging the rooks, is soon forced to conclude that this exchange only hastens the crisis on d5.

**23. ♜×d1 ♜d8 24. ♜×d8 ♖×d8  
25. a×b5 a×b5**

Not 25... ♖×b5 in view of 26. ♖d3.

**26. ♖d5! (D)**



With this move White reaches his strategic goal. Black will be unable to capture on d5, as witness the following variations:

(1) 26... ♖×d5 27. e×d5 ♖×d5 28. ♖×h6+ ♜×h6 29. ♖d2+, with advantage for White;

(2) 26... ♖×d5 27. e×d5 ♖×d5 28. ♖e4 and:

(2a) 28... ♖de7 29. ♖e3 g5 30. ♖×c5 etc.;

(2b) 28... ♖ce7 29. ♖×d5 ♖×d5 30. ♖×e5, with various threats, for example 31. ♖c6 or 31. ♖×h6+.

**26... ♖g8 27. ♖e3 c4 28. b3**

White makes a quick attempt to exploit the currently unfavorable position of the black pieces.

**28... ♖a5?**

Safer is 28... c×b3 29. ♖×b3. This continuation fails to lead to complete consolidation, however, since, for example, 29... ♖f6? 30. ♖×f6 ♖×b3 fails to 31. ♖g4, with the dual threat of 32. ♖×h6+ and 32. ♖g×e5.

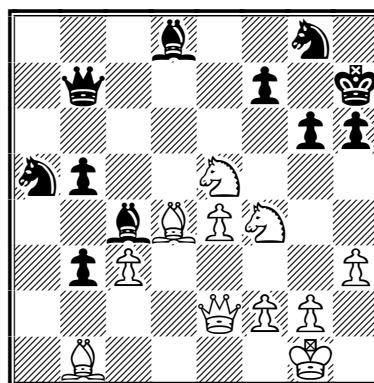
**29. ♖×e5**

It goes without saying that Black must not capture this piece (29... ♖×e5?? 30. ♖d4).

**29... c×b3**

Pawn for pawn. But while the black passed pawn is still completely harmless, the elimination of the central e5-pawn is the signal for a fierce attack.

**30. ♖b1 ♖b7 31. ♖d4 ♜h7 32. ♖f4  
♖c4 (D)**



The critical position. Now Smyslov had expected the following quiet winning continuation: 33. ♖g4 (threatening a sacrifice on g6) 33... ♖f6 34. ♖g3 (still threatening to capture on g6) 34... ♖×e4 35. ♖e3!, and regardless of whether

## The Hague Leg

Black withdraws his knight or defends it with 35...f5, White always plays the decisive 36.dexg6.

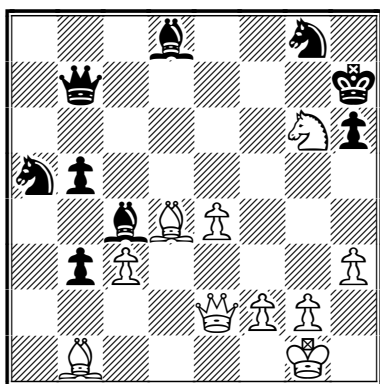
### 33.dexg6

Also good, and in any case more attractive than the variation given above.

### 33...fxg6

White was threatening 34.dxf8 mate, preventing Black from capturing on e2.

### 34.dfxg6? (D)



Too much of a good thing: 34.gg4 would have won almost effortlessly, for example:

(1) 34...ff7 35.e5 de7 36.e6 ce8 37.dh5 dg8 38.dg7!, and the black queen will be unable to continue covering g6;

(2) 34...de7 35.e5 df7 36.h4! ce6 37.e6 de8 38.h5, etc.;

(3) 34...df7 35.e5 dg5 36.e6;

(3a) 36...dfx4 37.cxf4 dxe6 38.ce5, and wins;

(3b) 36...de8 37.dfxg6 dxxg6 38.cff5! cgg7 (the only move) 39.cff7!! cxf7 40.exf7 dxbl 41.f8d#!.

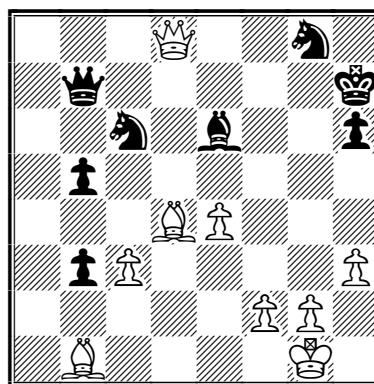
(4) 34...dg5 35.dxxg6! cxxg6 36.cff5+, and mate will follow.

### 34...cfxg6

34...cff7 would not be met by 35.dxf8+ in view of 35...cxf8 36.e5+ ch8 37.cce4 cgg7 38.e6 dff6!, and Black will be able to defend, but by 35.ccd1!!, after which 35...cfxg6 fails to 36.e5.

### 35.e5+?

Better is 35.ccf3, although this continuation also loses in the end: 35... de6! 36.ccf8! ch7 37.cxd8 dc6 (D)



and now: (1) 38.dff6 dff5!!, and White will be unable to make progress; (2) 38.ccd5 ccd7 39.cxb5 dxd4 40.cxd7+ dx7 41.cxd4 de7 42.d5 cgg7, and Black should win.

### 35...cf7 36.cch5+ ccf8 37.f4

The sad acknowledgment that there is nothing left to play for. 37.dcc5+ de7 38.cff5+ ce8 39.ccg6+ is met by the saving 39...dff7!.

### 37...db6

Black also has other ways to win.

### 38.cff5+ ce7 39.cch7+ ccd8



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Very subtle: now 40.♔×b7 is met first by 40...♗×d4+!

40.♗×b6+ ♔×b6+ 41.♖h2 ♕e3

42.♖f5 ♗c6 0-1

Black's sealed move. White resigned the game without resuming play.

### Round 5

Thursday, March 11, 1948

Game 9: Reshevsky-Euwe	1-0	41 moves
Game 10: Keres-Botvinnik	0-1	58 moves

Smyslov bye

The five players had once again enjoyed a day of rest. There were no adjourned games. Little has been seen of this drawback of the system to date, in contrast to other tournaments, where adjournments are the order of the day. Smyslov did not have to play today.

Again, Keres did not seem to be his normal self. White played 25.a4, which Black met by 25.♗h6. This put White in an unpleasant bind the awkwardness of which Keres should have realized.

But in a serious misreading of the situation he wanted to break through with his pawns on the queenside at all costs. And elsewhere in the game he also did incomprehensible things. The gallery was unanimous in its opinion that the Estonian's game had by no means been a grandmasterly piece, but more of a second-string effort. Botvinnik finished the game correctly.

The game Reshevsky-Euwe, a Slav Queen's Gambit (Romih's Half-Meran) showed an opening advantage for White, Black having met 12.d5! with 12...c5?, instead of with 12...♗×c3. After the latter move, the white attack

would not have gained such momentum. By playing d5-d6, White drove a sharp wedge into the black position, and the pawn duly became a thorn in Euwe's flesh!

After a wholesale exchange, the players emerged from the smoke of battle with a bishop and four pawns each. White sensibly refrained from swapping his b-pawn for Black's c-pawn, as this would probably have enabled Euwe to make a draw after all. He played 40.b3, and after 40...♖f7 41.♖e3, Euwe sealed the move 41...♗c8 after which the game was adjourned and both players could investigate their possibilities in their home analysis. Realizing that further resistance was futile, Euwe resigned. His fourth defeat in succession!

Standings after the fifth round: Botvinnik 3½/ 4; Reshevsky 2½/4; Keres and Smyslov 2/4; Euwe 0/4.

#### (9) Reshevsky – Euwe

Semi-Slav Defense [D46]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 ♗f6 4.♗c3 c6 5.e3 ♗bd7 6.♗d3 ♗b4 7.a3 ♗a5 8.♔c2 ♕e7 9.♗d2 d×c4 10.♗×c4 e5 11.0-0 0-0 12.d5! (D)