



# Chess

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Rashid Nezhmedtinov (1912-1974) is known in the chess world as a brilliant attacker, often defeating the world's best. Among his finest victims were the world champions Michael Tal and Boris Spassky. Nezhmedtinov's amazing victory against one of the world's elite, Lev Polugaevsky, has been recently selected as the best game of the last century played over the board. Despite all these achievements his game collections were only published in Russian. Not any more. Thinkers' Press (P.O. Box 8, Davenport, Iowa 528005-0008; phone: 1-800-397-7117) filled the void by issuing "Super Nezh" by Alex Pishkin, a collection of 100 of Nezhmedtinov's games and game fragments.

Nezhmedtinov was not a dragonslayer, neither was he a chess assassin (the publisher's description). He was a creative chess artist with subtle opening ideas, extremely dangerous when he had an initiative. When one of his wonderful attacks started, it was more enjoyable to look at it from the side than be in the middle of it, like watching summer thunderstorms developing from the safety of a house. Nezhmedtinov was proud of the following game played in Krasnodar in 1957, presented here with a few additional comments.

## Nezhmedtinov-Kotkov

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 (The Berlin defense that started the 2000 October revolution in London by Kramnik.) 4.o-o Nxe4 5.Re1 (This game made the rook move quite popular at the time it was played and in early 1960's.) 5...Nd6 6.Nxe5 Be7 7.Bd3 o-o 8.Nc3 Nxe5 (A perfectly good move, although some players prefer to keep the rook back, for example 8...Bf6 9.Ng4 Bd4 10.Ne2 Bb6 11.Nf4 Ne8 12.Nd5 d6 and black equalized in Stein-Smyslov, 1961.) 9.Rxe5 Bf6?! (This square is better left to the black knight, for example 9...Ne8!? 10.b3 d6 11.Re3 Nf6 12.Ba3 Re8 13.h3 Be6 with level chances in Gufeld-Kavalek, Helsinki 1961.) 10.Re3 g6 (Preventing 11.Bxh7+ Kxh7 12.Qh5+ Kg8 13.Rh3 and white mates.) 11.Qf3 Bg7 (Driving the rook to the first rank with 11...Bd4 can be ignored by Smirin's amazing 12.b3!? Bxe3 13.fxe3 with white trying to exploit the weak dark squares surrounding the black king.) 12.b3 Ne8 13.Ba3 d6 14.Rae1 (White enjoys a huge lead in development with all his pieces in play.) 14...Nf6 15.h3 Nd7?! (Hoping to plug the e-file with the knight on e5, but it does not work. Better was 15...Rb8 , for example 16.Bc4 Bd7 17.Nd5 Bc6 and after 18.Ne7+ white is pushed back with 18...Qxe7 19.Rxe7 Bxf3 20.gxf3 b5 21.Bd3 Nd5 22.Rd7 b4 23.Bc1 Rfd8 24.Rxd8+ Rxd8 and black is better.) 16.Nd5 f5? (Asking for swift punishment. On the other hand 16...Ne5 is refuted with a double-rook sacrifice 17.Rxe5! Bxe5 18.Rxe5! dxe5 19.Be7 Bg4 20.hxg4 Qc8 21.Nf6+ Kg7 [or 21...Kh8 22.Qh3 h5 23.Nxh5 winning.] 22.Nh5+! gxh5 23.Qf6+ Kg8 24.Qg5+ Kh8 25.Bf6 mate. If after 17.Rxe5 black plays 17...dxe5 white gets the edge after 18.Be7 Qd7 19.Nf6+ Bxf6 20.Qxf6 Re8 21.Rxe5 Qc6 22.Qh4, e.g. 22...Be6 23.Bf6 Bd5 24.Qxh7+ Kxh7 25.Rh5+ Kg8 26.Rh8 mate; or 22...Bd7 23.Qh6 and because of the threat 24.Rh5!

black has to give up the exchange 23...Rxe7 24.Rxe7 and white is a pawn up. Nezhmedtinov suggested 16...Rb8.)

17.Nxc7! Qxc7 18.Qd5+ Kh8 19.Re8! (Avoiding 19.Bxd6? Nb6! and black survives.) 19...Nf6 20.Rxf8+ Bxf8 21.Bb2 (The final assault starts with a powerful, long-diagonal pin.) 21...Bg7?! (Plays into white's hand. Also after 21...Kg7 22.Bc4 black is defenseless. But 21...Qg7 was more tenacious, for example 22.Bxf6 Qxf6 23.Bc4 Kg7 24.Qg8+ Kh6 25.Re8 Bg7 26.Rxc8 Rxc8 27.Qxc8 Qe7; or 22.Re8 Be6! [Not 22...Nxe8 23.Qf7!] ; or 22.Qd4 [Nezhmedtinov's choice] 22...Ne4 23.f3 Qxd4+ 24.Bxd4+ Bg7 25.Bxg7+ Kxg7 26.fxe4 Kf6 and white still has to work hard for his win.) 22.Bc4! Bd7 (On 22...Nxd5 23.Re8 mates.) 23.Bxf6 (More in style was 23.Qf7 Rf8 24.Re8!! Bxe8 25.Qxc7 and white wins easily. Nezhmedtinov said that he did not want to prolong the game this way.) 23...Bxf6 24.Qf7 Qd8? (Allowing a brilliant mate in two. After 24...Bg5 black can still continue the struggle. Nezhmedtinov suggested 25.g3, but after 25...Rc8 26.h4 Be6! 27.Qxe6 Bxd2 28.Qf6+ Qg7 29.Qxg7+ Kxg7 30.Re7+ Kh6 31.Rxb7 a5 black is still alive. Better seems 25.f4 Bh4 26.g3 Qc5+ 27.Re3! with white's advantage.) 25.Re8+!! (On 25...Qxe8 26.Qxf6 mates and on 25...Bxe8 26.Qf8 mates.) Black resigned.

## 1001 splendid puzzles

For more than half a century American players were able to sharpen their tactical skills from Fred Reinfeld's classic "1001 Winning Chess Sacrifices and Combinations." Now the Gambit Publications in London issued similar work, "The Ultimate Chess Puzzle Book" by English Olympian John Emms. Ultimate? Hardly, but it is fun to read. Emms drew the examples from three sources: his own games, games from the Soviet championships and-to maximize the number of original puzzles-games from tournaments in the last two years. As in Reinfeld's book there are 1001 puzzles, but unlike Reinfeld, Emms gives the names of the players and awards points for solutions. And there are plenty of puzzles for everybody, from beginners to grandmasters.

Today's puzzle (White: Ka2,Rg1,Bc1; Black: Ke2,Rb4,P:d3) is from Emms' book. How can black draw most efficiently and quickly? It appeared in the game J. Gallagher-G.Hertneck, Biel 1997, where black gave a convincing answer: 1...d2 2.Rg1+ Kd1 3.Bxd2 Rb2+! 4.Kxb2 stalemate.

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