Round 13. Candidates Tournament

Free day on Saturday was great. Sighting in London by feet's, Unforgettable lunch at Coventry Garden and of course some shopping. I was not feeling my legs by the end of the day, but very satisfied by specially organised for me program. Only Grischuk told how he spent his free day. He spent it at Casino, but unfortunately with bad luck. Other players have tuff preparations. Photo rapport from two last days I will present in the end of article. So, round 13. The pairs of the day:

1.

Kramnik-Gelfand

2.

Radjabov-Carlsen

3.

Grischuk-Aronian

4.

Svidler-Ivanchuk.

Gelfand choose Grunfeld again, this time close variation with c6 and got a surprise after Kramnik played 5.e3 inviting to capture c4 pawn.

Aronian accepted c4 pawn sac against Grischuk. Situation allowing to play only for win.

Svidler-Ivanchuk, of course after sensational victory in 12th round against Carlsen, Vasily loves French defense even more. Peter went to Sveshnikov-Alapin variation. Interesting moment, that follows all Soviet players, as well as I am doing exactly the same. Vasily touched all his pieces, given them the very precise place on the chess board. This touches like wrestlers or boxers touching each other before fight. Strong psychological preparation before the game.

Carlsen went to Nimtzovich variation , but not with his common d5, Magnus left his pawn on d6 and ... took off his Jacket.

Vasilys Knight got better square on g6, Peter followed Botvinniks recommendation to cut off the Knights activities by moving his pawn on g3.

Levon took pawn on c4 and probably plan to hold it.

Kramnik took off his Jacket for first time in the tournament.. Boris is still thinking. trying to find out what is behind 5.e3, this shy move can be very poisoned. By that time Vladimir looked at Magnus game. When Tejmour did Qc2, Kramnik smiled and went away. On press conference after his miracle victory against Aronian ex-World champion said, that he was very busy and totally have no time to follow Magnus game, but promised to do so in the last round.

Levon decided after few moves with extra pawn just give it back and transfer to safe Grunfeld, similar to Gelfands game. Will Boris take the pawn? If he can walk away from his table and take a look at Aronian position- probably – yes. Boris took the pawn, accepting invitation.

Funny discovery, in all positions g3 move played.

Alexander not in hurry to recapture sacrificed pawn, likes to play with imbalances

Carlsen played e5, pawn structure reminds me Kings Indian, but Bishop on b4, or maybe Philidor after whites e4.

Alexander took the pawn back, but lost control on e4 square.

Ivanchuk making standard f6 attack against pawn chain d4-e5.

Tejmur placed his Rook on d1 with x-ray on d-file. Where to put the Queen c7 or e7? E7-more aggressive , but can be pined after Bg5. Look like Radjabov got opening advantage and his position better.Magnus did not decided yet about Queens place and played 9...Re8. Provocative move invites Radjabov to do something with center or with b4Bishop.

Aronian equalised against Grischuk.

Boris did not kept his extra pawn on c4,same way like Aronian did and Vladimir after flank move Na3-Nxc4 got pawn back. But compare to Aronian position –one more Knight on the board. If 10.Ne5 Boris can do typical Grunfelds –Ng4. 10 Nd2?! Maybe an option in fight for e4 square . 10. Na5?! Knight on the side?! But strong eye on b7is good compensation.

Magnus decided just to give away his Bishop and place the Queen on e7 taken game back to Nimtzovich rals. White Queen on c3 is not on the right place.

Boris set his Queen on c7 to free his Bishopc8, but b4! Famous pawn minority attack, Queen on c7 can end under x-ray pressure on c-file after Rc1. I like white position.

Svidler squeezing Ivanchuk . Standard French defense strucrure, isolani d4 vs e6. Slightly better for white. Qon f7-extra defense for e6 pawn.

Radjabov decided to exchange on e5, in old days it was normal reply against Kings Indian, I think he did not want to allowe4, after a3 Bxc3, Qxc3 e4. In the game comes 11.a3 Bxc3 12.Qxc3 Qe7 13.b4, taken more space on Queenside and probably fianchetto on b2, then Q on c3 can be useful part for the cannon on a1-h8 diagonal.

On attack on the flank – contra in center. Gelfand played 11...e5. Kramnik took on e5 very quick.

Aronian 13... Qd6, I was thinking about 13...Be4, but calm e3 and exchange of white square Bishops , still leave some small pressure for white. Provocation by Bf4 will followed by Qb4 and black is OK. Pawn on b7 –protected (Qxb7 Rfb8)

Boris recaptured on e5 13.Nd4. Kramnik getting good advantage and can be really satisfies with his 5.e3 as the great surprise.

Magnus continue 13...Nb6 to provoke pawns promotions on Queenside and at the same time ruins Tejmurs hopes forcannon on a1-h8 diagonal. Radjabov brings 14.Be3 after 20 minutes thinking 14...Ng4, this Bishop should be removed he was to dangerous , keeping eye on Knight b6 and freeze a5 promotion.

Boris finds nice regrouping for his pieces13...Ne414...Re8 To bring pawn on f5 to protect the Knight was bit risky .Fix pawn structure on Kingside and wait for Vladimirs acceleration on Queenside –it is not an option.

Svidler sac the pawn to hold black King inthe center and will start attack on e and d files.

Carlsen can eliminate 2 Bishops and be worry about weak d6 square only, that can became gorgeus outpost . 15... f5! Bishop e3 will not run away. First aggressive move for Magnus. I was thinking more for pawn structure e5-f6-g7, but it to passive for World number 1 player.

Kramnik 15.Ba3!? Continues flank strategies. Almost 40 minutes advantagein time for Vladimir.

Tejmur spoiled his opening advantage and Magnus can take first walk to look at other tables.

Gelfand have only 35 minutes for 23 moves, but managed to consolidate his position.His both Knights got beautiful squares in the middle of the board.

Aronian trading Queens,his position solid, Grischuk storming the center.

Svidler found very strong option to continue attack on not castled King.18.b3! (18...Bxb5 19.bxc4 dxc4)18...b6 very quick reply by Vasily. 28minutes for 22 moves for Vasily. Time trouble coming soon, but he looks very calm.bxc4planed move in between Bxb5 cxb5, bxc5and black OK. Ba3can keep fire. 19.Bb4

Magnus turning play to his side, c5 with idea good and bad Bishops.

Kramnik doubled his Rooks on d-file, Bishop a3 his big reserve after discovery b5. Boris played Bg4 Vladimir have two tactical ways –take on c6Nxc6 bxc6, Nxc6 and f3 with the fork. Probably 18.Rc1 instead 18. Rfd1 was better option.

Svidler-Ivanchuk, complications in full speed. Peter used pins ideas19...a5 20.Bc3Bxb5 21.Bh5! g6

22.Bxh8 gxh5. Looks interesting 23.Re1 with another pin threat Qxd5. Done. Peter going for kill.

Magnus got small advantage ,better pawn structure and Bishop.

Kramnik refused complications and moved Rc1. Boris have 21 minutes for 21 moves, alarming. 19...Bxd4, just discussed this move in press center , I gave comments that Kings Indian player will never gave away this Bishop and if this will be done, late GM Gufeld will rotate in his grave. But Bishop was given away, 20.Rxd4 Ng5 good contra play threaten Nf3+, for example 21.e4?? Nf3+ 22.Bx3 Bxf3 23.exd5 Qe1+24.Rxe1 Rxe1 mate! Looks Kramniks Rfd1 instead Rc1 was mistake.

Magnus trades Queens and must show his endgames brilliant technique. He got similar endgame like against Ivanchuk, but by opposite colour.28...Nc5 remembering Ivanchuk Knight exchange on c5 and Vasilys comment: “I should take on c5 with a pawn.”

Kramnik 21.Qd3 Does he plan to sac en exchange for attack and cannon on a1-h8 diagonal, reminding King Indian Bishops slaughter?

Radjabov not willing to go by Ivanchuk steps. Two Knights on c5 and d4 are equals.

Boris checked on f3, lets see, Vladimir took with the Bishop22Bxf3 Bxf3 23.b5 Qe6 played like in blitz.

Ivanchuk did long castle on move 26!!! Better later as never. Vasily was dreaming for Kings safety for long time. Can be a surprise for Peter. But majority in press center already sent Vasily s King to the grave. 27.Rac1 Rd7 Ivanchuk trying to consolidate his position.

Radjabov have 5 minutes for 10 moves, but should not be a problem to manage with it inthe simple endgame.

Aronian find nice trick24... Bc1 (Bxc1 Nxb3)25. Bf6

Kramnik trades Queens, no more troubles with keeping eye on mate on g2, and probably gaining a pawn. Gelfand 7 minutes for 13 moves.

Ivanchuk offered Queen exchange. Yes, look like 26...0-0-0 was little shock for Peter, he lost his killing bite.

Grischuk trying to torture Aronian with Bishops pair.

Ivanchuk 1min30sek for 12 moves, can be one more lost on time game for Vasily. 29...h4 only 30 sek left.

Gelfand is pawn down, but different colours Bishops maybe practical chances for a draw.

Ivanchuk 23 seconds for 9 moves, looking totally at another side, everyone laughing in press center.5 seconds for 8 moves, two exchanges down. 3 sek for 5 moves. The show is over, lost on time.Waiting for press conference. 37.Qg7+ 1-0.

Gelfand two pawns down, but his pieces very active.

Press conference with Svidler:

“ With 3 minutes left Vasily looked away and after my a4 , he spent 30 seconds realising which move I just made. 13.was better.h6, probably Vasily did not like this lines as well. I gave en option to accept pawn sac 17..a6 18. Nd4 with good play, but not 18.Nd6+Bxd6 19.Bxd6 Nc4 and black OK.

I found 18.b3b6 19. Bb4 only one 19...a5 20.Bc3 this is very important point. I spotted 23.Re1, but it was 23...Nd6 24.Qxd5 Kd7!! And after long variations given to me on the way here by my seconds with computer help it should be a draw!

I can set up blockade on black squares.a4 was nice waiting move against the player that have only 1 minute left. Once I did mistake against Ivanchuk in Linares, in his time trouble I chosen variation with very well camouflaged trap instead of another simple, but better option and lost the game. Kasparov asked me after the game what I was doing? And after my explanation he added: You playing Ivanchuk, what trap!"

Grischuk –Aronian-draw.

Grischuk:" I was trying to win, positional advantage in the center. Ne5 and I want to take on b7, after Qb4, Qxb4 axb4 , Bd2 and I get the pawn.23.Rd6 very important move. I got bad luck at casino yesterday.

Ivanchuk:" I spent much time before I played 12...h6. I saw pawn sacrifice, but I was thinking Bxc4 was better. After opening I got uncomfortable position. Re1 gives lots of troubles.Qxd5 Kd7 I did not see this way. After beautiful games against Radjabov and Carlsen how you can comment losts on time in 5 games?- Vasily:" That happens, but I try to forget my loses as soon as possible.

Look like Gelfand managed to draw.

Carlsen just keep playing and playing.I cannot see how he can improve his position. Rooks gone, that gives little bit higher chances for Magnus.Both players dreaming for endgame with good Knights against bad Bishop.

Kramnik missed big advantage (he should play 30.Rdc4) double on open c-file.30...Bd5, not any more chance on c4.Bravo Boris, excellent defense. Today Rooks did not listening Vladimir.First mistake Rd1 instead Rc1 and once again. The winner will be known tomorrow.Boris can forced perpetuum checks after 52...Nc5,but instead he took on c1,

strange.52...Ra1 was also forcing the draw.Boris choosen another line, promote “a”pawn, remove white Rook from 7th line and build up his own eating machine with draw mechanism. Done, long time ago expected draw.

Magnus should finish too.

Press conference with Kramnik:

“5.e3 –it was good choice. I don’t think it bring to advantage, because it just leave a choice for black. Black should capture the pawn. Computer says its OK for black. 10.Na5 much more principal. After 13. Nd4 I was quite happy about my position.

B.G.-Qe7 ,I don’t like it, h5 direct.

V.K.-17.Qd3 instead 17.Rd3. Nxc6 did not workingRfd1, still considering Nxc6, maybe f3?

18...Bg4 19.f3 Ng5! 20.fxg4 Nxe3. 19...Bxd4-strange move, but I cannot see something else.

V.K.Rdc4 I don’t think, winning is to strong word. 31.Rc2 was very solid move, just to avoid any risk in timetrouble.33...Re8 was a big surprise for me.(Bxf7) g4 is computer move, we just humans.

Instead 41...Nc5 41... Nc3 –probably lost for black.

52....Nxc1 was the best option! It was very interesting game. Tomorrow is last game, its always last , does not matter whom to play. I am not nervous, I played many decides games in my life.

Magnus still playing. Tejmur did terrible move a4 and now losing the dead draw position again.

Bravo Magnus. Finally he won.

Savoy Place,

London. 31st of March

IM&FT Vladimir Poley.

P.S. P.G.A technical problems pictures will come tomorrow.