

Hübner Year by Year

Volume I (1959-1979)

Tibor Karolyi and Hans Renette

Hübner Year by Year: Volume I (1959-1979)

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Front cover: 14-year old Robert Hübner in 1962 at the Hamburg Turonen Tournament. Photo by Günter Haas via ChessBase

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ISBN 978-1-916839-20-5 (hardback), 978-1-916839-19-9 (paperback)



At Wijk aan Zee, 1971. Playing against Petrosian — Nationaal Archief (photo by Bert Verhoeff)

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Game	White	Black	Opening	Year
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80	Hübner	Hort	Sicilian Defence	1972
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83	Hübner	Estevez	English Opening	1972
84	Hübner	Fedder	Fragment	1972
85	Hübner	Rogoff	English Opening	1972
86	Ree	Hübner	Fragment	1972
87	Jansa	Hübner	Philidor Defence	1972
88	Kirov	Hübner	Caro-Kann Defence	1972
89	Hübner	Petrosian	Sicilian Defence	1972
90	Hübner	Jansson	English Opening	1972
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Game	White	Black	Opening	Year
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125	Csom	Hübner	Fragment	1976
126	Hübner	Petrosian	Fragment	1976
127	Hübner	Spassky	English Opening	1977
128	Hübner	Hermann	Bird's Opening	1977
129	Hübner	Karpov	Fragment	1977
130	Hübner	Andersson	Nimzo-Indian Defence	1977
131	Hübner	Gligoric	English Opening	1977
132	Hübner	Nonnenmacher	English Opening	1977
133	Hübner	Weidemann	Fragment	1978
134	Hübner	Marcus	Fragment	1978
135	Portisch	Hübner	Nimzo-Indian Defence	1978
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137	Hübner	Ljubojevic	English Opening	1978
138	Hübner	Spassky	Catalan Opening	1978
139	Hübner	Ljubojevic	English Opening	1978
140	Hübner	Donoso	Queen's Gambit Declined	1978
141	Cooper	Hübner	Fragment	1978
142	Hübner	Hort	Sicilian Defence	1979
143	Gaprindashvili	Hübner	Sicilian Defence	1979
144	Hübner	Miles	Neo-Grunfeld Defence	1979
145	Timman	Hübner	Caro-Kann Defence	1979
146	Robatsch	Hübner	Fragment	1979
147	Pfleger	Hübner	English Opening	1979
148	Hübner	Larsen	French Defence	1979
149	Kavalek	Hübner	Caro-Kann Defence	1979
150	Hübner	Sigurjonsson	Fragment	1979
151	Hübner	Hecht	Fragment	1979
152	Hübner	Hort	Sicilian Defence	1979 (m/1)
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159	Hübner	Portisch	Fragment	1979

Introduction by Tibor Karolyi

I was delighted when Hans suggested that we write a series on Hübner. I obviously knew that Hübner's results and contribution to our game make him a most deserving subject. In addition, my collaboration with Hans on our four volumes about Korchnoi progressed smoothly.

Who was Hübner and what did he accomplish? He was the greatest German player after Lasker, and occupied this position for decades. A stunning achievement given the strength of German chess.

Many grandmasters are rightly proud to have qualified for just one cycle of the World Championship Candidates, yet Hübner participated in four. Robert played every single great player of his time and defeated many of them.

I knew a lot of his games already, as I had written a number of books on his rivals against whom he played many matches and games. Petrosian, Portisch, Spassky, Korchnoi, Timman and Kasparov all met him in matches, while he played many games against Tal and Karpov. I even analysed Fischer's game against him. Hübner played so many world champions, a privilege enjoyed by only a handful of blessed grandmasters. He played Smyslov in 28 regular games, he faced Tal eleven times, he played fourteen games against Petrosian, Spassky had 35 games against him, and Fischer one. I found 28 regular games against Karpov, he had nine games versus Kasparov, and Kramnik was his opponent eight times. He played fewer, five games versus Topalov, and six versus Anand.

In many cases we all know the style of great players, for example, Alexei Shirov was a great attacking player in his day, Andersson was a fine positional player who excelled in endgames as well. Beliavsky was a great fighter. Yet somehow Hübner's name was not attached to any particular style. That is not without reason, as Hübner was a highly versatile player. He was an excellent tactician, yet one of the most strategic opening variations is named after him.

At the same time, I knew that the German grandmaster, who was alive until this project was almost complete, was a sensitive person, so I wrote him an email informing him about the book. As he did not disapprove of the idea (he didn't answer my email, but was clearly much sicker than we thought), I agreed to undertake my share of the project. Fortunately, he had previously provided Hans with some information by email during our Korchnoi project.

I have some vivid memories of him. When I played in the final of the Hungarian championship, my father told me after one of the rounds that Hübner was present and had watched my game. My father was a strong player, and his appreciation of the German grandmaster shone through and surprised me somewhat, as I did not realise how great Hübner was.

They say everyone remembers where they were when Kennedy was shot and when they learned about 9/11. In chess, I know where I was when Hungary won the 1978 Chess Olympiad. I remember when Leko lost the last game against

Kramnik in their world championship match. I also recall that I was in Germany on a boat trip when I learned that Hübner had saved a lost adjournment against Portisch and thus eliminated the Hungarian number one player from the candidates, which was a big shock for us Hungarian players.

When I wrote my book *Genius in the Background*, I devoted one chapter to my childhood trainer Karoly Honfi. I have spent five decades in chess and he was one of the closest people to me in the game. I knew that Karcsi bácsi (Uncle Karcsi) and Robert had a warm relationship, so I asked the German grandmaster to write a few words on him, and I was overjoyed to get an answer. Well, it was especially nice working on Hübner's games. There are plenty of beauties, and I often think about our mutual friend, hoping that he would have enjoyed this work on Hübner.

Investigating Hübner's play brought me some surprises. In particular, I had not foreseen certain qualities like his extreme resilience in endgames. He is probably the only player to have survived a very difficult endgame against Fischer, and he held clearly lost endgames against not only Kasparov, but also Karpov.

His games are highly entertaining and one can learn a lot from them. Dear Reader, join us in a journey through Hübner's exceptional career, you will not be disappointed.

Introduction by Hans Renette

I well remember being gifted my first chess board for my birthday, on 23 September 1990. Around that time, I joined the local chess club and it was not long before I dived into its extensive library. I also recall being eager to borrow chess magazines from other club members, like the Dutch magazine *Schaaknieuws*. My interest quickly focused on nineteenth and early twentieth century chess, finding the chess of the day (among others) too difficult for my modest playing level.

Diving into recent issues of *Schaaknieuws* at the time, I read about the World Cup. It was quite a novelty then – a series of tournaments with an overall score connecting them. Here, I saw many names of players who were soon going to be washed away by the youngsters, such as Timman and Short. In one way, they were moving up – they'd play the world championship matches in 1993 – but already in the early 90s, their results experienced clear setbacks from time to time. I also saw Salov's name – he came third in the World Cup and at that moment seemed one of the most likely future challengers. And there were other players taking part in the world cup: like Spassky, Andersson, Sax, Vaganian, Nikolic, Ribli, Hübner and others. What did I think of them? I – somewhat harshly – tended to lump them together as “boring” players, eager to get quick draws. Why did I think that? Well, they justified this image I had of them in the World Cup tournaments. It was a most lucrative series of events – maybe unheard of in the chess of that time – and, happy with the given conditions, several players took it easy. Speaking of Hübner: early in 1991, he was clinically eliminated by Timman in their candidates match. So it was a long time before I would think of him as the subject of a chess biography. Why should we write one? Because he speaks close to perfect Dutch? Or – much more impressive – Finnish?

Well, over the years, I got to know his results in the candidates matches. When deciding on a biography, though, I had to look much deeper and I saw a meteoric rise in chess that was hardly ever seen in – let's say – the Cold War years. Obviously, there was first Tal, who grew from an unknown master into a world champion over a few years. Next, there was Bobby Fischer with a run in the chess world that was unprecedented in the twentieth century (maybe only Morphy and Lasker can be considered quicker “climbers”). A similar incredible increase of strength could be witnessed in Hübner's career. At a very young age, Hübner was clearly highly promising in West Germany – a country which was not among the absolute top countries in chess. In the second half of the sixties, he scored well in the few national championships in which he took part.

It was not Hübner's ambition to conquer the chess throne and he combined playing the game with studying and other activities. But then this meteoric rise began: first, he managed to finish in the top three of the Athens Zonal and qualify for the Interzonal. Even though Hübner was only an IM at the time, he incredibly

finished among the leaders of that tournament as well and thus, at the tender age of 22, suddenly found himself to be a candidate. In the quarterfinals of that competition, Hübner met former world champion Tigran Petrosian. Obviously, Petrosian was the huge favourite, and he was able to eliminate Hübner – but only in a most controversial way, which not only showed the controversial sporting morals of his Soviet opponent, but also Hübner's own sensitiveness.

Afterwards, Hübner focused on studies and work, but he remained an elite player who also took part in the Interzonals of 1973 and 1976. Especially in the latter, he came extremely close to qualifying once more for the Candidates Matches, but once again Petrosian stood in his way. His successes in other individual and team events were noteworthy nonetheless and in particular – to mention just one – he inflicted the sole loss Petrosian ever suffered in an Olympiad.

This first volume of his chess career finishes with the year 1979. It was another Interzonal year and now Hübner focused more than ever on wagering his chances in the run for the world championship. After qualifying convincingly from the Lucerne Zonal, Hübner also delivered a confident performance at the Rio de Janeiro Interzonal. For the second time, he thus became a Candidate and would soon be at the centre of everybody's attention – but those tragic episodes will be covered in the second volume...

While researching the life of Viktor Korchnoi, I managed to exchange several e-mails with Hübner, with our hero sending me a total of eight such messages. The reader will find information from them in our biography. But my true appreciation for him came when I started to analyse the files that Tibor sent me with his selected games, which my co-author as always analysed extensively with most interesting insights. I saw all these incredible diagrams...

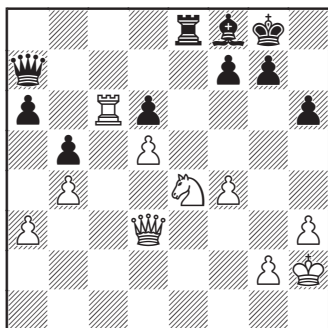
Once I get this book in my hands I will take out that same 34-year old chess board and play over these wonderful games again, and I hope you'll derive as much pleasure from them as I do.

31...♖xg3+ 32.hxg3 ♕xa1+
 33.♘f1 ♕xa2 34.♕h5+ ♖g7
 35.♕xg5+ ♖f7 36.♕f5+ ♖g8
 37.♕g6+ ♖h8 38.♕xd6 1-0

Game 34

J. Timman – R. Hübner

Jerusalem, World Junior Championship
 Finals (9), 1967

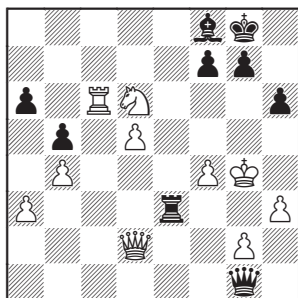


36.♘xd6??

Close to time control Timman plays a careless move: he allows the enemy rook and queen to attack his king.

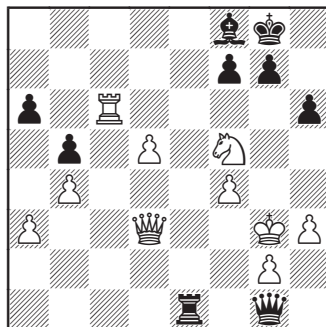
36...♖e1! 37.♘f5

The knight covers the e3-square, but it is not enough. 37.♕d2 would not hold either. 37...♕g1+ 38.♖g3 ♖e3+ 39.♕g4



39...♖d3! 40.♕e2 h5+ 41.♖xh5
 ♖xd5+ and Black wins the knight.

37...♕g1+ 38.♖g3



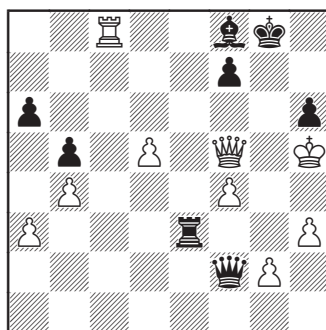
38...g6!

Hübner chases the knight away, giving Timman no time to pin the bishop effectively.

39.♖c8 gxf5

Hübner can just take the piece.

40.♕xf5 ♖e3+ 41.♖h4 ♕f2+
 42.♖h5



42...♕xg2

42...♖g3 would win quickly as well.

43.♕g4+ ♕xg4+ 44.♖xg4 ♖xa3
 45.♖f5 ♖g7 0-1

Keene got to know Robert Hübner and his family well from 1967, as he spent the year in Essen where he studied German Language and

Literature. Keene was most interested in him: he was an up and coming superstar in chess and they could speak German. In the past, he told us, blitz was not regarded as serious chess, whereas these days it has become a legitimate sport and such games are widely published and commented upon seriously. This justifies his pride in winning his first ever game with Hübner, a blitz game played in a local tournament.

Keene occasionally stayed in Hübner's home. The family spoke in German and the parents didn't realise that Ray's German was so good. He thus noticed the huge tension between Hübner and his father – the type who was proud of his Nazi uniform. They discussed politics but this only aggravated the tension. Hübner's mother stayed out – she gave Keene a very timid impression. Hübner's father was a teacher of Latin and Greek, while his brother Wolfgang studied German and history. Later in life, Hübner took care of his mother and brother when they fell ill.

Around 1971, Keene was invited by Hübner to give some simul. They played chess against the locals and annihilated them. On the second night, there was not chess but bowling on the menu. It didn't bother Keene that their opponents were in need of some revenge and it seemed it wouldn't bother Hübner either – he was spectacularly bad at the game. But Hübner improved very quickly, and by the end of the evening he was winning this as well. Next there was mini-golf. Keene lacked interest, the German opponents were very good at it, and

Hübner was again spectacularly bad. The chess amateurs were happy that they could finally beat him at something, but the scenario repeated itself: Hübner improved terribly fast, and by the end of the day he was winning everything. He wanted to win at whatever it was. Hübner looked peaceful, more peaceful than, for example, Kasparov, but in the end it was the same: he always wanted to win.

At the end of September, a new test awaited Hübner as he entered the ninth West German championship. It was obviously not a junior event and Hübner was the youngest competitor again, but the field which gathered at Kiel could have been decidedly stronger. Pflieger was prevented from playing due to exams, while Schmid, Unzicker and Darga were playing in other countries. This was all a bitter pill for the organisers in Kiel, the club which had gained the right to organise the championship after they took over the candidates tournament of 1965, but the situation only resulted in sleepless nights for the organisers, who had serious difficulties in getting the financial picture right. Ultimately, the organisation of the event was very professional, but there was little reward for anyone – the players could at most hope to get a reserve spot in the Olympic team.

The absence of the favourites made the field a very young one – the age of the players ran from 18 to 33 – but those expecting a stern battle would be disappointed, as many games ended in draws. The best start was



At Wijk aan Zee, 1979. Playing against Polugaevsky — Nationaal Archief (photo by Rob Croes)



At Tilburg, 1979. Playing against Karpov — Nationaal Archief (photo by Rob Croes)

with White, and suffered no losses. Timman put down a remarkable result (10/15), while Furman completed the stage.

Hübner's second major event of the year also marked the beginning of a new tradition: the series of Interpolis tournaments. Its invitation policy was most ambitious: they aimed for the very best and only sent out invitations to the world's top players. As an illustration: during the boycott of Korchnoi by the USSR, preference was given to inviting the world champion and other Soviet GMs. Only when it was over did Korchnoi appear in Tilburg. The players were treated excellently in Holland and the tournament was also top-notch for spectators. Hübner could obviously expect stiff opposition, but as in Bad Lauterberg he could be heard complaining about his health problems. This resulted in various short draws, none of which exceeded thirty moves.

In the first four rounds, Hübner drew twice, lost to Timman and then beat Olafsson, who tried to force matters. In the fifth round, he was successful against Andersson. This win enabled Hübner to join the leading group, which consisted of no fewer than six players.

Game 130

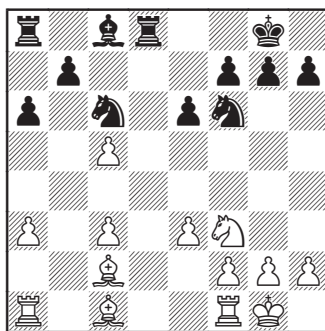
R. Hübner – U. Andersson

Tilburg (5), 1977

Nimzo-Indian Defence (E56)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4 4.e3 c5 5.♙d3 d5 6.♘f3 0-0 7.0-0 dxc4 8.♙xc4 ♘c6 9.a3 ♙a5 10.♙d3 a6

11.dxc5 ♙xd3 12.♙xd3 ♙xc3 13.bxc3 ♖d8 14.♙c2



14...♙d7?!

Andersson plays a new move; he is not in a hurry to win back the pawn. Hübner attaches a question-mark to his move and prefers 14...♖d5 or 14...♘a5.

15.a4

White has to defend the c5–pawn with his dark-squared bishop. He can try from either a3 or e3 and Hübner chooses the first option. If 15.e4 ♘a5 16.♘e5 ♙b5 17.♖e1 ♘d7 18.♘xd7 ♖xd7 19.♙f4 ♖c8 20.♙d6 b6 21.a4 ♙c4 22.♖ab1 bxc5 23.♖b6 White had a slight edge.

15...♘a5 16.♘e5

Hübner mentions that the white knight takes away the c4–square from the black knight.

16...♙e8 17.♙a3 ♖d5?

Andersson forces White to play f4 and hopes to have a target on e3.

a) 17...♖d2? 18.♖fc1 and Black would struggle after 18...♖ad8 19.♙b4 or 18...♖d5 19.f4.

b) 17...♘d7!

b1) 18.♘xd7 ♖xd7 19.♙b4 ♖d2 20.♙d1 ♘c4 and Black has enough play for the pawn to keep the balance.

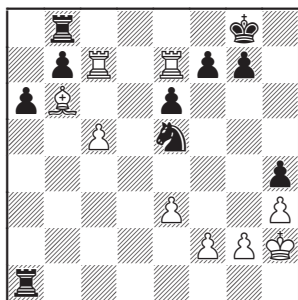
b2) 18. ♖d3 ♜ac8 19. ♜fb1 ♞c4
20. ♜xb7 ♞xa3 21. ♜xa3 ♞xc5
22. ♞xc5 ♜xc5=

b3) 18. ♙b4 ♞xe5 19. ♙xa5

b3.1) 19... ♜d2. This move is better than commentators judged it. 20. ♙e4 (20. ♜a2 ♞c4) 20... ♙c6 21. ♙xc6 ♞xc6 (21... bxc6 would not be hopeless for Black either.) 22. ♙b6

b3.1.1) 22... ♜f8? Commentators only looked at this natural move, but it has a drawback losing a chance to defend the f7–pawn. 23. ♜fd1 ♜c2 24. ♜d7 ♜b8 25. ♜ad1 ♜xc3 26. ♜c7 and Black has problems.

b3.1.2) 22... h5 23. ♜fd1 ♜c2 24. ♜d7 ♜b8 25. ♜ad1 ♜xc3 26. ♜c7 ♜a3 27. h3 ♜xa4 28. ♜dd7 ♞e5 29. ♜e7 ♜a1+ 30. ♙h2 h4



31. ♜xb7 (31.f4?? ♜d8!! and Black wins out of the blue.) 31... ♜xb7 32. ♜xb7 ♜c1 with equality.

b3.2) 19... ♜dc8 20. ♙b6 (20. ♙b4 a5 21. ♙a3 ♞c4♣; 20. ♙e4 ♙c6 21. ♙xc6 ♜xc6=) 20... ♞d7 21. a5 ♞xc5 22. ♜fb1 ♙b5 with equality.

18.f4 ♜dd8

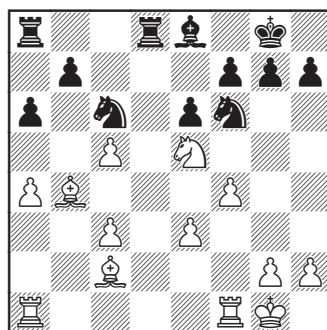
Andersson probably thinks that the rook can be a target in the centre, while returning to the eighth rank it vacates the d5–square for a knight. However, this costs two tempi.

a) 18... ♙c6 19. ♙b4 ♜d2 20. ♜f2 ♜xf2 21. ♙xf2 ♙e4 22. ♜c1 ♜d8 23. ♙e2 and White has a clear edge.

b) 18... ♞d7? 19. ♞f3 (19. ♙e4 ♞xe5 20. ♙xd5 exd5 21. fxe5 and Black has enough play for the exchange.) 19... ♞f6 20. ♙b4 ♞c4 (On 20... ♞c6 21.e4 would be strong.) 21. ♙b3 ♞xe3 22. ♜fe1 and Black will not have sufficient play for the exchange.

c) 18... ♜d2. The rook can't do enough on the second rank to equalise, but this is still the best role for it. 19. ♜a2 g6! Commentators did not consider this move. (19... ♜dd8 20.e4 is unattractive for Black. Or after 19... ♜ad8 20. ♙b4 ♞c6 21. ♞c4 White has repulsed Black's play.) White would be clearly better after 20. ♙b4 or 20. ♜f2 ♞c6 21. ♞c4 ♜e2 22. ♜fa1.

19. ♙b4 ♞c6



20. ♞c4!

Hübner stops Black's active play: he has won the opening battle and Andersson will not be able to make any active move in the rest of the game. Now Robert can start exploiting his extra pawn.

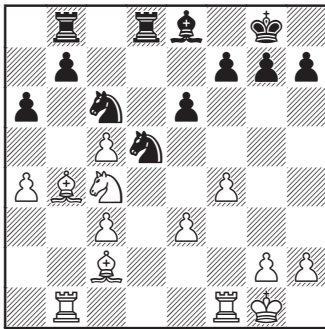
20... ♞d5 21. ♜ab1?!

Hübner probably doesn't even consider placing the king's rook on the

b-file, and the fact he did not mention it in his analysis suggests that. Hübner has a more precise move. 21.♖fb1! a5 (21...♙ab8 22.♖b2 b6 23.cxb6 ♘xb6 24.♗xb6 ♙xb6 25.a5 ♚bb8 26.♕e4 and Black has nothing for the pawn.) 22.♕a3 ♘xc3 23.♖xb7 ♗b4. (This works far worse with the rook on a1 than on f1 when Black plays 23...♗b4! in the following note below.) 24.♕xb4 axb4 25.a5! and White wins.

21...♙ab8

21...a5! 22.♕a3 ♘xc3 (22...♙ab8 23.♖b3) 23.♖xb7. Hübner stops here, saying that Black's position would be hopeless. However, Black has a brilliant resource. 23...♗b4! 24.♕xb4 (24.♕b3 ♙ab8!) 24...axb4 25.♖xb4 (25.f5 ♚db8!) 25...♖ac8 26.♗d6 ♖xc5 27.♗b7 ♖b8 28.♗xc5 ♙xb4. Black would be worse with the pawn deficit, but had chances to hold.



22.♖fc1!

Hübner places his rook behind two of his own pawns, but he thereby strengthens his queenside. 22.e4? ♗dxb4 23.cxb4 ♚d4 with equality. If 22.♗f2?! a5! Black would equalise after 23.♕xa5 ♘xa5 24.♗xa5 ♘xc3 or 23.♕a3 ♘xc3 24.♖b2 ♗b4.

22...♗f8

22...♗cxb4 23.cxb4 b5 (Or 23...♗c3 24.♕xh7+ ♗xh7 25.♖xc3 ♕xa4 26.♗d6 and White wins as Hübner pointed out.) 24.cxb6 ♗xb6 25.♗xb6 ♖xb6 26.♚d1 ♖xd1+ 27.♕xd1 and White wins.

23.♗f2

Hübner criticises this move, but there is nothing stronger. 23.♕d1 b5 24.cxb6+ ♗cxb4 25.cxb4 ♗xb6 26.♗xb6 ♖xb6 27.a5 ♚bb8 28.♕f3 ♚d2 29.♖c7 and White has decent winning chances just like in the game.

23...f6?!

This pawn move weakens the h7–pawn.

a) 23...♗cxb4 24.cxb4 ♗c3 (24...b5 25.cxb6 ♗xb6 26.♗xb6 ♖xb6 27.a5 ♚bb8 28.♚d1 wins.) 25.♖b3 (25.♖a1 ♗d5 26.♖cb1 b6!) 25...♗xa4 26.♖a3 b5 27.♗a5 ♚d2+ 28.♗g3 and White has excellent winning chances.

b) 23...a5

b1) 24.♕a3 ♘xc3 25.♖b3 ♗a2 (After 25...♗xa4 26.♕e4 f5 27.♕f3 ♗b4 28.♕e2 Black would be in trouble, but not necessarily lost.) 26.♚d1 and White would be somewhat better.

b2) 24.♗xa5 ♗dxb4 25.cxb4 ♗xa5 26.bxa5

b2.1) 26...♖d2+ 27.♗e1 (27.♗f3 f5 28.a6 ♕c6+ 29.e4 ♖xc2 30.♖xc2 ♕xe4+ 31.♗e3 ♕xc2 32.c6! Hübner misses this win.) 27...♖xg2 28.♕d3 and White wins more convincingly with this move than with 28.♕e4.

b2.2) 26...♕c6 27.a6 bxa6 28.♖b6 and White probably wins.

24.g3?!

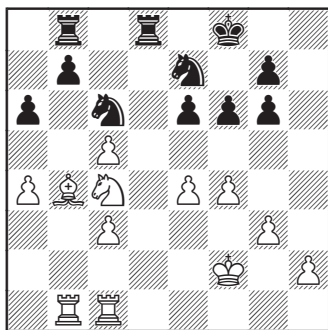
Hübner prepares to push the e-pawn; this gives him time to look for play. If 24.♗d6! White wins after

24...b5 25.axb5 axb5 26.♖b2 or 24...a5 25.♕a3 ♘xc3 26.♖b3. Or if 24.♕a3 ♘xc3 (24...♞ce7 25.♕d1) 25.♖b3 ♞xa4 26.♞d6 White again wins.

24...♕g6?

Exchanging the bishop gives White a free hand on the queenside. If 24...♙e7 then 25.e4 wins. After 24...h6 25.♕d1 ♕g6 26.♖b2 ♕e4 27.♕f3 White again wins. Black should act on the queenside. After 24...♞cxb4 25.cxb4 ♞c3 26.♖b3 (After 26.♖a1 ♞d5 27.♖cb1 b6 28.e4 ♞c3 29.♖c1 bxc5 30.bxc5 ♖b4 Black would be alive.) 26...♞xa4 27.♙e1 ♕b5 Black would struggle, but has chances to hold.

25.♕xg6 hxg6 26.e4 ♞de7



27.♕a3

Hübner stops any play for Black on the queenside. 27.♖d1 would be equally winning: after 27...♖xd1 28.♖xd1 ♖d8 29.♖b1 ♖d7 30.♞d6 Black's position falls apart.

27...♖d7

On 27...♖d3 28.♙e2 could be played.

28.♖c2

28.♞d6 ♞a5 (28...e5 29.♖d1) 29.c4 ♙g8 30.♕b4 ♞ac6 31.♕c3 ♞c8 32.e5 ♞xd6 33.cxd6 f5 34.h4 and White wins on the kingside.

28...♙g8

The Swede wants to make sure that Hübner will not get to unleash tactics on his king.

29.♙e2 ♞c8 30.♖cb2

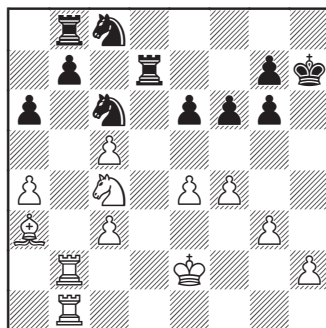
If now the c6-knight moves then White plays a5 and wins. If the black rook leaves the d-file, the white rook occupies this file.

30...♙h7

If 30...♞8e7? 31.♖b6 (31.♞d6 or 31.♖d2 are also possible) 31...♙h7 32.♞d6 and White wins. If 30...♙f8 31.♞a5! ♞xa5 32.c6+ ♖e7

a) 33.cxb7 ♞a7 34.♖b6 ♙e8 35.♕xe7 (35.♖xa6 ♞5c6) 35...♙xe7 36.♖xa6 and White's position is winning.

b) 33.♖xb7 ♖a8 34.♖b8 and again White wins.



31.h4!

Black has no active play. Hübner, though, can progress in several ways. He starts by opening up the kingside. This is logical, as Black is tied up on the queenside, so he will not be able to transfer his forces.

a) 31.♞d6 ♞xd6 32.cxd6 ♞a5 33.♙d3 ♖c8 34.e5 and White probably wins after 34...♙g8 35.♖b4 ♙f7 36.♖e4.

b) 31.♖d2 ♜xd2+ 32.♔xd2 ♕g8
33.h4 ♕f7 34.♕e3 ♕e8 35.♖d1 and
White wins.

31...♕g8

Andersson can do nothing but wait.

32.♕e3 ♕h7 33.g4

33.♖d2 swapping a pair of rooks
would win again.

33...♕g8 34.♖g2

Hübner builds his play patiently.
He can already open a file: 34.h5
gxh5 (34...♕h7 35.hxg6+ ♕xg6
36.♖h2 wins.) 35.gxh5 ♕h7 36.♖g2
and White's pressure on the g-file is
unbearable for Black.

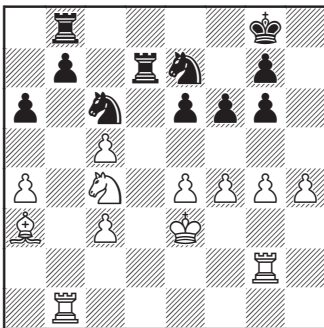
34...♖8e7

34...♕h7 35.h5

a) 35...gxh5 36.♖h2 and White wins.

b) 35...♖8e7 36.hxg6+ ♖xg6
(36...♕xg6 37.♖d6) 37.♖h1+ ♕g8
38.♖gh2 ♕f7 39.♖h7 and White wins.

c) 35...g5 36.fxg5 fxg5 37.♕e2 g6
38.♖h2 and again White wins.



35.h5

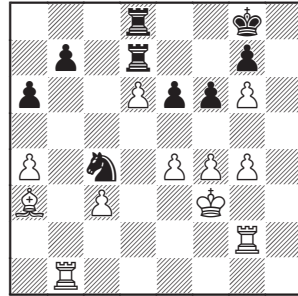
Hübner follows his plan.

35...♖bd8 36.♖d6 ♖a5 37.♕f3

After 37.♖b4 ♖ac6 38.hxg6 ♖xg6
39.g5 White would win as well.

37...gxh5

37...♖c8 38.hxg6 ♖xd6 39.cxd6
♖c4



40.♖h1 ♖xd6 41.♖gh2 ♕f8 42.e5
and White wins.

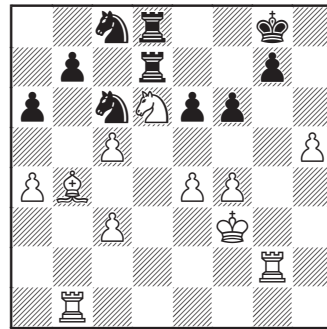
38.gxh5 ♖c8

If 38...♕h7 39.♖bg1 ♖c8 40.f5 e5
41.♖b4 ♖c6 42.h6 White wins.

39.♖b4

39.f5? exf5 40.♖xf5 ♕h8 and
Black would be alive.

39...♖c6



40.h6!

Hübner gets closer to Andersson's
king.

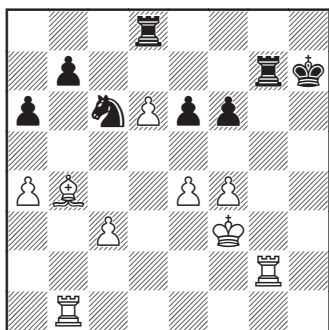
40...♖xd6

Or 40...♕h7 41.hxg7 ♖xg7
42.♖xg7+ ♕xg7 43.♖xb7 and White
wins.

41.cxd6

The pawn chokes Black on d6.

41...♕h7 42.hxg7 ♖xg7



43. ♖xg7+

The sealed move. Andersson decided to play on.

43... ♖xg7 44.c4

Hübner calls this move the most precise.

a) 44. ♖c5 ♖d7 45. ♖d1 e5 46.f5 ♖a5 47. ♖b4 ♖c6 48.a5+—

b) 44. ♖a3 ♖a5 45.e5 ♖c4 (45... ♖g6 46. ♖e4+—) 46. ♖xb7+ ♖g6

b1) 47. ♖c5 fxe5 48.d7 (48.fxe5 ♖f5=) 48... ♖f6 49. ♖f2! Hübner misses this instantly winning move in his analysis.

b2) 47. ♖e4 ♖xa3 48. ♖e7 ♖b1. White would win with 49. ♖xe6! or 49. ♖d4 but not 49.c4? as on 49... ♖d2+ 50. ♖d3 ♖b3 51. ♖xe6?? ♖c5+ Black would win.

44...e5

a) 44...f5 45. ♖c3+ ♖f8 46.c5 ♖d7 47. ♖h1 and White wins.

b) 44... ♖xb4 45. ♖xb4 ♖xd6 46. ♖xb7+ ♖g6 47. ♖e3 e5

b1) 48.fxe5 fxe5 49.a5 ♖g5 50. ♖b6 ♖d4 51.c5 ♖c4 52.c6 ♖f6 53. ♖d3 ♖c5 54. ♖xa6 and White wins.

b2) 48.f5+ ♖g5 49. ♖g7+ ♖h5 50. ♖g6 a5 51.c5 ♖c6 52. ♖d3 ♖xc5 53. ♖xf6 ♖g5 54. ♖g6+ ♖f4 55.f6 (55. ♖g1 also wins.) 55... ♖c8 56.f7 ♖d8+ 57. ♖c4 ♖f8 58. ♖f6+ ♖xe4 59. ♖c5

♖d3 60. ♖d6 e4 61. ♖e7 ♖xf7+ 62. ♖xf7 e3 63. ♖e6 e2 64. ♖e7 ♖d2 65. ♖d6 e1=♖ 66. ♖xe1 ♖xe1 67. ♖c5 and White wins as Hübner pointed out.

c) 44...b6 45. ♖a3 ♖d4+ (45... ♖a5 46.c5 bxc5 (46... ♖c4 47.c6) 47. ♖xc5 ♖c4 48. ♖b7+ ♖g6 49.d7 ♖f7 50. ♖e2+—) 46. ♖e3 ♖c2+ 47. ♖d3 ♖xa3 48. ♖xb6

c1) 48... ♖c8 49.c5 ♖xc5 50.d7+—

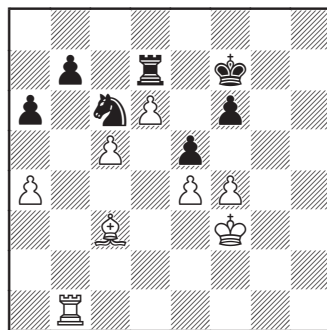
c2) 48... ♖f7 49.c5 e5 (49... ♖e8 50.e5+—) 50.f5 and White wins.

c3) 48... ♖h8 49.c5 ♖h3+ 50. ♖d4 ♖h2 51.c6 and White's connected passed pawns are decisive.

45.c5 ♖d7

If 45... ♖d4+ 46. ♖f2 ♖d7 47.f5 ♖f8 48. ♖c3 ♖c6 49. ♖e2 White wins by marching to d5 and possibly to e6.

46. ♖c3 ♖f7



47.f5

47. ♖h1 b6 48. ♖h7+ ♖e8 49. ♖h8+ ♖f7 50. ♖c8 ♖a7 51.c6 and White wins.

47... ♖e8 48. ♖h1 ♖f7

a) 48...b6 49. ♖h8+ ♖f7 50. ♖c8 ♖a7 51.c6 ♖xd6 52. ♖c7+ and White wins.

b) 48... ♖g7 49. ♖h8+ and White wins after 49... ♖d7 50. ♖f8 ♖h7 51. ♖g4 ♖g7+ 52. ♖h5 or 49... ♖f7 50. ♖c8 ♖h7 51. ♖c7+ ♖g8 52. ♖xh7 ♖xh7 53.d7 ♖g7 54. ♖a5.

49. ♖h6 ♜b8

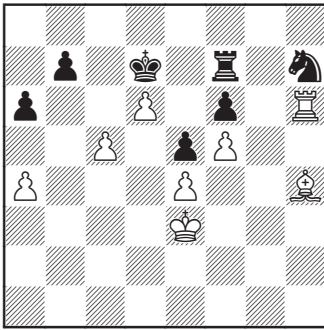
49... ♔d7 50. ♖g4 b6 51. cxb6 ♖xd6
52. ♖h5+—

50. ♕e1 ♞d7 51. ♕f2 ♞f8

Other moves also lose: 51... ♔d8
52. ♖e2 ♖c8 53. ♖d3, 51... ♗g7
52. ♖h8+ ♜f8 53. ♕e3 or 51... ♗f8
52. ♖e2 ♗g8 53. ♖d3 ♗g2 54. ♖h8+
♕f7 55. ♗d8.

52. ♖e3 ♔d7 53. ♕h4 ♞h7

On 53... ♗h7 54. ♗xf6 ♗xh4
55. ♗xf8 would win for White.



54. ♔d3

The king is about to invade.

54... ♖c6 55. ♖c4 b6

White wins if 55... ♜f8 56. ♗xf6
♗xf6 57. ♕xf6 ♞d7 58. ♕e7 ♞xc5
59. f6. Or 55... a5 56. ♗g6 ♗f8 (56... b6
57. cxb6) 57. ♗g7.

56. cxb6 ♖xd6 57. ♖b4 1–0

Hübner sealed this move and
Andersson resigned without resumption.
The game could end as follows: 57...
♖c6 58. ♖a5 ♖b7 59. ♗g6 ♞f8 (59...
♖c6 60. ♖xa6 ♗b7 61. a5 ♗b8 62. ♗g7)
60. ♗xf6 ♗xf6 61. ♕xf6 ♞d7 62. ♕g7
♜b8 63. ♖b4 ♖xb6 64. ♖c4.

In round six, a short draw against
Hort followed and Hübner went straight
to bed afterwards. He then lost with

White against Karpov. Robert made a
big mistake in the early middle game.
Karpov afterwards analysed the game,
trying to create great positional play. It
seems that this frustrated the German
grandmaster. Here is what Karpov
wrote: “Gradually, Black’s positional
advantage emerges.” Hübner: “I
cannot discover this advantage.” Your
Hungarian author thinks that Hübner’s
irritation was justified as he lost thanks
to a single-move mistake. But credit
also goes to Karpov for instructively
converting his advantage.

In round eight, Hübner missed
great winning chances against Miles,
the co-leader, then fair draws against
Sosonko and Smyslov followed. By
now, Hübner had recovered and fate
had him paired against Gligoric,
who preceded him by a half point in
the standings. In their game, Hübner
showed a tremendous will to win.

Game 131

R. Hübner – S. Gligoric

Tilburg (11), 1977

English Opening (A30)

**1. c4 ♞f6 2. ♞c3 c5 3. g3 e6 4. ♞f3
b6 5. ♕g2 ♕b7 6. 0-0 ♕e7 7. d4 cxd4
8. ♗xd4 0-0 9. e4 d6 10. b3 ♞bd7
11. ♗e3 a6**

