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Legendary Chess Careers

Vlastimil Hort



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KEY TO SYMBOLS

=	Equality or equal chances
±	White has a slight advantage
∓	Black has a slight advantage
±	White is better
∓	Black is better
+ -	White has a decisive advantage
- +	Black has a decisive advantage
∞	unclear
∞	with compensation
↔	with counterplay
↑	with initiative
→	with an attack
Δ	with the idea
□	only move
N	novelty
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
+	check
#	mate

PREFACE

My interview with Vlastimil took place seven years ago in his home in Cologne. The original idea was to make a book with several interviews with former world class players who made it to the world championship candidates matches. Unlike present top players they can talk much more freely about their secrets and approaches to chess. Also we know so much about the achievements of the world champions, but less about the players who were a bit below, although they on their inspired days were able to beat anybody. However, the original idea never materialised. Grandmaster Csaba Balogh came up with the idea to make separate books of these interviews as he thought there was rich enough material in each interview for a whole book. I am grateful to him for this. The first two books of the series were on Timman and Portisch. Fortunately these books were successful. Therefore Chess Evolution decided to publish some more. Dear Reader, in this book you can first read the original interview. As it is a whole book on Hort I feel lucky to be able to provide more material, so I happily analysed some more superb games from the Czech-born German grandmaster.

I would like to express my gratefulness to many people who helped with this book. First the strong grandmasters, Jan Smejkal, Rainer Knaak and Vlastimil Jansa who know Hort very well and wrote appraisals on their contemporary. Mark Lyell, Kevin Goh Weiming and Nick Aplin helped me to raise the level of English in the interviews. Several people helped in parts: Zachary Loh, Dave Kennedy, Justin Tan, Alan Ansell, Giancarlo Franzoni and Yochanan Afek. I received some pictures from Pavel Matocha and Jan Kalendovsky. Of course the biggest thanks go to Hort himself who was kind enough to give the interview. I hope the quality of the book will please him.

The way I selected games for the second part of this book changed a bit. I chose games in which he beat world champions and truly world class players and he produced a marvelous endgame. These victories illustrate how strong Hort was, but they will serve at least two more purposes: they will entertain you a lot and one can learn a lot from them.

VLASTIMIL HORT PHOTOGALLERY





6



7



8

1. Hort vs Cifuentes, Prague 1966
[photo by Pavel Matocha].
2. 1967 [photo by Pavel Matocha].
3. Hort vs Olafson, Athens 1970
[photo by Pavel Matocha].
4. Wijk aan Zee 1973
[photo by Bert Verhoeff / Anefo].
5. Hort vs Timman, Wijk aan Zee 1982
[photo by Hans van Dijk / Anefo].
6. [photo by Pavel Matocha].
7. Thessaloniki 1988 [photo by Gerhard Hund].
8. 2010 [photo by Stefan64].

INTERVIEW

I wasn't able to get in touch with Vlastimil by email so Jürgen Daniel (Leko's manager in his junior years) gave me Hort's phone number. It took quite some time to reach him by telephone and to fix a date for the interview. After the interview I was told that he had participated in the Hoo-geveen tournament without a computer at all. On the way back from Amsterdam I stopped in Köln but this time I didn't look at the beautiful cathedral and instead conducted my interview with Hort. My good fortune had allowed me to interview another legendary player one day after my interview with Timman.

Before we sat down for the interview the Czech-German grandmaster told me that he hoped that I didn't do chess writing for a living because it's too hard.

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T.K.: This isn't my main income but I still need the money I make from it.

V.H.: *We're doing a book on Opocensky, he was a very good player who did a lot for chess. Steinitz was born in Prague but he left at an early age and culturally he wasn't a Czech. He spoke Jewish, but*

didn't even speak very good German, as he went to England in his early years. Two to three years ago, when it was the anniversary of a hundred years of organised chess in Czechoslovakia, a questionnaire was sent to something like seven hundred addresses, to academics, institutions and respected people who really have some kind of intellectual capacity. Its purpose was to ask who did the most for chess and who was the most useful. Do you know who came first?

T.K.: Sorry I don't know.

V.H.: *Reti came first because of what he did in the openings and for his ideas, his studies and his achievements in blindfold chess. I expected that Flohr would be second but you will laugh; I took the second place. Flohr took third place but we were close, taking most of the points.*

T.K.: Congratulations!

V.H.: *Thanks. I was surprised - I think I should have been in third place. By the way, Duras was fourth.*

T.K.: Didn't Duras stop playing when he married a rich lady?

V.H.: *Duras' last tournament was in Abbazia, maybe in 1912 (according to the database his last tournament was in 1914). Opocensky played Capablanca and Lilienthal (they must have been friendly games later on as Lilienthal was born in 1911). If you do a lot of research, you will find out incredible things. I did this in an old-fashioned way. It will be an interesting book.*

T.K.: How did you start playing chess?

V.H.: *I started by accident. I wasn't six years old yet; I was taken to a hospital with a disease nobody could explain so I was in quarantine. There was a doctor working nights who played correspondence chess. I was a very small and feverish boy and he said consoling me: I will show you something. He taught me chess. I spent two months in the hospital. When I came out I was already vaccinated for chess (He laughed after saying this). I came home where nobody played chess, even though we had a chess-set. I told my mother I wanted to play chess, so she took me to a chess club, which was not easy in 1950.*

T.K.: Did the doctor know that you became such a strong player later on?

V.H.: *No, he emigrated to Zürich and soon after he died in a car accident. However, it was because of him that I started to go to a club in my town Kladno.*

T.K.: What was his name?

V.H.: *I think Novak. He was probably a rather good player; to play correspondence chess meant that you already knew something, but by the time I left I only learnt the basics from him. I remember –it was funny– I lost my first game because my opponent took en passant, which I didn't know. I was crying and shouting: "you are a cheater!" (He laughed whilst saying this). I played chess but I was not a miracle child. I wasn't like Reshevsky. I never had somebody to force me to play chess; I played chess whenever I liked. Just like my whole generation appeared suddenly, we all like to play. I had virtually no state support or anything like that. Once I went from Kladno to Prague to a seminary of Pachman. Though his understanding was there, I found it dull; we had to learn moves by heart. I stopped attending as I didn't like it. I played for my team in the region and junior tournaments. However in Czechoslovakia we never got support from the republic.*

T.K.: Did your parents support your chess?

V.H.: *They said "please do what you wish to do!" I was also a rather good goalkeeper in ice hockey and I had to make a decision whether to continue. As a junior I was in the same team as Pospisil who later became a very famous player. He was also born in 1944. Sometimes I would cry and tell myself: "you are so slow" or "what are you doing"? Still ice hockey was fun. I started to play in junior*

chess tournaments - I was developing, but never thought of becoming a professional, not at all. I had other plans as I started to study. I just played chess and was waiting to see what would happen. To be honest there was no Fischer then and Czechoslovakia was so poor that you really had to have a profession. To be a professional you need to have a perspective. In chess Fischer had it. In the fifties and sixties look at which countries organised tournaments: Holland and in Argentina thanks to Najdorf. Chess professionalism was born with Fischer. Maybe around 1968 Yugoslavia came very strongly, I didn't imagine that I could make a living from it as I also had family problems and so on.

T.K.: What was your parents' profession?

V.H.: *My father was a very good musician: he played four instruments. He had very good, almost pitch perfect ears. My mother stayed at home. You know during the fifties in the years of communism, until Stalin died, we had problems to feed ourselves to not be hungry. Those red years were bad. I probably made a mistake starting to study. I had to learn such nonsense.*

T.K.: Who were your trainers in your junior years?

V.H.: *We had a state trainer Pithart who was a rather good master. I went to the local chess club where people learnt from one another. I didn't think chess was*

important for me, when I suddenly made my IM norm. I won the national junior championship as well.

T.K.: According to the database at age of 15 you achieved a tremendous result by winning the silver medal. Do you have any memorable game from your first national championship?

V.H.: *Look at the games and you will find some! By the way I was not on my own: I was one of the golden generation. Somehow I got slightly better results but I don't want to be arrogant. Actually I like Kavalek's style very much.*

T.K.: Let me show the game of yours I liked most from this event!

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• V. Hort • I. Ivanko [B24]

CSR-CHAMPIONSHIP

BRATISLAVA [2], 1959

1.e4

Hort played 1.e4 in most of his games in his very first national championship, however he had two with 1.d4 as well.

1...c5 2.♘c3

I found sixty nine games of Hort's in the closed Sicilian. He won thirty nine, lost four and drew twenty six, an impressive score.

2...g6 3.g3 ♘g7 4.♗ge2 ♘c6 5.♘g2 ♖b8 6.d3 b5 7.o-o b4 8.♗d5 e6 9.♗e3 ♗ge7 10.f4 ♘b7?!

The bishop develops but leaves the kingside and may be more effective on a6. It would have been interesting to try 10...d5!? gaining space in the centre immediately.

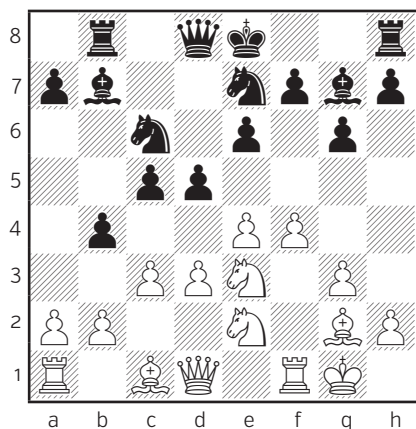
11.c3

White's main plan is to gain space in the centre with d4.

11...d5?

Black delays castling and gains space instead, which is quite reasonable in a closed position, however it won't remain

closed. Preventing White's play on the kingside with 11...f5!? was interesting.



12.f5!

This shows one of Hort's best qualities at a young age. He's quick to react and adjust his play according to circumstances. White opens the position in the centre because Black's king is vulnerable.

12...dxe4

Black's replies are has limited because of the big threat of f6.

a) 12...exf5 13.exf5 ♔d6 and now:

a1) 14.♗g4 White gains the advantage this move e.g. 14...gxf5 (14...♗xf5 15.♘f4) 15.♘f4 ♗e5 16.♗xe5 ♘xe5 17.cxb4 cxb4 18.♖a4+ ♗c6 19.d4 and Black's pawns are really weak.

a2) 14.f6! is even more convincing: 14...♘xf6 15.♗g4 ♘g7 (15...♘e5 16.d4) 16.♘f4 and White

wins the exchange for only a pawn.

b) 12...gxf5 13.exf5 ♖xf5 14.♗xf5 exf5 15.♔xf5 and White has an advantage because of his better pawn structure and Black's king won't be a totally safe after castling short.

13.fxe6!

This opens up the position and stops Black castling short. 13.f6 winning the piece was weaker as Black gets a few pawns and some compensation e.g. 13...♗xf6 14.♔xf6 exd3 15.♗f4 ♖e5! and Black has lovely play, or after 15...♗g8 16.♔xf7 ♖xf7 17.♗xd3 White has some compensation for the exchange, but Black should be okay here.

13...fxe6 14.♗xe4 bxc3

It's already hard to find a way to stay in the game.

a) 14...♗f5 15.♗f4 ♔d7 16.♗xe6 ♔xe6 17.♗xf5 gxf5 18.♗xf5 and Black's king is in big trouble in the centre.

b) 14...♗d5 15.♗xd5 exd5 16.♗g2 ♔d7 17.d4 and Black's position is quite loose.

c) 14...♗a5 15.♗f4 ♔d6 16.♔a4+ ♗ac6 17.♗c4 ♔d7 18.♗e2 and Black has problems keeping his position together.

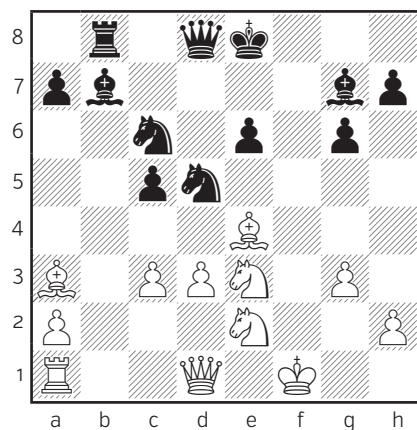
d) 14...♔d7 15.♗c4 ♗e5 16.♗h6! ♗xh6 17.♗xe5 ♗e3+ 18.♔g2 ♗xe4+ 19.dxe4 ♔xd1 20.♔axd1 bxc3 21.bxc3 ♔b2 22.♔b1 with a really tough ending for Black.

15.bxc3 ♔f8 16.♗a3

Maybe 16.♔xf8+ was even stronger because if 16...♔xf8 then 17.♗a3 is very strong.

16...♔xf1+ 17.♔xf1 ♗d5

17...♗b4 18.cxb4 cxb4 19.♗xb7 ♗xa1 20.♔xa1 bxa3 21.♗e4 ♔b2 22.♗c4 and Black's compensation is insufficient.



18.♗xd5!

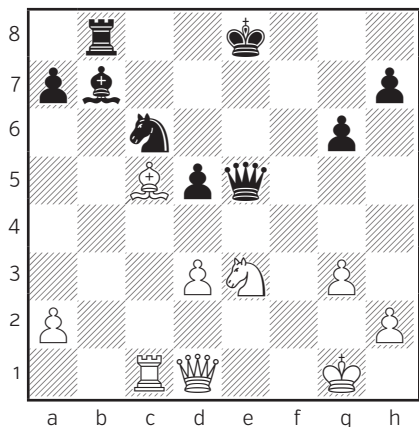
White can give up the light-squared bishop because Black's king is still in the centre.

18...exd5 19.♗xc5 ♗xc3?

This wins back the pawn but because of these exchanges White gets much closer to Black's king. 19...♗a6!? 20.♔g1 ♔a5 21.d4 ♗f8

22. ♖xf8 ♔xf8 and Black doesn't win back the pawn but at least he stabilises his king.

20. ♘xc3 ♕f6+ 21. ♔g1 ♕xc3
22. ♖c1 ♕e5



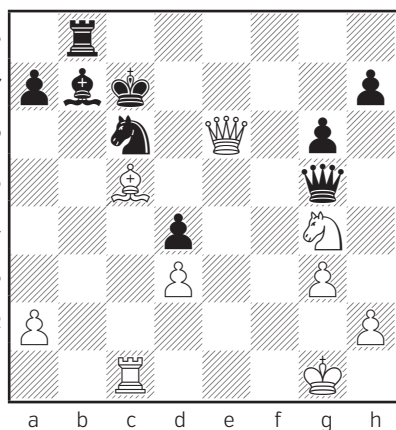
23. ♕f3 d4

Black's king is desperately exposed to the queen and bishop anyway but this move doesn't help. Bringing the rook into the game with 23... ♖d8 wouldn't save him but probably avoids losing very quickly e.g. 24. ♕f8+ ♔d7 25. ♕f7+ ♔c8 26. ♖xa7 and Black struggles on.

24. ♕f8+ ♔d7 25. ♕f7+ ♔c8 26. ♖g4
♕g5

26... ♕c7 27. ♖e7 wins.

27. ♕e6+ ♔c7



28. ♖d6+ ♔d8 29. ♖f1 1-0

Black resigned as he will be checkmated in a few moves.

This game was typical of the future great player i.e. a slow start, but when a change of tack is necessary Hort starts to play sharply and finishes his opponent off very quickly.

T.K.: Knowing the strength of Czechoslovakia at chess this is an amazing result. In the database this is your very first tournament? Did you have any special result before it?

V.H.: This was not the first but the best in those years. My best and favourite game from these years was against Pachman; I think it was played in Kosice at the national championship. I was Black and it was a Sicilian. I got real satisfaction: he didn't understand how it was possible that he lost to me and didn't feel

dynamism in chess. It was a kind of miniature and he was upset that I smashed him.

T.K.: Let's have a look at that game!

• L. Pachman • V. Hort [B33]

CSR-CHAMPIONSHIP KOSICE [7], 1961

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1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 e6

Hort had never played this move before and it wasn't until ten years later that he repeated it. So he must have prepared it especially for Pachman.

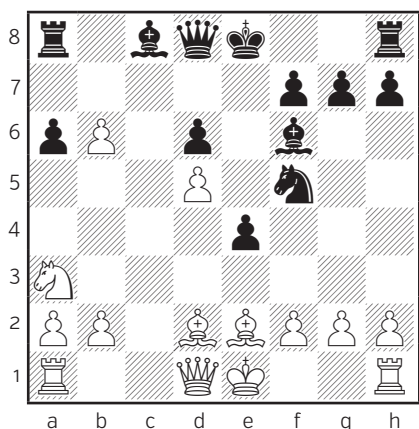
5.♗b5 d6 6.♙f4 e5 7.♙e3 ♗f6
8.♗1c3

8.♙g5 is more popular here as White often develops the b1 knight to c4 via d2. Leko used it to beat Portisch in a positional masterpiece: 8...♙e6 9.♙xf6!? gxf6 10.♗d2 d5 11.exd5 ♙xd5 12.♙c4! a6 13.♙xd5 axb5 14.♙b3 ♗d4 15.o-o ♗xb3 16.axb3! ♖xa1 17.♙xa1 ♙e7 18.♙d1 o-o 19.♗e4 ♙c8 20.♙e2 ♗d8 21.♗g3 b4!? 22.f4 ♙c5+ 23.♗h1 exf4 24.♖xf4 ♗e8 25.♙d1 and White is clearly better and went on to win in Leko-Portisch Budapest 1997.

8...a6 9.♗a3 b5 10.♗d5 ♗xd5
11.exd5 ♗e7 12.c4 ♗f5

Black sacrifices a pawn for fluid play.

13.♙d2 ♙e7 14.cxb5 ♙f6 15.♙e2
e4 16.b6



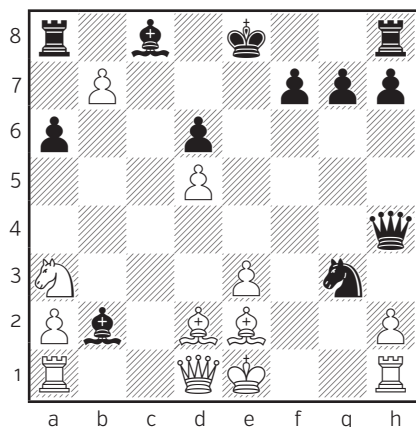
16...e3?

This was Hort's prepared novelty against his experienced opponent. It shows courage to enter a line your opponent has played against Fischer and may have analysed with him as well. On this occasion bravery paid off. In the Leipzig Olympiad Pachman had this position with Black against Fischer and he played 16...o-o then, drawing with the sensational young American: 17.♘c4 ♕d4 18.o-o ♕xb6 19.♘xb6 ♖xb6 20.♕c3 ♕b7 21.♕c4 (21.♖d2!? Perhaps this was Pachman's improvement on Fischer's play) 21...♖ac8 22.b3 ♘e3! 23.♕d4 ♘xd1 24.♕xb6 ♘c3 ½-½ Fischer,R-Pachman, Buenos Aires 1960.

17. ♕xe3?

The sacrifice, which is a bluff, does its psychological damage and Pachman loses his way. White should take the pawn i.e. 17.fxe3! ♕xb2 (17...♖xb6 18.♖a4+ ♕d7 19.♖e4+ ♖f8 20.♘c4 and White has an overwhelming

advantage) 18.b7 (18.o-o ♕xa1 19.♖xa1 and White has strong play for the exchange) 18...♖h4+ This dangerous line is probably what Hort had prepared (18...♕xb7 19.♖a4+ ♖d7 [19...♘f8 20.♖b1 ♖f6 21.o-o and Black is already lost] 20.♖xd7+ ♘xd7 21.♖b1 and Black has lost a piece for nothing) 19.g3! ♘xg3



20.♖a4+!! With this amazing tactical shot White decides the outcome of the game in his favour, as on 20... ♖xa4 21.bxa8 ♖ o-o 22.hxg3 ♕xa1 23.♘c4 White is winning.

17... ♘xe3 18.fxe3 ♕xb2 19.♘c4?!

White plays somewhat automatically by moving the hanging piece. There were other possibilities at his disposal:

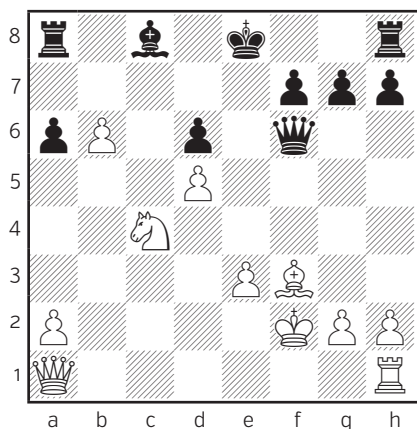
a) 19.o-o ♕xa1 20.♖xa1 o-o 21.♘c4 a5 and despite Black being an exchange up the position is balanced because of the strong b6 pawn.

b) 19. ♖b1! is White's best move when Black needs to find some spectacular tactics to stay in the game: 19... ♙h4+! 20.g3 ♚e4! 21. ♖f1 ♙xa3 22.b7 ♙xb7 23. ♖xb7 o-o 24. ♚d3 and White is fractionally better but the game should end in a draw.

19... ♙c3+ 20. ♚f2 ♙f6+ 21. ♙f3??

Too much calculation takes it toll and Pachman makes a fatal mistake. Instead it was necessary to play 21. ♚g3 ♙xa1 22. ♙xa1 when White has enough compensation for the exchange.

21... ♙xa1 22. ♙xa1



22... ♙h4+!

This check wins the c4 knight and the game is virtually over as Black is a rook up.

23.g3 ♙xc4 24. ♖c1 ♙b4 25. ♙xg7 ♙d2+ 26. ♙e2 ♙xc1

White has no real chance to find a perpetual check.

27. ♙xh8+ ♚e7 28. ♙g7 h6! 29.g4 ♙c2 30. ♙xh6 ♙g6 31. ♙xg6 fxg6 32.h4 ♖b8 o-o

Hort had not yet acquired the analytical skill of the great player to be, however this game demonstrated Vlastimil's strong points. He was able to adjust his style to his opponents and played in a way which led them into positions which did not suit them. He was ready to analyse a position at home and had the courage to play it, coming out the winner against a renowned Czechoslovakian player.

V.H.: Pachman was still named as fifth on this list of most contributing players: he was a very good theoretician. By the way, interestingly Jansa was tenth. I developed normally. To be honest I always analysed a lot. It was very interesting and sometimes I had games which I analysed for a month. When I had an adjourned game I really squeezed the position and found the best counterplay and what was in the position. I was analysing for long into the nights. Nobody helped me - to have a second or a manager in those times would have been a luxury, I couldn't even think of it. Unlike in Warsaw or Hungary, in Czechoslovakia there was no state support. They just let us out to play tournaments. I don't know when chess-professionalism started, maybe around the end of the sixties. Suddenly they discovered

chess in America and there were more tournaments in the West. I was happy that I could play in Hastings. I don't know how many times I won it...I think I won it twice alone and tied a few times. Already in 1966 I tied for first to fourth place. It was a very "stupid" tournament.

T.K.: You had no trainer for most of the time, but did you have a chess idol?

V.H.: *You will laugh but my first chess book was the Avro 1938 tournament. I studied the Podebrad 1936 one as well. I knew all the games of Avro by heart. Opocensky wrote it in Czech and made some very nice comments, I like the book very much. I discovered some kind of fathom: Larsen and Opocensky could write very well. Because of Avro I very much admired Keres but not so much Alekhine. There was the famous tournament in Prague in 1943 when Alekhine won and Keres was second. There was another nice tournament in 1942 in Czechoslovakia. During the war there was more chess activity than after it. The problem was in Czechoslovakia; I do not know what it was like in Hungary. We had this very strong guy, Opocensky, who was a staunch communist. He had the best connections to the top, to the information minister, to the cultural minister. His idea was that chess belongs to culture and he wanted to put chess in the trade union and culture. There was already a plan to build a chess-house in Prague but suddenly the Russians put chess definitely under sport*

and all the other Eastern block countries had to do the same. Probably it is a pity as players were better treated till it was not under sport. For me the 1968 revolution when the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia was the decisive moment. Then I really went to chess as a professional. From then on I knew I wanted nothing to do with these communists.

T.K.: At the age of 17 you played a very strong tournament in Moscow with Korchnoi and Polugaevsky; did it change anything, did you readjust your chess playing these giants?

V.H.: *Probably, I still didn't have the right ambition even if I made good results - my true ambitions came later. This is terrible, you know. Somehow I didn't want to take up the role of a professional player. I got my degree in economics. Maybe I wanted to make a career like that. But this is as it is; you know in our life we have a different appreciation of values when we are young and old. When you are twenty years old some different things are important to you. I went through this change of values very intensively. I really found out that I don't want anything to do with these communists. You are a cadaver in a cellar; you have to experience it yourself.*

T.K.: Do you remember how you performed at your first Olympiad?

V.H.: *Yes, in the 1960 Leipzig Olympiad I played on the fourth board. My first*

game was against Ujtumen; I played so well (he laughed) and I was better, but I came to a time trouble and I lost. But in my Olympiads I made plus scores; maybe there's an exception but mostly I played very well.

T.K.: Do you have any memorable games from that Olympiad?

V.H.: *I beat Ivkov, but that isn't true; it was Bertok (Beni). Ivkov was my victim at my second Olympiad. This game with Beni wasn't so bad and it's typical of me: suddenly the game is over.*

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• V. Hort • A. Beni [B30]

OLYMPIAD (MEN)

FIN-A VARNA (10), 1962

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1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3

Hort has played this move on only five occasions, the last time was in 1964. It usually transposes to a main line Sicilian.

3...e5

After the Sveshnikov became popular this line was seen more frequently.

4.♙c4 d6 5.d3 ♙e7 6.o-o

Nowadays transferring the knight to e3 by 6.♘d2 is more popular.

6...♘f6 7.♘e1

Hort had this position one other time by transposition against Portisch in San Antonio 1972, where he played 7.a4. However the main line is 7.♘g5.

7...o-o 8.f4 exf4 9.♙xf4 ♘e5 10.♙xe5

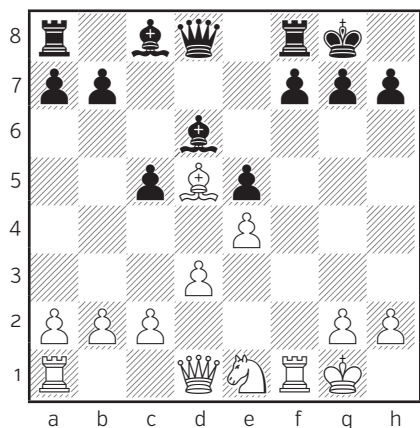
A knight on g5 usually gets taken too.

10...dxe5 11.♘d5 ♘xd5?!

11...♙e6 12.♘xf6+ ♙xf6 13.♙xe6 fxe6 and Black's bishop is slightly worse.

12. ♖xd5 ♙d6

12...g6!? 13. ♘f3 ♔d6 14. ♖d2 ♙g7 and Black has a playable position.

**13. ♔h5!**

The queen becomes unpleasant for Black.

13... ♖e7

Chasing the queen by 13...g6 required a somewhat awkward follow-up i.e. 14. ♖h6 ♙e7 15. ♘f3 ♙f6 16.h4 and Black must be careful.

14. ♘f3 ♙e6

Black decides to accept doubled e-pawns to reduce the pressure.

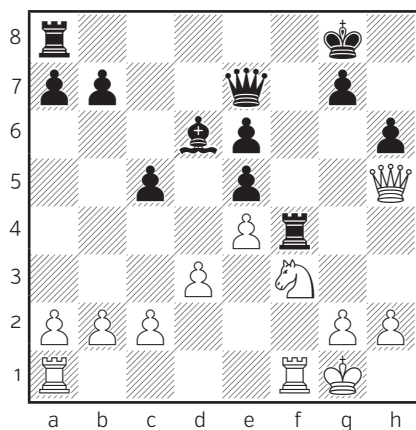
15. ♘g5 h6 16. ♙xe6

Hort prefers to keep the knight. Black can probably live with the e6 pawn after 16. ♘xe6 fxe6 17. ♙c4 ♖ae8.

16...fxe6 17. ♘f3 ♖f4?

Black plays actively on the f-file and tries to set a trap but unfortunately

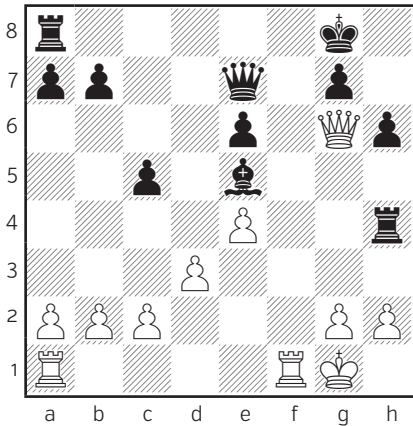
for the Austrian player he ends up trapping himself. Although 17... ♖c7 is a bit passive, defending the pawn gave reasonable chances to survive a long squeeze. But there was an active solution to his problems with 17...c4! gaining reasonable play e.g. 18.dxc4 (18. ♘xe5 cxd3 19. ♘xd3 ♖c7 20.c3 ♖b6+ 21. ♙h1 ♖e3 and White's pieces are loose) 18... ♖f4 19. ♖ae1 ♖c7 20.g3 ♖ff8 21.b3 b5! when Black can get at the queenside pawns. After 22.g4 bxc4 23.g5 cxb3 24.axb3 ♖f7 25. ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 White is still a bit better but Black seems to have enough play against White's pawns.

**18. ♘xe5!! ♖h4?**

Beni diverts the queen which defends the e5 knight to win material but it is only temporary. Black could have put up more of a fight with 18... ♖f6 just to keep playing and accept that he has lost a pawn e.g. 19. ♖xf4 ♖xf4 20. ♘g6! ♖e3+ (20... ♖d2 21.e5 ♙c7 22. ♖g4 ♖e8 23. ♖f3 ♖xc2 24. ♖f1 and Black's king is in trouble) 21. ♙h1

c4 22. ♔g4 ♕e8 23. dxc4 and the two extra pawns are too much.

19. ♖g6 ♗xe5



20. g3!

This was Hort's clever idea trapping the rook.

20... ♔g5?

Exchanging queens eases White's task of converting the material advantage. Instead it would be preferable to play 20... ♗xb2 21. ♖ab1 ♗d4+ 22. ♔g2 ♗xh2+ 23. ♔xh2 c4 and White's task is much harder than in the game.

21. ♔xg5 hxg5 22. gxh4 ♗xb2 23. ♖ab1 ♗d4+ 24. ♔g2 gxh4 25. ♖xb7

The rest is trivial, although Hort uses his king instructively.

25... a5 26. ♔h3 ♖d8 27. ♔xh4 ♗f6+ 28. ♔h5 c4 29. ♔g6 cxd3 30. cxd3 ♗e5 31. ♖e7 1-0

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T.K.: Do you know your personal score against him?

V.H.: *I know I had good physical condition; I had the patience to defend. I do not really know.*

T.K.: Do you know who was the first grandmaster you beat?

V.H.: *I don't know.*

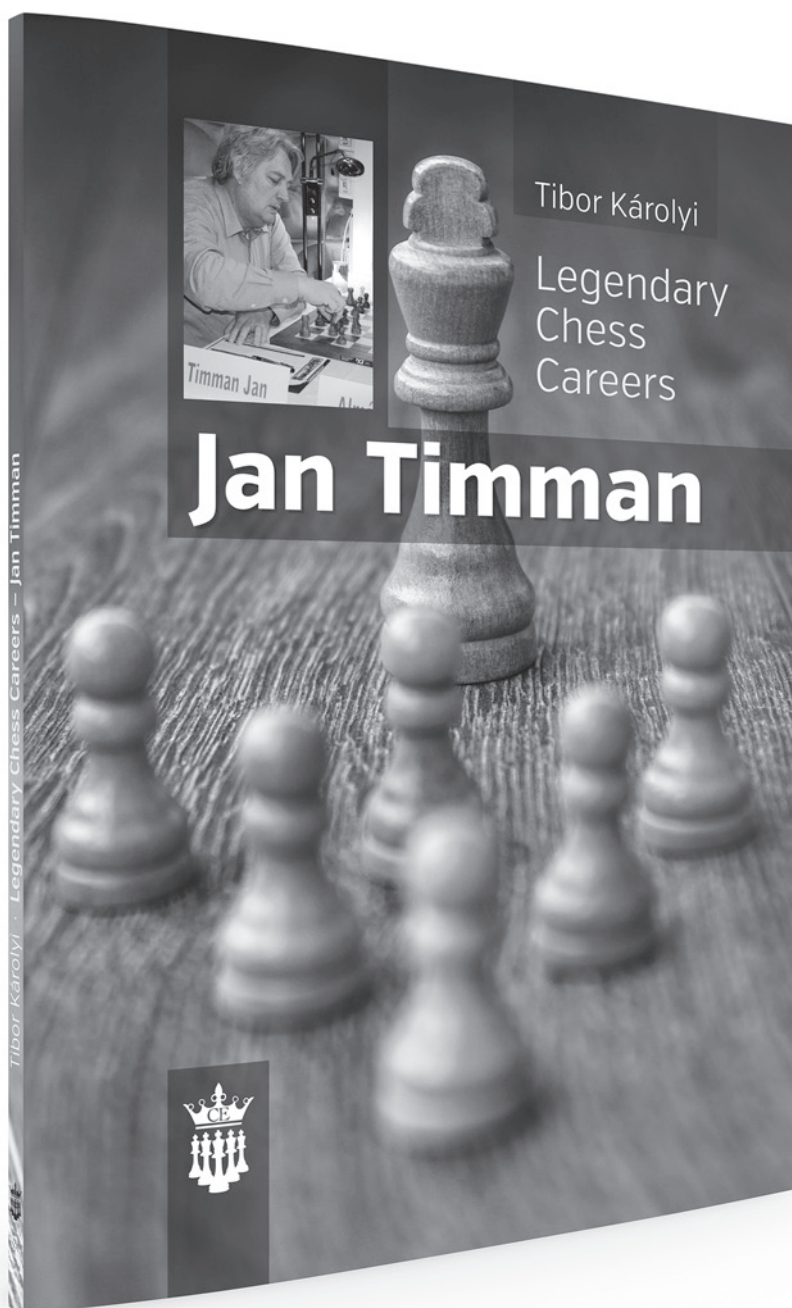
T.K.: Do you know who was the first world-class player you beat?

V.H.: *I think it was in Hungary when I played with Portisch in Kecskemet in 1963. I made a norm and beat some good players. We shared first to second place in this strong ten player event. Alekhine also played in Kecskemet. Maybe I didn't beat a world-class player, but I beat many average grandmasters. I like to remember this tournament as I played many interesting games – the one with Portisch is memorable. We started our careers almost together.*

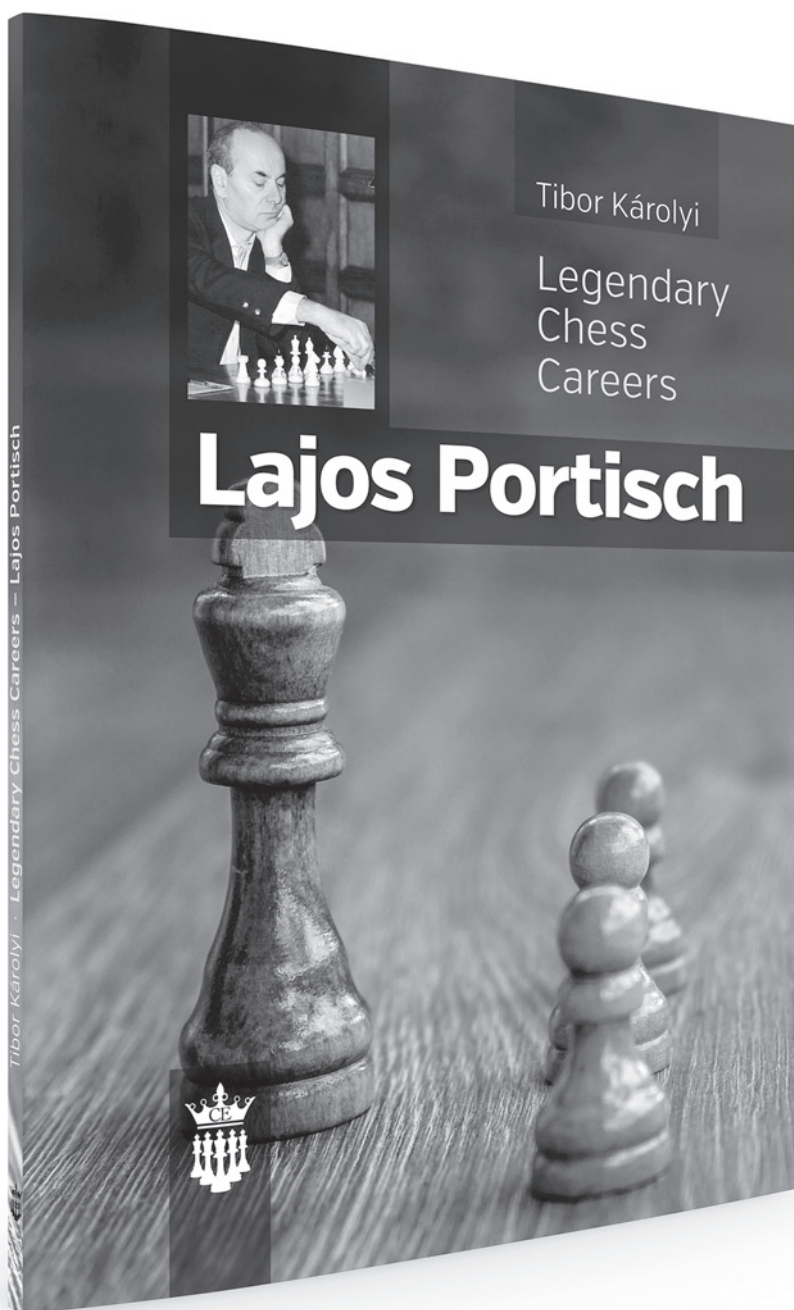
T.K.: What was the opening?

V.H.: *It was a Gruenfeld and it ended in a draw, but it was a very fighting game and again I had to save myself. He was a better player than me, but we were probably still in the same category.*

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