

## Lesson 30: Chess History—Magnificent Moves

## A Golden Move



Occasionally a player comes up with a move, or a tactic, that is so spectacular it goes down in chess history, remembered for years to come. We saw some examples already in Lesson 20: Magnus Carlsen's Qh6+ to retain the World Championship, and Puzzle 6, the finish to the so-called Immortal Game.

In the position on the left the American player Frank Marshall found a move that stunned the spectators into showering the board with gold coins! As Black he needed to deal with the attack on his queen, the plan of Rc7 and Qxg7 checkmate, and the threat to his rook on h3.

Marshall played the brilliant move 1...Qg3, placing his queen on a square where it can be captured by two pawns and White's queen. This threatens an immediate checkmate on h2 so White must capture. But how?

- 2. hxg3 allows checkmate in one move by 2...Ne2#
- 2. fxg3 allows checkmate in two moves by 2...Ne2+ 3. Kh1 Rxf1#
- 2. Qxg3 allows 2...Ne2+ 3. Kh1 Nxd3+ 4. Kg1 (4. fxg3 Rxf1#) Nxf1 5. gxh3 Nd2 and Black emerges a knight ahead, more than enough to win.

What a move, and what a reward!

## Anything you can do...

A few years later the great World Champion Alexander Alekhine reached this position as White. Perhaps inspired by Marshall, he found 1. Qg6 threatening checkmate on g7. After 1...hxc6 2. Rh3# is checkmate, while 1...fxg6 2. Nxc6+ hxc6 3. Rh3+ Qh4 4. Rxh4# is also checkmate. Can you find the checkmate after 1...Rg8?

Impressed? How about if we told you this was one of several games Alekhine was playing simultaneously, wearing a blindfold and having the moves called out to him to remember! Now that is quite a feat.





## An Epic King March

Nigel Short is perhaps the most famous British chess player, reaching the World Championship Final in 1993. As White he found an incredible plan to beat the Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman.

Black's pieces are tied down defending but Short's attack needs reinforcements. Amazingly, he used his king. After 1. Kh2, Black watched helplessly as the king marched up the board to help checkmate.

The game ended 1...Rc8 2. Kg3 Rce8 3. Kf4 Bc8 4. Kg5 and Black resigned. It's checkmate after 4...Bxd7 5. Kh6 and 6. Qg7#. 4...Kh7 slows the advance but doesn't save the game: 5. Rxf7+ Rxf7 6. Qxf7+ Kh8 7. Kh6 and checkmate on h7 is unavoidable. No sacrifices, but a very memorable finish.

## A Champion's Finish

Akiba Rubinstein was one of the greatest players never to become World Champion. Well-known for his ideas in the opening and expertise in the end-game, here he produced a stunning series of sacrifices to complete a victory in the middlegame.

As Black, he ignored the threat to his queen, playing 1...Rxc3. Capturing the rook would allow 2...Bxe4+ 3. Qxe4 Qxh2# so White was forced to accept the queen sacrifice with 2. gxh4. Rubinstein followed up with a second sacrifice, 2...Rd2. If White doesn't accept this sacrifice, checkmate soon follows, either by 3...Rxxh2 or if 3. Qxg4 Bxe4+ 4. Rf3 Rxf3 5. Qg2 Rf1+ 6. Rxf1 Bxg2#. However, after 3. Qxd2 Bxe4+ 4. Qg2 Rh3 (yet another sacrifice!) checkmate soon follows by 5...Rxxh2+.



Why not play through the moves and see if you can find all the variations?

## The End, Or Just The Beginning?

This is the last in our series of worksheets but we hope it's only the start of your chess journey. If you want to learn more about our great game there are hundreds of books to read and videos to watch, and many hours of fun to be had playing against your friends and family. Who knows, one day we might just be writing about *your* magnificent moves!