

CHARGE! (And never mind the fallen)

THE INTERZONALS are the most important, strenuous and exciting events in the chess world. The two tournaments decide who will qualify for the candidates' matches — the first three in each gaining a place. The winner of the "candidates" will play world champion Anatoly Karpov for his title in 1978.

The hosts this year are Switzerland and the Philippines. At the time of writing I am following the Manila Interzonal where the favourites are Spassky (USSR), Hort (Czechoslovakia), Mecking (Brazil), Ljubgevic (Yugoslavia), Polugayevsky (USSR). At this stage I predict the temperamental Brazilian, Henriquez Mecking will top the field of 17 grand masters and three international masters. He will be challenged strongly by, among others, the Russian former world champion Boris Spassky who lost his title to Bobby Fischer in the infamous 1972 match.



An artist's impression of Polugayevsky from "Sovietsky Sport".

Manila 1976:
Polugayevsky (Russia) Gheorghiu (Rumania)

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| 1. Nf3 | Nf6 |
| 2. c4 | e6 |
| 3. Nc3 | b6 |
| 4. e4 | Bb7 |
| 5. Bb3!? | |

The sort of move a beginner might play and be criticised for! But Polugayevsky has decided on the best square for his bishop.

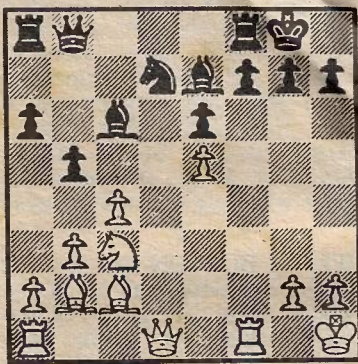
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| 5. . . . | d6 |
| 6. Bc2! | c5 |
| 7. d4 | |

Now the plan is clear. White has transposed into a Sicilian type position with his bishop on a more aggressive post than the normal e2.

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| 7. . . . | cxd4 |
| 8. Nxd4 | Be7 |

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| 9. O-O | O-O |
| 10. b3 | a6 |
| 11. Bb2 | Nc6 |
| 12. Kh1 | Qb8?!
12 . . . b5!? is interesting. |
| 13. f4 | b5!? |
| 14. e5!! | |
- Polugayevsky demands more from his position than
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| 14. cxb5 | Nxd4. 15. Qxd4 |
| axb5. 16. Nxb5?! Ba6. | |
| 14. . . . | dxe5 |
| 15. Nxc6 | Bxc6 |
| 16. fx e5 | Nd7 |

BLACK



WHITE

17. Nd5!

Not a printing error but the stunning continuation to 14. e5. The depth to which Polugayevsky analysed before playing the move must have been phenomenal.

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| 17. . . . | exd5 |
| 18. cxd5 | Bb7 |
| 19. d6! | Bg5 |
| 20. Qh5 | h6 |

If 20 . . . Bh6 then 21, Qf5 threatens mate and the unprotected knight on d7.

21. h4

The bishop cannot move, as in the previous note. But Gheorghiu sets an ingenious trap which, almost unbelievably Polugayevsky must have seen several moves back.

21. . . . Qc8!

Hitting the bishop on C2.

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| 22. Bf5 | g6! |
| 23. Qe2!! | |

Not falling for 23, Bxg6? Nf6!. 24. exf6 Qh3 ch and Qxg2 mate.

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| 23. . . . | gxf5 |
| 24. hxg5 | Be4? |

The Russian magazine 64 gives the alternative 24 . . . Nc5. 25. R(a)c1 Ne4. 26. Rxc8 Ng3 ch. 27. Kh2 Nxe2. 28. Rc7! Bd5. 29. Rf2 hxg5 and White is winning. I think Black can save the game though, with 24 . . . Bd5! The bishop will shortly sit on e6, performing the invaluable function of keeping the a1-h8 diagonal closed (by blocking the white pawn). But who can blame the bewildered Gheorghiu for missing White's next move?

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| 25. e6! | fxe6 |
| 26. Qh5 | e5 |

Trying desperately to block the murderous diagonal.

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| 27. Qg6 ch | Kh8 |
| 28. Qxh6 ch | Kg8 |
| 29. Qg6 ch | Kh8 |
| 30. Rf4! | Resigns. |

An impressive illustration of a sacrificial attack carried out irrespective of material considerations. Mate on the rook's file is unavoidable.

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