

# The poisoned pawn

THE BIEL INTERZONAL, won by Larsen, left three players in second equal place. Portisch, Tal and Petrosian had an all-play-all to decide which of them would occupy the remaining two places left in the candidates' matches.

Although Portisch had to contend with the two Rus-

sians, he played well and finished second to Petrosian. He cost Tal a place in the Candidates' with a daring opening which must have flustered the former world champion. Fortune favours the brave — and it needs to, on the black side of the dangerous poisoned pawn variation of the Sicilian defence.

Interzonal Play Off, Rome 1976.

## SICILIAN NAJDORF

M. Tal (USSR)	L. Portisch (Hungary)
1. e4	c5
2. Nf3	d6
3. d4	c×d4
4. N×d4	Nf6
5. Nc3	a6

6. Bg5 e6  
7. f4 Qb6!?

That must have made Tal jump! Portisch never plays the poisoned pawn — and he never plays anything that he feels is not sound. But home improvements or not, Tal has never been one to decline a challenge!

8. Qd2

8, Nb3 is the safe way out.

8. . . .	Q×b2
9. Nb3	Qa3
10. B×f6	g×f6
11. Be2	Nc6
12. O-O	Bd7
13. f5	

Tal played 13, Bh5 in his game against Platonov in Dubrna in 1973. Play continued 13 . . . Bg7. 14, Rf3 O-O and White won, but by a slightly dubious method.

13. . . .	Ne5
14. f×e6	f×e6
15. Bh5 ch	Kd8
16. R(a)b1	Rc8

Portisch thought a long time on that move. He moved instantly up to stage.

17. Ne2	Be7
18. Nf4	Kc7
19. Be2	Kb8
20. Na5?	

Changing plans. 20, Nd4 may give White a slight plus.

20. . . .	b5
21. Nb3	Bd8

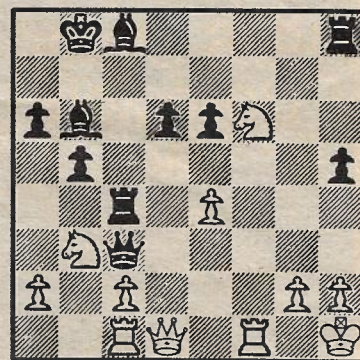
This would have been Black's reply to 21, c4 as well.

22. Kh1	Bb6
23. Nh5	Rc7
24. N×f6	Bc8
25. Ng4	Nc4
26. B×c4	R×c4
27. Nf6?	

Another slight error, and Tal is in trouble. Better was 27, Ne3 followed by, for example, 27 . . . R×e4. 28, Qc3 Bd4. 29, Qd3 Bb7 (29 . . . d5?? 30, Nc4! and wins.) 30, Rf7 and White has counterplay.

27. . . .	Qb4
28. Qd1	Qc3!
29. Rc1	h5!

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WHITE

The Hungarian finds all the best moves. The bishop manoeuvres soon begin to show their point as they bear menacingly down on the white kingside.

30. Rf3	Qe5
31. Qd2	Ka8
32. Rd1	Bc7

33. Na5	d5
34. g3	B×a5
35. Q×a5	R×c2
36. Qb6	Qb2
37. Qg1	d×e4
38. N×e4	Bb7
39. Re3	Rf8
40. a4	Qe5
41. Resigns.	

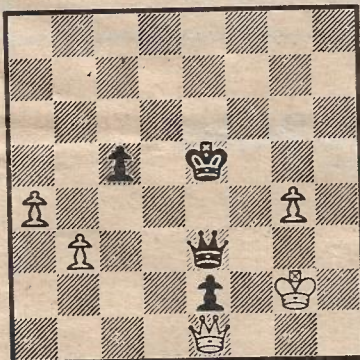
After 41, Qe1 R(f)f2 is the simplest. Perhaps the poisoned pawn has lost its bite!

THE EIGHT qualifiers for the candidates' matches are Larsen, Petrosian, Portisch, Korchnoi, Mecking, Fisher, Hort and Polugayevsky. They will play knockout matches to decide who will challenge the present world champion Anatoly Karpov.

If Fischer does not take up the place, given because he was the last world champion, it is expected Spassky will fill the vacancy.

THE YOUNG SWEDISH Grandmaster Ulf Andersson is noted for his long games. He instructively gains a tempo in this queen ending having just made (K(d6)e5) his 109th move!

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O. Castro	U. Andersson
1. g5	Kf5!
2. Qf2 ch	
(2, a5 Kg4. 3, a6 Qf3 ch. 4, Kg1 Qg3 ch.)	
2. . . .	Ke4
3. Qe1	
(3, Qh4 ch Kd3. 4, Qc4 ch Kd2. 5, Qd5 ch Qd3).	
3. . . .	Qf3 ch
4. Kh2	

Making the win easy. After 4, Kg1 however, Andersson had in mind 4 . . . Kf4! (threat: Qg3 ch). 5, Qh4 ch Ke3. 6, Qe1 Qg4 ch. 7, Kh2 Qh5 ch. 8, Kg2 Q×g5 ch. 9, Kh2 Kf3! 10, Qc3 ch Kf2 and wins.

4. . . .	Qf1
5. Resigns.	

As Qh4 ch loses immediately to 5 . . . Qf4 ch.

A worthwhile ending to look at as it is relatively simple but contains many of the basic points of queen endings.