

Chess

Winning rubbish

AT THE 14th World Junior Championship in Yugoslavia last year I met the young English player Jonathan Mestel, who impressed me with many of his feats — not the least of them climbing a nearby mountain and nearly missing the start of a round.

During the tournament he surprised everybody when he beat Paul van der Sterren from Holland with an old opening regarded as suspect. After the game Peter Nurmi, a very strong Canadian player, chided him for playing "such rubbish" and pointed out several "refutations".

It just so happened they chanced to meet in the final round — and Mestel was presented with a golden opportunity to prove his point.

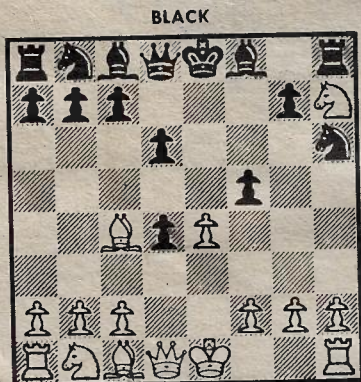
PHILIDOR
counter gambit

P. Nurmi (Canada)	J. Mestel (England)
1. e4	e5
2. Nf3	d6
3. d4	f5!?

Nurmi was stunned when Mestel played this move, believing it to be completely unsound.

4. Bc4	e×d4
5. Ng5	Nh6
6. N×h7?!	

For if Black takes the knight, mate follows: 6. . . R×h7. 7. Qh5ch. Kd7. 8. B×h6. R×h6. 9. Q×f5ch, Kc6 (or either e8 or e7. 10. Qf7 mate.) 10. Qb5 mate.



6. . . . Ng4!
But Mestel ignores the beast.

7. N×f8	K×f8
8. e×f5	Qe7ch
9. Kf1	B×f5

Black has a winning position. If White attempts to save his rook's pawn a typical line of play might go like this: 10. h3, Nc6. 11. Kg1 (threatening to take the knight with the pawn on h3) Re8. 12. h×g4 Qe1ch. 13. Q×e1 R×e1ch. 14. Bfe R×h1ch. 15. K×h1 R×f1ch. 16. Kh2 R×c1. 17. g×f5 Nb4 and Black has won a piece.

10. Q×d4	N×h2ch
11. R×h2	

Or Kg1 Qe1ch and mates.

11. . . .	R×h2
12. Be3	

12 Kg1 Qh4 swaps off Queens.

12. . . .	Qe4
13. Q×e4	Rh1ch!

An important interpolation.

14. Ke2	B×e4
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Now Black, already the exchange up, stands to win more material. This is top flight chess, so . . .

15. Resigns.

A beautiful and original win by Jonathan Mestel.

MURRAY CHANDLER