

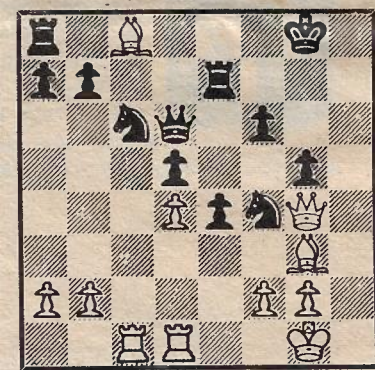
Taking poison

THE CHESS WORLD seems a very small place, and people you have met in other countries keep turning up all the time. After the Olympiad in Israel I met three of the Australian team in different places around London. I expected to meet Vernon Small and Robert Smith, two of the New Zealand team who are playing in Europe before returning home, at the Islington Congress. Instead I found Vernon standing on my doorstep one afternoon.

One of the biggest coincidences was, when playing board 1 for Charlton Chess Club in a match against London Universities, I turned up to find the opposing No 1 was New Zealand Championship participant Peter Weir.

I had lost my game against Weir in congress last Christmas and thought I had given him another present this year when I got a bad game from the opening. But Weir grabbed a "Baker" pawn — named after Canterbury's Chris Baker, who is reputed to snatch any and every pawn he thinks he can get away with.

BLACK



WHITE

Weir, playing black has a fine position but the continuation with ... Rb8? was dubious. Play proceeded;

1. Bxf4 Qxf4
2. Be6 ch

The Zwischenzug or in-between move. White regains his pawn with at least equality.

2. ... Kg7
3. Qxf4 gxf4
4. Bxd5 Nb4
5. Bc4!

Weir had perhaps calculated 5, Bb3?!, which cedes d3 to the black knight. Black would assume a dangerous initiative with follow-ups such as Kg6 and the doubling of rooks on the h file being very strong.

5. ... b5
6. Be2 Nxa2?

A lowly pawn is no reward for putting the knight out of play like this. Better is 6 ... Rd7.

7. Rc5 b4?
8. d5 Rb6

More resilient but still inadequate was 8 ... Rd8. 9,

d6 R(e)d7. 10, Rc6. Eg 10 ... f5. 11, Bc4 b3. 12, Be6.

9. d6 Rd7
10. Rc7! Rb7

After 10 ... Rxc7. 11, dxc7 Rc6 the pawn is shepherded through with 12, Rd7 ch Kg6. 13, Ba6!

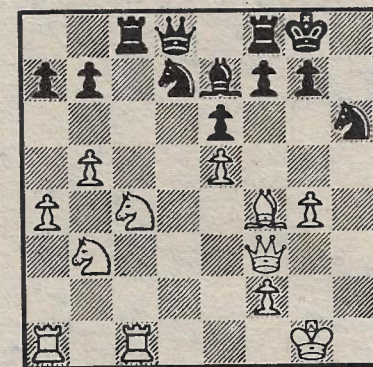
11. Rxb7 Rxb7
12. d7 Resigns

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NOW, to show that not only New Zealanders can take poison, here is a position from the New Zealand v England struggle at Haifa.

Olympiad, Israel 1976.

BLACK



WHITE

The British Champion A. J. Mestel, playing white, was too greedy, and New Zealand's V. Small played accurately to score a fine victory.

1. Qxb7? Bg5!
2. Qe4

Both 2, Bxg5 Qxg5. 3, Qxd7 Qxg4 ch. 4, Kf1 Rxc4 and 2, Qf3 f5! are good for black.

2. ... Nxg4
3. Rc3 Bxf4
4. Qxf4

Ewen Green's suggestion after the game of 4, Rh3!? just fails to 4 ... f5! 5, Qxf4 g5. 6, Qd4 N(d)x e5. 7, Nd6 Rc2. 8, f3 Qa8!

4. ... N(g)x e5

Before the game I had (jokingly!?) warned Small about Mestel's exchange sacrifices and guaranteed he would try one! Here Mestel should defend with 5, R(a)c1 but ...

5. Nxe5?! Rxc3
6. Rd1 Qf6!

Decisive simplification.

7. Qxf6 Nxf6
8. Na5 Rc7
9. N(a)c6 Nd5
10. Rd3 R(f)c8
11. a5 f6
12. Nc4 Rxc6!

"I had heard so many stories," said Small "of Mestel giving up the exchange and winning, that I socked it back to him at the earliest opportunity!"

13. bxc6 Rxc6
14. Nd2 Rc1 ch
15. Kh2

Even in horrific time trouble, Mestel saw the knight fork after 15, Kg2.

15. ... Rc5
16. Nb3 Rc3
17. Rxc3 Nxc3
18. Nd4 Kf7
19. f4 Nd5
20. Kg3 a6
21. Kf3 Nxf4!

Resigns

After 22, Kxf4 e5 ch the piece is recovered with an easy win.

MURRAY CHANDLER