A Najdorf novelty

IT WAS A GOOD day out for the theoroticians when England met Iceland in round one of the World Tele Olympiad. English International Master Michael Stean, author of The Najdorf Sicilian, actually *played* a Najdorf Sicilian — and lost! His Grandmaster opponent played one of the most controversial lines of the entire defence and at the critical moment produced a novelty to win a fine game in only 28 moves.

National Liberal Club, London 1977.SICILIAN DEFENCE

M. Stean	G. Sigurjonsson
1. e4	c5
2. Nf3	d6
3. d4	c×d4
4. N×d4	Nf6
5. Nc3	a6
6. Bg5	e6
7. f4	b5!?

Here is the ultra-sharp Polugayevsky variation of the Najdorf. Black has been getting hammered in this variation lately, so when it came up on the big demonstration board we were all surprised. What on earth was Sigurjonsson doing?

8. e5	d×e5
9. f×e5	Qc7
10 Qe2	Nfd7
11. 0-0-0	Bb7
12. Qg4	Q×e5
13. Be2!	

This is White's latest weapon, first played in Balashov v Quinteros in Manila in 1976. Black tried 13. . . .h5 but ended up with a slight disadvantage after 14.Qh4 f6 15.Bf4 g5 16.Q×h5 ch R×h5 17.B×h5 ch Ke7 18.B×e5 N×e5 19.Bf3. Tarjan's attempt of 13. . . .Nf6 against Balinas in Odessa in 1976 got wiped off the board in 26 moves, so it had appeared that at last the Polugayevsky had been tamed.

13. . . Bc5!

Gudmundur Sigurjonsson's new move. Stean here rejected the draw by repetition occurring after 14.Bf4 Qf6 15.Bg5 Qe5 (15. . . .Qg6 is too dangerous) and decided to play all out for a refutation.

14. Bf3!?	B×d4
15. B×b7	B×c3!

Perhaps this move is the reason 13. . . .Bc5 has not been found before. After 15. . . .Ra7 16.Rhe1. Black is lost, but now his rook offer must be declined: eg, 16.B×a8 B×b2 ch 17.Kb1 Ba3! 18.Bc1 B×c1 19.R×c1 0-0, and with rook v knight and two pawns, White has an uphill struggle all the way to draw.

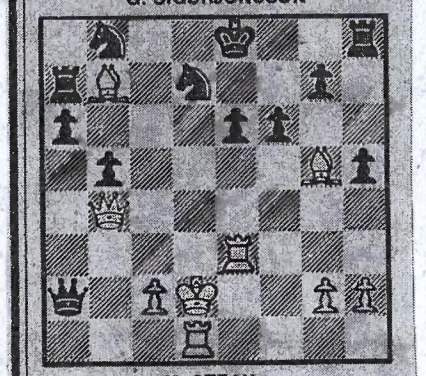
16. b×c3	Ra7
17. Rhe1	h5!

Or else White will start chopping on e6. This intermediary move is common in all of these Polugayevsky lines, but Black must always check that White cannot actually swap queens. Here he escapes by a cat's whisker, ie 18.R×e5 h×g4 19.Rc5! 0-0 20.Rc7 (threatening 21.Be3, winning the rook) 20 . . .Nc5! and Black survives.

18. Qh4	Q×c3
19. Re3	Qa1 ch
20. Kd2	Q×a2
21. Qb4	f6

All this looks risky, but now Stean has both bishops en prise. *Black's defence lies in the fact that his queen defends e6 and also threatens the exposed White King in many lines.*

G. SIGURJONSSON



M. STEAN

22. Qd6	R×b7
23. R×e6 ch	Kd8
24. Bf4!	Kc8!

There were a crowd of us glued to Stean's demonstration board guessing the next moves, and Stean's previous threat of mate in three by 25.Qe7 ch and 26.Qe8 ch had claimed a fair number of casualties. Nobody found 24. . . .Kc8 though, and it is quite likely that Sigurjonsson already had in mind the combination with which he clinched the game.

25. Rde1	Qa5 ch
26. Kc1	Rd8
27. Re8	Qa1 ch
28. Kd2	

While we were all wondering "will Black take the draw?" we were informed Stean had resigned! The reason was simply that Sigurjonsson's final move had not been put up, and it won instantly.

28. . .	Q×e1 ch!!
29. Resigns	

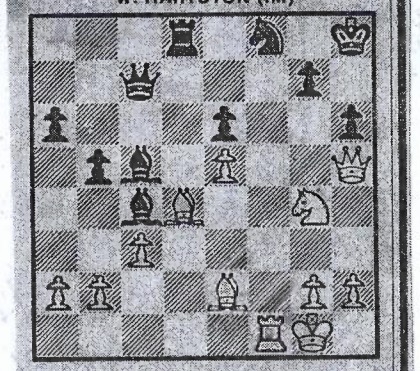
On 29.K×e1 R×e8 ch White has no attack and is hopelessly placed materially, while on 29.R×e1 Black recovers his queen with either 29. . . .Nb6 or 29. . . .Ne5, remaining a piece up in either case.

Fourteen countries are competing in this years World Tele Olympiad, in which all the matches are played by Telex. Although it looks strange to see a row of players staring at empty seats opposite, Tele Chess has several advantages, one of them being that it enables countries to compete against one another without involving costly and time con-

FROM BOARD ONE: England — Iceland Telex match.

Fridrijk Olafsson, Iceland's national chess hero and veteran of world super-class competition, played excellently against Bill Hartston to win a pawn and build up a strong king-side attack. In this position he played 1.Ne3 and eventually the game was drawn. What should he have done?

W. HARTSTON (IM)



F. OLAFSSON (IGM)

Solution: Olafsson missed the neat finish 1.N×h6! when Black is mated or loses his queen 1. . . .g×h6 (1. . . .B×e2 2. N17 dble ch and 3.Qh8 mate) 2.R17 and the threat of 3.Q×h6 ch, forcing mate, wins. It is interesting to note that 1.R17 fails to 1. . . .Qb6 2.N×h6 B×e2! when White has no double check on f7.

MURRAY CHANDLER