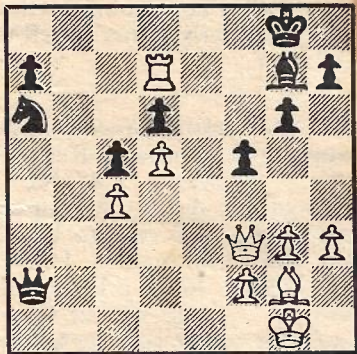


23.Rxb7! Qxd2  
24.Re7 f5

Black must return the favour of leaving a horse en prise as in answer to 24...Ne5 White whips back with his rook by 25, Rxe5 and mate follows in 26, Qxf7 ch etc and to 24 ... Nf6 White replies 25, Rxf7, Qh6 26, Rxf6!

25.Rbx d7 Rxd7  
26.Rxd7 Qxa2

LARSEN



PORTISCH

27.Qe3 Qal ch  
28.Kh2 Qe5  
29.Qxe5 Bxe5  
30.f4! Resigns

After 30... the Bishop moves 31.Rxd6 Portisch can simply roll his d pawn up to the eighth rank and Larsen's minor pieces will be powerless to stop him. Portisch won the match by 6½ to 3½ and he was White in even numbered games.

Portisch	1 ½ 0 1 ½ 1 0 1 ½ 1 6½
Larsen	0 ½ 1 0 ½ 0 1 0 ½ 0 3½
	* * *

In the other matches Lev Polugayevsky (USSR) defeated Henrique Mecking (Brazil) by 6½ to 5½. Many people, among them a number of Russians, didn't believe Polugayevsky could take the match, but as it turned out Mecking could not win a single game in the 12-game match!

Switzerland 1977

Polugayevsky	½ 1 ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ 6½
Mecking	½ 0 ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ 5½
	* * *

In the "match of hate" Victor Korchnoi (Stateless, ex-USSR) has beaten Tigran Petrosian (USSR) by 6½ points to 5½. Both players refused to speak to or even acknowledge the presence of each other during the match and an English paper devoted a full page to the contest although some of the incidents they described seem a bit far fetched. Korchnoi is now drawn against yet another Russian, Polugayevsky for the semi-finals.

Italy 1977

Korchnoi	½ ½ ½ ½ 1 0 ½ 1 ½ ½ ½ 6½
Petrosian	½ ½ ½ ½ 0 1 ½ 0 ½ ½ ½ 5½
	* * *

At the time of writing Boris

Spassky (USSR) and Vlastimil Hort (Czechoslovakia) have 6 points each although Spassky may be said to be losing by an appendix. The match has been temporarily postponed to allow Spassky to be operated on, but it is due to resume only days later and this could affect his play.

Chess

Might is white

LAJOS PORTISCH of Hungary became the first player to qualify for the 1977 Candidates semi-finals when he convincingly won his 10th match game against Bent Larsen in Rotterdam. Portisch played steady but powerful chess leaving the Dane to make the errors and, as usual, Larsen played for the win. But Portisch, who studies eight hours a day, is, with white, one of the best prepared and hardest to beat players in the world and, as a result, Larsen lost four blacks in succession at the finish. The 10th and final game was one of the few that Portisch was winning throughout, Larsen chose a lesser known variation of the King's Indian Defence that he has been experimenting with at sporadic intervals.

Rotterdam 1977. Candidates' Quarter Finals, 10th match game.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENCE

L. Portisch	B. Larsen
1.Nf3	g6
2.c4	Bg7
3.d4	Nf6
4.g3	0-0
5.Bg2	d6
6.Nc3	c6
7.0-0	Bf5!?

The "Larsen" variation! Portisch finds the correct response: if 8... Qb3 Qb6! is fine for black.

8.Nh4 Bd7!?

This move is definitely dodgy, more usual is 8... Be6 9. d5 cxd5 10. cxd5 Bd7.

9.e4 e5

10.Nf3 Re8  
11.h3 Na6  
12.Re1 exd4  
13.Nxd4 Qb6  
14.Nb3 Rad8  
15.Be3 c5?

This type of move is normal in King's Indians, Black cedes d5 for possibilities of placing his queen's knight on d4. The problem is that Larsen's queen's knight on a6 isn't exactly going anywhere.

16.Bg5!

White's knight immediately threatens to hop into d5 with a vengeance and Larsen must do something about 17. Bxf6 Bxf6 18. Nd5 winning.

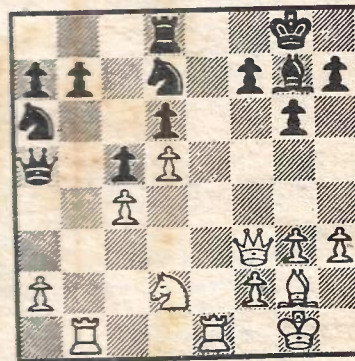
16... Be6  
17.Qf3

Portisch now wins material.

17... Nd7  
18.Bxd8 Rxd8  
19.Nd5 Bxd5  
20.exd5 Bxb2  
21.Rb1 Bg7  
22.Nd2 Qa5

With his black square control Larsen appears to have chances, but it's spot the combination time.

LARSEN



PORTISCH

Iceland 1977

Spassky	½ ½ 1 ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ 0 ½ 6
Hort	½ ½ 0 ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ ½ 1 ½ 6

To be continued

\* \* \*

So it's Korchnoi v

Polugayevsky and Portisch v either Spassky or Hort. Since I have been wrong in all my predictions so far all I will say is that the two matches I would most like to see take place are Karpov-Korchnoi and Karpov-Spassky.

MURRAY CHANDLER