

Chess

Lost chance

NEW ZEALAND'S performance at the Philips Second Asian Teams Tournament in Auckland was disappointing. We came fifth and on paper we were the second strongest team. However, I believe we could have won. The Philippines, defending champions, came determined to retain the Tun Abdul Razak Trophy.

Among the New Zealand team, however, an opinion was expressed before we began that we didn't really have a very strong team. But look! On bd 1 — Ortvín Sarapu, veteran of New Zealand chess, international master. Bd 2 — myself, played professionally for 1½ years in Europe, international master. Bd 3 — Vernon Small, played in Olympiad team in Haifa where he gained a 2460 Elo rating, highest in New Zealand. Bd 4 — Paul Garbett, former New

Zealand Champion, also represented New Zealand in the zonal in Australia. Bd 5 — B. Anderson, twice New Zealand champ in past years, only recently making a comeback. Bd 6 — Ewen Green, team captain, experienced overseas and Olympiad player. Never before in our history have we had a such a strong line-up. So where did we go wrong?
First off, the team was selected by the New Zealand Chess Council four months before the tournament took

place. The Philippines, on the other hand, with thousands of miles to travel, selected their team only after taking into consideration the results of the Marlboro GM classic held three weeks before the team event. As a result Lev Aptekar, former New Zealand champ, whose recent tournament results fully justified his inclusion in the team, was dropped in favour of Ewen Green. Green is a good captain, easily the best in New Zealand, but we were the home team and had no

travelling expenses to worry about; so why not have Aptekar in, with Green as a non-playing captain?

Then there was the board order. After tying with Sarapu and Aptekar for the 75/76 New Zealand championship, I played professionally overseas and recently gained my IM title. My international Elo rating is higher than Sarapu's so I was most suprised when I was told I was on bd 2. I lodged a protest (a week beforehand) but was told "it is too late to change anything". I was also informed "that the team was not necessarily selected on playing strength". That did not improve my state of mind for the event.

However, the New Zealand Chess Association is not always that bad. Recently a number of young people infused new blood into the administration and it was because of their dedication and hard work, combined with Philips' sponsorship, that we were able to host the biggest event in Asia. A first time for all of the organisers and everything went without a hitch.

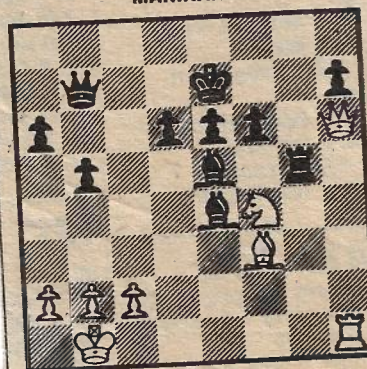
New Zealand scores:

1. O. Sarapu — 2/5; 40%
2. M. Chandler — 5/7; 71.4%
3. V. Small — 4/7; 57.1%
4. P. Garbett — 5½/7; 78.5%
5. B. Anderson — 2½/6; 41.7%
6. E. Green — 2/3; 66.6%

Results: Philippines 30%, China 26%, Indonesia 23%, Australia 22%, New Zealand 22, Singapore 18%, India 15%, Thailand 11½, Malaysia 8, Papua-New Guinea 1½.

Paul Garbett scored the best percentage in our side and was perhaps the only one of us who managed salvage draws from his lost games. For example, he made up some lost ground with spectacular play in round 2 that had the audience enthralled.

MANINANG



GARBETT

Three pawns down, Garbett found a brilliant saving move in 1.Ng6ch! Maninang has three ways to capture the impudent knight but all fail, ie 1. . . . Bxg6 2.Bxb7 or 1. . . . hxg6 2.Qg7 ch followed by 3.Rh8 mate. In the game Maninang played 1. . . . Rxg6 2.Qxh7 ch Kf8 3.Qxg6! Bxg6 4.Bxb7 a5. They reached an unclear position and the draw was eventually agreed on at move 67.

MURRAY CHANDLER