

Letter bombs

WHAT WOULD Alexander Solzhenitsyn do if he were indeed a keen chess player as *Punch* magazine implied (*Listener*, September 9) and he wanted to play against one of his Russian ex-countrymen? Travelling to Moscow could cause problems, but the New Zealand Correspondence Chess Association has an answer.

Chess by mail is popular in many countries, particularly the United States, where sub-

stantial cash prizes can be won. In Godzone, we generally stick to trophies but the competition is certainly no less fierce.

Leonard J. Jones of Wellington is the 44th New Zealand correspondence chess champion. He finished ahead of such over-the-board championship-strength players as David Beach, Bruce Anderson and Peter Stuart. The 1977-78 annual report of the NZCCA gives the tourney re-

sults and grading list of its 206 members, a number returning to the 350 mark where it stood before the postal increases.

Games by letter take roughly a year to complete and are a leisurely way of enjoying chess. Correspondence chess is ideal for people who spend a lot of time at home, particularly housewives or the disabled. Apart from the fun of opening the envelope to see what surprises your opponent has in store, you can make great friends playing CC for a year.

This week's game is taken from the semi-finals of the World Correspondence Championship, in which Richard Sutton, former New Zealand chess champion, is competing. In CC one often has more opportunity for heroic defence, and crushing attacks — and our hero here wins in just 24 moves.

FRENCH DEFENCE

(notes by Richard Sutton)

SUTTON NZ	STERLE Yugoslavia
1. d4	e6
2. e4	d5
3. Nc3	Nf6
4. Bg5	Be7
5. e5	Nfd7
6. h4!	a6

Black has a good deal of choice here. The chosen move meets the threat of Nb5, which would be played after 6... c5; but the loss of a developing tempo means that Black is much more poorly placed to make a break in the centre, and his game tends to become passive.

7. Qg4 f5
Probably better is 7... Kf8.

8. Qh5 ch g6
9. Qh6 Bxg5
10. hxg5 Qe7

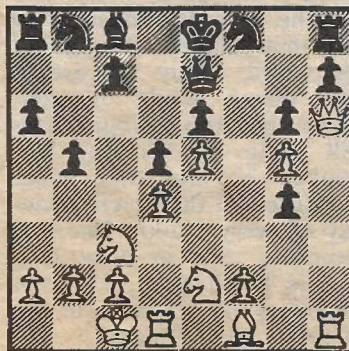
In Yanofsky-Gudmundsson, Iceland 1947, Black played 10... Kf7 and a similarly constricted game resulted for Black.

11. Nge2 Nf8

The natural 11... c5 12. 0-0-0 cxd4 13. Nxd4 Nxe5 14. Re1 Ng4 15. Nxd5 is unpleasant for Black, and he must also reckon with the threat of 12. Nf4 and 13. Nxc6.

12. 0-0-0 b5
13. g4 1xg4

STERLE



SUTTON

Giving White a half-open f-file for his rooks, which cannot be opposed.

14. Rh4 Nbd7
15. Rxc4 Nb6

16. Nf4 Bd7
17. Nd3 a5
18. Nc5 c6

Black's plan of developing his Queen-side has turned out very badly. He cannot shake off the powerful White centre, and has major problems on the f-file which White will soon occupy. He poses no threats worth speaking of, and the White knights are gallivanting over his black squares. A dream position for White!

19. Rf4 Rg8
20. Nb7!

If immediately 20.Rd3, then

20... Nc4 threatening 21... Nxe5. So the knight is forced back. White gaining a tempo in the process.

20... Nc8
21. Rd3 Ra7
22. Nc5 Nb6
23. Rdf3 b4?!

Desperation — there are no good moves left.

24. N3e4! resigns

The havoc wrought by a knight on d6 or f6 is just too much.

MURRAY CHANDLER

ALGEBRAIC NOTATION

The algebraic notation in this chess column is that used almost exclusively in Europe and in many countries elsewhere. Each square has one designation only. The vertical files are labelled a to h from White's left. In horizontal rank the squares are labelled 1 to 8 from White's end. Normal symbols are used, except that pawns as such are not mentioned; just the arrival square is given for a non-capturing pawn move.

BLACK							
a8	b8	c8	d8	e8	f8	g8	h8
a7	b7	c7	d7	e7	f7	g7	h7
a6	b6	c6	d6	e6	f6	g6	h6
a5	b5	c5	d5	e5	f5	g5	h5
a4	b4	c4	d4	e4	f4	g4	h4
a3	b3	c3	d3	e3	f3	g3	h3
a2	b2	c2	d2	e2	f2	g2	h2
a1	b1	c1	d1	e1	f1	g1	h1
WHITE							