

Rio trio a qualifying success

THE RIO interzonal tournament (September 22-October 22) was won jointly by Hungarian Lajos Portisch, West German Robert Hubner and Tigran Petrosian of the USSR. These three and the qualifiers from the parallel Riga interzonal, Soviet representatives Mikhail Tal and Lev Polugayevsky and the winner of a play-off between Hungarians Zoltan Ribli and Andreas Adorjan, go through to the eight-player candidates series.

The six join Viktor Korchnoi (stateless) and Boris Spassky (USSR) in a series of knock-out matches to select a challenger to world champion Anatoly Karpov in 1981.

In contrast to Tal's storming of first place with 14 points in Riga, the finish at the Rio interzonal was a thrillingly close battle. The withdrawal of top Brazilian Grandmaster Henrique Mecking in round three, for health reasons, created a second bye in the 19-round tourney and the true standings were distorted for some time.

Going into the final round, Hubner had 11½ points — but with one bye to come. He could be overtaken by Portisch, on 11 points, and caught by Petrosian and Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman on 10½.

Playing safe, Portisch agreed a 16-move draw with American Leonid Shamkovich, leaving Petrosian and Timman desperately wanting wins to come first equal. They both adjourned a pawn up, and Petrosian's opponent, Borislav Ivkov of Yugoslavia, resigned without resuming. But Timman's remarkable recovery — he had hauled himself back into contention after scoring only 2½ points from his first seven games — proved in vain when he could only draw with Guillermo Garcia-of Cuba.

This must be a heart-breaking blow for the dedicated 28-year-old Dutchman, who earlier in the tournament had rewritten established endgame theory. His adjourned position of rook and a-pawn versus bishop and a-pawn against Yugoslav Dragoljub Velimirovic was, according to a famous endgame manual by Frenchman Andre Cheron, only a win in 77 moves — by which stage it would be declared an automatic draw under the 50-move rule.

In an effort to stay in the race, Timman worked out a way to cut the winning process to fewer than 50 moves — thus altering known theory about the position.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT.

PORTISCH (Hungary)	IVKOV (Yugoslavia)
1. d4	d5
2. c4	e6
3. Nc3	Be7
4. cxd5	exd5
5. Bf4	c6
6. e3	Bf5
7. Nge2	

Riga Interzonal 1979

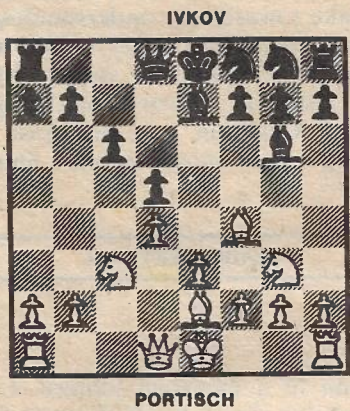
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1. TAL	USSR	-	1	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	14
2. POLUGAYEVSKY	USSR	0	-	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	0	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	11½
3. ADORJAN	Hungary	½	½	-	½	0	0	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	11
4. RIBLI	Hungary	½	½	½	-	1	0	0	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	1	11
5. GHEORGHIU	Rumania	0	½	1	0	-	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	0	1	10½
6. ROMANISHIN	USSR	0	0	1	1	½	-	1	0	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	10½
7. LARSEN	Denmark	½	0	0	1	½	0	-	0	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	10
8. KUZMIN	USSR	0	0	½	½	0	1	1	-	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	0	1	9
9. MILES	England	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	-	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
10. TSESHKOVSKY	USSR	0	1	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	-	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	½	9
11. TARJAN	USA	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	-	0	1	0	0	1	½	1	8
12. GRUNFELD	Israel	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	1	-	0	1	0	1	½	1	7½
13. LJUBOJEVIC	Yug.	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	1	-	0	1	0	1	0	6½
14. BOUAZIZ	Tunisia	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	½	-	½	0	1	1	5½	
15. VAN RIEMSDYK	Brazil	½	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	1	0	½	-	½	½	0	5½
16. MEDNIS	USA	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	1	½	-	½	1	5½
17. TROIS	Austria	0	0	0	0	1	0	½	1	0	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	-	½	5
18. RODRIGUES	Phil.	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	0	1	0	½	-	4

More usual is 7.g4.

- 7. . . . Nbd7
- 8. Ng3 Bg6
- 9. Be2 Nf8?

Soviet Grandmaster Efim Geller, in the interzonal play-off in Portoroz 1973, had played 9. . . . Ngf6 10.h4 h5 11.Bg5 Bd6 12.Rh3 Qb6 13.Qd2 0-0 14.Kf1 Rfe8 15.Kg1 Rac8 against Portisch, reaching an unclear position.

Ivkov's move meets an impressive refutation.



10. h4! Portisch put considerable thought into this move. For the sacrificed pawn, White gains the bishop pair and an advantage in development.

- 10. . . . Bxh4
- 11. Qb3 Bxg3
- 11...b6? 12.Nxd5?! Bxg3 (12...cxd5 13.Bb5 ch) 13.Nc7 ch Qxc7! is OK for Black, but instead 12.Qa4! gives White a big advantage.
- 12. Bxg3 Qb6
- 13. Qa3 Ne7
- 14. Na4 Qd8
- 15. Nc5 Qb6
- 16. Na4 Qd8
- 17. Nc5 Qb6
- 18. Be5! f6
- 19. Bh2 Bf7
- 20. Bd6 Nfg6

On 20...Nf5 comes 21.Bxf8 Rxf8 22.Rxh7 — the point of waiting until Black's bishop is on f7.

- 21. Bd3 Nc8
- 22. Bg3 a5
- 23. 0-0 Nge7
- 24. Rfe1 Ra7

To enable Ivkov to play ...Qb4 without leaving the b-pawn undefended.

- 25. Qc3 a4?
- It is better to continue nevertheless with 25...Qb4 26.Qc2 Bg6!?, and Black has some defensive chances.
- 26. Rab1 Qd8

Intending ...0-0 which is not possible

immediately because of 27.Nd7 winning rook for knight. However, now Black loses material.



- 27. Bb8! b5

On 27...Ra8 28.Nxb7 Qb6 (28...Qd7 29.Nc5) 29.Nd6 ch regains the pawn and maintains the lethal bishop pair.

In the game continuation Ivkov manages to castle, at a cost, but Portisch comes swarming in with his pieces.

- 28. Bxa7 Nxa7
- 29. b3 axb3
- 30. axb3 0-0
- 31. Ra1 Nec8
- 32. Bf5 Re6
- 33. Ra6 Qc7
- 34. Rea1 Re7
- 35. Nd3
- The knight was excellently posted on c5 — but Portisch envisages an even more effective placement of pieces.
- 35. . . . Be8
- 36. Qc5 Qb7
- 37. Nb4 Rc7
- 38. Be6 ch Bf7
- 39. Bxc8 Nxc8
- 40. Rxc6 Rxc6
- 41. Nxc6 Resigns

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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.