

Near misses in Singapore

Bernard Carpinter, Wellington journalist and former South Island chess champion, talks to Fenella Foster who recently participated in two international women's competitions.

FOLLOWING HER participation in the Olympiad in Argentina, Fenella Foster, co-

New Zealand ladies' champion, represented this country in the Asian-Pacific women's zonal tournament, a stage in the world championship elimination series.

It was an extraordinarily close tournament, six of the eight competitors finishing within a point of one another. In such close com-

petition, losses in the last two rounds dropped Foster sharply from first equal to fifth equal. The winner, women's international master Narelle Kellner from Australia, won only two games but draws in the other five were enough to give her 4½ out of 8 and first place.

Kellner and 15-year-old



Fenella Foster: expected a higher standard.

Chan Lai Fung from Singapore will now go forward to the interzonal tournament.

Foster, who comes from Wainuiomata, says the standard of play was lower than she expected. Most of her own games were decided by blunders and one opponent simply put a bishop where it could be taken. She found herself handicapped by a lack of detailed opening preparation; most of the opposition was pretty well booked up on the openings.

Her own standard of play, she says, rose perceptibly during the two overseas tournaments, and the experience helped her find herself as a player. "Before the Olympiad I wasn't sure what style of play I had. Now I know I prefer to build up positionally and attack from there."

Foster now plans to put more time into studying openings, if preparations for School certificate allow it, and she is hoping to find a trainer this year.

She considered the following game to be her best from the zonal. She keeps the tournament winner pinned down for 41 moves, but does not quite manage to break through.

Asian-Pacific Women's Zonal Tournament Singapore

FRENCH DEFENCE

FOSTER New Zealand	KELLNER Australia
1. e4	e6
2. d4	d5
3. Nd2	Nf6
4. e5	Nfd7
5. Bd3	c5
6. c3	Nc6
7. Ne2	Be7

Better is 7...cxd4 8.cxd4 Qb6 or 8...Nb6. After 7...Be7 the Encyclopedia of Chess Openings suggests 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Nf4 b6 10.h4 with a big advantage for White.

8. 0-0 0-0
9. Nf3 Nb6

If 9...f6 White has a strong answer in 10.Nf4 Nb6 11.exf6 Rxf6 12.Re1. After Black's move in the game, White's most effective continuation is 10.Qc2 g6 11.Bh6.

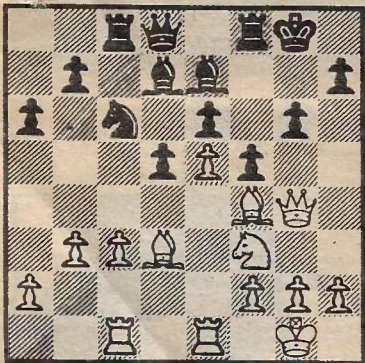
10. Bf4 cxd4
11. Nxd4

The right recapture; White keeps the c-file closed and gets a good square for her pieces on d4, while the e-pawn remains adequately protected.

11. ... Bd7
12. Re1 Nc4
13. Qc2 g6

If 13...h6 White should be able to cause chaos on the king-side by reversing the positions of her queen and king's bishop. After 13...g6 White should play 14.Bh6, driving the rook off the f-file and preventing...f6, to which Bxg6 would be a winning sacrificial reply.

14. Rac1 Rc8
15. b3 Nxd4
16. Nxd4 Na5
17. Qe2 a6
18. Qg4 Nc6
19. Nf3 f5



31. Bxe7 Qxe7
32. Rg5 Kg8
33. Qg3 Kf7
34. Be2 Rh8

White was sneakily threatening 35.Bxh5. Now White's best try seems 35.Qe3, hoping to crawl into the queen-side with 36.Qb6 (36...Bc6 37.Bxa6).

35. Qf4 Qc5
36. Qd4 Rc8

The queen swap would probably lose as White gets her rook into Black's vitals after 36...Qxd4 37.cxd4 Rc8 38.Rxc8 Bxc8 29.Rg3 and

40.Rc3.

37. Qf4 Qa5
38. Qg3 Rcg8

It looks dangerous to pinch the pawn with 38...Qxa2 39.Bxh5, but then after 39...Rcg8! 40.Bd1 Qd2 Black would be doing quite nicely.

39. Rc2 Qc5
40. Rc1 Qa5
41. Rc2 Qc5

White still has the edge. She should now have adjourned and at leisure looked for ways of tormenting her opponent, but Foster was tired and so agreed a draw without adjourning.

White has played well to build up a menacing position on the king-side and was ready to add to the pressure with 20.Ng5.

20. Qg3

With this move White keeps the advantage, but the position becomes blocked and hard to crack, as Black manages to counter White's plan of advancing the h-pawn.

White would have had more winning chances with 20.exf6 ep, opening the position up. If then 20...Bxf6 21.Ne5 White keeps a plus.

After 20.exf6 ep Black could recapture, 20...Rxf6, and then the tempting 21.Ng5 would actually lose to 21...Rxf4 22.Qxf4 Bxg5. However White would keep on top with 21.Ne5 since 21...Rxf4 fails to 22.Qxf4 Bg5 23.Qf7 ch.

20. ... Rf7
21. h4

It would be nice to play 21.Ng5 Rg7 22.c4 dxc4 23.Bxc4 putting awkward pressure on the e-pawn, but after 22...h6 23.Nf3 g5 suddenly it is Black who has the play on the king-side. First the king-side has to be nailed down.

21. ... Kh8
22. Ng5

White could play 22.h5, regaining the pawn after 22...gxh5 with 23.Qh3. But then 23...Rg7 leaves Black with a perfectly satisfactory position.

22. ... Rg7
23. Qh3

Now 23.c4 looks promising.

23. ... h5
24. Re3

White resolves to play it safe while probing Black's weaknesses. The aggressive policy was 24.f3 followed by g4, but then Black could blow up the centre with...d4 and White's king might turn out more exposed than Black's.

24. ... Qe8
25. Rg3 Nd8

Black is grovelling, but grovelling successfully and patching up the holes. Now if White tries to open the game up with c4, Black's bad bishop will suddenly spring to life on the long white diagonal.

26. Nf3 Nf7
27. Nd4 Bc5
28. Nf3 Kh7
29. Ng5 ch

White wants to clear the g5 square for her rook and get her queen back into play.

29. ... Nxg5
30. Bxg5 Be7

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	Place
1 N. KELLNER (Aust)		½	½	½	½	½	1	1	4½	1
2 L. F. CHAN (Sing)	½		0	1	1	0	1	½	4	2=
3 L. POPE (Aust)	½	1		½	0	1	0	1	4	2=
4 H. L. TAN (Sing)	½	0	½		1	½	½	1	4	2=
5 F. FOSTER (NZ)	½	0	1	0		1	0	1	3½	5=
6 M. WATAI (Japan)	½	1	0	½	0		1	½	3½	5=
7 G. PADRIGO (Phillip)	0	0	1	½	1	0		½	3	7
8 MERSUCHIN (Indo)	0	½	0	0	0	½	½		1½	8