

Benedictine double

AFTER JOSTLING for the lead from the word go with several other Masters, I managed to win the Benedictine International Tournament jointly with Welshman George Botterill on seven points out of nine. George lost early on to David Strauss (the game was given in last week's column) but recovered well to catch up with the leaders who were mainly myself, Grandmaster Yair Kraidman of Israel, GM Rosendo Balinas of the Philippines, International Master Carlos Cuartas of Colombia and IM Nigel Birnbohm of Israel.

I stumbled in round six with a defeat at the hands of Birnbohm, rated Elo 2460, and only an unexpected three victories in a row allowed me to catch up with the then leader Botterill. In fact, I overtook him on tie-break to win the Benedictine liqueur trophy, and the largest portion of the sponsor's product.

Personally, winning at Manchester is very pleasing for me, as I have now done the "double" — first at the Lloyds Bank Masters and first in the Benedictine within the space of three weeks. As these are the second and third strongest internationals in Britain, this puts me in a challenging position to win the £2000 Cutty Sark Grand Prix for the most successful player on the British circuit.

Results of the 1979 Benedictine International: 1st equal, M. Chandler (New Zealand) and G. Botterill (Wales), 7 points out of 9; 3rd equal, C. Cuartas (Colombia); N. Birnbohm (Israel), R. Balinas (Philippines), 6½; 6th equal, Y. Kraidman (Israel), M. Petursson (Iceland), K. Niklasson (Sweden), G. Iskov (Denmark), N. Short (England), 6.

After losing with White to Birnbohm I resigned myself to a minor placing, but had my share of good luck in the next rounds. In the following struggle, some possibly over-ambitious play saddled me with a passive defence, but a timely pawn sacrifice turned the tables.

SICILIAN DEFENCE

M. CHANDLER New Zealand G. ISKOV Denmark

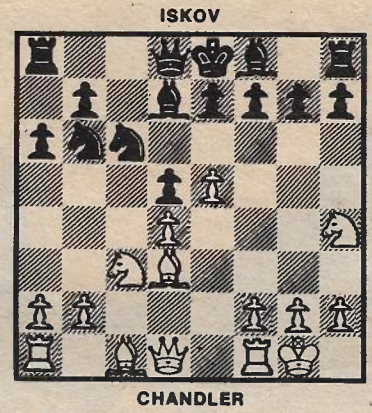
1. e4

Four of my nine games in this tournament were Grünfeld defences, as White or Black, so in this game I insisted upon some variety with a king's pawn opening!

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| 1 ... | c5 |
| 2. c3 | Nf6 |
| 3. e5 | Nd5 |
| 4. d4 | Nc6 |
| 5. Nf3 | cxd4 |
| 6. cxd4 | d6 |
| 7. Bc4 | Nb6 |
| 8. Bb5 | d5?! |
| 9. 0-0 | Bf5 |

Black's problem in this variation is where to develop his queen's bishop. On 9...Bg4 10. h3 he must exchange it off, for on 10...Bh5? 11. e6! is very strong.

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| 10. Nh4 | Bd7 |
| 11. Nc3 | a6 |
| 12. Bd3! | |



Here 12...Nxd4 can be met well by 13.Be3 Nc6 14.Bxb6 Qxb6 15.Nxd5 regaining the pawn. Interesting is 13.Qh5 in this line with the devastating threat of 14.Ng6!, a move which crops up in a number of variations. Hence Iskov's next move.

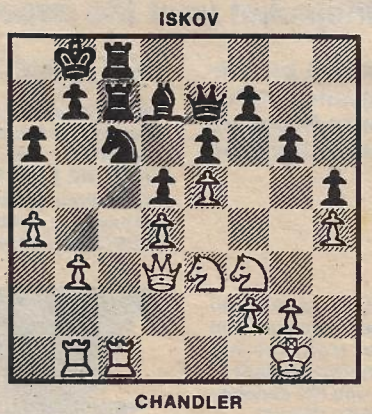
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| 12. ... | g6 |
| 13. a4 | |

I was aware this left a nasty weakness on b4, but the threat of 14.a5 winning the d-pawn forces Iskov now to play 13...e6, locking in his queen's bishop and creating vast black-square weaknesses.

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| 13. ... | e6 |
| 14. Nf3 | Nb4 |
| 15. Bg5 | Be7 |
| 16. Bxe7 | Qxe7 |
| 17. b3 | Nc8 |
| 18. Bb1? | Na7 |
| 19. Qd2 | 0-0-0 |

This simple move gives Black an excellent game. My 18th move is the culprit; soon the bishop has to be centralised again.

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| 20. Nd1 | Kb8 |
| 21. Ne3 | h5 |
| 22. h4 | Rc8 |
| 23. Bd3 | Nac6 |
| 24. Rab1 | Rc7! |
| 25. Rfc1 | Nxd3 |
| 26. Qxd3 | Rhc8 |



Iskov has made good use of his b4-square control, and now White must submit to passive defence on the queenside instead of attacking on the king-side.

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| 27. Qd1 | Qb4 |
| 28. Nc2 | Qb6 |
| 29. Qe1 | Ka7 |

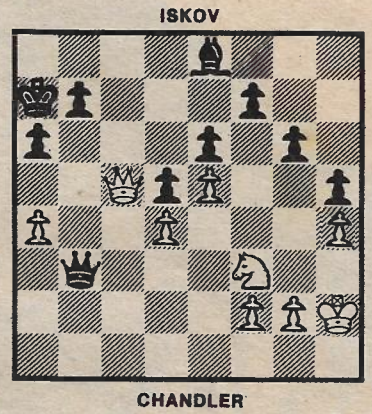
29...Na5 30.Nal Rxc1 31.Rxc1 Rxc1 32.Qxc1 Nxb3 33.Qb1! Bxa4 34.Nd2 nets White a piece, although even that is still far from clear!

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| 30. Kh2 | Be8?! |
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Correct is 30...Nxe5! 31.Nxe5 Rxc2 32.Rxc2 Rxc2 33.Nxd7 Qc7 ch 34.Ne5 f6 regaining the piece with considerable advantage. Fortunately for me

Iskov was aiming to win a pawn — a scheme against which I had prepared a most deceptive resource.

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| 31. Qd1 | Na5 |
| 32. Na1! | Rxc1 |
| 33. Rxc1 | Rxc1 |
| 34. Qxc1 | Nxb3 |
| 35. Nxb3 | Qxb3 |
| 36. Qc5 chl | |



I played this instantly, and now it dawned on Iskov that his ending "a pawn up" after 36...Qb6 37.a5!! Qxc5 38.dxc5 is actually worse for Black, maybe losing! After 38...Kb8 39.Nd4! Kc7 40.Kg3 Kd7 41.Kf4 Ke7 42.Kg5 White has a colossal advantage based on his gorgeous knight on d4 which dominates the entire board, his active king penetrating on the dark squares, and also his ability to create an outside passed pawn! The pawn minus is nothing, eg 42...Ba4 43.f3 Bd1 44.g4 hxg4 45.fxg4 followed by h5 with a passed pawn difficult for Black to stop.

Iskov avoided this exchange, but now White is clearly on top.

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| 36. ... | Kb8 |
| 37. a5 | Qb5 |
| 38. Kg3! | Qc6 |
| 39. Kf4 | b6 |
| 40. axb6 | Kb7 |
| 41. Nd2 | Bd7 |

Black cannot capture with 41...Qxb6 immediately because of 42.Qe7 ch.

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| 42. Nb3 | Qxb6 |
| 43. Qe7 | Qxb3 |
| 44. Qxd7 ch | Ka8 |
| 45. Qxf7 | Qb2 |
| 46. Qe8 ch | Kb7 |
| 47. Qd7 ch | Kb8 |
| 48. Kg5 | Qxf2 |
| 49. Qxe6 | Qxg2 ch |
| 50. Kf6 | Qf2 ch |
| 51. Kxg6 | Qxd4 |

The adjourned position. The queen ending is a straightforward win for White, thanks to his fast-as-lightning e-pawn.

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| 52. Qd6 ch | Kb7 |
| 53. e6 | Qe4 ch |
| 54. Kh6 | Qe3 ch |
| 55. Kxh5 | Qf3 ch |
| 56. Kg5 | Qe3 ch |
| 57. Kg6 | Qe4 ch |
| 58. Kg7 | Qg4 ch |
| 59. Kf8 | Qf5 ch |
| 60. Ke8 | Qg6 ch |
| 61. Kd7 | Qf5 |

This was all more or less my adjournment analysis. Now a pretty way of finishing the game occurred to me.

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| 62. Kd8 | Qf6 ch |
| 63. Qe7 chl | Qxe7 ch |
| 64. Kxe7 | d4 |
| 65. Kd8! | Resigns |

Indeed Black gains a new queen — even with check! — but after 65...d3 66.e7 d2 67.e8=Q d1=Q ch 68.Qd7 ch! Qxd7 ch 69.Kxd7 a5 70.h5 I queen my rook-pawn one tempo ahead of Iskov — thus controlling his queening square!

MURRAY CHANDLER