

It's a serious business

WHEN Hungarian Grandmaster Lajos Portisch dons his orange bathing cap and goggles and goes swimming, he doesn't do it just for fun. Keeping fit is a serious business for the 42-year-old Portisch, the world's number three player. Almost as serious as the eight hours' study a day he is reported to put in all the year round, preparing for future tournaments.

At the Rio interzonal tournament, an important world championship elimination contest, Portisch lived up to his reputation by winning on tie-break from West German Robert Hubner and Tigran Petrosian of the USSR.

Despite three sensational losses to low-rated players — Eugene Torre of the Philippines, Jaime Sunye of Brazil and, in the penultimate round, bottom-marker Simeon Kagan from Israel! — Portisch produced some magnificent chess. His crushing victories over Russians Yuri Balashov and Rafael Vaganian, fellow Hungarian Gyula Sax and Yugoslav Borislav Ivkov were superb combinations of tactical and positional play.

At the board he sits straight-backed and poker-faced. Frequently in the opening he confidently wanders around the stage while his poor opponent is trying to find an answer to yet another novel move prepared in advance.

Away from the board he also gives off an air of great self-discipline, and made swimming at Rio's Copacabana Palace Hotel look like a real chore!

Portisch's dedication and play should be a fine example for any young player. In the following game from Rio, he beautifully ushers a passed pawn through to its coronation.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENCE

L. PORTISCH (Hungary)	Y. BALASHOV (USSR)
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. Nc3	Bb4
4. e3	O-O
5. Bd3	c5
6. Nf3	d5
7. O-O	dxc4
8. Bxc4	Nbd7
9. Qe2	a6 (?)
10. a4	Qc7
11. Na2	b5!?
12. Bd3	

If immediately 12.axb5 axb5 13.Bxb5 Black has adequate compensation for his pawn sacrifice with 13...Bb7 and threats of ...cxd4 followed by ...Bd5.

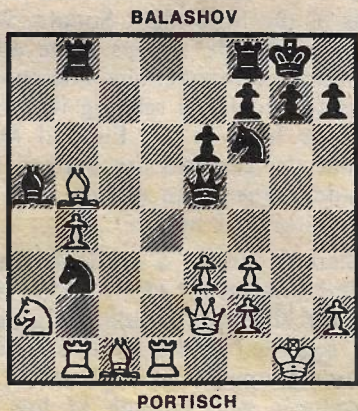
12. . . .	Ba5
13. axb5	axb5
14. Bxb5	Bb7
15. Rd1!	

Avoiding any possible improvement Balashov may have found after his game as Black against Knaak, Halle 1976, which had led to advantage to White after 15.Nc3 cxd4 16.Nxd4 Qd6 17.Ra4 Nb6 18.Ra3 Nbd5 19.Nxd5 Bxd5 20.Bd3.

15. . . .	Rab8?!
-----------	--------

More logical is 15...Rfd8 keeping the queen's rook on the open a-file. In the game Balashov breaks up Portisch's kingside pawn formation — but White has an extra pawn.

16. dxc5	Bxf3
17. gxh3	Nxc5
18. b4	Nb3
19. Rb1	Qe5!



Not 19...Nxc1? 20.Rdxc1 attacking Black's queen as well as the bishop on a5. Instead Balashov has a tactical resource — but Portisch emerges from the complications with a passed a-pawn.

20. bxa5	Rxb5
21. Kh1!	

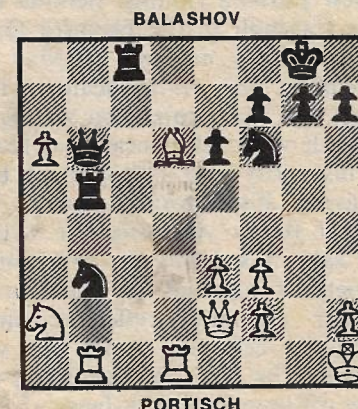
On 21.Ba3 Nd4! is strong, since 22.Rxb5? Nxe2 is check. Portisch's king move is a preventive measure to avoid this check.

21. . . .	Qb8
22. Ba3	Rc8
23. Bd6	

The bishop begins a remarkable escorting of the a-pawn.

23. . . .	Qb7
24. a6!	Qb6

The lusty passed pawn is untouchable — 24...Qxa6 25.Rxb3 wins a knight.



25. Bc7!!

And the bishop too is immune! 25...Rxc7 26.Rd8 ch Ne8 27.Rxe8 is checkmate, and 25...Qxc7 loses to 26.Qxb5.

25. . . .	Qc6
26. a7	h6
27. Bb8	Nd7
28. Rd6!	

Refusing to allow Balashov even 28.Rxd7 Nd4!? 29.Rxd4 Rxb1 ch or 28.a8=Q Qxa8 29.Qxb5 Rxb8 30.Qxd7 Qxa2. Portisch insists upon a second queen!

28. . . .	Qb7
29. Rxd7	Qxd7
30. a8=Q	Rbxb8
31. Qe4	Resigns

MURRAY CHANDLER