

# Spanish main man

IN THE ABSENCE of huge cheering crowds, the concept of home and away matches might seem in-applicable to a chess player. However, being such sensitive creatures, they are affected by the environment, and the atmosphere surrounding events — even in foreign countries — can be a significant factor in outstanding successes or equally dismal failures.

One American in the Californian outback during the annual Lone Pine tournament protested that he could not concentrate. There was too much prairie and open space for the native New Yorker — "Where are the skyscrapers?" he lamented.

But 25-year-old Larry Christiansen from Los Angeles appears to have discovered his El Dorado without a doubt. Before even becoming an international master, he gained his grandmaster title at tournaments in Spain, and last year in Linares took first place ahead of Viktor Korchnoi.

This year he topped even that by tying for first with world champion Anatoly Karpov in a category 13 event at Linares. He scored four and a half points from the first five rounds and apparently even had "Tolya" tottering on the edge of a salt mine as well in game six, but eventually lost to the champion.

One of his most impressive victories was over Hungarian Lajos Portisch, still the world's third highest rated player.

*Eliminating the strong knight, but now White gains the bishop pair and Black will find it difficult to blockade the dangerous passed d-pawn.*

- 17. Bxe5 Rc8
- 18. Rc1 Qd7
- 19. Bc3 Ba6
- 20. Re1 Nb7
- 21. Qd4

*Inducing a kingside weakness through the threat of mate on g7.*

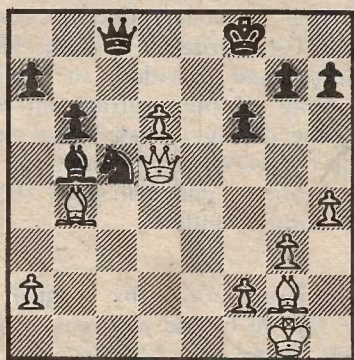
- 21. ... f6
- 22. Bb4 Rxc1
- 23. Rxc1 Rc8
- 24. Rxc8 Qxc8
- 25. h4 Bb5
- 26. d6

*The passed pawn takes another step.*

- 26. ... Nc5
- 27. Qd5 ch Kf8

*On 27...Kh8 White can win quickly with 28.Bxc5 bxc5 29.Bh3! Qd8 (29...Qxh3 allows mate in two by 30.Qa8 ch) 30.Qb7 followed by d7 and Qc8. But as Christiansen now demonstrates, the king's position on f8 is also vulnerable.*

PORTISCH



CHRISTIANSSEN

28. Qe4!

*A pretty queen offer which must be declined.*

28. ... Kf7

*On 28...Nxe4, 29.d7 gives discovered check from White's bishop, and White not only wins back Black's queen but promotes himself another one! Instead Portisch could try 28...Kg8 but then infiltration by 29.Qe7 is decisive.*

- 29. Qe7 ch Kg6
- 30. h5 ch Kxh5
- 31. Qf7 ch Resigns

*Instead of resignation, 31...Kg4 (31...Kh6 32.Bd2 ch wins) 32.Bh3 ch! Kxh3 33.Qh5 mate might have been a fitting finish to this powerful performance by White.*

MURRAY CHANDLER

## ENGLISH OPENING

L. CHRISTIANSEN	L. PORTISCH
1. c4	c5
2. Nc3	Nf6
3. Nf3	e6
4. g3	Nc6
5. Bg2	d5
6. cxd5	Nxd5
7. 0-0	Be7
8. d4	0-0
9. e4	Nxc3

*Portisch spurns the line he himself recently revived — 9...Nbd4!? planning 10.a3 cxd4! or 10.d5 exd5 11.exd5 Nd4 — possibly worried about 10.Be3!? as in Christiansen-Hartston, Hastings 1978/79.*

- 10. bxc3 cxd4
- 11. cxd4 Bf6
- 12. Bb2 b6
- 13. Rb1

*White protects his bishop in order to proceed with his central pawn advance.*

- 13. ... Bb7
- 14. d5 exd5
- 15. exd5 Na5
- 16. Ne5 Bxe5

## 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.

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