

# Going Hungary

THE HUNGARIAN chess phenomenon is, if anything, even more baffling than the English chess explosion. Considering their tremendous results at the past two Olympiads, the Hungarians can barely be inferior to the Soviet Union in team competition. Moreover, this country of only 10 million people claimed two of the eight places in the previous individual world championship candidates cycle — and have 15 grandmasters, compared to, for example, New Zealand's none.

During my recent trip to Budapest I took the opportunity to investigate the factors behind this relatively small nation's status as a world superpower in chess. Part of the solution, I am sure, can be found in the offices of the Hungarian federation in the capital, although Tibor Florian, its president, modestly downplays the organisation's role.

Florian himself does not know any specific reasons for Hungary's string of international honours over the past few years, he says in between taking telephone calls, rattling off instructions to his full-time national trainer and two secretaries, and arranging Grandmaster Lajos Portisch's visa to the next overseas tournament. "It's just we were very lucky in the beginning," he says, "to find three such talented players as Sax, Ribli and Adorjan."

These three world-class grandmasters, as well as Portisch, all now belong to a government category entitled "international sportsmen" whose regular stipend depends only upon representing Hungary in tournaments. But further down the scale there is also a broad base of semi-professionals — perhaps even 100 or more — earning their living directly or indirectly from chess. It may be this "hidden professionalism", as one onlooker called it, that distinguishes Hungary from other Eastern European powers such as Rumania and Czechoslovakia, which have superficially similar situations.

Certainly the government involvement runs deep in Budapest. The most prominent enthusiast is no less a figure than the First Secretary, Janos Kadar. During last year's Ribli-Adorjan candidates play-off he could be spied following almost every game, and he is also an occasional visitor to the chess federation offices — conveniently situated just a stone's throw from party headquarters. As a youngster Kadar was also a promising player, as well as a member of the then illegal Communist Party.

During my trip a number of locals voiced what is becoming a familiar complaint in many countries — that there is a "generation gap" between the top stars of today and the youngsters to replace them. A gap of this type was particularly noticeable in the Soviet Union where, apart from Karpov, they were still relying exclusively on players in their late forties — until

Kasparov came along. But from what I saw, the Hungarians may have also found their Kasparov — only she is female! Twelve-year-old Zsuzsa Polgar learnt to play at the age of four, became a female master in 1979 and a national "male" master in 1980, the youngest in the world.

From what I saw of her play during the recent European girls' championship in Yugoslavia, Hungary has itself a potential women's world champion. Already she is being groomed as such.

Her schoolwork is done at home (mainly involving learning those invaluable chess languages of English, Russian and German) and she studies chess for four hours a day. She has several coaches. Without doubt it is this dedicated approach, combined with exceptional talent, that is producing a superstar.

Here is Polgar's final-round victory from the European women's under-21 championship, in which she finished in fifth equal position.

## FRENCH DEFENCE

<b>L. MEYER</b> (Switzerland)	<b>Z. POLGAR</b> (Hungary)
1. e4	e6
2. d4	d5
3. Nd2	c5
4. Ngf3	Nf6!?

*Normally this knight is developed later, at e7, to avoid being pinned by White's queen's bishop on g5. But in the game continuation Meyer does not succeed in applying this pin.*

5. exd5	exd5
6. c3?!	Be7
7. dxc5	Bxc5
8. Be2	0-0
9. 0-0	

*Not 9.Nb3 Bb6 10.Bg5? Bxf2 ch! 11.Kxf2 Ne4 ch followed by 12...Nxf5.*

9. ...	Ne4!
10. Nb3	Bb6
11. Bf4?!	Nc6
12. Nbd4	Bg4
13. Nxc6?	

*A terrible strategic error — not only does White relinquish her blockading square on d4, but she also strengthens Black's d-pawn.*

13. ...	bxc6
14. Qc2	Qf6!

*The attack begins, and Polgar subjects the White kingside to unbearable pressure.*

15. Be5	Qf5
16. Bd4	Bc7
17. h3	Bxf3
18. Bxf3	Qf4

POLGAR



MEYER

19. Rfe1	Nd2
20. Resigns	

*Mate by 20...Qh2 cannot be reasonably staved off — 20.g3 allows 20...Nxf3 ch.*

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