

# Normally successful Nokes

THE ANNUAL Lloyds Bank Masters Tournament in London has become the showpiece of the European Swiss-system circuit in a way that must be the envy of many countries.

This year's event resembled a mini-Olympiad — 110 participants of whom 62 were foreign. The line-up of seven Grandmasters included Russian former world champion Vassily Smyslov, whose resurgence this year at age 60 has surpassed the old-age achievements of even the great Emanuel Lasker. Of the 13 international masters playing, remarkably, none were English, but the host country did have her usual crop of juniors, sitting Trifid-like in wait for visiting celebrities. One of the first to suffer was Smyslov, whose overall score of six points included several draws against youngsters.

Overall the GMs nevertheless came out on top. First place on seven points (out of nine) was taken by local GM Raymond Keene on tie-break ahead of Tony Miles (also England) and Yasser Seirawan (USA). Keene, in his first English tourney for several years, produced some spectacular chess and seemed to enjoy tantalising the crowd with exchange sacrifices.

Compared with my first-equal of the past two years, the Kiwi performance was low-key, and I finished a point behind the winners. But Roger Nokes, our current joint New Zealand champion, did gain a personal triumph with his score of 5½ points. The tally included a draw with GM Shamkovich of the US and a win over IM Botterill of Wales. Roger gained a Fide master norm at his first attempt, and had chances for an IM norm going into the final round. Although paired against the strong Dutch player Gert Ligterink, already an international master, Roger was out for the win.

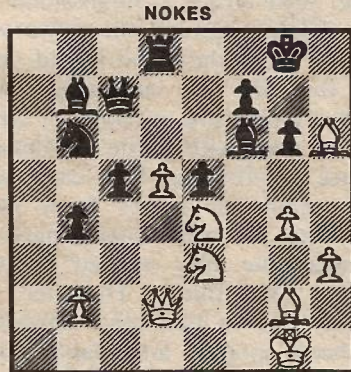
## BENONI DEFENCE

G. LIGTERINK	R. NOKES
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	c5
3. d5	e6
4. Nc3	e×d5
5. c×d5	d6
6. Nf3	g6
7. g3	Bg7
8. Bg2	0-0
9. 0-0	a6
10. a4	Re8
11. Bf4!	
11. ...	Nh5
12. Bg5	Qc7
13. h3	Nbd7
14. Qd2	Rb8
15. Bh6	Bh8
16. e4	b5
17. a×b5	a×b5
18. Rfe1	b4
19. Nd1	Bb7
20. Ng5	Nb6
21. Ne3	Ra8
22. R×a8	R×a8
23. g4	Nf6
24. f4	Nf7

25. e5! d×e5  
26. f5!

A thematic Benoni break. Ligterink was clearly in no-mood to mess about, and the sheer venom with which he follows up the assault requires great coolness to handle.

26. ... Nf6  
27. f×g6 h×g6  
28. Rf1 Rd8  
29. R×f6! B×f6  
30. Ne4



LIGTERINK

The critical position. 30...Bg7? now loses to 31.B×g7 K×g7 32.Nf5 ch!! g×f5 33.Qg5 ch Kf8 34.Qh6 ch Ke7 35.Qf6 ch followed by 36.d6.

But 30...Rd6!, offering to return the exchange, would leave White struggling to justify his sacrifices. The line Roger chooses allows Ligterink to invest even more material in his vicious onslaught.

30. ... Bh8?  
31. Qf2 Nd7

The threat was 32.Nf6 ch.

32. Nf5! g×f5

The next few moves are forced for both sides.

33. g×f5 Nf6  
34. Qg3 ch Kh7  
35. Qh4 N×e4!

Black's saving defence, as 36.B×e4 f6 holds the position.

36. Bg5 dis ch Kg8  
37. B×d8 Qd6  
38. B×e4 f6  
39. Ba5 Qa6!  
40. Qh5! Bg7

On 40...Q×a5 White's idea was 41.Qe8 ch Kg7 42.Qe7 ch Kh6?? (42...Kg8! 43.Q×b7 Qa1 ch may still draw) 43.Qf7!! — a fiendish trap after which Black is busted: 43...Qa1 ch 44.Kh2 Q×b2 ch 45.Bg2 Kg5 46.Qg6 ch Kf4 47.Qg3 ch K×f5 48.Qg4 mate! Nokes avoids this line by offering, in effect, a queen sacrifice.

41. Qe8 ch Kh7  
42. Qh5 ch Kg8  
43. Qe8 ch Kh7  
44. Qh5 ch Kg8  
45. d6! B×e4  
46. d7 Q×a5  
47. Qe8 ch Kh7

## Draw agreed!

After 48.d8=Q (48.Kh2! c4! 49.d8=Q Q×d8 50.Q×d8 c3) Qa1 ch 49.Kf2 Q×b2 ch 50.Ke3 B×f5! 51.Qg8 ch (51.Qh5 ch? Bh6 ch) Kh6 52.Qd2 Q×d2 ch 53.K×d2 B×h3 54.Qc4 Bf5 55.Q×c5 b3 and White may even be lost with queen against two bishops and three pawns! A great fight with a draw probably the fairest result.

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