

Getting into Europe

THE EIGHT finalists for the European Teams Championship have now been decided, following Denmark's victory over Czechoslovakia and England's over Iceland in the last remaining preliminaries. Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Holland, West Germany, England, Denmark and the Soviet Union are the qualifiers, and the venue is tentatively scheduled as Plovdiv, a town in Bulgaria, some time next year.

Being second in status, as a team event, only to the Olympiads, the European Championship is naturally taken seriously at all stages. This week's game features an impressive top-board clash from the preliminaries between two of the professional circuit's most distinctive personalities. On board one, representing Iceland, is Grandmaster and Fide (World Chess Federation) president Fridrik Olafsson. His opponent is the aggressive young English Grandmaster John Nunn, who the previous day had already beaten Olafsson in the first game of the double-round match.

It is admirable that Olafsson still plays top-level competitive chess at all, for the duties of a Fide president are demanding. His stern attitude with the Soviets was probably instrumental in bringing about the recent release of defector Viktor Korchnoi's wife Bella and son Igor, who have at long last joined Viktor in the West. More recently he staved off a threatened change of site and date of the Mexico Interzonal — at the personal request of Nunn, who said it would clash with his BBC tournament invitation!

Nunn, of course, is currently the best British hope for a player in the world championship candidates matches. But the price of fame is already being felt. A recent simultaneous exhibition he gave at a London college took place the day after publication of an international "blacklist" of sportsmen who had played in South Africa. John's name was included and during play left-wing protesters smashed windows to get in and then overturned the chess sets. The irony of it all was that the simul was for Amnesty International.

BISHOP'S OPENING

J. NUNN	F. OLAFSSON
1. e4	e5
2. Bc4	Nf6
3. d3	Nc6
4. Nf3	Bc5
5. 0-0	d6
6. c3	Qe7
7. Nbd2	a6
8. Bb3	0-0
9. Re1	Be6
10. Nf1	Ba7
11. Bc2	Kh8
12. Ng3	Qd7

An interesting finesse to discourage 13.h3. Black could then try a bishop sacrifice to expose the White King by 13...Bxh3 14.gxh3 Qxh3 15.Be3 Bxe3 16.Rxe3 Ng4 with unclear complications.

13. d4	Bg4
14. d5	Ne7

15. h3!	Bxf3
<i>Parting with the bishop pair, but now on 15...Bxh3 16.gxh3 Qxh3 17.Be3 Bxe3 18.Rxe3 Ng4 White has 19.Rd3 followed by 20.Qf1.</i>	
16. Qxf3	Nfg8
17. Bd2	g6
18. c4	f5
19. exf5	Nxf5
20. Nxf5	gxf5
21. Bc3!	

Lining up ominously on the diagonal leading to Olafsson's king. Admittedly the bishop currently bites on the Black e5 pawn, but Nunn has imaginative plans for the removal of this obstacle.

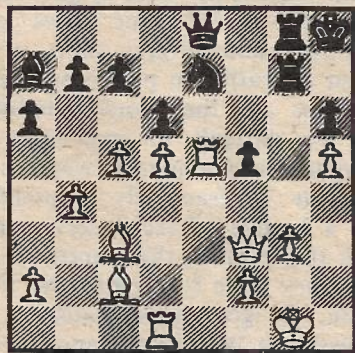
21. ...	Rae8
22. b4	Ne7
23. h4!	Rg8
24. h5	

Denying Black's knight the g6 square.

24. ...	Rg7
25. c5	Reg8
26. g3	h6?

The best bid for counterplay was 26...f4. Nunn had planned a similar sacrificial continuation to the one which occurs in the game: 27.Rxe5! dxe5 28.Bxe5 with dangerous threats, but Black is at least more active than in the actual continuation.

27. Rad1	Qe8
28. Rxe5!	



A devastating rook sacrifice to clear the long diagonal. Nunn's bishops are now brought to bear directly on the enemy king. Before embarking on such a committal course a player such as John will usually calculate as far as he can in specific variations, but intuition does play a part as well. Here the fact that Black's rook is pinned and his bishop passive helps to confirm the feeling that he has no defensive resource.

28. ...	dxe5
29. Bxe5	b6
30. d6	Nc6
31. Bf6!	

The right direction. On 31.Bc3 bxc5 32.Qxf5 Black has 32...Nd4.

31. ...	Qe6
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Nunn threatened 32.Qxf5 followed by mate on h7 so Olafsson decides to return his extra material with interest. Perhaps with 31...Rf8 32.Bxg7 ch Kxg7 33.dxc7 Black might have held on a little longer.

32. Bxg7 ch	Rxg7
33. Qxc6	bxc5
34. Qa8 ch	Rg8
35. Qxa7	Rxg3 chl

A nice try — 36.fxg3 Qe3 ch gives a draw by perpetual check — but easily sidestepped.

36. Kh2!	Qe5
37. Qxc5	Resigns

MURRAY CHANDLER