

In Georgian style

THE RECENT women's world championship, in which 20-year-old Maya Chiburdanidze successfully fended off a strong challenge from Nana Alexandria, was, as is now usual, a very Georgian affair. Both participants came from this small Soviet republic, the match was played there, and the West seems as far away as ever from providing a serious contender.

The 16-game match was tense and fluctuating. Reigning champion Chiburdanidze lost the first decisive game, but then took a lead of three wins to one. Alexandria fought back with two wins, and seemed to be holding her own until suddenly losing game 15. The match was effectively over, since in the event of a tie the champion retains her title. For prize-money reasons the final game was nevertheless played, and did indeed result in an Alexandria victory.

The blanket domination of women's chess exerted by the Georgians is not easy to explain. The terrific publicity generated by Nona Gaprindashvili's 1962 world title victory may have sparked it all off, or perhaps this land of wine and dancing may simply be the ideal creative environment. The fact remains that of the four semi-finalists in the candidates qualifying series three were Georgian (the other was a Russian). The West didn't quite manage a representative in the final eight.

Here is the fifth, and first decisive, game of the Chiburdanidze-Alexandria match; a heavyweight opening tussle which is virtually decided by superior home preparation by Black.

SICILIAN DEFENCE

M. CHIBURDANIDZE	N. ALEXANDRIA
1. e4	c5
2. Nf3	d6
3. d4	cxd4
4. Nxd4	Nf6
5. Nc3	a6
6. Bg5	e6
7. f4	Qb6
8. Qd2	Qxb2

The infamous "poisoned pawn" variation, in which Black grabs material at the cost of putting her queen out of play.

9. Rb1	Qa3
10. f5	Nc6
11. fxex6	fxe6
12. Nxc6	bxc6
13. e5	dxe5
14. Bxf6	gxf6
15. Ne4	Be7
16. Be2	h5
17. Rb3	Qa4
18. Nxf6 chl?	

Very fashionable at present. It sometimes amuses me to see how even the meekest of players will instantly make such bold decisions in the opening if they are accorded the respectability of "theory". Here White sacrifices a whole knight just to keep the position open while Black's king has no haven.

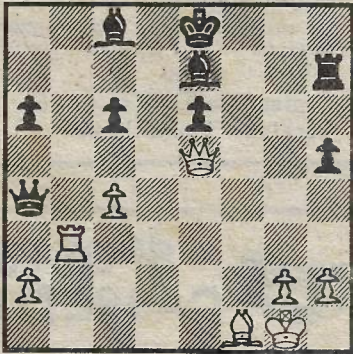
18. ...	Bxf6
19. c4	

To cut Black's queen out of the action for longer.

19. ...	Ra7
20. 0-0	Rf7
21. Qd6	Be7

22. Qxe5	Rxf1 ch
23. Bxf1	Rh7!

A new move, finally! Instead, a game Velimirovic-Musil, Maribor 1980, had continued 24...Rf8 25.Be2 Rf5 26.Bxh5 ch Rxh5 27.Qxh5 ch Kd8 28.Rd3 ch Bd7 when White later declined to force a draw by perpetual check and lost.



Alexandria's idea is that 24.Bd3 Rh6 leaves White sensitive on the back rank — 25.Rb8? Qd1 ch. Also if 24.Qb8 Black keeps her extra piece by 24...Bc5 ch 25.Kh1 Kd8! 26.Rd3 ch Rd7.

24. Rb8	Kd7
25. Qd4 ch	Bd6
26. Qa7 ch	Kd8!

So that 27.Qxh7 is met by 27...Bxb8. The world champion interpolates a "desperado" sacrifice to win back a bishop.

27. Rxc8 ch	Kxc8
28. Qxh7	Bc5 ch
29. Kh1	Qxa2

Black remains a pawn up as the deadly threat of 30...Qf2 must be parried.

30. Qh8 ch	Kc7
31. Qg7 ch	Kb6
32. Qg5!	

White counters with a threat of her own — perpetual check beginning with 33.Qd8.

32. ...	Qb2
33. Qd8 ch	Ka7
34. Qc7 ch	Qb7
35. Qe5	Qe7
36. Qxh5	Qd6

Material equality has been restored, but Black is still better. Her outside passed a-pawn is ideal for a quick sprint to the queening square. White's bishop, hindered by its own pawn on c4, can hardly impede its advance.

37. Qh7 ch	Kb6
38. Qb1 ch	Bb4
39. g4	a5
40. g5	Qd4
41. c5 ch	

A belated attempt to gain scope for the bishop.

41. ...	Kxc5
42. g6	Bc3
43. Qc1	Kb6
44. Qc2	Kc7
45. Bg2	Qe3
46. Bxc6?	

A miscalculation, though on 46.Bf1 (46...Qe1 was threatened) comes 46...a4! and the march of the a-pawn should prove decisive — 47.Qxa4 fails to 47...Bd4.

46. ...	Kxc6
47. g7	Qf3 ch
48. Kg1	Qg4 ch
49. Resigns	

On 49.Kf1 Black picks up the g-pawn and protects her bishop by 49...Qxg7.

MURRAY CHANDLER