

Max Euwe

FORMER world champion Macheillis (Max) Euwe, who died late last year at the age of 80, was one of the legendary figures of chess history. His remarkable double achievement of winning the world crown and later becoming president of Fide, the International Chess Federation, may never be matched.

Born on May 20, 1901 in Watergraafmeer, Holland, Euwe was taught chess at the age of four by his mother. At 10 he played his first tournament in Amsterdam and in 1920, while still at university, he became Dutch champion.

Euwe went on to gain a doctorate in mathematics, and remained a chess amateur even through his peak years, lecturing in mathematics, mechanics and astronomy at an Amsterdam lyceum. Despite this handicap, he scored many outstanding successes in international tournaments and matches, which led up to his world championship challenge of Russian Alexander Alekhine in 1935.

Although the temperamental and heavy-drinking Alekhine started as clear favourite, the contest developed into a close-fought marathon which Euwe eventually won by 15½-14½. He held his title for two years before, with a chivalry rare of champions of that period, he agreed to a return match with Alekhine, which he lost.

In 1970 Euwe was elected president of Fide, an organisation he had helped to found in 1924. During his eight-year tenure only his great reserves of diplomatic skill and patience kept the federation together through a series of crises. One was the 1972 world championship match where he persuaded, after all seemed lost, the awkward American Bobby Fischer to face the Russian Boris Spassky. Many New Zealanders will remember his visit to New Zealand that year, during which he gave several simultaneous exhibitions.

Here is one of Euwe's most famous encounters, which won a beauty prize at the Zurich 1953 candidates tournament.

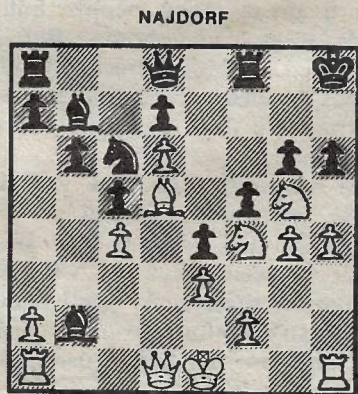
- 9. ... Nc6
- 10. e3 b6
- 11. Bd5 Kh8
- 12. Ne4 Qd8
- 13. h4! f5
- 14. Ng5!

The start of an enduring attack. Clearly the knight is taboo — 14...h×g5 15.h×g5 gives a powerful discovered check by White's rook.

- 14. ... Bb7
- 15. g4

15.Nf7 ch?! R×f7 16.B×f7 wins bishop for rook but cedes the initiative to Black after 16...Nb4.

- 15. ... e4
- 16. Ne2 B×b2
- 17. Nf4!



Offering a rook sacrifice. Black declines probably because the continuation 17...B×a1 18.g×f5! Bc3 ch 19.Kf1 is similar to the game continuation. In Bronshtein's classic book of the Zurich tournament he opines that then White's threats of N×g6 ch, Qg4 etc. "could not be met in a practical tournament game".

- 17. ... Qf6
- 18. g×f5! B×a1

Najdorf decides he might as well accept the material, as on 18...g×f5 19.Rb1 Be5 20.Qh5 White has a strong attack in any case.

- 19. N×g6 ch Kg7
- 20. N×e4 Bc3 ch
- 21. Kf1 Q×f5
- 22. Nf4!

Euwe is a whole rook down, but the Black king is critically exposed. Now 22...Qe5 23.Qg4 ch or 22...Be5 23.Ng3 Qh7 24.Qg4 ch Kh8 25.Ng6 ch both win for White.

- 22. ... Kh8!

The best defence. By returning a bishop Black gains some respite.

- 23. N×c3 Rae8?

Bronshtein gives 23...Nd8 as the most resilient.

- 24. Nce2 Rg8
- 25. h5! Rg5
- 26. Ng3 R×g3

Trying for counterplay. On 26...Qg4 comes 27.Bf3, and on other tries White also has strong continuations. Black's king position is just too airy.

- 27. f×g3 R×e3
- 28. Kf2 Re8
- 29. Re1 R×e1
- 30. Q×e1 Kg7
- 31. Qe8!

The final stage of the king hunt begins.

- 31. ... Qc2 ch
- 32. Kg1 Qd1 ch
- 33. Kh2 Qc2 ch
- 34. Ng2 Qf5
- 35. Qg8 ch Kf6
- 36. Qh8 ch Kg5
- 37. Qg7 ch Resigns

Mate is unavoidable.

MURRAY CHANDLER

KING'S INDIAN DEFENCE

M. EUWE	M. NAJDORF
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	g6
3. g3	Bg7
4. Bg2	O-O
5. Nc3	c5
6. d5	e5
7. Bg5	h6

Black was worried about White's plan of Qd2 followed by Bh6 and pushing the h-pawn. But more logical was 7...d6.

- 8. B×f6 Q×f6
- 9. d6!

This incursion of the d-pawn both delays Black's queenside development and cuts communication between his flanks. In addition White gains the valuable d5 square for his bishop and knight. The only drawback to the move is that the pawn, no longer protected by its comrades, may later be lost.