Ches NZ LISTENEH, November 27, 1982

Playing possum

IT MAY SEEM suicidal for a possum at night to freeze when caught in a car's headlights, but many chessplayers exhibit similar traits when facing a strong master. Some are reduced to quivering, nail-biting lumps even before the game begins. "How many moves will I last?" and "Will I make a fool of myself?" are common questions that race through their minds, as the master sits there as nonchalantly as a Capablanca. The answers are usually "less than 25 moves" and "yes".

Which is rather silly really; in reality the master should be worrying. When he wins, the result is passed over as "expected". But should he lose, the game is a sensation talked about everywhere. By realising this the weaker player can start off with psychological equality — perhaps the single most important step for improving one's results against stronger opposition. The next barrier to overcome is the one where one limits oneself to the optimum possibility of scraping a draw.

Let us look at the game of Scared Possum versus Master. Scared Possum eschews his normal opening for a sideline, hoping that Master will be less familiar with it. If Scared Possum doesn't get skinned alive (for Master quite possibly knows the sideline equally well) he intends to swap off as many pieces as possible to reach an endgame. The best he can look forward to is a long and difficult defence in a slightly inferior endgame, and just maybe a draw.

Smart Possum, on the other hand, plays the favourite opening he knows best from dozens of club games. Master may be familiar with its intricacies, but at least Smart Possum has his own experience to draw from. Then Smart Possum plays the position, but keeps an alert eye open for possibilities of attack — particularly aimed at the opposition King. The master will also realise he must exhibit caution here, and not overpress in search of the win. Unlike Scared Possum, Smart Possum will refuse draws if he gains a sizeable advantage.

Of course it is probable that, in either case, the best player will triumph. But the unexpected does occur, and it is then that fortune favours the boldest possum. This week's game confirms that the underdog should not sit there waiting for that rare grandmasterly miscalculation.

The unranked Swiss player Fernand Gobet plays an outstanding game to defeat the world-class Czech grandmaster Vlastimil Hort.

> Biel 1982 ILIAN DEFÉNCE

SICILIA	N DEFE
F. GOBET	v. HORT
1. e4	c5
2. Nf3	Nc6
3. Nc3	d6
4. d4	c×d4
5. N×d4	Nf6
6. Bc4	Qb6

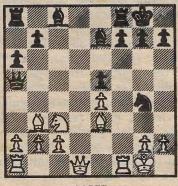
This disrupts White's plan to build up a dangerous attack with Be3, Qe2 and 0-0-0.

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7. Ndb5	a6
8. Be3	Qa
9. Nd4	e6

Black has won a tempo but he must not be too greedy — 9...N×e4? 10.Qf3 gives White powerful pressure.

0-0	Rel
Bb3	0-0
14	N×d4
B×d4	e 5
f×e5	d×e5
Be3	Ng4?
orrect was 15	Be6.
	Bb3 f4 B×d4 f×e5 Be3

HOR



GOBE

16. Qd5!

A fine move which gives White an endgame advantage. Hort had only considered the sacrifice 16.R×f7 R×f7 17.Qf1 when Black defends with 17...Nh6! 18.B×h6 Be6 19.B×e6 Qb6 ch

16.		QXd
	N×d5	Bd6
18.	Bb6	Be6
19.	Rad1	Race
20.	h3	Rc6!

A clever resource to avoid the passive retreat 20...Nh6, when 21.Be3 Rfd8 22.Bg5 sets Black real problems. However, Gobet finds a way to keep the initiative.

trutt	unve.		
21.	h×g4l		BXd5
22.	R×d5	i in the	R×b6
23.	Rfd1		Bb8
24.	Rd7		

White's attacking pressure on f7 is enhanced by the presence of opposite coloured bishops:

24.			Ba7
25.	Kh2		Rh6 c
26.	Kg3		Rf6

27. g5

Black threatens mate by 27...Bf2 ch 28.Kh2 (or Kh3) Rh6, but this is easily dealt with.

Rf4

Be3

20. KID	go	The state of the s
If 28R	×e4 29.R×f7	R×f7 30.Rd8
mate.		ins from section
29. g3 30. R×b7	Rf2	in analysis w
30. R×b7	Bd4	T PERMIT

32. Kg4 Kg7
32...h5 ch immediately was better,
but. as in the game, the advance of
White's passed c-pawn should ultimately prove decisive.

33.	Rdd7		h5 ch
	g×h6		B×h6
	Bd5		Bd2
	c4	No.	Be1
	c5	min a	Rg2
	Rb3	STATE OF	Kh6
39.	BXf7		Resign

MURRAY CHANDLER