

The last frontier

IN COMPARISON with many other sports, international chess competitions occur in an exceptionally wide variety of places around the world. Western Europe, the US, South America and Asia all hold regular events, and even China has its moments. Eastern Europe, of course, runs a constant succession of them — even in its present throes Poland still finds time for tournaments. Not without hitches, though. A Western colleague of mine arrived for a Polish event recently, but found living conditions so dismal he started searching for a diplomatic way to withdraw. Eventually, in desperation, he had his wife back home telegram him: "Your mother is ill. Return immediately!"

One portion of the globe yet to have any significance in chess terms, however, is Africa. But the emergence from that deepest, darkest continent is beginning. An open invitation tournament in Zimbabwe earlier this year attracted an interesting entry. The USSR, US and England all sent players to the 93-player, nine-round contest which, strength-wise, would scarcely have merited as much attention had it been played anywhere else.

Expatriate New Zealander Bob Wade went as England's representative, to do battle with Grandmasters Robert Byrne from America and Buhuti Gurgenzidze from the USSR, and Georgian Women's Grandmaster Nana Ioseliani. Bob reported a fairly well organised event, held in the capital Harare and opened by the President of the republic, Canaan Banana. As for the results — well, they went much as expected, though local player C. Kuwaza, Zimbabwe's third board at Lucerne, performed creditably. Leading scores were: 1-2, Byrne and Gurgenzidze 8 points; I. Watson (England) and C. Kuwaza 7. Wade and Ioseliani were among a group of eight on 6½. Ioseliani dropped several spots with her shock last-round loss to "unofficial" English representative Ian Watson, ranked 43rd in his home country.

The clash between the Soviet and American co-winners in Zimbabwe resulted in a relatively short draw, but it was nevertheless both fighting and interesting.

of the Pelikan variation. Since White always has the pawn move c3 to control the d4 square, Black's knight heads for more useful pastures on c5 or f6, via d7.

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| 13. c4 | Bxd5 |
| 14. cxd5 | Nd7 |
| 15. exf5 | Bh6 |
| 16. Nc2 | Qh4 |
| 17. g3 | Rg8 |

For his sacrificed pawn Gurgenzidze gains typical Pelikan kingside pressure.

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| 18. Kh1 | Qh3 |
| 19. a4 | |

A critical thrust which compels Black to seek immediate counter-measures.



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| 19. ... | Rg4! |
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Threatening 20 ... Rh4! 21.gxh4 Bf4 mating.

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| 20. Rg1 | Rxa4 |
| 21. Rxa4 | bxa4 |
| 22. Nb4 | Nc5 |
| 23. Nxa6 | |

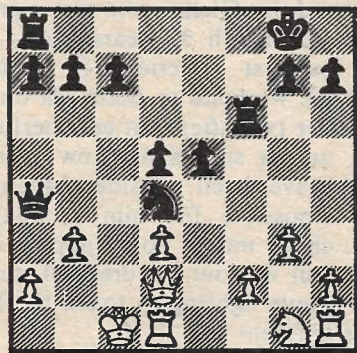
Byrne wastes no time killing off the last of the queenside pawns, but Gurgenzidze finds enough kingside pressure to maintain the balance.

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| 23. ... | Nxa6 |
| 24. Qxa4 ch | Ke7 |
| 25. Qc6 | Qg4! |

The equalising riposte.

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| 26. Bxa6 | Draw agreed. |
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After 26 ... Qf3 ch 27.Rg2 Qd1 ch White cannot avoid perpetual check.



Black to play

A. Nascimento v Wade, Zimbabwe 1983. After mismanaging the opening White, the Angolan champion, found it necessary to castle queenside. How did one-time New Zealand champion Wade exploit the opposition king's position? Solution upside down below.

Solution: 1 ... Nxb3 ch 2. Resigns. Black wins after 2.axb3 Qa1 ch 3.Kc2 Rc6 ch.

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SICILIAN DEFENCE

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| R. BYRNE | B. GURGENIDZE |
| 1. e4 | c5 |
| 2. Nf3 | Nc6 |
| 3. d4 | cxd4 |
| 4. Nxd4 | Nf6 |
| 5. Nc3 | e5 |
| 6. Ndb5 | d6 |
| 7. Bg5 | a6 |
| 8. Na3 | b5 |
| 9. Bxf6 | |

The positional variation 9.Nd5 Be7 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.c3 is currently in fashion, though I'm not convinced it gives White a lot.

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| 9. | gxf6 |
| 10. Nd5 | f5 |
| 11. Bd3 | Be6 |
| 12. 0-0 | Nb8! |

Apparently the latest try in this line