

# Czechmates

SINCE THE revolution in Iran chess has been officially frowned on by the Ayatollah Khomeini as it apparently encourages people to "think in terms of war". Needless to say this pronouncement did not win the Ayatollah any awards for services to the royal game in his home country and some of Iran's top masters have left indefinitely to pursue their careers elsewhere. However, anyone who has experienced the aggressive competitiveness of tournament play will agree that chess is hardly the sport for pacifists.

Despite this there have always been a small number of players who choose to rely almost exclusively on subtle technical expertise rather than direct attacks. One of the greatest exponents of this style of play was the Czech Grandmaster Salo Flohr, who died earlier this year aged 74. Flohr, born in Horodenk, Russian Poland, succeeded to the stage where, in 1937, he was nominated as the challenger of world champion Alexander Alekhine. Regrettably the political turbulence of that period led to indefinite postponement of the match; more's the pity considering Flohr's consistent top form around that time. His succession of first places included Hastings 1933 (ahead of Alekhine), Moscow 1935, Margate 1936, Podebrady 1936, and Kemiri and Ostend in 1937.

After the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1938 Flohr sought refuge in Scandinavia, and then in the Soviet Union where he was later naturalised. One columnist described him as something of a punch-bag for his newfound compatriots to test their skills on. Former world champion Mikhail Botvinnik was more polite, commenting that Flohr's accurate style was an ideal foil to the tactical approach of the younger Soviet masters. In the following smooth positional win, played when Viktor Korchnoi still represented the USSR, watch how White's game collapses within a few moves of losing control of the open e-file.

## REVERSED KING'S INDIAN

V. KORCHNOI	S. FLOHR
1. Nf3	d5
2. c4	d4
3. g3	c5
4. Bg2	Nc6
5. 0-0	e5
6. d3	Nf6
7. e4	dxe3 e.p.
8. Bxe3	Be7
9. Nc3	Bf5
10. Qb3	b6
11. Nd5	

Muscovite Grandmaster Simagin prefers 11.Nh4 Bd7 12.Nf5! or 11.Nd2 Rc8 12.Nde4 with a grip on the central white squares.

11. ...	0-0
12. Rfe1	Nxd5
13. cxd5	Na5
14. Qc3	f6
15. Nd2	Rc8
16. Nc4	Nxc4!

A surprising capture which sets right White's pawn structure, but is actually Black's best way to blockade the

passed d-pawn. Instead 16... Nb7 allows White to seize the offensive with 17.f4! b5 18.fxe5 bxc4 19.d6! or 17... exf4 18.Bxf4 b5 19.Qb3!

17. dxc4	Bd6!
18. f4?	

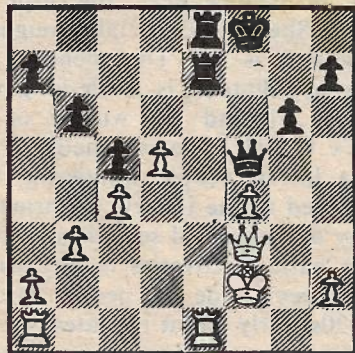
This kingside weakening tells in the long run.

18. ...	exf4
19. Bxf4	Bxf4
20. gxf4	Qd6!
21. Qg3	Rfe8
22. Bf3	Qd7
23. b3	Kf8
24. Bh5	g6
25. Be2	

Better was 25.Bf3; now Flohr can double rooks on the e-file.

25. ...	Re7
26. Bd3	Rce8
27. Kf2	Bxd3
28. Qxd3	Qg4
29. Qg3	Qf5
30. Qf3	

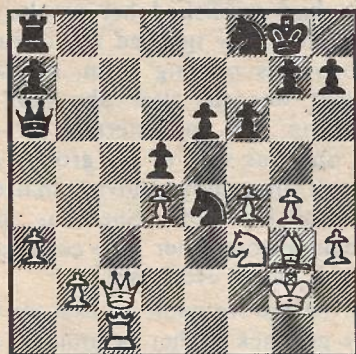
Korchnoi would dearly have liked major exchanges with 30.Rxe7 Rxe7 31.Rel, but then Black would have 31... Rxe1 ch 32.Kxe1 Qb1 ch.



30. ...	Re4!
31. Rxe4	Rxe4
32. Kg3	g5!
33. fxg5	Qxg5 ch
34. Kf2	Rf4
35. Resigns	

Finally a position to show that, when he wanted, Flohr could calculate tactics as well as the next man.

FLOHR



GUDMUNDSSON (Iceland)

Played at Stockholm 1937. Black to play. Flohr embarks on his mating combination with a rook sacrifice to decoy the white queen.

1. ...	Rc8!
2. Qxc8	Qe2 ch
3. Kg1	Qxf3
4. Be1	Qxh3
5. Rc2	Qe3 ch
6. Kf1	Qxf4 ch
7. Kg1	Qxg4 ch
8. Kh2	Ng5!
9. Qc3	Nf3 ch
10. Resigns	

White must give up his queen or be mated.

MURRAY CHANDLER