

third game from his match with Timman.

One on one

SERIOUS competitive chess normally takes place in the form of tournaments featuring anything from nine to a thousand participants. Match play, where one faces the same opponent several times in succession — one example being the Candidates matches in the men's and women's world championship cycles — is much rarer. But the semi-finals of this knock-out Candidates contest, just before Christmas, appeared to trigger an epidemic of other one-to-one clashes around the world. One such was my tussle with "the Great Ort" (many times New Zealand champion Ortvin Sarapu) during December, held in Auckland's Winstone centre — a superb venue despite the distractingly panoramic view. Around the same time, in France, Aldo Haik was losing 1½ points to 2½ to Russian ex-world champion Boris Spassky, though I'm not sure about the view — apparently they played in the Metro. A Copenhagen theatre was the site of a remarkable performance by Denmark's 18-year-old Curt Hansen, who beat famous Grandmaster Bent Larsen 2-0 before a crowd of 850 spectators.

Spectators were the reason for several intriguing matches in London that supported the Kasparov-Korchnoi and Smyslov-Ribli Candidates spectacular. With the public sometimes travelling long distances to see a game, a sideshow was a good idea if the main contestants took a time-out or finished quickly. English number one Tony Miles and Czechoslovakian GM Vlastimil Hort certainly put on a show, with a marvellous 10-game display of entertaining chess. In fact the match (result 5-5 with only two draws) was suspiciously entertaining, but I've never been one for the compulsory breathalysing of Grandmasters anyway. Another London subsidiary event featured England's wonder-boy Nigel Short losing 5½-1½ to 19-year-old American Joel Benjamin. No doubt Short was exhausted from his recent exertions in the USSR, where he won a strong tournament in Baku and narrowly missed a grandmaster result. The talented youngster, so close to the grandmaster title, suffered the GM-norm jitters at Brighton too. In the final round, needing a win to qualify for the title, he tried to castle queenside illegally and lost after having to move his king instead.

A more sober match took place in Holland during late December. It was between Boris Spassky (again) and Dutch star Jan Timman, and they drew the six-game contest (prizefund 15,000 guilders) three-all. There was talk, many months ago, of a possible Spassky visit to New Zealand. If some large company could be persuaded to finance it, I'm sure such a tour would still be brilliantly received. The general public still remember the charismatic Boris as the good guy from the explosive Fischer-Spassky match back in Iceland 1972, and as can be seen the over-the-board prowess is still there. This is the

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

J. TIMMAN	B. SPASSKY
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. Nf3	d5
4. Bg5	Be7
5. e3	O-O
6. Nc3	h6
7. Bh4	b6
8. Be2	Bb7
9. Bxf6	Bxf6
10. cxd5	exd5
11. O-O	Nd7
12. Qb3	c6
13. Rad1	Re8
14. Rfe1	Nf8
15. e4!	

Timman tries some analysis I published after my own game with Spassky in 1980. On 15...dxe4 16.Bc4! is good, but the experienced Boris is content to keep the position closed.

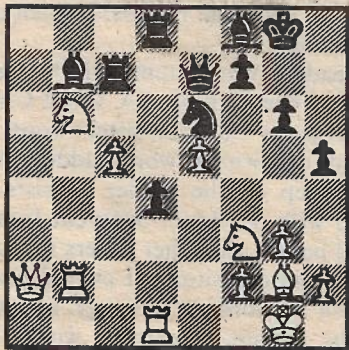
15 ...	Ne6!
16. e5	Be7
17. a3	Bf8
18. g3	Rc8
19. Rd2	g6
20. Bf1	h5
21. Bg2	Rc7
22. Qa2	Rd7

After subtle manoeuvring Black is ready for the thematic Queen's Gambit break with ...c5. Timman manages to postpone this advance, but White's queenside pawns become potentially vulnerable.

23. b4	Qe7!
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White's pawn push b5 can now always be met with ...Qxa3.

24. Rdd1	a5
25. Na4	axb4
26. Nxb6	Rc7
27. axb4	Qxb4
28. Rb1	Qe7
29. Rd1	Rd8
30. Rb2	c5
31. dxc5	d4!



Although most of the queenside has disappeared, Black's passed d-pawn guarantees him the edge. The White pawn on c5 can be recaptured next move.

32. Qa3	Rxc5
33. Na4	Rc1!

Beginning a neat combination to end matters swiftly. On 34.Qxe7 Rxd1 ch 35.Bf1 Bxe7 Black remains material ahead even after 36.Rxb7.

34. Qd3	Qa3!
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Same idea; 35.Qxa3 Rxd1 ch followed by ...Bxa3. Meanwhile ...Qxd3 is threatened.

35. Qf1	Rxd1
36. Qxd1	Bc6!

White sheds a piece — 37.Nb6 Qxb2. A good example of how, even in this solid opening, the initiative can swing to Black if White plays planlessly.

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