

Meanwhile, back in London

THERE WAS one slightly frustrating aspect of my recent New Zealand tour that could not be helped even with the superb hospitality afforded me by the various clubs. While I played every player in the country in exhibitions (it felt like that anyway) a mighty chess spectacular was happening 25 minutes from my European base back in London. It was not that anyone could even be blamed for the lack of foresight. It was difficult to predict that Fide (the World Chess Federation) and the Soviet authorities would end their squabble so abruptly — allowing “defaulted” Soviets Garri Kasparov and Vassily Smyslov back in the world championship cycle. It was near impossible to predict that London would successfully bid to stage both Candidates semi-final matches. The British firm of Acorn Computers had less than a week to deliberate before committing £80,000 sponsorship to the clashes, which saw Kasparov pitted against Soviet defector Viktor Korchnoi and Smyslov against Hungarian Zoltan Ribli.

The outcome was a resounding success for the English organisers, and, over the chessboard anyway, for the Soviets. Kasparov, the 20-year-old wonder boy, beat Korchnoi 7-4, while Smyslov defeated Ribli 6½-4½, so that these two winners now play off to see who challenges Anatoly Karpov for his world crown. Despite the final victory margin, however, the Kasparov match was a tense affair after Korchnoi’s dream start. The experienced 52-year-old exile sensationally won the first game with black against an a3 Queen’s Indian Defence — an opening that has been Garri’s bread and butter on the grandmaster circuit. Shaken, Kasparov abandoned his favourite line and never looked like doing better than a draw in the next four games. Game six proved the turning point. Spurning a middle-game draw offer, Korchnoi went astray with a decentralising rook manoeuvre, and a further blunder later on allowed Kasparov to equalise the scores. From then on the new Soviet “young sportsman of the year” took command, and his tally of five points from the last six games speaks for itself.

Barring accidents, however, Kasparov’s victory over his older rival had been expected. What was less clear was how 62-year-old Vassily Smyslov would fare against Ribli at an age when most Grandmasters would be tottering down the road to collect their pensions. So what happens? Smyslov turns in a superbly smooth technical performance, ending the best-of-12 series with a game to spare. As Karpov pointed out before the start, the fact that Smyslov, as a former world champion, had very little pressure on him was an important factor. Especially so against the nervous Ribli, a newcomer to the Candidates matches. Yet there is no denying that Smyslov turned in some outstanding play, and his fifth game win was an attacking gem that will certainly fea-

ture in a following column.

This week’s encounter is the final game from the Kasparov-Korchnoi match. Korchnoi nowadays carries a Swiss passport, but the night before this clash he was relieved of it by muggers while strolling on Tower Bridge. Reasonable grounds for asking for a postponement, but Viktor preferred to go down fighting in a sharp Benoni defence.

BENONI DEFENCE

G. KASPAROV	V. KORCHNOI
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. g3	c5
4. d5	e×d5
5. c×d5	b5
6. Bg2	d6
7. b4!	

An aggressive counter to Black’s own ambitious queenside advance. Now 7...c×b4 8.a3 b×a3 9.N×a3 Qd7 10.Qb3 is a promising gambit for White.

7. ...	Na6!?
8. b×c5	N×c5
9. Nf3	g6
10. 0-0	Bg7
11. Nd4!	0-0

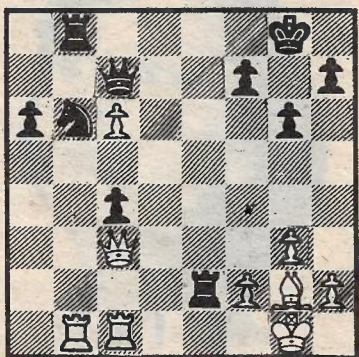
Intending 12.N×b5 Nfe4! with counterplay.

12. Nc3	a6
13. Nc6	Qc7
14. Be3	Bb7
15. Bd4	Rfe8
16. a4	b×a4
17. B×c5	d×c5
18. Q×a4	Nd7
19. Qb3	B×c6

Finally Korchnoi elects to remove the knight. Unfortunately White’s resultant passed pawn on c6 proves even more dangerous.

20. d×c6	Nb6
21. Rab1	Rab8
22. Qa3	c4
23. Rfc1	B×c3
24. Q×c3	R×e2

Grabbing this pawn was the only chance, but now Kasparov deftly runs Black out of constructive moves.



25. Qd4!	a5
26. Rb5	a4
27. Bf3	Ree8
28. Qc5	Qe7?

In time-trouble Korchnoi collapses and allows the White c-pawn to march on. Nevertheless, Black would need more than time to find an answer to the threatened 29.Rcb1.

29. c7	Q×c5
30. R×c5	Rbc8
31. Bb7	Nd7
32. R(5)×c4	Resigns

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