

Up the creak

THEY SAY rust is insomniac, and indeed it never seems to stop working. When not ripping into car bodies on wet nights it eats into chess players' brains. There is only one known method of prevention and it is not a process that is advertised on television. To quote former New Zealand champion Vernon Small: "The only way to clear away rust in the analytic joints is to exercise them vigorously."

The 91st New Zealand championship, organised by the Auckland Chess Centre as part of its centennial celebrations, illustrated this maxim most clearly. The rustiest player was joint 1982-83 champion David Gollogly, whose medical studies had prevented serious play all year. The consequence was slow, squeaky running in the early parts of the games, leading to time trouble, missed opportunities and a final placing of sixth equal. Small also arrived complaining of a lack of play and preparation; he showed some hesitancy but still played some good games to finish second equal.

In contrast the other joint 1982-83 champion, Paul Garbett, arrived in fine working order: "I played a lot in the second half of the year and also played some practice games with Ortvin Sarapu. I think that helped." Playing direct, attacking chess, ready to take risks to go for the full point, he came in a full point ahead of the strong field to score his fourth championship.

Eighteen-times champion Sarapu, now in his 60s, was probably most affected by the loss of one of the usual two rest days, but he scored three wins in a row near the end to catch up with Small for second equal. The youngest player to finish in the top half of the field, 19-year-old Jonathan Sarfati, led early on and had the satisfaction of beating Garbett in a nice game. Two losses near the end dropped him back to fourth equal with Robert Smith.

Championship placings: 1 Garbett, 8 points; 2-3 Small and Sarapu, 7; 4-5 Sarfati and Smith, 6; 6-8 L. Cornford, Gollogly and P. Clemance, 5; 9-10 E. Green and P. Stuart 4½; 11-12 A. Ker and A. Lloyd, 4. The reserve championship was convincingly won by Michael Freeman, a point ahead in a field of 98. Katrine Metge won the women's championship, which had only five competitors.

Garbett felt the following game was his best of the championship.

RUY LOPEZ

P. GARBETT	P. CLEMANCE
1. e4	e5
2. Nf3	Nc6
3. Bb5	a6
4. Ba4	d6
5. Bxc6 ch	bxc6
6. d4	f6
7. Be3	Ne7
8. Nc3	Ng6
9. h4	h5
10. Qe2	Bd7
11. 0-0-0	Qb8

To start a counter-attack on the queenside, but 11...Be7 was probably safer.

12. dxe5 fxe5

13. Qc4 Be7
14. g4!

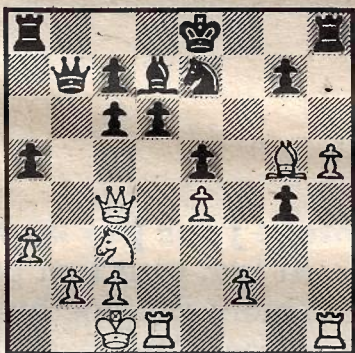
"When I spotted that move I couldn't resist it; it looked so unusual in that sort of position."

14. ... h×g4

The alternative was 14...B×g4 15.Q×c6 ch. Now 15...Bd7 16.Qc4 is positionally good for White, but 15...Kf8 forces White to sacrifice the exchange by 16.Ng5 or 16.Rhg1 B×f3 17.R×g6 B×d1. In both cases White has considerable long-term pressure for his material — the other knight will enjoy going to d5 — but the investment could hardly be considered gilt-edged.

15. Ng5 B×g5
16. B×g5 a5
17. h5 Ne7
18. a3 Qb7

CLEMANCE



GARBETT

19. f4

The pawns in the centre are frustrating White's regicidal ambitions — so off with their heads.

19. ... e×f4

Black could play 19...g×f3 en passant. Garbett then planned 20.h6 g×h6 21.B×h6 Rg8 (21...0-0-0 22.Bg5 R×h1 23.R×h1 Re8 24.Qf7 wins) 22.Bg5! since 22...R×g5 is met by 23.Rh8 ch Rg8 24.R×g8 ch N×g8 25.Q×g8 ch Ke7 26.Qg5 ch followed by 27.Rh1 and White must win. No better is 22...d5 23.e×d5 R×g5 24.Rh8 ch Rg8 25.R×g8 ch N×g8 26.d×c6. It is not clear, however, why White did not play 19.h6 immediately.

20. B×e7 K×e7
21. e5

The third pawn offer, though not a terribly generous one, as 21...d×e5 would be strongly met by 22.Qc5 ch. Now the most tenacious defence is 21...Raf8, though White could repossess one of his pawns with 22.e×d6 c×d6 23.Qd4.

21. ... f3?!
22. e6! B×e6
23. Rde1 Rh6
24. Q×g4 Kf7
25. Q×f3 ch Kg8
26. Rhf1 Rf6
27. Qg2 R×f1
28. R×f1 Qb6
29. Re1 Bf7
30. h6 g6
31. Qf3 Rf8??

Black had to play 31...Qd4 but then White could start turning his positional assets into material ones with 32.Q×c6 Rf8 33.Q×c7, and should win the ending.

32. Qf6 Resigns.

BERNARD CARPINTER

Murray Chandler is on leave. He will return for the April 14 issue, and from then on the Chess column will appear fortnightly, alternating with Bridge.