

MURRAY CHANDLER

Chop

IT IS a common fear among casual players that, pitted against a master, they would lose in less time than it takes to say "Znosko-Borovsky". Many, I imagine, would be surprised to learn that their partner in the works canteen might well beat them quicker than would have that Russian master of old. This apparent paradox occurs because of the strong player's typical choice of opening — usually highly sophisticated and lacking in direct threats. It is pretty hard to lose quickly against an opponent intent on the subtleties of a Ruy Lopez opening, though I have seen it done. At a 72-board exhibition I played in Dunedin last November several of my school-age opponents fell for the Petroff Defence trap. After 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Nxe5 Nxe4? 4. Qe2! Nf6?? 5. Nc6 discovered check White wins the Black queen in "respectable" fashion after just five moves.

At tournament level at least the first six or seven moves will normally be known to both players. Some openings have been analysed out to the endgame, a theme which is the subject of a recent book by American Grandmaster Edmar Mednis (*From the Opening into the Endgame*, Pergamon Press). Yet it is constantly astonishing how quickly one can depart from known opening theory with unconventional play or a new idea. In the two games that follow we see a sort of grandmaster's equivalent of the notorious four-move checkmate. Both encounters begin with the reputedly quiet English Opening, which takes a sharper twist with White's fifth turn. On move nine comes the tricky knight advance which catches certainly the Russian Arkhipov unawares. The outcome is two sensational brevities of just 16 and 18 moves. Not quite "Znosko-Borovsky" but getting close to "Konstantinopolsky". The first game was played in Hungary last year, the second in the Hastings, England, tournament over the Christmas-New Year period.

ENGLISH OPENING

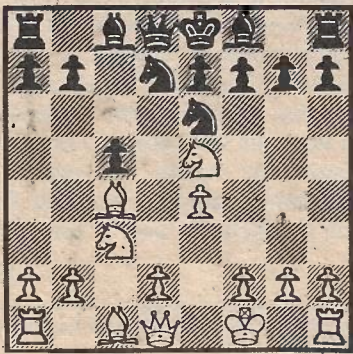
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| J. PINTER
(Hungary) | S. ARKHIPOV
(USSR) |
| 1. c4 | c5 |
| 2. Nc3 | Nf6 |
| 3. Nf3 | d5 |
| 4. cxd5 | Nxd5 |
| 5. e4!? | Nb4 |
| 6. Bc4 | Nd3 ch |
| 7. Ke2 | Nf4 ch |
| 8. Kf1 | Ne6 |

White has forfeited the right to castle in return for a lead in development. A couple of years ago American GM Yasser Seirawan resurrected the pawn sacrifice line 9. b4!? cxb4 10. Nd5 to exploit this lead, but later resources were discovered for Black.

9. Ne5!

A trappy new try. Unsuspecting, Arkhipov walks right into a devastating knight sacrifice.

9. Nd7?



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| 10. Nxf7! | Kxf7 |
| 11. Bxe6 ch | Kxe6 |
| 12. Qb3 ch | |

Australian International Master Ian Rogers points out a comparison with the similar, but unclear, sacrifice arising from Alekhine's Defence (1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 dxe5 5.Nxe5 Nd7 6.Nxf7 Kxf7 7.Qh5 ch Ke6). Here White's use of the a2-g8 diagonal makes all the difference.

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| 12. | Kf6 |
| 13. Nd5 ch | Kf7 |
| 14. Nc7 ch | Kg6 |
| 15. Ne6! | Qe8 |

The king hunt becomes a queen win after 15. ... Qb6 16.Nf4 ch Kf6 17.Nd5 ch.

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| 16. Nf4 ch | Kg5 |
| 17. h4 ch! | Kh6 |
| 18. Qg3! | Resigns |

Mate on the g5 square cannot reasonably be postponed.

In the next game a Hungarian finds himself on the receiving end. Gyula Sax, a strong Grandmaster, was no doubt aware of the earlier game and had prepared an improvement. But while his ninth move is undoubtedly stronger than Arkhipov's he actually loses quicker.

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| M. SUBA
(Rumania) | G. SAX
(Hungary) |
| 1. c4 | c5 |
| 2. Nf3 | Nf6 |
| 3. Nc3 | d5 |
| 4. cxd5 | Nxd5 |
| 5. e4 | Nb4 |
| 6. Bc4 | Nd3 ch |
| 7. Ke2 | Nf4 ch |
| 8. Kf1 | Ne6 |
| 9. Ne5 | Qd6 |

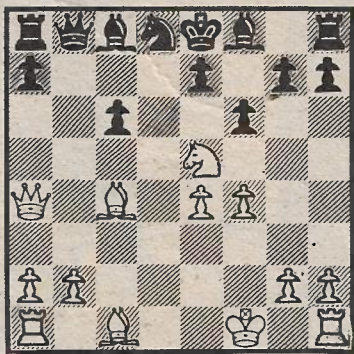
The exhibition game Miles-Hort, London 1983, had gone 9. ...g6 10.Qa4 ch Nd7 11.d4! cxd4 12.Nb5 Bg7 13.Nxf7! (again!) and White ultimately won, but better was 10. ...Bd7 11.Nxd7 Qxd7 12.Bxe6 fxe6 as in Bohm-Ree, Holland 1983. Instead 9. ...Qd4 10. Qa4 ch Nd7 11. f4! threatens Nb5, so Grandmaster Sax experiments with a different square for his queen.

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| 10. f4 | Nc6 |
| 11. Qa4 | Nd8?! |
| 12. d4! | cxd4 |

Certainly not 12. ...Qxd4 13. Nb5, while 12. ...f6 13.Nxc6 Bd7 14. d5 bxc6 15.Qc2 is also difficult for Black.

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| 13. Nb5 | Qb8 |
| 14. Nxd4 | f6 |
| 14. ... Qc7 | was the last try. |
| 15. N(d)x c6 | bxc6* |

Setting the stage for an unusual grandmaster checkmate.



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| 16. Bf7 ch! | Resigns |
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On 16. ...Nxf7 17.Qxc6 ch Kd8 18.Nxf7 is mate. What can one say, except, perhaps... "Dzhindzhivili"...