

MURRAY CHANDLER

# Short sharp

**A**LTHOUGH some clubs do go into recess for a few summer months, chess is not meant to be a seasonal game. One is as likely to freeze in unheated school halls in winter (nostalgic sigh from columnist remembering a Wellington junior championship) as melt at the national congress over Christmas. Recently, however, a number of organisers in Europe have apparently decided that a tournament is simply not the same unless it is crammed between the months of June and September. As a result we long-suffering professionals get a choice of where to push wood over the summer vacation. This year there were major events overlapping, in Denmark, Amsterdam, Hamburg, Switzerland and England. Even Czech GM Vlastimil Hort (famed for his exhibitions in different countries during rest days in tournaments) could not have played more than two of them.

I toddled off to the OHRA tournament in Amsterdam, where a strong 24-player Swiss-system event was won by Jan Timman (Holland), followed by Portisch (Hungary) and myself third. A well-deserved first grandmaster norm was gained by the Swedish international master Tom Wedberg — he will now need one or two more similar good results to get the title. Meanwhile, in Biel, Hort was tying for first place with Robert Hübner from West Germany. Soviet defector Viktor Korchnoi managed a poor third, after sensationally losing against the young Swedish woman Pia Cramling in the first round.

But if there were a prize for the most outstanding performance over this mini-season, it would go this year to England's Nigel Short. By winning in Esbjerg, Denmark, Short effectively fulfilled his long-awaited qualification for the prestigious title of grandmaster. At 19 he is now the world's youngest grandmaster — and the fifth youngest in history. His four predecessors are Bobby Fischer at 15, Garri Kasparov at 17, Boris Spassky at 18 and Anatoly Karpov at 19 — three world champions and the current challenger. With the pressure off, Nigel went on to win the British championship in Brighton immediately afterwards.

Short, who is no longer as diminutive as his name might suggest, learnt the moves at the age of six. At 14 he became the world's youngest international master, and at 16 he abandoned school to turn professional. His ambition then was "to become a teenage grandmaster, and then go on to contest the world championship". In the past his strength in intuitive positional play has sometimes been offset by poor openings, but this may change now that he studies with another English grandmaster, John Nunn. In this attacking game from Brighton, against an Indian IM, we see some early fruits of this new partnership.



**Nigel Short, teenage grandmaster: now for the world championship.**

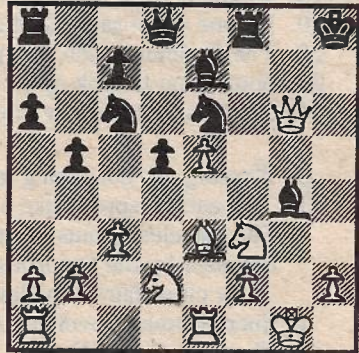
- 11. Re1 Nc5?!
- 12. Bc2 Bg4
- 13. Nbd2 Ne6
- 14. Qb1!

*Thipsay has mixed two systems of defence and now has to choose between weakening his kingside with 14...h6 and allowing White a dangerous sacrifice.*

- 14. ... Kh8
- 15. Bxh7! g6

*Trapping the bishop, but Short gets two more pawns for it and eliminates the Black king's shelter.*

- 16. Bxg6 fxg6
- 17. Qxg6 Bf5
- 18. Qh6 ch Kg8
- 19. g4! Bxg4
- 20. Qg6 ch Kh8



- 21. Kh1!

*The point of White's 19th was to open the g-file (but not 21. Qxg4? Rg8!). Now on 21...Bxf3 ch 22. Nxf3 Rxf3 White checkmates with 23. Qh6 ch Kg8 24. Rg1 ch Kf7 25. Qg6 ch Kf8 26. Qg8.*

- 21. ... Bf5
- 22. Qh6 ch Bh7

*On 22...Kg8 23. Rg1 ch wins.*

- 23. Qxe6 Qe8
- 24. Rg1 Rf7
- 25. Qh3 Rf5
- 26. Bh6 Bf8
- 27. Bxf8 Qxf8
- 28. Rg5 Re8
- 29. Rxf5 Qxf5
- 30. Qxf5 Bxf5
- 31. Re1 Bg4
- 32. Ng5 Rf8
- 33. Kg2 Ne7
- 34. Nb3 Resigns

**Contest result**

The solution to the problem in the August 4 column was 1.Bd6 Rxd6 2.c3 Qb5 3.Ra5 trapping the queen. About 30 correct solutions were received, and one answer came from New York! The first 10 correct entries won prizes. They were: Michael Browne, Gerard Barrow, Norman Bradley, Alastair Duhs, P. F. Cribbett, Peter McKenzie, A. L. Hames, Mark Capie, Peter King and Arthur Pomeroy.

**RUY LOPEZ**

N. SHORT	P. THIPSAY
1. e4	e5
2. Nf3	Nc6
3. Bb5	a6
4. Ba4	Nf6
5. O-O	Nxe4
6. d4	b5
7. Bb3	d5
8. dxe5	Be6
9. Be3	Be7
10. c3	O-O