

MURRAY CHANDLER

# World beaters

**A** YOUNG SOVIET team, sans world championship contenders Karpov and Kasparov, successfully defended its Olympic title in Thessaloniki in December — but the West is catching up. The USSR took gold medals in both the 88-nation open competition and the 51-nation women's event. In the open the squad of Belyavsky, Polugayevsky, Vaganian, Tukmakov, Yusupov and Sokolov started with a maximum 12/12 points — including an unprecedented 4-0 wipeout of major rivals Hungary. But the USSR did lose a key match to the US, when, after nine hours' play, American board one and Soviet defector Roman Dzhindzhishvili inflicted a subtle *zugzwang* on Belyavsky. Any move the Russian made would lose immediately. Moscow radio mentioned the defeat, only the fourth match loss ever for the Olympic champions, but Dzhindzhishvili's name was omitted from the report. Too politically sensitive, or perhaps they couldn't pronounce it either.

This victory put the jubilant Americans on a \$US5000 for first and \$US1000 for second place bonus, in a promising position for the silver medals. A strong start, however, had pushed the fighting all-grandmaster English team up against powerful opposition early on. This proved to be a critical factor in the final three rounds, when by crushing weaker teams England catapulted into second place — an historic breakthrough. Final leading scores in the 14-round event, over four boards, were: USSR 41 points, England 37, US 35, Hungary 34½, Romania 33, West Germany and France 32½. As well as the medals, an encouraging sign for Western countries was the relegation of the normally dominant East Europeans (particularly Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia) to minor standings.

One very pleasant aspect of this Olympiad in Greece was the gigantic playing arena, which comfortably hosted the 1000 or so players and officials. There are few events elsewhere in which amateurs from say the US Virgin Islands can play near — and occasionally against — the world's top professionals. Everyone was able to watch some fantastic individual clashes on huge demonstration boards mounted above the leading matches.

Eclipsing even Alexander Belyavsky's medal-winning score of 8 out of 10 on board one for the finest result of the Olympiad was the English grandmaster John Nunn's staggering 10 points from 11 games. For this Nunn won two individual golds, for the best score on board two and the best overall performance. On his free day John added another award to this tally by ambling down to the playing hall and winning the world problem-solving championship!

This week's game features the annihilation of the normally solid Dutch grandmaster Gennadi Sosonko at the hands of England's 29-year-old superstar.

**SICILIAN DEFENCE**

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|---------|------------|
| J. NUNN | G. SOSONKO |
| 1. e4   | c5         |
| 2. Nf3  | Nc6        |
| 3. d4   | cxd4       |

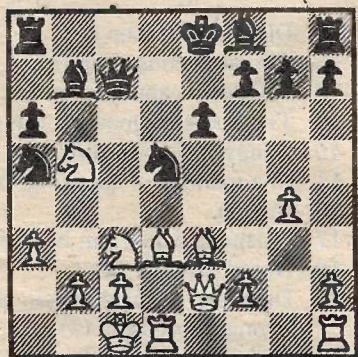
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| 4. Nxd4 | Nf6 |
| 5. Nc3  | d6  |
| 6. Bc4  |     |

*The sharp Sozin variation, in which Nunn had prepared a surprise against Sosonko's usual defensive choice.*

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|----------|-----|
| 6. ...   | e6  |
| 7. Be3   | a6  |
| 8. Qe2   | Qc7 |
| 9. 0-0-0 | Na5 |
| 10. Bd3  | b5  |
| 11. a3   | Bb7 |
| 12. g4!? | d5  |

*The theoretically recommended counter to White's aggressive 12th move. Nunn's pre-game analysis involved a bold sacrifice to trap Black's king in the centre.*

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|------------|------|
| 13. exd5   | Nxd5 |
| 14. Ndxb5! |      |



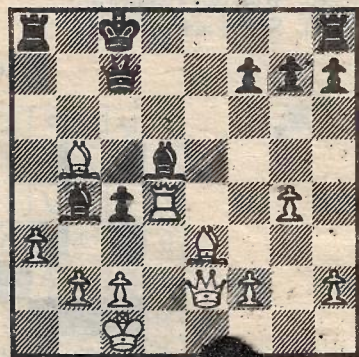
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|-------------|------|
| 14. ...     | axb5 |
| 15. Bxb5 ch | Kd8  |
| 16. Nxd5    | exd5 |

*The critical test is 16...Bxd5 17. Rxd5 ch! exd5 18. Rd1 when White, although a rook down, has dangerous threats. As the game goes, Nunn is able to get to the opposing king by means of an unusual transfer of his rook to the third rank.*

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|----------|-----|
| 17. Rd3! | Nc4 |
| 18. Rc3  | Bb4 |
| 19. Rxc4 |     |

*Avoiding 19. axb4?? Ral checkmate of course.*

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|------------|------|
| 19. ...    | dxc4 |
| 20. Rd1 ch | Kc8  |
| 21. Rd4!   | Bd5  |



*Desperately shovelling back some material, but there is nowhere to hide. If 21...Kb8 then 22. Bf4 wins the Black queen.*

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|----------|---------|
| 22. Rxd5 | Bd6     |
| 23. Rd4! | Resigns |

*White will have three pawns for the exchange and his attack still rages.*

Next column: the New Zealand performance at Thessaloniki.