

MURRAY CHANDLER

Top class

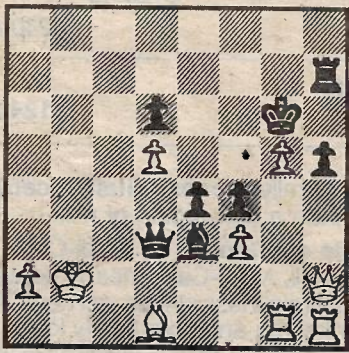
NEW ZEALAND'S final placing at the recent Thessaloniki Olympiad in Greece represents a slight improvement over Lucerne 1982 — 38th-45th equal in an 88-nation field. Although the tally of 29 hard-won points seems a far cry from the 41 of the victorious USSR, a close examination reveals that we were only a point behind Sweden, whose squad of seasoned professionals were challenging for medals earlier in the tournament. While none of our national team are regulars on the international circuits, all six men this time could claim a fair measure of past overseas experience. This was especially reflected in good solid performances returned by the top two boards, Vernon Small and Ortvín Sarapu. A heartening 3-1 victory over Indonesia further confirms that talented players like Small would regularly be notching up international master norms if given the same opportunities readily available to most Europeans.

Our result in the concurrent Women's Olympiad, 39th-40th from 51 teams, was more disappointing considering the presence of both Fenella Foster and Winsome Stretch. Unfortunately the latter was badly off form, but a brilliant New Zealand success was scored by Vivian Smith whose seven points from nine games netted her the individual bronze medal for board three. Individual scores in both teams were: (men's) Small 7½/12, Sarapu 7/12, Smith 5/12, Levene 5/11, Gologly 4/9; (women's) Foster 5½/10, Stretch 2/10, Smith 7/9, Parlane 4/10.

At this stage in the column I'd normally divulge all juicy gossip pertaining to the New Zealand squad. Or at least urge you to subscribe to *New Zealand Chess* magazine (PO Box 8802, Symonds St, Auckland) which will no doubt carry its usual comprehensive report. As, however, I was this time a member of the English squad in Greece I cannot resist showing the most remarkable pair of adjourned positions from a team match I can ever remember seeing. Jonathan Mestel and John Nunn were adjourned respectively against the Americans (actually ex-Soviets!) Lev Alburt and Roman Dzhindzhishvili. The other English team members were waiting back at the hotel when captain David Anderton returned, bringing news that both games were adjourned yet again. "We are a rook down in Mestel's game," he said, "and a queen for bishop down in Nunn's." Then, over the groans, he announced: "But we hope to win them both!"

This was the situation at second adjournment in Mestel's game.

MESTEL



ALBURT

1. Re1

Alburt's sealed move. Black would now get nowhere with 1. ... Rb7 ch 2, Bb3 Bd4 ch 3. Kc1.

1. ... Bd4 ch

2. Kc1 Bc5!

The first "quiet move", threatening a nasty check on a3.

3. Re2 h4!!

This second "quiet move" is quite stunning, as at first glance it seems irrelevant to the main theatre of war on the queenside. On close inspection the point is revealed: Black cannot win by 3. ... Ba3 ch 4. Rb2 Rc7 ch 5. Bc2, as any non-checking move allows Alburt his own winning attack down the h-file. Mestel's cunning little pawn push is intended to hold up this counter-attack for an extra vital tempo.

4. Kb2

In spite of a free move and extra rook, White has no way to bolster his defences against 4. ... Rc7 followed by 5. ... Ba3 ch. 4. Rb2 loses to 4. ... Be3 ch 5. Rd2 Rc7 ch 6. Bc2 Qxc2 checkmate.

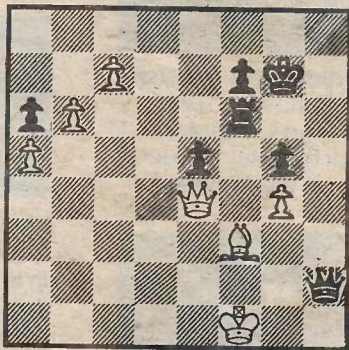
4. ... Rc7

5. Resigns

On 5. Bb3 Black mates with 5. ... Bd4 ch 6. Ka3 Ra7 ch 7. Kb4 Bc5.

We pick up John Nunn's position after 51 moves and about six and a half hours' play. Dzhindzhishvili had been pressing for the win all game, but had probably mentally conceded White the draw by now.

DZHINDZHISHVILI



NUNN

1. ... Qh1 ch

2. Ke2 Qh2 ch

The tacit draw by repetition offer, which it seems White must take. Or so Dzhindzh must have thought.

3. Kd3!

But what's this?

3. ... Rd6 ch*

4. Kc4!! Rd4 ch

5. Kc5!!

The truth begins to dawn. Although Black now goes queen for bishop ahead, his situation will be desperate due to the far-advanced white passed pawns on c7 and b6.

5. ... Rxe4

6. Bxe4 Qd2

7. Kc6 Qf4

8. Bd5!

This was the situation at second adjournment. Analysis convinced us that the White king could easily find shelter and then shepherd the passed pawns through to promotion. For example, 8. ... Qa4 ch 9. Kb7 Qd7 10. Bc6 Qe7 (to meet 11. Kb8 with 11. ... Qd6 pinning the c-pawn) 11. Kxa6! Qe6 12. Kb7! Qe7 13. a6! and yet another white pawn steams down to become a queen when it reaches the eighth rank.

Dzhindzhishvili resigned. ■