

Out and up

by Murray Chandler

AFTER a seven-and-a-half year campaign fighting the USSR authorities for permission to emigrate — including a 40-day hunger strike — the Gulko family have made it to the West. Former Soviet Champion Boris Gulko, his wife, women's grandmaster Anna Akhsarumova, and their son David arrived in Israel last June, where they were put up in a special transit centre for Soviet émigrés, though where they will eventually settle is unclear. Dutch grandmaster Gennadi Sosonko, himself an émigré, said that "Boris feels he has a moral duty to stay in Israel", but the traditional haven for recent arrivals has been the US.

Notwithstanding the culture shock of swapping orderly Moscow life for that of freewheeling New York, Soviet players invariably improve their world rankings after coming to the West. Although age 41, and rated around No 100 on the ELO list, Gulko could easily shoot to the top 30 or 40 now that he can plan his career and choose his own tournaments. The last international event he was allowed to play in the West by the strict Soviet Chess Federation was, I believe, the 1976 Biel Interzonal.

His wife will also undoubtedly be an asset in the national team of whatever country they do adopt. Her results have not been helped either by their long struggle to emigrate. She once lost a possible USSR women's title when an opponent was controversially reinstated after losing on time.

If Boris Gulko does elect to earn his living as a professional in the US, he will soon be meeting, and competing with, some familiar faces from his past. Defector Lev Alburt, émigrés Leonid Shamkovich, Dimitry Gurevich and Roman Dzindzihashvili, among others, have also traded in their regular Soviet stipends for the uncertain rewards of the American circuit. But rewards there certainly are, on occasion. The just-finished "World Open" in Philadelphia had over 1500 players competing for \$US190,000 in prizes, though the first prize of \$21,000 went to a home-grown American grandmaster, Nick De Firmian. My American informant tells me De Firmian's celebratory booze-up must have cost at least \$500, so maybe the ex-Soviets got some free vodka to console themselves with.

Probably because everybody had hangovers no games have yet surfaced from the World Open. So, perhaps appropriately, this week's encounter comes from the latest USSR championship (a competition none of the above-mentioned persons are likely to play in again). This year's competition held in Kiev — former home-town of our own Soviet chess coach émigré Lev Aptekar — suffered some unfortunate timing. Three rounds from the end the Chernobyl disaster occurred a few kilometres away, though the tournament was played to a finish with no apparent loss of fighting spirit. The winner in a field missing many

of the traditional old guard (Tal, Polugayevsky, etc) was the brilliant GM Vitaly Tseshkovsky.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENCE

K LERNER	L YUDASIN
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. Nc3	Bb4
4. e3	c5
5. Bd3	Nc6
6. Ne2!?	cxd4
7. exd4	d5
8. cxd5!	

After 8. 0-0 dxc4 9. Bxc4 Black has equalised in several previous games. This straightforward capture sets Yudasin some new problems to solve.

8. ...	Nxd5
9. 0-0	Nf6

The obvious 9. ... Be7 10. a3 0-0 does not equalise as White continues 11. Bc2 Bf6 12. Qd3 and the weakening 12. ... g6 is forced. This unpleasant lining-up of the White queen and bishop, to threaten checkmate should Black castle, remains a dominant theme for the rest of the game.

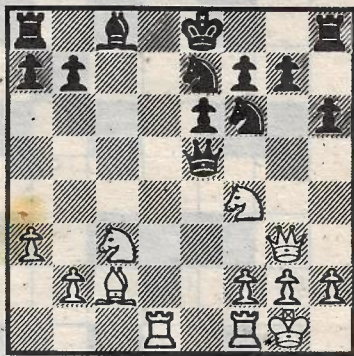
10. Bc2	h6
11. Qd3	Bd6
12. a3	Ne7

Strategically excellent — the knight seeks its perfect outpost on d5. But chess is also a dynamic game and Black's inability to castle (12. ... 0-0 13. Ne4! favours White) results in his dramatic demise.

13. Bf4	Bxf4
14. Nxf4	Qd6
15. Qg3!	Qxd4

To answer 16. Qxg7 with 16. ... Rg8. Instead 16. ... 0-0 loses a piece to the fiendish trap 17. Nfd5! Qxg3 18. Nxe7 ch Kh8 19. hxg3.

16. Rad1	Qe5
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17. Nxe6!	
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A brilliant stroke that forces Black's reply. 17. ... Qxg3 18. Rd8 is checkmate.

17. ...	Qxe6
18. Rfe1	0-0

Now White prosaically takes the queen and the game is effectively over. If 18. ... Qb6 instead, the end is swift (19. Ba4 ch Bd7 20. Bxd7 Nxd7 21. Rxe7 ch! Kxe7 22. Nd5 ch forks king and queen) but what about 18. ... Qa6? Then white must find 19. Qxg7 Rg8 20. Nd5!! Rxe7 (20. ... Nxd5 21. Qxg8 ch Kd7 22. Qxf7 wins) 21. Nc7 ch Kf8 22. Rd8 ch Ne8 and 23. Rxe8 mate.

19. Rxe6	Bxe6
20. Ne4	Nxe4
21. Bxe4	Rad8
22. Rxd8	Rxd8
23. h3	Nd5
24. Qe5	b5
25. Qd4	a6
26. Qa7	Nf6
27. Bf3	Resigns

Black's queenside pawns suffer a meltdown after 27. ... Bc8 28. Bb7 (28. ... Rd7 29. Qb8). ■