

There goes the centre

by Murray Chandler

IN MY latest *CIA* (as *Chess in Australia* magazine is quaintly dubbed by the natives) I notice that efforts are being made to establish a permanent centre in Sydney. Chess Discount Sales, who currently rent large premises devoted to selling books and equipment, have started the fund by purchasing 25 shares totalling \$A50,000. The idea is to raise up to \$A350,000 by selling shares at \$A2000 each, and purchase a venue catering for up to 100 players. If Peter Parr, *CIA* operative and entrepreneur, succeeds in this ambitious venture he will be one up on a number of major capitals — including London. In New Zealand there are clubs in Dunedin, Auckland and Christchurch with their own houses, although nothing on the scale of Sydney's planned venture.

Australian chess received a big boost last Christmas with the successful staging of the Adsteam-Lidums tournament in Adelaide, which attracted a number of top foreign grandmasters. Leading scores in this 259-player international were: 1, Sax (Hungary) 10 points; 2-3, Garcia-Palermo (Argentina) and Djuric (Yugoslavia) 9; 4-8, Miles (England), Torre (Philippines), Lobron (West Germany), Rogers and Hay (both Australia) 8½. Gyula Sax's brilliant performance of 10 points from 11 games earned him undisputed first prize of \$A5000, while his compatriots, the three Polgar sisters, were a media hit as usual — 18-year-old Zsusa scored 8 points, 10-year-old Judith 7½ and 12-year-old Sofia 7. The two younger sisters of this remarkable family appear to relax by playing blindfold speed games against each other!

One of Australia's next ambitions must be to get a player through to one of the three World Title Interzonal tournaments, a major rung up the championship cycle. Unfortunately disturbing reports have come in regarding the Asian Zonal qualifying tournament, alleging cheating from some of the Chinese players. Melbourne's Ian Rogers was among several players who withdrew in protest. However, the BBC has reported that the event is to be completely replayed so there must still be good possibilities for Rogers — Australia's only grandmaster — to win that precious interzonal spot.

In this following game from Adelaide we see perhaps the one dubious influence Rogers has had on his country's chess! As Black against the ferocious Sax, Steven Pickles from New South Wales decides to defend with the unusual Centre Counter. This rare defence, where Black's queen is developed very early, was a successful Rogers favourite for many years domestically. It can be tricky. But at international level — as even Rogers was

eventually forced to concede — it suffers.

CENTRE COUNTER DEFENCE

SAX	PICKLES
1. e4	d5
2. e×d5	Q×d5
3. Nc3	

Already we see the fundamental reason why strong players shun the Centre Counter, also known as the Scandinavian defence. White wins time attacking the Black queen.

3. ...	Qa5
4. d4	Nf6
5. Nf3	Bg4
6. h3	Bh5
7. g4!	Bg6
8. Ne5	e6
9. Bg2	c6

9. ... Be4 was virtually refuted in Jansa-Rogers, Yugoslavia 1985, by 10. B×e4 N×e4 11. Qf3 Nd6 (intending 12. N×f7 N×f7 13. Q×b7 Bb4! with counterplay) 12. 0-0! when 13. Ne4 and 13. N×f7 N×f7 14. Q×b7 are strong threats.

10. 0-0!

Sax knows when to break the rules. Although White has weakened his kingside with pawn advances (h3 and g4) his king is not really vulnerable in this position.

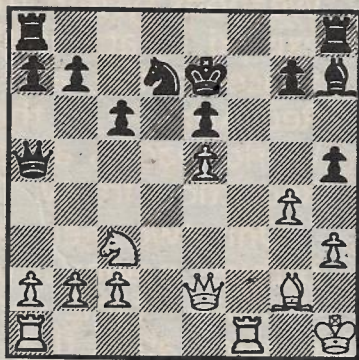
10. ...	Nbd7
11. Qe2	N×e5
12. d×e5	Nd7?

Too passive; 12. ... Nd5 had to be tried.

13. f4	Bc5 ch
14. Kh1	h5
15. f5	Bh7
16. f×e6	f×e6
17. Bg5!	

Now castling either side is impossible.

17. ...	Be7
18. B×e7	K×e7



19. Qd2!

As the CIA pointed out, this threatens four different avenues to a win (20. Nd5 ch, 20. Qd6 ch, 20. Qg5 ch and 20. Rf7 ch). Amazingly Black's next move defends against them all!

19. ...	Q×e5
20. Rae1	Qc5
21. b4!	Resigns

But to no avail. 20. ... Q×b4 21. Nd5 ch c×d5 22. Q×b4 ch or 20. ... Qb6 21. Rf7 ch K×f7 22. Q×d7 ch Kg8 23. Q×e6 ch Kf8 24. Rf1 ch or 20. ... Qd6 21. Rf7 ch K×f7 22. Q×d6 all win. A model and instructive termination of the Centre Counter, with extreme prejudice.

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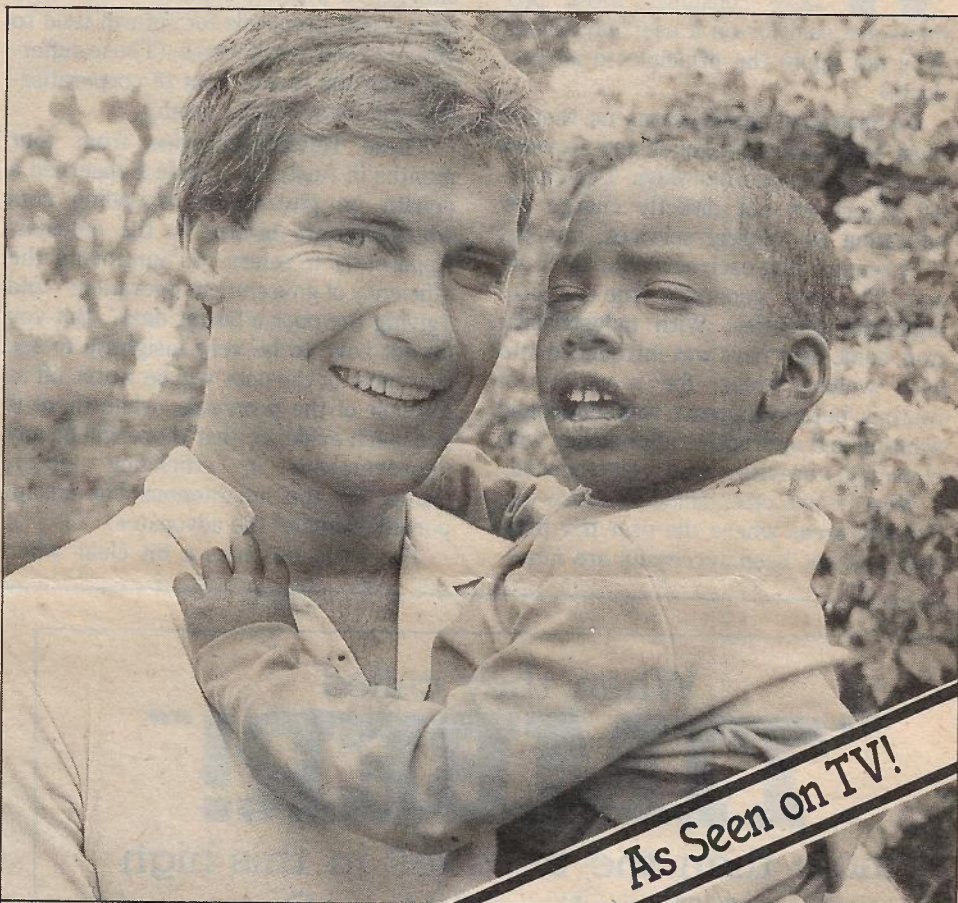


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