

Short's triumph

by Murray Chandler

NIGEL SHORT described his victory in the four-player double-round Euwe Memorial in Amsterdam as "the greatest and most important of my career". He picked up the first prize of 15,000 guilders (about \$NZ12,000) and finished ahead of the world's No 2 and No 3 players, Anatoly Karpov and Jan Timman. The 23-year-old English grandmaster is also through to the Candidates quarter-finals and has genuine prospects of breaking the Soviet stranglehold on the World Championship title. His qualifying match against fellow countryman Jon Speelman is scheduled for London in mid-August.

Here are the results of the 1988 Verenigde Spaarbank Tournament, in honour of the Dutch former World Champion Max Euwe:

	1	2	3	4	Total
Short (England)	xx	0½	½1	11	4
Karpov (USSR)	1½	xx	0½	½1	3½
Ljubojevic (Yug)	½0	1½	xx	½1	3½
Timman (Holland)	00	½0	½0	xx	1

Jan Timman's disastrous performance followed on the heels of a magnificent win in Spain. According to the Linares organisers, it was one of only 11 tournaments in history to reach category 15 on the Elo rating scale. Yet Timman was unstoppable, scoring 8½/11 to finish 1½ points clear of the field. Well, almost unstoppable. I had the good fortune of halting his winning run, in a French defence where I surprised him with my choice of opening variation. In Amsterdam Short used the same line to inflict yet another crushing defeat. Black is positionally massacred in just 26 moves, and Short makes it all look so easy.

FRENCH WINAWER

N SHORT	J TIMMAN
1. e4	e6
2. d4	d5
3. Nc3	Bb4
4. e5	c5
5. a3	Bxc3 ch
6. bxc3	Ne7
7. Qg4!	

Like myself, Short habitually plays 7. Nf3 here, but he may well have been aware of Chandler-Timman, Linares 1988. After 7. ... Qc7 8. Qxg7 Rg8 9. Qxh7 cxd4 10. Ne2 Nbc6 11. f4 Bd7 12. Qd3 dxc3 I got a good position with 13. Nxc3 a6 14. Ne2!, an idea of Boris Spassky's.

7. ...	cxd4
8. Qxg7	Rg8
9. Qxh7	Qa5?
9. ... Qc7 would transpose back. Either Timman had not yet found an improvement to our game, or he thought the rather discredited ... Qa5 variation deserved a fresh look.	
10. Rb1	Nbc6

10. ... Qxc3 ch 11. Bd2 Qc7 12. f4 Nbc6 13. Nf3 Bd7 14. Ng5 Rxc5 15. fxg5 0-0-0 16. Qxf7 favoured White in Alexander-Botvinnik, Radio Match 1946.

11. Nf3	Bd7
12. Rxb7	Qxc3 ch
13. Kd1	Na5
14. Rb4!	Rc8

14. ... Nc4 15. Bxc4 dxc4 16. Bb2 trapping the Black queen.

15. Ng5	Rf8
16. Bd3	Qc7



Short: making it look easy.

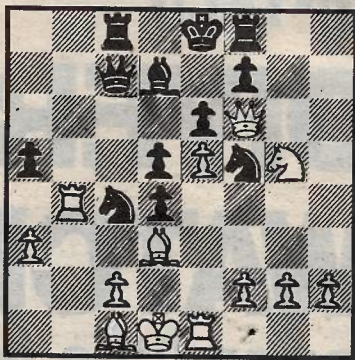


Timman: magnificent in Spain.

17. Re1	Nc4
18. Qg7	Nf5
19. Qf6!	

The bishop on d3 is also a vital defender, keeping White's king safe in the centre. Premature would be 19. Bxf5 exf5 and Black threatens ... Ne3 ch and ... Qxc2.

19. ...	a5
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Now Short blocks all counterplay down the c-file with a neat exchange sacrifice.

20. Rxc4!	dxc4
21. Bxf5	Qd8

Equally hopeless is 21. ... exf5 22. e6 splitting open the centre. After 22. ... fxe6 23. Qg6 ch Kd8 24. Nxe6 ch Bxe6 25. Bg5 ch is deadly.

22. Qg7	Qe7
23. Ne4	exf5
24. Nd6 ch	Kd8
25. Bg5	f6
26. Nb7 ch	Resigns

Black's queen is lost after 26. ... Ke8 27. exf6.

The final scores at Linares 1988 were: 1 Timman 8½ points; 2 Belyavsky (USSR) 7; 3 Yusupov (USSR) 6½; 4-5 Chandler (NZ/England) and Ljubojevic (Yug) 6; 6-9 Kir Georgiev (Bulgaria), Illescas (Spain), Nunn (England) and Portisch (Hungary) 5½; 10 Hjartason (Iceland) 4; 11 P. Nikolic 3½; 12 Chiburdanidze (USSR) 2½.