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CHESS

One of the best

by Murray Chandler

PLAZA INTERNATIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT March 15-27, 1988

	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Final score
1. GM Boris Spassky	2565	x	½	1	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	½	—	7½
2. GM Murray Chandler	2590	½	x	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	—	—	7½
3. GM Edward Gufeld	2485	0	½	x	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	—	—	7½
4. IM Zsuzsa Polgar	2475	0	½	½	x	1	0	1	½	1	1	—	—	6½
5. GM Ian Rogers	2520	½	½	½	½	x	0	1	1	1	1	(1)	—	6½
6. GM Larry Christiansen	2575	0	½	0	1	1	x	½	½	½	1	—	—	6
7. NM Jonathan Sarfati	2250	½	0	0	0	0	½	x	½	½	1	—	—	4
8. IM Ortvín Sarapu	2345	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	x	½	0	—	—	3
9. FM Vernon Small	2355	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	x	½	—	—	3
10. CM Russell Dive	2235	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	½	x	—	—	2
11. CM Anthony Ker	2410	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	x	—	1½
12. GM Robert Hubner	2595	—	—	—	—	(0)	—	—	—	—	—	—	x	—

AUSTRALIAN grandmaster Ian Rogers called the Plaza International in Wellington "one of the best two tournaments I have ever played in". He was not, however, referring to his results against the resident New Zealand players (along with myself and Gufeld he made a clean sweep) but to the organisation. The tournament, which neatly coincided with the arts festival, was a tribute to chief organiser Grant Kerr, hotel manager Trevor Blockley and their many helpers. Playing conditions were to a high standard, the lighting was good, and there were large demonstration boards for the public to follow the games. In the second banquetting suite of the Plaza were the bookstall and lecture room, where New Zealand championship-strength commentators would discuss the games in progress.

The participants responded with fighting and, on occasion, dramatic chess. We saw a vintage Spassky, unleashing his famous King's Gambit on Hungarian girl superstar Zsuzsa Polgar. We saw the positional expertise of the Soviets, as Eddie Gufeld relentlessly consolidated his first round victory over US Olympiad GM Larry Christiansen. And, although the cross-table shows a 26½-3½ split, it is a minor miracle none of the professionals lost to our home players. Jonathan Sarfati from Wellington looked well on course for a 5½ point international master "norm" but unfortunately dropped off at the end.

In round nine Spassky had to beat his former compatriot Gufeld to stay in the hunt for first. The resulting sacrificial brilliancy was the daily \$100 best game award and was, in my opinion, the best of the tournament.

CLOSED SICILIAN

SPASSKY	GUFELD
1. e4	c5
2. Nc3	Nc6
3. g3	g6
4. Bg2	Bg7
5. d3	d6
6. f4	e6
7. Nf3	Nge7
8. O-O	O-O
9. Be3	Nd4
10. Bf2	Nxf3 ch
11. Bxf3	Nc6
12. Bg2	Nd4?!

This looks natural, but runs into a bold Spassky pawn sacrifice. The Encyclopaedia

of Chess Openings gives 12... Rb8 as in Spassky-Karpov, Linares 1983 — ironically this section was written by Gufeld himself!

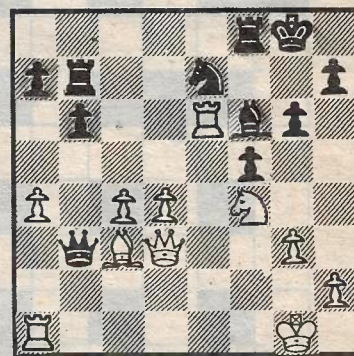
13. e5!? dxe5
14. fxe5 Bxe5
15. Ne4 f5

On 15... Qc7 16.c3 Nc6 17. Bxc5 White again regains the pawn with advantage.

16. Nxc5 Qd6
17. b4 Rb8
18. c3 Nb5
19. d4 Bf6
20. Qb3 b6
21. Nd3 Bb7
22. Bxb7 Rxb7
23. a4 Nc7
24. Rfe1 Nd5?

In spite of Black's unpleasant pawn weakness on e6 he could still have hopes of defending with 24... Rbb8 or 24... g5.

25. c4 Ne7
26. Nf4 Nc6
27. Rxe6 Qxb4
28. Qd3 Ne7
29. Be1! Qb2
30. Bc3 Qb3



31. Rxf6

The culmination of White's imaginative bishop manoeuvre (29. Be1 30. Bc3): Black's King is forced out with a temporary exchange sacrifice.

31... Rxf6
32. d5 Kf7
33. Ne6 Rxe6

There is no other defence to 34. Nd8 ch or 34. Nd4, trapping Black's queen.

34. dxe6 ch Kxe6
35. Re1 ch Kf7
36. Qd4 Qxa4
37. Qg7 ch Ke8
38. Bf6 Kd8

38... Qb4 fails to 39. Qg8 ch Kd7 40. Rxe7 ch.

39. Qf8 ch Qe8
40. Rd1 ch Rd7
41. Bxe7 ch Kc7
42. Qxe8 Resigns

Complete bulletins of the Plaza International are obtainable from NZ Chess Supplies, PO Box 42-090, Wainuiomata at \$14.50 each.