

# CHESS BARBS

CHESS BARBS by Jude Acers  
(US senior master)

## HOROWITZ CASHES IN AT 65

Al "Sockdolager" Horowitz, THE most widely read chess author in these United States for the past 30 years, died at home in New York on Jan. 18, 1973.

Born Nov. 15, 1907, Israel Albert Horowitz made his first mark in the chess world with successful performances at the Chess Olympiads (1931, 1935, 1937 and 1950), but he left an even more indelible impression as editor and publisher of "Chess Review", which he founded in 1933 and ran until Oct. 1969.

He was a prolific writer. Probably no personal chess library in America can claim to be free from at least one Horowitz production. The titles seem endless: How To Win in the Chess Openings; Chess Openings, Theory and Practice; How To Think Ahead in Chess (one of his best); How To Win in the Chess Endings; Chess for Begin-

ners; Chess Traps, Pitfalls and Dwindles; New Traps in the Chess Openings; The Best in Chess; Winning Chess; Winning Chess Tactics; All About Chess (some Acers games here!); Chess: Games to Remember; Solitaire Chess; Point Count Chess; The Complete Book of Chess; and many, many more.

In Fact, a whole living generation of players cut their teeth on his colorful vocabulary ("Marshall lets fly a sockdolager." "Actions speak louder than checks." "Spielmann outspieled!" "Landau replies 27 K-N2, and Tartakover hangs on by the skin of his bridge-work.").

Cliche ridden and pun infested, Horowitz's writing style nevertheless proved by simple survival that the American chess public knew what it wanted and was willing to pay for.

Regarding Horowitz's alleged crass chess commercialism, Burt Hochberg, editor of "Chess Life", commented in 1968, "Author of numerous chess books aimed at the average player, his ship has finally come in. He's making money now almost as fast as it comes out and tickled pink about it. In the hoariest Hollywood tradition, Al struggled hard for many years, blazing trails to be later followed by others, and he deserves every penny."

As a chess player Horowitz achieved international master status (1950), received the International Judge title (1951), won the U.S. Open (1936 and 1948), tied Reshevsky for the 1941 U.S. Championship (losing the playoff match, -3 -13), conducted 15 transcontinental tours, giving thousands of chess lectures and simultaneous exhibitions, participated in many U.S. team events and was largely responsible for several U.S.A. vrs. U.S.S.R. chess competitions that took place after the second world war.

An early example of Horowitz's combinational skills is his roughshod victory over Kevitz, in which he uses his opponent's own pet opening against him.

White: I. A. Horowitz. Black: Alexander Kevitz. New York, 1931. Queen's Indian Defense 1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 b6 3 d4 Bb7 4 Nc3 e6 5 e3 Bb4 6 Bd3 0-0 7 0-0 d5 8 cd ed 9 a3 Bc3 10 bc Nbd7 11 c4 e5 12 Bb2 Rc8 13 Rcl a6 14 Ne5 cd 15 ed cd 16 Nc4 b5 17 Nd6 Rcl 18 Qcl Ba8 19 Nf5 Nd5 20 Rel N7b6 21 Re4 Re8 22 Qg5! g6 23 Qh6 gf 24 Rg4! fg 25 Bh7 Kh8 26 Bg6 Kg8 27 Qh7 Kf8 28 Qf7 mate.

As usual, a person's strengths turn out to be weaknesses as well. "In spite of his excellent natural gift for the game," reflected Reuben Fine, "Horowitz has al-

ways suffered from a certain incurable optimism which usually led him to take unnecessary chances. I knew also that one of his weaknesses lay in an unwillingness to study the openings more thoroughly, which made it possible to win with dubious or little-known variations." Incurable optimism was a "Horrible-witz" affliction all right, and he infected everyone within range with his personal brand of sheer chess delight.

White: W.M.P. Mitchell. Black: I. A. Horowitz. Syracuse, New York, 1943. Two Knights' Defense (notes by Horowitz) 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6 4 Ng5 d5 5 ed Na5 6 Bb5 c6 7 dc bc 8 Qf3 cb? 9 Qa8 Bc5 (This fulminating position arises out of a variation which has been popular for centuries. Black gives up a Pawn, then the Exchange in order to control the center and gain better development. He aims to bring matters to a head by a King-side attack. His sacrifice is speculative in the sense that, if the attack peters out without recovering the material, he loses the game.) 10 Qf3 (White secures his Queen against the threat of ...0-0, ...Qc7 and ...Bb7.) Bb7 11 Qe2 0-0 12 c3 (White's last has a dual purpose. It menaces b4, forking two pieces, and also creates a possible exit for his King at c2 if the King side becomes too turbulent.) h6 13 Nf3

Nc4 14 b4 e4! 15 Nd4 (White cannot afford 15 bc ef as then the King file is open and offers a direct approach to his King.) Bd4 16 cd Qd4 17 Nc3 Ne5! 18 0-0 (White has managed to retain the advantage of the Exchange and now seeks seclusion on the right wing, behind what seems to be a solid array of Pawns.) Nf3!! (All is not what it seems. Black now breaks through the King's field.) 19 Khl (Not 19 gf? ef as White's Queen must then flee and Black has 20... Qg4 and mate to follow.) Ng4! (Now Black gangs up en masse against the enemy King.) 20 Qb5 (This diversion is of no help. There is, however, naught else to be done against the threat of 20...Qe5, followed, if necessary, by 21...Qh5 and a critical penetration of White's defenses.) Qf2!! (Completing the breakthrough. The threat is 21...Qgl 22 Rgl Nf2 mate.) 21 Qe2 Qh4! 22 gf ed 23 Resigns (White must lose much material or be mated at once.).

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There can be no doubt that Horowitz's greatest individual triumph was his brilliancy prize game against international grandmaster Salo Flohr during the U.S.A. - U.S.S.R. Radio Match of 1945.

White: I. A. Horowitz. Black:

Salo Flohr. Radio Match, U.S.A. vrs. U.S.S.R., Sept. 1945. Caro-Kann Defense 1 e4 c6(A) 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3(B) de 4 Ne4 Nf6(C) 5 Nf6 gf(D) 6 Ne2(E) Bf5(F) 7 Ng3(G) Bg6 8 h4(H) h6(I) 9 h5 Bh7 10 c3(J) Qb6(K) 11 Bc4(L) nD7 12 a4!(M) a5(N) 13 Qf3(O) e6 14 0-0 Bc2(P) 15 Bf4(Q) Bb3 16 Bd3 e5(R) 17 Be3 Bd5 18 Be4(S) Qb3 19 de fe 20 Radl(T) Be4 21 Qe4 Qe6(U) 22 Rd2 Nf6(V) 23 Qf3 Rg8(W) 24 Rfdl Rg477(X) 25 Nf5!(Y) E\$ (Z) 26 Bb6!(AA) Rg2(BB) 27 Qg2(CC) Qf5(DD) 28 Rd8 Rd8 29 Rd8 Ke7 30 Qg3!(EE) Nd7 31 Bc7(FF) Qd5(GG) 32 c4 Qg5(HH) 33 Qf5!(II) 34 Ra8 Ke6(JJ) 35 Ba5 f5(KK) 36 Bc3 f4 37 a5 g4 38 b4 f3 39 Bd2 Kf7 40 Ra7 g3 41 Rb7 Resigns.

(In-depth annotations by I. A. Horowitz, "Chess Riview", Dec. 1945, pp. 11-12)

(A) Flohr's favorite and formerly preferred by Capablanca. But the popularity of the Caro-Kann is on the wane.

The move 1...c6 has little to recommend it. It acts as a support for Black's following move, ...d5, but controls no important central square nor opens any vital lines. However, in contrast to the French Defense, it does not obstruct the development of the Queen's Bishop.

Continued Next Week!