

Chess Barbs

by Jude Acers (US senior master)
 DIAGRAM: White to move and win (from Averchenkov--Vlascov, Soviet Candidates Master Tournament, 1973). How? Out of the question is 1 Bc5 Qc6, with a forced draw. Solution elsewhere in this issue.

GAME: He creeps around Berkeley. The red death. Kaplan, the positional squeezer. Nobody used to know about him but me! I was once the only US master going over every move of every game by the Puerto Rican sensation, Julio Kaplan, an international master (the youngest in the world when he won the World Junior Chess Championship in 1967-68). I learned many things and kept my secret study material quite under wraps. Alas, no more.

Former world champion and super grandmaster Michael Tal goes over Kaplan games, too, as we learn in his notes from a game played in his unbelievable, undefeated five tournament victory string this past year.

Tal, the only active grandmaster with a plus score (6-4) against Robert Fischer, is almost certain to get a world title challenge match, if Fischer elects to play a championship defense each year. I personally believe that Tal, despite very serious health problems, is the greatest natural genius ever.

Tal was the youngest player ever to win the world title, beating Botvinnik in 1960. He lost the rematch in a huge upset a year later and waited ten years to make the comeback he is clearly capable of.

Soviet cartoons depict Tal walking into the tournament room with an old-time "bowling ball" type bomb carried behind his back, fuse already lit. It is supposed to be representative caricature, not comedy, for that's just the kind of problem Tal poses to his chess opponents. He once lost a full piece against a grandmaster

and still won the game anyway.

White: Mark Westnerin. Black: Michael Tal. Tallinn, 1973. Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 b3(A) Nf6 4 e5 Nd5 5Bb2 Be7 6 c4 Nc7(B) 7 Nc3 f6 8 Ne4 fe 9 Ne5 0-0(C) 10 d4(D) cd 11 Qd4 Bb4ch 12 Kd17(E) d6l (F) 13 Nd3 e5 14 Qe3 Ba5l (G) 15 Qg5 Qd7l(H) 16 Kc2 Qc6l(I) 17 f3(J) Bf5 18 Ng3(K) Bg6(L) 19 Rcl Nba6(M) 20 Ba3 (N) Nb5l 21 Kb2 Na3 22 Qe3 (O) Nb4l(P) 23 Ka3 Bd3 24 Bd3 Qa6l(Q) 25 White resigned.

(Notes by IGM Michael Tal, translated by Jude Acers)

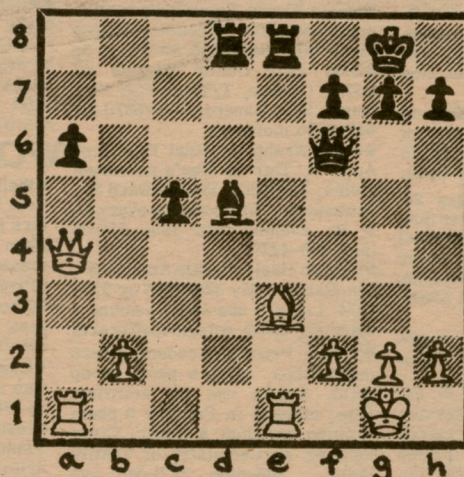
(A) This move has been used by the Finnish master fairly often. With this variation he won a game two years ago in Tallinn against grandmaster Leonid Stein! Literally half an hour before the beginning of this game, while leafing through current chess magazines, I came upon a game Westnerin--Julio Kaplan, which was lost by White in 20 moves, and with additional checking I decided to follow the moves played by the Puerto Rican.

(B) Of course, the normal continuation is 6...Nb4; indeed with it Kaplan won quickly...

(C) In this position in Skopje, Yugoslavia, Westnerin continued with 10 Qg4? and after 10...Ne8 Black quickly obtained the initiative, for by means of two moves (11...d6 and 12...e5) the energetic work of White's bishop at b2 was ended. Of course, it would be extremely naive to think that the Finnish master would copy that game to the end.

9d0 and now it is clear how White will try for the advantage. If 10...d6, then he is able to follow with 11 Nf3 cd 12 Qd4 Nc6 13 Qe3, and pressure on the "d" file guarantees White excellent prospects.

(E) Westnerin's chess is very active and not suitable for him would be 12 Bc3 Nc6 13 Nc6 Bc3ch 14 Qc3 bc, with only a



small positional advantage for White. (Acers note: To make this move against Michael Tal is in utter disregard of chess history, professional chess standards and the high mortality rate of kings stranded amidst the Latvian fiend's pieces. I cannot believe Westnerin played this, but he did! Tal also mentions 12 Ke2! was possible and better than the text.)

(F) Apparently this simple move had escaped the attention of Westnerin until now. It is now clear that if 13 Nc6 e5! White ends up a piece down. Had White placed his king on the better square, e2, earlier, he would now be able to play 13 a3 de (There is nothing else.) 14 Qd8 Rd8 15 ab Nc6, with an unclear endgame. By the way, 14 Qe5 is also to be considered in this variation.

(G) And here is another difference in White having his king at d1 instead of e2, which would have been more successful for White, as he could bring his "a" rook to d1. Black thought awhile about 14...d5, but it seemed that after 15 Nb4 dech 16 Kc2 White successfully completes his development. The modest move made in the game was really disagreeable, but now Black is threatening to advance the "d" pawn in earnest.

(H) Of course, exchanging queens leaves Black with a genuine advantage as well. But on d7 the queen is not badly situated.

(I) Black also had to examine for a long time 16...b5, with sharp variations like 17 Rdl bc 18 Ne5 Qf5 19 Bc4ch d5 20 Rd5, etc. But then I gave attention to the apparent awkwardness of the queen and this move, which leads to a great and possibly decisive advantage. (Acers note: Often a grandmaster does not see one move ahead in unfamiliar positions---he adjusts!) In one move Black frees his pieces with gain of time (threat: Qe4) and the square c6 is not necessary for Black's knight.

(J) It is easily determined that 14 Nd6 Qd6 15 Be5 Qd7 gives White nothing.

(K) It is possible that 18 Be2

is more tenacious. Black intended 18...Nba6 in that case.

(L) Of course not 18...Ne6 19 Nf5.

(M) Threatening a murderous check on b4. If now 20 a3, there follows 20...Nc5 (preventing 21 b4 Nd3 22 Bd3 Qc4ch), when White cannot escape the bind. The only way White may avoid quick material losses was with 20 Kdl, but while examining the position I knew that appraising it was unnecessary.

(N) And now the other knight comes into play.

(O) After 22 Ka3 Black wins immediately: 22...Bd3 23 Bd3 Qc5ch 24 Kb2 Qd4ch 25 Kc2 Nb4ch.

(P) This is quicker than the prosaic 22...Bd3 and 23...Bb4.

(Q) From the threat of retreating the bishop (with or without check) there is no escape.

USCF master Dennis Fritzing of Berkeley scored a particularly satisfying victory over international master Arthur Dake during the Louis B. Statham Masters and Experts Tournament, held in Lone Pine, CA, this March. Watch sly Fritzing, fianchetto his bishop three times to win the game!

White: Arthur Dake (2370). Black: Dennis Fritzing (2300). Lone Pine, 1973. English Opening 1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 0-0 5 0-0 c5 6 d4 d6 7 Nc3 Nc6 8 h3 cd 9 Nd4 Bd7 10 Nc2 Qc8 11 Kh2 Na5 12 Ne3 Nc4 13 Nc4 Qc4 14 Bb7 Rab8 15 Bg2 a 5 16 e4 a4 17 a3 Bc6 18 Rel Nd7 19 Bfl Qb3 20 Qe2 Rfe8 21 Bd2 Nc5 22 f3 Ne6 23 Rab1 Nd4 24 Qd3 e6 25 Kg2 f5 26 Bf4 Rbd8 27 Recl h6 28 Be3 Nf3 29 Kf3 f3 30 Ne4 Rf8 31 Kg2 Rfl 32 Qb3 Be4 33 Kfl ab 34 Ke2 d5 35 Bb6 Rb8 36 Bc7 Rc8 37 Bf4 Rc2 38 Rc2 Bc2 39 Rcl Bb2 40 Kd2 Ba3 41 Rc2 bc 42 Kc2 Bf8 43 g4 Bg7 44 Bb8 Kf7 45 Kd3

e5 46 Ke3 Ke6 47 Kf3 e4 48 Ke3 Be5 49 Ba7 Bh2 50 Ke2 Bf4 51 Bd4 Be5 52 Be3 Bg7 53 Bb6 d4 54 Ba5 Kd5 55 h4 d3 56 Kd2 Kc4 57 White resigned.

NEWS: Bay Area based USCF National Secretary Martin E. Morrison leaves for USCF Headquarters in Newburgh, N.Y., this week for his new job as Technical Director for the Federation. Morrison played a major part in building up chess clubs in this area (e.g., Berkeley Chess Club membership is now hundreds strong and still growing!), directing and organizing tournaments, editing and publishing "Chess Voice" magazine, acting as chairman for the Central California Chess Association, revising and clarifying chess rules and regulations, serving on state and local chess committees and boards, and so on and so forth... He has done a lot more than most to further chess interest among the "rank and file" through his incessant propaganda activity for chess, constant emphasis on recruiting new USCF members and continual interest in the progress of club level competition. Morrison's new duties as USCF Technical Director will be "to supervise such member- and organizer-oriented national programs as the Tournament Director Certification Program, the Rating System, and the Catalogue" of the US Chess Federation. Here's hoping he can do as much for the country as he did for the state!

SOLUTION TO DIAGRAM: White knocks 'em dead with 1 Bg5!, winning at least a piece, as otherwise he mates in two moves.