

The Chess Column

Davis Player Makes First Try At Championship Level

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Special To The Bee

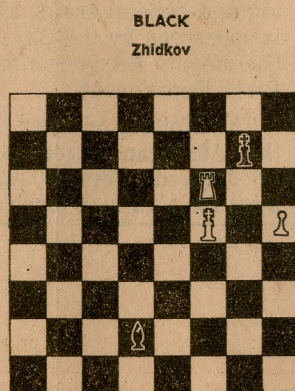
The US Women's Chess Championship provided no surprise as to results. Mona Karff, a veteran player and former champion, captured the title with a 6½-3½ score. But for a participant any gathering of top chess players creates a vivid microcosm of a world more varied and more intense than the work-a-day world normally experienced.

Diane Comini, an urban geography specialist from Davis, returned home brimming with enthusiasm for chess and bubbling with impressions of the diverse personalities who entered her life for the two weeks it took to play the tournament.

She was the lowest rated player in this, her first outing in championship competition. Her score faithfully mirrored these statistics, but to Comini the score was not the most significant feature. The play was the thing. She experienced the typical pains and fell into the typical pitfalls that bedevil neophytes in these affairs. On two occasions she dropped winning games on time forfeits, for example.

For recreation from the chess grind she investigated the city planning of St. Petersburg, Fla., the tournament site. She found planning arrangements disappointing and particularly inappropriate to the needs of the many retired people living there.

Among her rivals Comini seems to have been most interested by Greta Olsson, a Los Angeles English teacher. Olsson impressed her as rather a Jekyll-Hyde person-



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Tal

ality, "proper" and "friendly" socially, she became "aggressive, flamboyant and short-tempered" during a game. Olsson's playing style impressed her as being like a man's, aggressive and hard-charging, while the other combatants hewed to a close, conservative style marked by numerous friendly draws.

Aside from Olsson the players fell into two distinct age groups. The older ones were between 55 and 65, while the younger players were about 25 to 35. The older ones tended to have more community status. Gisela Gresser is the wife of a lawyer. Mabel Burlingame is a bluff "pioneer type" from Arizona who has become a successful businesswoman in spite of being orphaned early and receiving only a sixth grade education.

The younger women tended to a more footloose lifestyle. Judith Rippeth is a college dropout who lives in West Lafayette, Ind. Susan Sterngold is a bartender and part-time college student in Madison, Wis.

What really united this

group was resentment of the second-class status accorded the women's championships and women players in general. Of the three championships, the US, the US Junior, and the US Women's, this was the only one where the invitees did not receive a travel allowance. The women also regaled one another with stories of masculine condescension and hostility and agreed that US masters "would not give a woman player the time of day."

The consensus of the women was that, although there ought to be equality among players of all sexes,

there should also be special prizes and incentives to stimulate a wider participation by women.

One of the more discouraging occurrences in a chess game is to obtain an early material advantage and chop down to an ending which you are unable to win. Mikhail Tal demonstrates the winning technique for an apparently difficult ending.

See diagram.

Appearances point to queening the P as the key to victory, but that P cannot be forced forward in

this position. Instead Tal sacrifices to set up a zugzwang.

1. P-R6ch!, BXP; 2. R-N6ch, K-R2; 3. K-B6, B-K6; 4. K-B7, B-R2.

(Black faces mating threats: 4. . . ., B-Q5; 5. R-N4, B-B7; 6. RN2 wins.)

5. R-QR6, B-N1; 6. R-R8, B-B2.

(If 6. . . ., B-Q3; 7. R-R1, K-R3; 8. Rr-R6.)

7. R-QB8, B-B5; 8. R-B4, B-N4; 9. R-B3, Resigns.

(If 9. . . ., B-R3; 10. R-KR3 and Black must move into mate.)

Local Chess News

Demonstrating his typical deft feel for the positional nuances of the game, David Levy captured the Davis Invitational Championship played on successive Mondays in April and May.

The latest Davis five-minute tournament, went, predictably, to Tom Dorsch.

Steve Markman surprised by finishing second in a strong field.

The Capablanca Memorial tournament, held this year at the Cuban seaside town of Camaguey was won by Ulf Andersson, the Swedish grandmaster who takes his shoes off to think better.