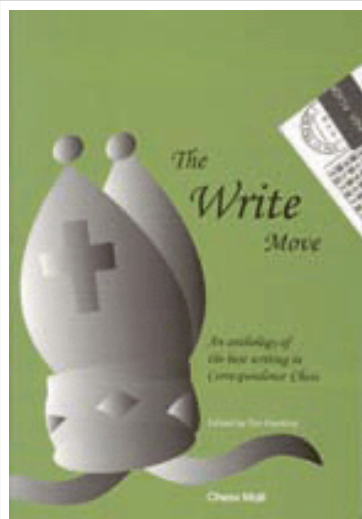




## COLUMNISTS

*The Kibitzer*

Tim Harding



*The Write Move*  
by Tim Harding

## Another Blast from the Postal Past

Back in [February 2003](#), I wrote about the task of archiving old postal master chess games, found in hard copy, into databases. And recently I have been compiling and editing what will probably be my last database collection of correspondence games, to be called [UltraCorr](#).

Correspondence database compilation is much harder than compiling databases of current “over-the-board” (OTB) games, because the latter are usually entered into the database as soon as they are played. Recent correspondence events are sometimes compiled thoroughly at the time they were played, but until the late 1990s, with the coming of email tournaments, complete records of events were rarely prepared. Even when games did get into databases there were frequently problems with non-standard player and event names that required a lot of editing, as my previous article explained.

My new database has over 800,000 games, most of which are comparatively recent, but to my mind the most important part are the old games that I have been able to preserve. All games in the database have been played between distant opponents by post, fax, email, web-server or some other transmission mode. Postal games are the least likely to be found in databases because in most cases they were never published in print, or only in obscure magazines or local columns.

The late Hermann Heemsoth, correspondence chess grandmaster and chess journalist, was a great collector of such games, which he seems to have obtained mostly from tournament directors and opponents. Hermann sadly died a few months ago, at the age of 96. Until last year he was still sending me games and old notebooks from time to time and I shall miss these little surprises.

As I recorded in [Kibitzer 81](#), in 2003 he sent me a scrapbook of games from the 11<sup>th</sup> ICCF correspondence world championship. Earlier he had sent me his scrapbooks of the Soviet Postal Championships, which were invaluable to Sergey Grodzensky and me when we were writing our book about those classic tournaments, [Red Letters](#). Heemsoth also sent me scrapbooks of games (over-the-board and postal) in the Marshall Attack and from the 8<sup>th</sup>

ICCF World Championship. This article is mostly about what I found in those scrapbooks.

As with the previous gifts, this was a real blast from the postal past! The games were often the players' reports when the games ended, but most are in Heemsoth's own neat handwriting in German algebraic notation. Some games had been printed and were in the form of clippings from various papers. The notebooks were arranged by openings: 1 e4 e5 open games, semi-open games including the Sicilian, and closed games. In all, there are about 300 games in these books, of which only about a hundred were in my previous databases or anyone else's.

I have input all the games in those books, making a total of 333 games from these events, of which about two hundred were previously lost. I also added Heemsoth's notes where available. All these games are to be found on [UltraCorr](#). The rest of this article consists of some of the entertaining games and game finishes I found, but to see them all you will need to buy the CD.

### About the Tournaments

First I shall say a little about the tournaments featured in these scrapbooks.

The 8<sup>th</sup> CC World Championship Semifinals began in 1972 and most games ended in 1973 or 1974. There were six sections, each of 16 or 17 players, a few of whom did not complete the tournaments. Apart from the fifteen players who were in the 7<sup>th</sup> World Championship Final, played contemporaneously, the field included most of the top postal players of the period. Of course, these were nearly all amateurs although a few of the players may have worked as chess trainers or journalists. To be included in a semifinal, you either needed to have won a master class GT tournament (15 players) or two 7-player master class sections, or to have had a sufficiently good result in a previous world championship final or semifinal, or else you had to be your country's quota nominee.

The prize was qualification for a World Championship Final, and this was the last time that this was possible direct from a semi-final. The number of master class events was increasing, and so there were becoming too many qualifiers for the semi-finals and hence for the finals. Around this time ICCF decided that the World Championship would become a three-stage-event instead of two-stage, so that qualification from future semi-finals would be to a Candidates or "Three-Quarter-Final" tournament. Starting in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> World Championship Finals, as well as the 8<sup>th</sup>, "used up" the surplus qualifiers, and the new system was geared to deciding the qualifications for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Finals in the late 1980s.

So the 8<sup>th</sup> World Championship Semi-final was the last of an innocent time, and the tournaments included a few rather weak players as well as a few

famous masters, such as A. M. Konstantinopolsky (fading by this stage), and several players who achieved great things soon afterwards. Future world champions Grigory Sanakoev and Tonu Õim were among those who progressed to a final. I found a few previously unknown games by them, but most were not really special. However, here is quite an interesting fight between the Estonian, who went on to win two ICCF world titles, against a West German FIDE Olympiad player, who also later played in an ICCF World Championship final.

***Tonu Õim – Dieter Mohrlok***

Wch8 sf3 corr ICCF, 1972

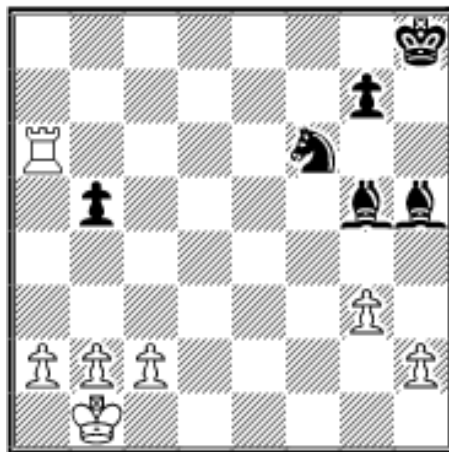
*[Heemsoth scrapbook]*

**1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bg5 e6 7 f4 b5 8 e5 dxe5 9 fxe5 Qc7 10 exf6 Qe5+ 11 Be2 Qxg5 12 Qd3 Qh4+ 13 g3 Qxf6 14 Rf1 Qe5 15 0–0–0 Ra7 16 Nf3 Qc7 17 Ne5! Be7 18 Nxf7 0–0**



White thinks he stands better here and goes for the kill, but it doesn't quite work out against tenacious defence.

**19 Nd5?! exd5 20 Qxd5 Bf6 21 Nd6+ Kh8 22 Bd3 Nc6! 23 Bxh7 Bg4 24 Bg6 Ne7! 25 Qe4 Bxd1 26 Qh4+! Bxh4 27 Rxf8+ Ng8 28 Nf7+ Qxf7 29 Bxf7 Rxf7 30 Rxf7 Bh5 31 Ra7 Bg5+ 32 Kb1 Nf6 33 Rxa6 1/2-1/2**



Computers probably say Black is winning here, but do they understand the potential danger posed by White's queenside pawns? I leave you to decide whether Mohrlok was wrong to agree to a draw.

Many of Sanakoev's brilliant wins can be found in his justly celebrated book [World Champion at the Third Attempt](#). Here, though, is one game he unsurprisingly chose to draw the veil over, but now revealed thanks to the assiduous researches of Heemsoth.

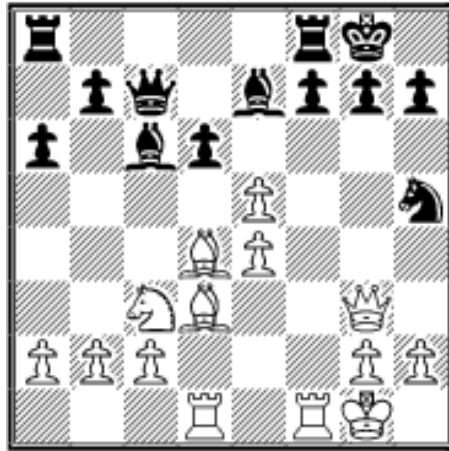
***Einar Hatlebakk (NOR) – Grigory Sanakoev***

Wch8 sf5 corr ICCF, 1972

**1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 Qc7 6 Be2 a6 7 f4 d6 8 Be3 Nf6 9 0–0 Be7 10 Qe1 0–0 11 Rd1 Bd7 12 Qg3 Nxd4 13 Bxd4 Bc6 14 Bd3**

The Russian master is under pressure from a little-known opponent. He tries to break out, but it backfires.

**14...e5 15 fxe5 Nh5**



**16 exd6! Nxc3 17 dxc7 Nxf1 18 Bxf1 Bd6 19 Bb6 Be5 20 Nd5 Rfe8 21 g3! Bxb2 22 Bh3! Ba3 23 Ne3 Bxe4 24 Rd8! Raxd8 25 cxd8Q Rxd8 26 Bxd8 1–0**

The tough competition really sorted out the world class players from the few who were in as nominees of small countries. Most of the sections had one or two players who withdrew for one reason or another, after only a few moves; these games are usually not preserved and

probably were not worth preserving. Herman Heemsoth himself was in one section though he did not do particularly well; few of his games are in these scrapbooks, probably because he kept his own games in another book.

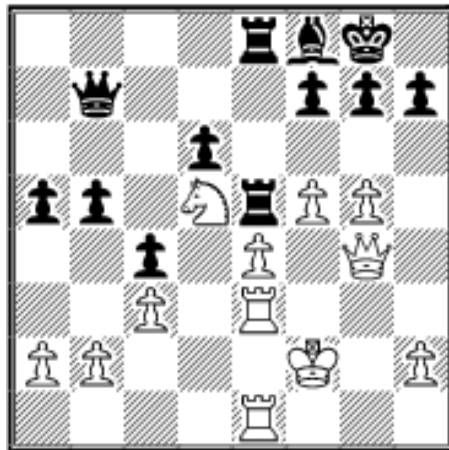
A curiosity is that one competitor changed his name during the tournament — and not just his surname. The Hungarian player Karoly Androvitzky appeared in the starting list, but in the final table there was Zoltan Borloy. In Heemsoth's books, sometimes one name appears, sometimes the other, sometimes both. Hungarian chess historian Ivan Bottlík tells me that this was not a case of substitution: the man changed *both* his names during the event, following a divorce.

When looking at the following games and excerpts, it must be borne in mind that chess computers of any competence were still a quarter of a century away. The games were played by the individuals concerned using their own brain-power, and they often involve quite exciting passages of play that few would risk nowadays in correspondence chess, because their opponents' silicon brains would discover any flaws. Please enjoy the tactics for their own sake and don't send me emails pointing out refutations. Some of these positions could be useful to coaches looking for something different to test their students, rather than the usual hackneyed examples. I have chosen games that were not published before, so these are by no means the only exciting tactical episodes in the six semi-final tournaments.

***H. Meier (GER) – F. Blockx (BEL)***

Wch8 sf5 corr ICCF, 1972

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Bc5 5 Nb3 Bb4+ 6 c3 Be7 7 g3 d6 8 Bg2 Nf6 9 0-0 0-0 10 Nd4 Bd7 11 f4 Qc8 12 Re1 Rd8 13 Be3 Bh3 14 Nd2 Nxd4 15 Bxd4 Bxg2 16 Kxg2 c5? 17 Bxf6 Bxf6 18 Qf3 Qc6 19 Nc4 b5 20 Ne3 Be7 21 Nd5 Bf8 22 g4 Re8 23 g5 Re6 24 Re3 Rae8 25 Rae1 a5 26 f5! Re5 27 Qg4 Qb7 28 Kf2 c4?



29 Nf6+! gxf6 30 gxf6+ Kh8 31 Qg5!!

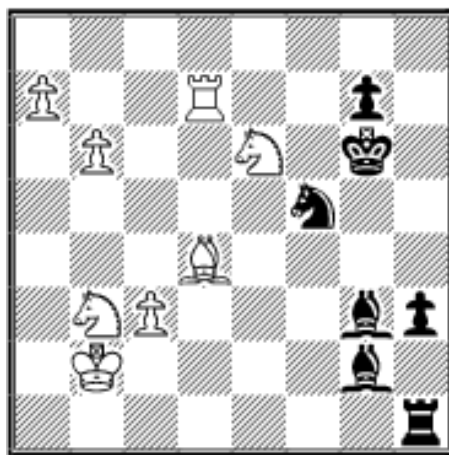
This “creeping move,” preventing ...Bh6, is the key to the combination begun at move 29.

31...Qxe4 32 Rxe4 Rxe4 33 Rg1! Re2+ 34 Kf3 R8e3+ 35 Qxe3 Rxe3+ 36 Kxe3 Bh6+ 37 Ke4 b4 38 Rd1 Bf8 39 Kd5 bxc3 40 bxc3 h5 41 Rd4 Bh6 42 Kxd6 Bf8+ 43 Kd7 Kh7 44 Ke8 Bc5 45 Rxc4 Bg1 46 Kxf7 Kh6 47 h4 1-0

*Milan Jovcic (YUG) – C. Waagner Nielsen (DEN)*

Wch8 sf6 corr ICCF, 1972

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 d6 5 Bxc6+ bxc6 6 d4 Bg4 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 Qxd8+ Rxd8 9 Nfd2 Nf6 10 f3 Be6 11 Nb3 Bd6 12 N1d2 Rb8 13 Na5 Bd7 14 c3 0-0 15 Ndc4 Ne8 16 Be3 f5 17 exf5 Rxf5 18 0-0-0 Rb5 19 b4 Rd5 20 Nb3 Be6 21 Nca5 Nf6 22 Nxc6 Rxd1+ 23 Rxd1 Rh5 24 h3 e4 25 fxe4 Nxe4 26 Kb2 Bd5 27 Nb8 Ng3 28 Bc5 Bf4 29 Nxa6 Kf7 30 a4 Bxg2 31 Nxc7! Rxh3 32 Rd7+ Kg6 33 Bd4 Nf5 34 Ne6 Bg3 35 b5 h5 36 a5 h4 37 a6 Rh1 38 b6 h3 39 a7



39...Rb1+!! 40 Kxb1 h2 41 Ka2 h1Q 42 Nec5 Qh2! 43 Ka3 Nd6 44 Rxg7+

A very unusual material balance: Black now has no pawns, but has Q v R and three pawns, each side having three minor pieces.

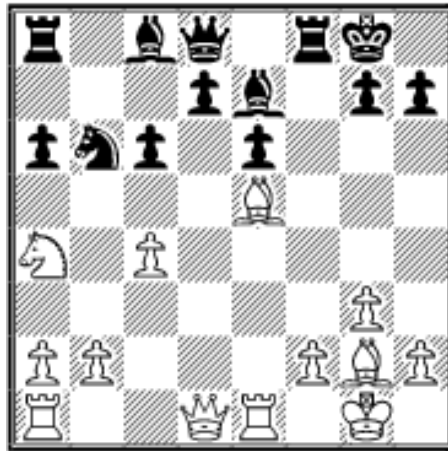
44...Kf5 45 Kb4 Nc8 46 Rf7+ Kg6 47 Rg7+ 1/2-1/2

*Aleksey Mikhailov (USSR) – J.*

*Ljungdahl (SWE)*

Wch8 sf2 corr ICCF, 1972

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 e6 5 Nc3 Qc7 6 g3 a6 7 Bg2 Nf6 8 0-0  
Be7 9 Re1 0-0 10 Nxc6 bxc6 11 e5 Nd5 12 Na4 f6 13 c4 Nb6 14 Bf4 fxe5  
15 Bxe5 Qd8



16 Be4! Nxa4

Probably expecting a recapture, but ...

17 Qh5!! Rf6 18 Qxh7+ Kf7 19 Qh5+  
Kg8 20 Bh7+ Kf8 21 Bc2! Nb6 22 Re4  
Qe8 23 Qh3! Qf7 24 Rh4 Ke8 25 Rh8+  
Bf8 26 Bd6 Rh6 27 Qxh6!! 1-0

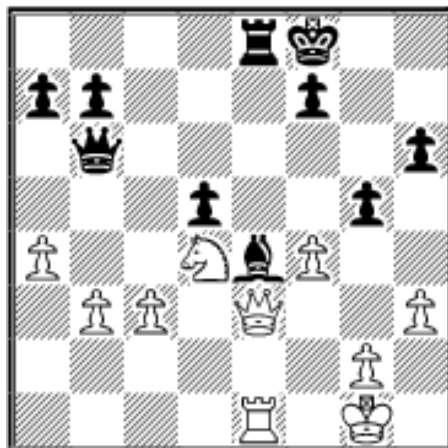
For if 27...gxh6, 28 Bg6!.



Here is a simple one-mover to try on the kids.

1 Rh8+! 1-0

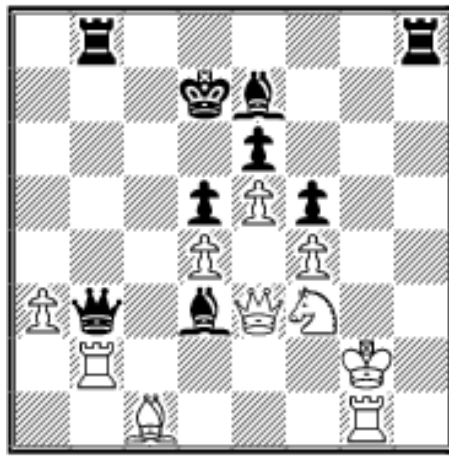
Here is another case for the elementary  
tactics exercise file.



*G. Bartis (ARG) – J. Roose (BEL)*  
Wch8 sf3 corr ICCF, 1972

White thinks he has knight against bad  
bishop and wants to exchange queens, but  
overlooks a neat cross-pin exploitation.

36 Nb5?? Bd3! 0-1



This one is a bit harder. Black is to move.

**K. Petrzelka (CZE) – E. Stransky (GER)**

**1...Qxb2+! 2 Bxb2 Rxb2+ 0-1**

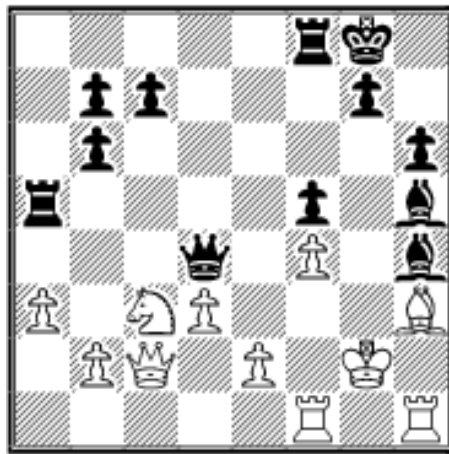
If 3 Kg3 Be4 (threatening ...Rbh2).

The following game is poorly begun by White, but it gets exciting. Heemsoth called it “eine grossartigen Kombinatspartie.”

**E. Bengtsson (SWE) – H. Meier (GER)**

Wch8 sf5 corr ICCF, 1972

**1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 g3 d5 5 cxd5 Nxd5 6 Bg2 Nb6 7 d3 Be7 8 Be3 0-0 9 h4?! h6 10 Qd2 f5 11 h5 Be6 12 Bxb6 axb6 13 Kf1? Ra5! 14 Bh3 Qd7 15 Kg2 Bf7 16 a3 Bxh5 17 Rag1 Nd4 18 Ne1 Bg5 19 f4 exf4 20 gxf4 Bh4! 21 Nc2 Nxc2 22 Qxc2 Qd4 23 Rf1**



Now Black plays for mate and the fun really starts. Perhaps 23...Qe3 may also win, but presumably Meier had reasons for preferring his move.

**23...Rf6!. 24 Bxf5 Rg6+! 25 Bxg6 Rg5+ 26 Kh2**

Taking the rook allows ...Qg4+ and immediate mate.

**26...Bg3+ 27 Kh3 Bxf4! 28 Qb3+ Kh8 29 Qf7 Bg4+ 30 Kh4 Bg3+ 31 Kxg3 Bxe2+ 0-1**

The finish to the following game could not happen in the computer era. At move 37, White tries to avoid a draw by perpetual attack on his queen, with disastrous consequences that Fritz or Shredder would immediately warn him about.

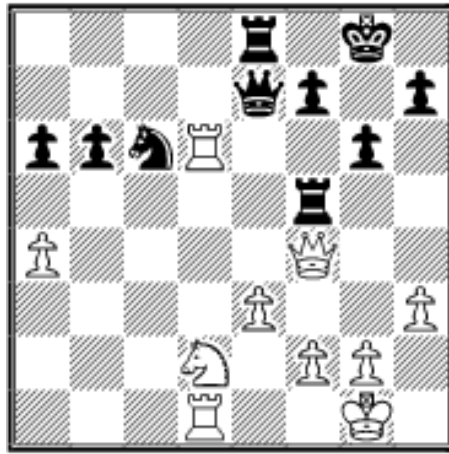
**Vit Paroulek – H. Meier**

Wch8 sf5 corr ICCF, 1972

**1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 e3 Bb4 5 Qc2 0-0 6 d3 d5 7 cxd5 Nxd5 8 a3 Nxc3 9 bxc3 Bd6 10 d4 Qe7 11 Be2 b6 12 Bb2 Bb7 13 Qf5 exd4 14 cxd4**



Na5 15 Nd2 g6 16 Qh3 Rad8 17 0-0 c5 18 Bf3 Rfe8 19 Bxb7 Qxb7 20 Rfe1 cxd4 21 Bxd4 Be5 22 Nf3 Bxd4 23 Nxd4 Nc4 24 Rec1 Ne5 25 Qg3 Rc8 26 Rd1 Rc5 27 a4 Nc4 28 h3 Rec8 29 Qh4 a6 30 Nf3 Re8 31 Rd4 Rh5 32 Qg3 Ne5 33 Nd2 Qe7 34 Rd1 Nc6 35 Rd6 Rg5 36 Qf4 Rf5



So if this position arose today, a draw would be agreed. But in 1973 or thereabouts ...

37 Qh2?? Rxf2!! 38 Nc4 Rc2! 39 Rxc6 Qe4 40 Rxb6 Rxc4 41 Rxa6 Rc1! 42 Rad6 Qc2! 0-1

White resigns as e3 now falls.

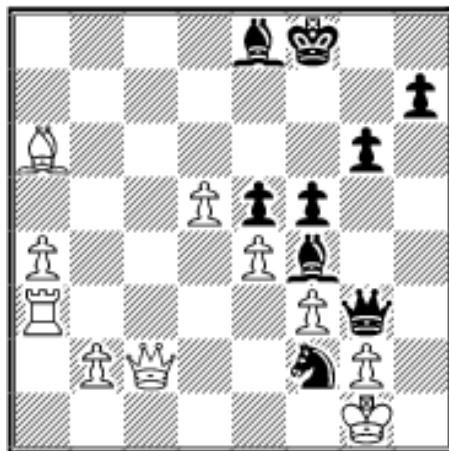
Beginners are always told not to play knights into corners, so here is the

“exception that proves the rule.”

**B. Perfors (NED) – A. Siklos (CAN)**

Wch8 sf1 corr ICCF, 1972

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 Nf3 0-0 5 Bf4 d6 6 e3 Nbd7 7 h3 a6 8 a4 Qe8 9 Be2 e5 10 dxe5 Nxe5 11 Nxe5 dxe5 12 Bh2 Qe7 13 0-0 Rd8 14 Qc2 a5 15 Rfd1 Bf5 16 e4 Bd7 17 Qc1 Bc6 18 f3 Rxd1+ 19 Nxd1 Nd7 20 Bg3 Nc5 21 Qc2 Rd8 22 Ne3 Ne6 23 Nd5 Qg5 24 Kh2 Be8 25 Qc3 c6 26 h4 Qh6 27 Qxa5 Rd7 28 Qa8 Kf8 29 Be1? cxd5 30 Bb4+ Re7 31 cxd5 Qxh4+ 32 Kg1 Bh6 33 Ra3 Nf4 34 Bxe7+ Kxe7 35 Qxb7+ Kf8 36 Bf1 Qg3 37 Qc8 f5! 38 Qc2 Nh3+ 39 Kh1 Nf2+ 40 Kg1 Bf4 41 Ba6



41...Nh1!! 42 Kf1 Qh4 43 Qc5+ Kg7 44 Qg1 Ng3+ 45 Ke1 fxe4 46 fxe4 Nf5+ 47 Kd1 Nd4! 48 Be2 Bh6! 0-1

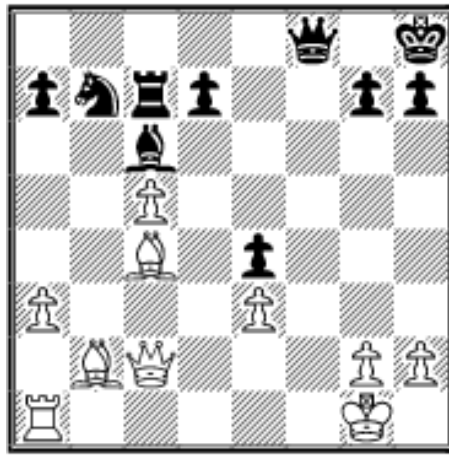
He threatens both ...Qxe4 and ...Qg5/Qf4 (idea ...Qc1#); so White resigns.

**J. Maedler – D. Mohrlök**

Wch8 sf3 corr ICCF, 1972

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 Nc3 Bb4 5 Qb3 c5 6 a3 Bxc3+ 7 Qxc3 cxd4 8 Nxd4 Ne4 9 Qc2 Bb7 10 e3 0-0 11 Bd3 f5 12 0-0 Nc6 13 f3 Nd6 14 Nxc6 Bxc6 15 b4 Rc8 16 Qe2 e5 17 c5 bxc5 18 bxc5 Nb7 19 Qc2 e4 20 fxe4 fxe4 21 Rxf8+ Qxf8 22 Ba6 Rc7 23 Bc4+ Kh8 24 Bb2





**24...Qxc5**

Black grabs the pawn to equalise material. There now follow lively tactics as White tries to create a mating net.

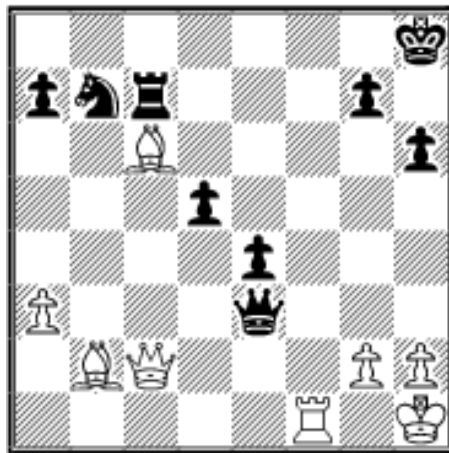
**25 Rf1 d5 26 Bb5!?**

Flashy! But not really best; 26 Bd4 or 26 Be5 seems correct, when White retains the initiative.

**26...Qxe3+**

Other moves are either disastrous or leave Black with an inferior endgame. Thus 26...Qxc2?? and 26...Qxb5 are both answered by 27 Rf8 mate. If 26...Bxb5?!, 27 Qxc5 and if Black recaptures Rf8#. After 26...Kg8 27 Qxc5 Nxc5 28 Bxc6 Rxc6 29 Rc1, White has the better endgame prospects, with B versus N.

**27 Kh1 h6 28 Bxc6**



The decisive moment. Black must use the pin on the c-file to recover the piece

**28...Na5??**

The wrong way: Black falls headlong into the trap. If 28...Qb6, he regains the piece, but there is one tactic White can try to simplify the game: 29 Rf8+ Kh7 30 Qxe4+ dxe4 31 Bxe4+ Qg6 32 Bxg6+ Kxg6 and a draw seems the likely result.

28...Nd8! seems best; maybe Black feared 29 Bxg7+?! Kxg7 30 Qb2+, but after 30...Kh7 31 Be8 d4, White is a pawn down with no clear threats. So instead White must settle for 29 Qd1 Nxc6 30 Qxd5, which seems about equal.

**29 Bd7!**

Terminal.

**29...Qe1!**

A nice joke; 29...Nc4 was presumably Black's intention, but the queen is not needed to administer mate: 30 Rf8+ Kh7 31 Bf5+ g6 32 Rh8#. 29...Qc1 prevents the mate, but of course still loses.

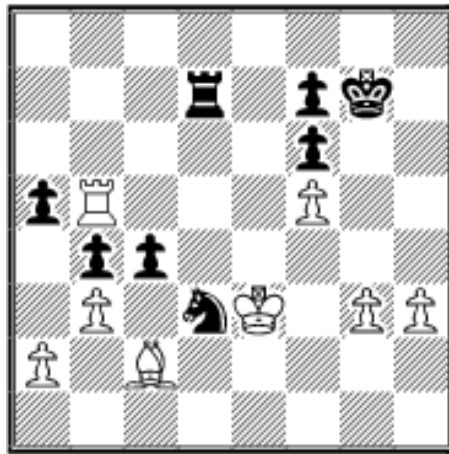
### 30 Qe2! 1–0

With a symmetrical riposte; if the queen is taken, White has the same mate as in the note to move 29.

It is not only the middle-games that are worthwhile. Here is a delicate endgame from the scrapbooks.

**L. Centerdahl (SWE) – A. Siklos (CAN)**

Wch8 sf1 corr ICCF, 1972



42...Ne1! 43 Be4 c3 44 Rc5 Kh6 45 Ke2 Re7 46 Rc4 Nc2 47 Kd3 Na3 48 Rc5 Rd7+ 49 Bd5 Kg5 50 Ke3 Nb1! 51 Be4 Nd2 52 Bg2 Re7+ 53 Kd3 Re5 54 Bd5 Nf1! 55 h4+ Kh6 56 g4 Ne3 57 g5+ Kg7 58 gxf6+ Kh7! 59 Rc7 Nxd5 60 Rxf7+ Kg8 61 Rh7 Kf8 62 Rg7 Nf4+ 0–1

### Final Note on the Database

Apart from the late Hermann Heemsoth, I am grateful for help received from several players and tournament organisers who

contributed. They are too many to mention who sent in files of their own games, but I particularly wish to acknowledge the assistance of Brett Sinclair and Michael Freeman (for several thousand New Zealand correspondence games between them), J. Franklin Campbell (files of mostly American games), Erik Osbun (several hundred of his games not previously published), Armando Perez Perez (a large file of Cuban correspondence games), and Conny Persson (Sweden) for particularly large collections.

My new [UltraCorr](#) database will be available for a limited time only, because I shall again be busy with university research and teaching from October, please order soon if you intend to do so. Later orders will be processed, but probably not in a timely manner, as after this month I shall only have limited time at weekends to deal with chess business.

### Postscript to Last Month's Column

As often happens, a reader sent me feedback on the last [column](#). Generally articles are not altered once posted (unless a really serious error is detected), because people who read the column early would miss it. John Saunders, editor of *British Chess Magazine*, found the whole of the second Parratt-De

Soyres game, from the R. N. Coles' *One Hundred years Ago* column in the March 1973 *BCM* (just before my own set of that magazine begins). I believe the game must have been published originally in one of Lowenthal's chess columns. It's not an especially memorable game, so I won't reproduce it here. I have also since found De Soyres's obituary in *The Field*, which confirms that he did indeed play at Hilversum, but withdrew before the end.

### **American Correspondence Chess Needs You!**

This final paragraph is addressed to U.S. readers only. After many years of loyal service to the cause of America's representation in international correspondence chess, Max Zavanelli and Ruth Ann Fay wish to retire. Max, whose business activities require him to travel more than half the time, is retiring immediately, but Ruth Ann, who has been doing most of the work in the last few years, is willing to stay in the office for a few more months to train her successor. The voluntary work entails organising U.S. teams in ICCF events, the SCCC, and collecting entries for ICCF individual events. As NAPZ Director, she organises NAPZ events and is on the ICCF Executive Board. If you are willing to be considered for one or both of these responsible roles, of great value to all Americans who play internationally, please email Ruth Ann at [zprchess@aol.com](mailto:zprchess@aol.com). There is a detailed job description at [www.iccfus.com](http://www.iccfus.com).

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