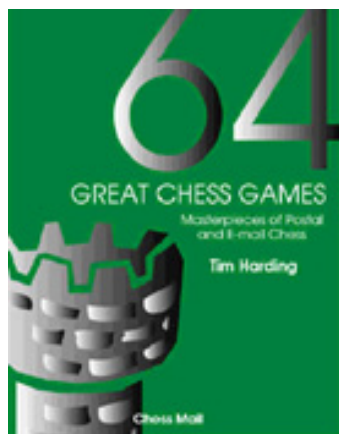




C O L U M N I S T S

The Kibitzer

Tim Harding



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by Tim Harding

A Blast from the Postal Past

My principal task at present is the compilation and editing of what will probably be the largest ever database of correspondence chess games published up to now.

‘MegaCorr3’, due to be published on CD-ROM later this year, will include a large collection of CC tournament crosstables and other information, in addition to ChessBase and PGN files containing around 525,000 games.

All these games have been played between distant opponents by post, fax, email, web server or some other transmission mode. Internet blitz games will not be included and other games — such as cable or telephone and radio matches — played in a single session will only be included if they are of some historical interest. The two defining characteristics of a correspondence game is generally taken to be that moves are transmitted by opponents at a distance and that time is measured in days rather than hours, minutes and seconds.

Correspondence database compilation is much harder than compiling database of current “over-the-board” (OTB) games, which are usually entered into databases as soon as they are played.

In recent years, the quantity of available correspondence games has greatly increased, largely because the various organizing bodies (e.g. ICCF, IECG, IECC and some of the commercial web servers) make their games available for download. Players usually report (if not play) email games

using PGN so that there is relatively little work for a tournament director to pass on a record of his events to an archivist.

However, there is still a lot of work to be done to get many of these game scores into a publishable state. When players send in game scores that have not been computer-generated, it is quite common to find illegal and ambiguous moves.

I still frequently receive games, for example, where a player's name is given in the PGN as "John Smith" or "Smith John" (without a comma), necessitating a good deal of processing to get all names into the standard "Smith, John" format which works best in ChessBase and other proprietary formats.

Dating of games can also be a problem. Most CC archivists now agree that a game should be filed in a database by the year in which it began, and not by the year in which it ended or was first published, as was often the case in the past. If games are given by when they finished, then sorting a database by date can break up complete tournaments. ChessBase 8 looks first to see if there is an official event date and sorts by that first; other software may not examine this "EventDate" field of a PGN header. Giving a precise date is impossible for a correspondence game (except for the official start date) but some archivists put this information in the PGN "Date" field, whereas I put it in the "EventDate".

Unfortunately I still come across cases where the date of a game is wildly wrong: usually because the person inputting the score has found it in a publication that came out many years after the game was played. Another cause of this is that during the late 1980s and early 1990s, many postal tournaments dragged on for years during the political upheavals caused by the break-up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia — both countries with a lot of master postal

players. An event like a World Championship Semifinal or Olympiad could take 5-9 years to complete if one player lived in one of those countries, and the game score subsequently published might be given as anything from 1984 to 1996.

Until the rise of the Internet in the last few years, the vast majority of correspondence games were of course played by post with the players sending in typed or hand-written scores to the tournament director (TD). This laborious process usually meant that a game was only preserved if it featured an opening innovation or a brilliant finish. Sometimes there was a tournament book. Most games only were preserved if one of the players or the TD thought the game of sufficient interest to send it to a national magazine or to the ICCF magazine 'Fernschach', for example. Some players have gone through their old paper records and input games from the pre-database era.

In recent years, a few people (including myself) have been using a lot of their spare time to go through the old printed sources and put such games into databases. Sometimes these games were reported in the ICCF numeric notation, but even when a game is available in algebraic it is hard to input games to a database faster than 10 games per hour. This inevitably means I have a large backlog of games not yet in databases and I never have enough time to input them all.

It is only in the last few years that ICCF (the correspondence chess counterpart to FIDE) has appointed game archivists. Wes Green (USA) is doing an excellent job with the email game scores but the process of inputting large quantities of paper game scores from the postal era has barely begun. Pietro Cimmino (Italy) made a good start but has now given up and his successor is waiting to receive paper scores.

Except for the most important tournaments prior to 1996,

there are still some missing games. Even the records of some of the most important invitational master CC tournaments are incomplete because either nobody took the trouble to input the games for databases, or because somebody did collect the games for an intended book that never materialized. In more than one case, the death of a TD meant the sudden loss of scores of potentially valuable games.

ICCF probably holds, or has lost for that reason, a large number of high-quality games played in the final qualifying stage for the CC World Championship (formerly called Three-Quarter Finals, but now Candidates), which have never seen the light of day. Of course this is very convenient for the players concerned, who can recycle opening ideas from those forgotten events whereas if you play a good move now in an email tournament, everybody knows about it within six months which was never the case in correspondence chess until recently. (Of course if a master plays an innovation in an OTB event, everybody knows about it within a week!)

People buying a games database generally want it for one or both of two reasons: to research the games of future opponents and to find opening ideas, because the repertoires of master correspondence players often differ considerably from OTB fashions. (There is generally a higher proportion of 1 e4 e5 games in correspondence play, and the Ruy Lopez/Spanish is not the only open game to be popular in CC.)

A database of games that are not widely known can also provide a good source of instructive material for chess coaches. These range from elementary blunders (not so common nowadays with computers available to blundercheck) to deep combinations, which it would be almost impossible to play OTB.

Correspondence players have the freedom to analyse in depth over many days, moving the pieces and making notes. In the postal era, long endgames were rare because adjudication would tend to supervene, or a result would be agreed because there was no prospect of completing the game normally. Nowadays the pace of email play means that most games are usually played to a finish and CC games of 80 moves or more are becoming more common. So instructive endgames can be found in a correspondence database too.

While my game collection is inevitably dominated by recently played games, much of the interest for an editor lies in unusual nuggets of historical information that gets turned up, and especially unpublished games when they can be found. (Unpublished in databases, at least, but I sometimes find interesting games that did not even make it into print anywhere.)

Also I sometimes come across queries, such as alternate versions of games where the task is to verify which is correct, or at least which is the more plausible. Working with the database alongside crosstables gives some opportunity to spot discrepancies, which can sometimes be resolved by making enquiries in the right quarter. At other times, especially when the players concerned have died, one is left with intriguing mysteries that cannot be solved — unless maybe a reader of this column can assist.

Early CC databases were bedevilled by bad data and often zero information about events, inconsistencies of dates etc. The famous *Chess Informant* is a well-known problem because (as *British Chess Magazine* complained many years ago) it continues just to publish “corr” games with no specific reference, and often an inaccurate date, although the person who sent in the game probably provided them with the precise details of when and where a game was played.

One tool has made a big difference to me in helping to assign mis-dated or unidentified “corr” games to their correct events. The diligent and energetic ICCF Ratings Commissioner Gerhard Binder has extended the ICCF Eloquetry program in recent years so that it is much more than just a ratings database. It also includes a great deal of crosstables and other historical information. Released twice a year, it is freely available for download from www.iccf.com,

This is very useful, for example, to help identify which Hansen or Nielsen or Sanchez may have played in a particular event. Find an opponent in the games database who has a less common surname, look them up in Eloquetry and you may well be able to find the crosstable of the event in which they played that opponent. Gradually, more and more ICCF games can be assigned to their correct players — although this isn’t always possible when there are two or more players with very similar names.

Another area where Eloquetry is of great assistance to an archivist is in team tournaments. I have noticed for example that ChessBase databases, excellent in many other ways, tend not to give specific information about the preliminary section or board in which a Correspondence Olympiad or other team event game was played. However, each board in a team tournament is a complete round-robin for which a crosstable can be generated if all the games are there and correctly identified. There won’t be time to identify in this way all the ICCF games in my database but I am doing what I can in the time available, and I hope that an ultimate “MegaCorr4” will in future be as complete as possible in this respect.

However, the complete crosstables only start in Eloquetry around the mid-1980s (for the most important events) to

early 1990s (for less important events). For pre-Eloquery events, research in “Fernschach” back issues and other old sources is usually the only way. Thus, I am trying to establish exactly who played who, and with what result, on each board in each section of every ICCF Olympiad, but this isn’t quite possible yet, because sometimes crosstables were not published.

When doing this, one comes across some surprises. For example, the current issue of my *Chess Mail* magazine contains a major tribute to the 4th CC World Champion, Professor Vladimir Zagorovsky, including a major article by GM Paul Motwani. For this purpose, last year I prepared as complete a collection of games as I could for Paul to study, but I encountered some problems. Some of his top-level games were played in those tournaments, like the Axelson or Purdy Memorials, which have never been published, so that only a few of his games from them are available.

Other games have no identification. Some may actually be OTB games played in the USSR by Professor Zagorovsky. There is also sometimes confusion with his namesake Mikhail Zagorovsky (not a relation), who competed with him in the 7th CC World Championship Final.

One particular game remains a puzzle, and research in Australia has so far not resolved it. This is a well-known game in which Vladimir Zagorovsky played his favourite Deferred Schliemann defence to the Lopez against the Australian master John V. Kellner and White won. Notes by the first CC world champion Cecil Purdy attributed this game to the final of the 3rd CC Olympiad (started 1958) but this cannot be right.

Research in *Fernschach* shows that Zagorovsky played Klass on board 4 in this Olympiad while Kellner was on board 5 for Australia. In the 5th Olympiad Final (started 1 April 1965) it is true they both played board 1 but the game has been published and it was different: Zagorovsky and White in a

French Defence!

The opening variation means it certainly was a Vladimir Zagorovsky game, so when and in what event was it really played?

John Kellner (Australia) – Vladimir Zagorovsky ICCF
event and year to be established

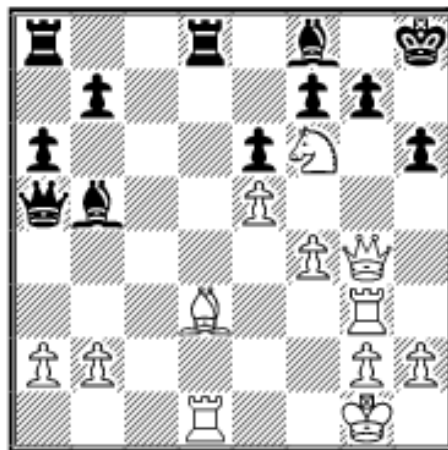
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 f5!?

Zagorovsky played this on many occasions when he wanted to try for a win with Black.

5 d4 exd4 6 Nxd4 Nxd4 7 Qxd4 c5 8 Qe5+ Qe7 9 Qxe7+ Bxe7 10 c4! fxe4

“Black's pawn compensates for his bad pawn formation,” wrote Purdy.

11 Nc3 b6 12 Bf4 Nf6 13 Rd1 Bb7 14 0–0 0–0–0 15 Bc2 Rde8 16 Rfe1 Bd8 17 h3 Re6 18 a3 Rhe8 19 Re2 h6 20 Red2 Bc7 21 Be3 g5 22 b4! cxb4 23 axb4 Bf4 24 Bb3 Bxe3 25 fxe3 g4 26 c5 Rc6 27 Na4 bxc5 28 Nxc5 gxh3 29 gxh3 d5 30 Rg2 Rd8 31 Rf1! Rcd6 32 Rg7 Bc6 33 Nxa6 Ne8 34 Re7 Rg6+ 35 Kh2 Rdd6 36 Nc5 d4 37 Rf8!



37...Kd8?

Purdy wrote here: “Both players were playing to win, and with justification until this move. Black had a sure draw by giving up two pieces for rook: 37...dxe3 38 Rfxe8+ Bxe8 39 Rxe8+ Kc7 40 Nxe4 Rb6.” Instead the Russian overlooked a mating

finish.

38 Nb7+! 1–0.

I found this in an Australian booklet *The First 50 years of the CCLA*, attributed to the Final of the 3rd CC Olympiad with notes by Cecil Purdy. Those notes were abbreviated from Purdy's magazine *Chess World* (December 1962) which I don't have, so can some Australian reader please look up the original reference and see if a different attribution is given there?

Occasionally my research turns up discrepancies between the results of games and what Eloquetry gives. When I get all the games of an event from a reliable source, I tend to trust that but in many cases I have used the Eloquetry crosstable. Of course, ICCF can only build its database on the information it receives from organizing bodies and occasionally it is given wrong results.

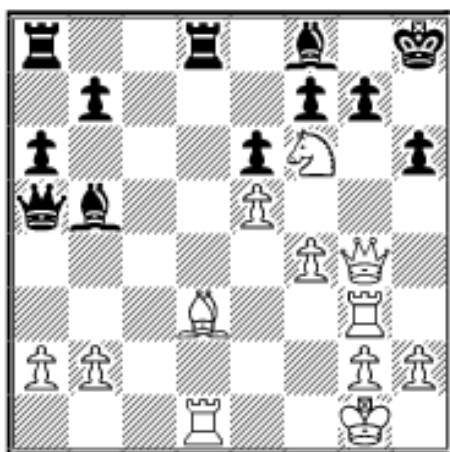
A few months ago, a Lithuanian friend wrote to me that my MegaCorr2 had the wrong result of one game in the Lithuania-100 tournament which was played in the late 1980s. Barash-Engel had been given as 1-0 but it should have been 1/2-1/2 and this error meant that D.F.Barash was given as joint winner of the event instead of fourth. This was fixed in the October 2002 Eloquetry after the Lithuanian CC federation officially notified Gerhard Binder. Such corrections of old records do not affect active players' ratings (only changes in the most recent 4-5 years would probably make a significant difference).

There is no mystery about the following game, but it is of interest as the winner, Dr Dyckhoff, was one of the key figures in postal chess history in the first half of the 20th century. I found the game recently in an article about his career in "Fernschach", 1954.

Dr Eduard Dyckhoff (Germany) – Sven Carlson (Sweden)
[D53] IFSB Olympiad preliminary-A board 1, 1935
Queen's Gambit Declined (D53)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Be7 5 e3 0–0 6 Bd3 dxc4

**7 Bxc4 c5 8 Nf3 Nc6 9 dxc5 Qa5! 10 0-0 Qxc5 11 Qe2
Ne5 12 Nxe5 Qxe5 13 f4! Qa5 14 e4 h6 15 Bxf6! Bxf6 16
e5 Be7 17 Rad1 a6 18 Rf3! Rd8 19 Bd3! Bd7 20 Rg3 Be8
21 Qg4 Bf8 22 Ne4! Bb5 23 Nf6+ Kh8**



White to play and win.

24 Qg5!! 1-0.

24 Qh4? also threatens Qxh6+ but Black was ready with the refutation 24...Bc5+ 25 Kh1 Rxd3!. The text move prevents this by threatening mate on g7.

Now if 24...g6 25 Rh3 or

24...hxg5 25 Rh3 mate or 24...Bc5+ 25 Kh1 Rg8 26 Rh3 Bf8 27 Rxh6+ gxh6 28 Qxg8 mate. So Black resigned.

Contributions from readers and friends are very valuable, especially when they supply old events that might otherwise be lost forever. Tim Runting and Bruce Littleboy have recently sent me game scores of several Australian CC championships, and in one case this also turned up a mistake in ICCF's database.

The German chess journalist Hermann Heemsoth set a new record in 1987 when he became the oldest player to become an ICCF grandmaster at the age of 77. Now 92 and recovered from a heart attack last year, he surprised me last week by sending a scrapbook of about 50 games played (mostly) in the semifinals of the 11th ICCF world championship, i.e., these games began in 1975.

This treasure was a real blast from the postal past! The games were mostly the players' reports when the games ended, but some are in Heemsoth's own handwriting. Only very few of them have been previously published and they

arrived just in time for inclusion on my CD.

Some of the games were very interesting, for instance this one, which had a few light notes (probably comments from the winner when he sent the game to the TD).

Chaim Shirok (Israel) – Øystein Sande (Norway) 11th CC World Championship, semifinal 2, 1975 King's Indian Attack (A04)

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d3 Nc6 4 Nbd2 d6 5 g3 g6 6 Bg2 Bg7 7 c3 Nge7 8 0–0 0–0 9 Re1 e5 10 Nb3?!

Apparently envisaging d3-d4 but this never happens and the Knight is poorly placed here.

10 a4 Rb8 11 Nc4 is the normal plan, already known at this time, e.g. from V.Ciocaltea-D.Drimer, Bucharest 1967.

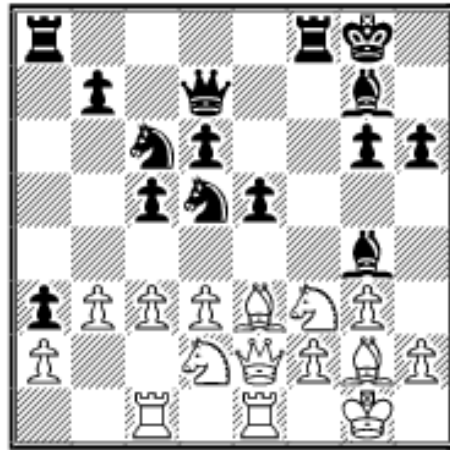
10 a3 has also been played in several games.

Also other Knight moves have been seen, e.g. 10 Nf1 h6 (Maybe unnecessary. The immediate 10...Be6 was OK in Z.Trkulja-Z.Lanka, Donau Open, Aschach 1996.) 11 Ne3 Be6 12 Nh4 d5 13 Qf3 d4 14 Nd5 dxc3 15 bxc3 Nc8 16 Be3 b6 17 Qe2 Nd6 18 Rad1 g5 19 Nf3 f5 20 Bc1 f4 21 Nd2 Qd7 22 f3 Rf7 with an excellent game for Black (0–1, 40) in M.Udovcic-T.Petrosian, Zagreb 1970.

10...f5

Black aims to take the initiative on the kingside. Not long before this game began, M.Kabbani-G.Forintos, Nice ol 1974, had gone 10...Rb8 11 d4 exd4 12 cxd4 c4 13 Nbd2 b5 (0–1 in 37 moves).

11 exf5 Bxf5 12 Be3 a5 13 Qe2 a4 14 Nbd2 a3 15 b3 Nd5 16 Rac1 Qd7 17 Bg5 h6 18 Be3 Bg4



19 Nxe5 Nxc3!?

This leads to anarchic play, much more easily analysed in a correspondence game than in your hand against the ticking clock. 19...Bxe5? would be a mistake in view of 20 Bxd5+ Kh7 (20...Kg7 is worse 21 f3 Be6 22 Bxc6 bxc6 23 Bxc5) 21

f3 Be6 22 Bxc6 Qxc6 23 Bxh6! Kxh6 24 Qe3+ Kg7 25 d4 and White regains the sacrificed piece with advantage, e.g. 25...Bxb3 26 axb3 Bf6 27 Ne4 Rae8 28 Qd3 White is a pawn ahead although the position remains complicated.

19...Nxe5 is better according to Fritz8 on my fastest computer, but that judgment is incorrect, I think. Play would probably continue 20 Bxd5+ Kh7 21 f3 Bf5 22 Nc4 Rae8 (22...Bxd3?? 23 Nxe5; 22...Nxd3 23 Nb6 and White keeps a slight initiative by matching fork with fork) 23 Nxe5 Rxe5 24 Be4 d5 but here my computer didn't find White's best move:

a) 25 d4 cxd4 26 Bxd4 dxe4 27 Bxe5 Bxe5 28 g4 exf3 (Fritz8) is very good for Black, because 29 Qxf3? Bd6 30 gxf5 Rxf5 gives him a winning attack.

b) 25 Bxf5! Qxf5 26 Qd2 and White seems to hold because if 26...d4 (26...Qxf3?! 27 Bxc5) 27 cxd4 Rxe3 28 Rxe3 Bxd4 29 Kg2.

20 Qxg4

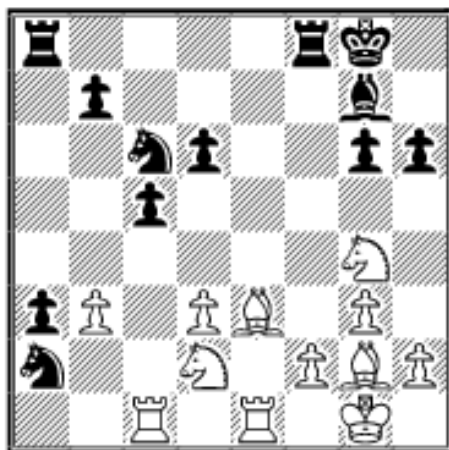
20 Nxd7 leads to wholesale exchanges and a dubious endgame for White: 20...Nxe2+ 21 Rxe2 Bxe2 22 Nxf8 Bxf8 White's d-pawn is weak and if 23 d4 cxd4 24 Bxc6 bxc6 25 Bxd4 c5 (Fritz8) Black's passed d-pawn should

prove a major asset.

20...Qxg4

Black continues to play uncompromisingly. His aim is to make his a-pawn passed, which would not happen after 20...Nxe5! 21 Qxd7 Nxd7 22 Rc2.

21 Nxg4 Nxa2



The only consistent move.

22 Bxh6?

White loses his bearings. He "wins" two minor pieces for a rook, but the passed a-pawn and Black's initiative more than counterbalance this.

22 Ra1! was the best practical try. There may be nothing better than 22...Bxa1!? 23 Rxa1 Nab4 24 Bxh6 (White's minor pieces threaten mayhem, but Black can stay ahead.) 24...Nc2 25 Bd5+ Kh7 26 Bxf8 Rxf8 when White is not obviously lost, but looks like getting the inferior ending after 27 Rd1 a2 e.g. 28 b4 N6xb4 29 Bxa2 Nxa2 30 Ne4 b5 and not now 31 Nxd6?! Nc3.

22...Nxc1 23 Rxc1 Bb2

23...a2!? was one of the brief comments in the Hermann scrapbook, possibly from the winner in his report to the tournament director, the late Karl-Heinz Boese. After 24 Bxg7 Kxg7 25 Ra1 Black may not have enough advantage to win.

23...Nd4 may be even better than the text; Fritz8 gives 24 Bxg7 Kxg7 25 Ra1 Nc2 26 Ra2 Nb4 27 Ra1 Rfd8 followed

by ...d5; also 23...Nb4 comes into consideration.

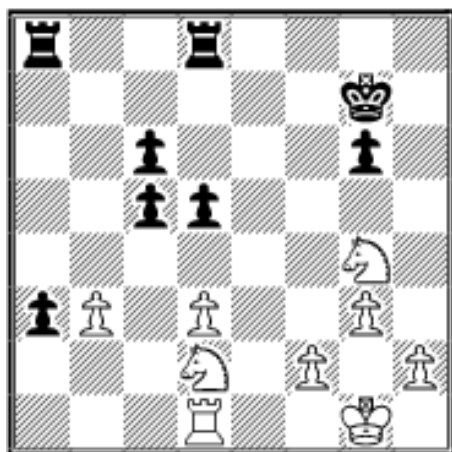
24 Rf1

24 Rf1!? was suggested in the scrapbook. 24 Bxf8?? would be a losing blunder: 24...Bxc1 and two white pieces are attacked.

24...Rfd8 25 Bd5+ Kh8 26 Nc4 Bd4 27 Bxc6

27 Bg5 was preferred by Fritz 8 (at 30 seconds) to the move White actually played, although the computer could see Black stood better after 27...Rf8 28 Bh6 Rfb8.

27...bxc6 28 Be3 Bg7 29 Bh6 Bxh6 30 Nxb6 Kg7 31 Ng4 d5 32 Nd2



Now Black is ready to spring open the queenside for his rook pair.

32...c4 33 bxc4 dxc4 34 Nxc4

Not 34 dxc4? a2 and the pin on the d-file is decisive.

34...a2 35 Ra1 Rdb8

Now White's last rook must go.

36 Kg2 Rb1 37 Rxa2 Rxa2

Now Black is two exchanges ahead, for two pawns. His task is to avoid pawn exchanges while he coordinates his rooks.

38 h4 Ra7 39 Nce5 c5 40 Kf3 Re1 41 Kf4 Re7 42 Ne3 Re6 43 N3g4

43 Nd7!? is in the scrapbook; 43...Rc6 seems a good answer.

43...Rd6 44 Kg5 Rd5 45 Kf4 Re2! 0–1

If 46 f3 Re1!.

Sande, now editor of the Norwegian correspondence magazine *Postsjakk*, went on to qualify for the Final. Also found in the same Heemsoth scrapbook, here is a previously unpublished loss of the notorious Australian (formerly Latvian) chess master Karlis Ozols, who was lucky at one time to escape prosecution for war crimes allegedly committed when he was a Nazi camp guard in Byelorussia.

***R. Schlieder* (East Germany) – *Karlis Ozols* (Australia)
11th CC World Championship, semifinal 8, 1975
Leningrad Dutch (A89)**

1 Nf3 f5 2 d4 Nf6 3 c4 g6 4 Nc3 Bg7 5 g3 0–0 6 Bg2 d6 7 0–0 Nc6 8 d5 Ne5 9 Nxe5 dxe5 10 Qb3 e6 11 Rd1 exd5 12 cxd5 Ne8?



13 d6+ Kh8 14 dxc7 Qxc7 15 Be3 Nf6 16 Rac1 Qa5 17 Qb5 Qxb5 18 Nxb5

Black played the opening variation badly and has a lost game already.

18...Bd7 19 Nc7 Rac8 20 Bxa7 e4 21 Bd4 Rf7 22 Rc3 Kg8 23 Nb5 Rxc3 24 Nxc3 Be6 25 f3 exf3 26 Bxf3 Rd7 27 b3 Kf7 28 Be5 Rxd1+ 29 Nxd1 Bc8 30 Nf2 Ke6 31 Bd4 Ne8 32 Bxg7 Nxg7 33 Nd3 Kd6 34 Kf2 b6 35 Ke3 g5 36 b4 Bd7 37 Kd4 Ne6+ 38 Kc3 Bb5 39 e3 Nc7 40 a3 h6 41 Bd1 Bc6 42 a4 Be4 43 Bb3 Ne8 44 Kd4 Nc7 45 Bc4 1–0.

Ozols was the subject some years ago of a Chess Café column by Edward Winter dealing with some of the

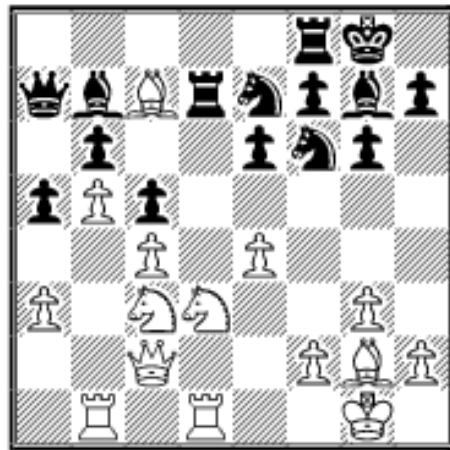
allegations about him. He has since died.

The following games from the scrapbook was lost by the co-author of one of my old opening books. Markland, who once played in the Hastings Premier, afterwards became a CC-GM but gave up postal chess abruptly in the mid-1980s.

Many of the old games I see could not have been played a CC master in the 21st century because any computer-assisted player would avoid the decisive error, The following game is an exception.

Pavao Keglevic (Croatia) – Peter Markland (England)
Wch11 sf8 corr ICCF, 1975 Symmetrical English (A36)

1 c4 g6 2 g3 Bg7 3 Bg2 c5 4 e3 Nc6 5 Ne2 Nf6 6 Nbc3 e6 7 Nf4 0–0 8 0–0 d6 9 a3 Rb8 10 b4 Qd7 11 Qa4 a6 12 b5 Ne7 13 Rb1 b6 14 d4 a5 15 dxc5 dxc5 16 Rd1 Qc7 17 Qc2 Bb7 18 e4 Rbd8 19 Nd3 Qb8 20 Bf4 Qa7 21 Bc7 Rd7

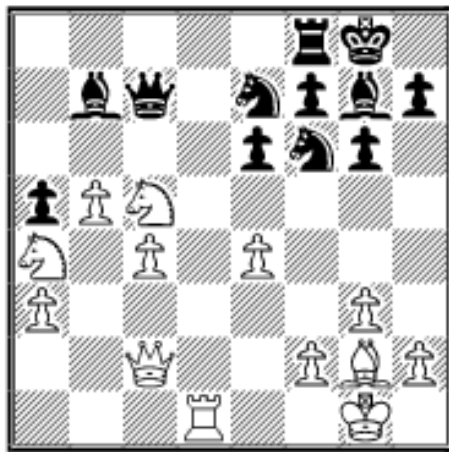


22 Bxb6! Qxb6 23 Na4!

If a computer found White's previous move, it would probably be with the intention of following up 23 e5 Bxg2 24 exf6 but after 24...Ba8 the position seems unclear and rather dangerous for White. Black has active pieces (25 fxg7 Rfd8) and the light square holes around the white King are alarming.

The Croatian CC-grandmaster has a quite different plan: with (at first) just two pawns for the piece, he will obtain a simple won endgame.

23...Qc7 24 Ndxc5 Rxd1+ 25 Rxd1



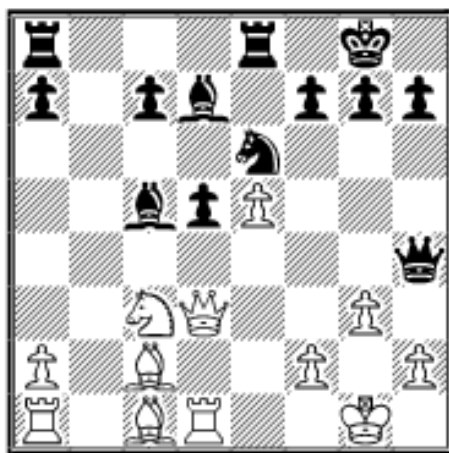
It is becoming apparent that White's conception was correct and probably Black cannot do more than prolong his resistance at the cost of more stamps and frustration.

25...e5 26 Qc3 Rd8 27 Rxd8+ Qxd8 28 Nxb7 Qd1+ 29 Bf1 Qxa4 30 Qd3 1-0.

Hermann Heemsoth has also sent me several rare tournament books and scrapbooks of games played in Soviet events, which will provide material for a later book and CD on the CC Championships of the Soviet Union.

To conclude this column, here is a case where maybe some reader with a good library may be able to assist me. I have the finish of a classic miniature game, and the start, but not the middle!

G. Axelson – J. Fridlitzius, *Aftonbladet* corr tournament, Sweden 1898-99



White has evidently just played 1 g2-g3. Black answered **1...Bxf2+!** and some time during the following sequence (when exactly?) White resigned: **2 Kg2 Qh3+! 3 Kxh3 Nf4+ 4 Kh4 Ng2+ 5 Kh5 g6+ 6 Kh6 Bc5 7 Qxg6+ fxg6 8 Rxd5 Bf8+ 9 Kg5 Be6 10 Be4 Be7+ 11 Kh6 Rf8 12 a4 Rf2 13 Rd7 Bf8+ 0-1.**

I cannot remember where I first found this, but recently I came across the opening of the game. In a note in one of

Karl Schlechter's editions of the 'Handbuch des Schachspiels', I learned that the game began **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nxc6 bxc6 6 Bd3 d5 7 Qe2 Be7 8 e5 Nd7 9 0–0 0–0 10 c4 Nc5 11 Bc2 Re8 12 b4? Ne6** with advantage to Black. However, what were the moves in between?

When I attempted to reconstruct a plausible sequence to the diagram above, I came up with **13 Rd1 Bxb4 14 cxd5 cxd5 15 Qd3 Qh4 16 Nc3 Bc5 17 g3** — but you can see that the Black QB is on d7 not c8. This would mean White wasted a tempo.

So far the authentic score of this game has not been found by me. If you have it, and preferably the source, please send it to me as soon as possible!

If any readers have previously unpublished CC games (in PGN, Chessbase or Chess Assistant format) I shall be pleased to receive them, but games cannot be included in the forthcoming CD unless they reach me by February 20 because I still have several weeks of editing work ahead to prepare the final version of MegaCorr3.

I have an addendum, re my previous column, where I wrote: "I don't know why Janowski did not play in Monte Carlo, where he had done well the two previous years. Maybe he was ill. Also absent was Chigorin, visiting the USA."

Apparently my guesses were incorrect.

David McAllister has kindly written in to explain why Chigorin and Janowski were absent from the field of the 1903 Monte Carlo tournament. He has a copy of the tournament book, which I have not seen, and that book gives

the explanations.

“The reasons Chigorin and Janowski did not play in Monte Carlo were due to disputes with the organizers,” summarises Mr McAllister. “Janowski had been involved in a dispute with the tournament manager De Riviere (I believe over the tournament schedule the previous year) and had indicated he would not accept an invitation for 1903 and was therefore not invited. Chigorin had been invited and travelled from Russia. However the president of the tournament (and provider of some of the prizes), Prince Dadian of Mingrelia, objected to him competing in the tournament and Chigorin was excluded. He was given compensation of 1500 Francs (more than the third prize).”

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