

Inside Chess

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Japfa Classic Bali 2000

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The Category 16 Japfa Classic International Chess Tournament 2000 was the highest category round robin ever held in Indonesia and by extension Asia. The event was played at the spectacular Grand Bali Beach Hotel in Bali, Indonesia one of the most beautiful islands in the world. The tournament took place from April 22nd to May 2nd 2000 and was sponsored by the Japfa food company. The tournament featured one of the most interesting last round match-ups that I've ever witnessed in a round robin as the leaders were all paired together.

The four leaders: Gilberto Milos – Judith Polgar and Alexander Khalifman – Anatoly Karpov, as luck would have it, faced off in the last round. Judit Polgar scored a fine win with Black to take clear first and the \$20,000 reward that came with her victory. For Judith, this, along with defeating Anatoly Karpov in a Rapid Chess match, must be the finest result of her illustrious career. For a while it appeared as if FIDE Champion Alexander Khalifman would take the measure of long time FIDE Champion Anatoly Karpov. However, showing his grit and determination, Karpov hung on in a long ending to earn a share of second and third. Due to his hard luck final round loss, Gilberto Milos stumbled to fourth and I finished at fifth place with an undefeated result. The total prize money was \$56,500 USD, which was a generous prize fund to be divided amongst the ten players.

Final Standings

1. **Polgar**, Judit g HUN 2658 **6½**
2. **Khalifman**, Alexander g RUS 2656 **6**
3. **Karpov**, Anatoly g RUS 2696 **6**
4. **Milos**, Gilberto g BRA 2620 **5½**
5. **Seirawan**, Yasser g USA 2647 **5**
6. **Timman**, Jan H g NED 2655 **4**
7. **Adianto**, Utut g INA 2584 **4**
8. **Ehlvest**, Jaan g EST 2622 **3**
9. **Gunawan**, Ruben g INA 2507 **2½**
10. **Zaw Win Lay** m MYA 2633 **2½**

Below I'd like to focus on the crucial games and review the tournament winner's results.

First a few stories: As beautiful as Bali is, it is not the easiest place in the world to get to. In my case I flew from Seattle to Taipei on an eleven-hour flight. Three movies and an endless series of meals and beverages later, I was as exhausted and bloated as I can recall. While the plane was descending we were politely informed that if we were caught trying to smuggle drugs into the country we would be killed. This information certainly snapped me to complete attention. Later I would transfer and transit to Singapore and then to Bali. Somehow I had calculated about 30 hours of travel including the unexpected delay in Seattle. Of course I'm not sure my judgment could be trusted by the time I arrived at the Grand Bali Beach Hotel. The return was much easier.

The opening ceremony was quite nice and I enjoyed watching the Balinese dancers perform their exquisite movements. Certainly a highlight of the opening ceremony was the address made to the players by the Vice-President of Indonesia, Megawati Soekarnoputri. It is extremely flattering to play in events that are opened and attended by the top leaders of the host country. Megawati spoke of her long time interest in chess and was aware of the names Anatoly Karpov and Judith Polgar. She explained that she was happy to now take the opportunity to meet the players in Bali.

Speaking of Karpov, of course I had to take advantage of the opportunity to speak with Tolya about his lawsuit against FIDE. While quite forthcoming, Tolya also wanted much of our discussions off the record. In a nutshell a Swiss Sports Court and the judges are considering the case and like having it! Mostly these sports courts have to deal with matters of doping and welcomed an interesting case of law. Karpov is claiming breach of contract and is asking for redress and compensation. Interestingly, Susan Polgar has taken the same route and even hired the same attorney! While Karpov is quite confident that he will be vindicated he doesn't know what to expect in the area of

compensation. In the case of Susan Polgar the contractual violations are even more egregious and FIDE will certainly take a financial bath, in Karpov's view. These discussions were incredibly enlightening and I'm really unsure why Karpov hasn't aggressively taken his views public. He was quite upbeat that the courts decision would be completed before years end.

Karpov was enjoying a swing through Asia as he had a series of victories in China and had been deeply impressed by the support that the Chinese have shown for Western Chess. He also noted that at years end he would be returning to Asia and to Vietnam(!) for that countries first major chess event.

The new FIDE Champion, Alexander Khalifman, confirmed that FIDE had indeed paid him the prize money from Las Vegas and we all had a toast. We carefully reviewed the list of prizewinners and we couldn't confirm that each and everyone was as fortunate. While in Bali, a group of us often spoke about the ideal way of running an annual World Chess Championship and Sasha was a key contributor. One concept was to "improve" the Knockout format by allowing for folks to be defeated twice before getting tossed from the competition. Of course those who had been defeated once could only aspire to win the third place prize. The concept included having three distinct Knockout events, a Grand Prix, which would lead to a fourth, and final event, the Masters. In concept, this would be an eight-player event, which would have six players coming from the three qualifying tournaments and two invited players. Sasha offered his poor person as a previous defending champion and Garry Kasparov – if he was interested – as the final player in the Masters. If Garry declined, it would be a simple matter to invite the seventh qualifying player. I liked his concepts very much and will explore the feasibility of such a plan with a few potential sponsors.

Another topic of discussion was the participation of Zaw Win Lay of Myanmar. He came into the event sporting the extraordinary FIDE rating of 2633. Chess players around the world couldn't help but note that many players from Myanmar have seen their ratings soar and charges of manipulation were discussed at length. Considering that a country like Holland has a number of 2600+ players, we determined that within a single rating period two Dutch players – with national cooperation – could achieve ratings higher than Kasparov's with ease. For a military regime like Myanmar, it may have great propaganda values to have some of the highest rated chess players in the world. When Zaw Win Lay started with a score of one draw from his first six games, discussions stopped. His recovery at the end of the tournament caused the discussions to flare up anew. In the end the collective wisdom settled for 2550, which isn't bad at all.

We'll we've delayed long enough. Let us get to the games and we begin with our winner, Judith Polgar. I've known Judith since she was a little tyke with no knowledge of English, as they say, "you've come along way baby." Judith started well, playing a leading role throughout the tournament. She didn't appear to be in trouble in any of her games and won the tournament by counter-punching with the Black pieces. Winning with Black is a major plus in the top leagues but Judith's three wins with Black and her one win as White were outstanding and all were well deserved. While Timman may have self-destructed, that wasn't her fault, just her good fortune. Let's look at the game from the ninth round that brought her ultimate victory:

Sicilian Najdorf, Fischer Variation B87

GM Gilberto Milos (2620)

GM Judit Polgar (2658)

Japfa Classic Bali INA (9), 02.05.2000

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4 e6
7.Bb3 b5 8.0-0 Be7 9.Qf3 Qb6 10.Be3 Qb7 11.Qg3 Nbd7 12.f3
Nc5!?**



A remarkable idea, which I believe, should be properly credited to the recently deceased GM Lev Polugaevsky. Black's idea is that after the capture of the g7-pawn, Black will use the time that White needs to extricate his Queen to complete his development and to utilize the half open g-file for an attack. Thus:

13.Qxg7 Rg8 14.Qh6 Rg6

15.Qh3 Bd7, when Black tries to combine a doubling on the g-file with a center break based on ...d6- d5 and ...e6-e5 ideas. While I'm a bit skeptical of Black's compensation, I certainly accept that it exists.

The decision to capture or not capture the pawn didn't sit to well with Gilberto. His approach to the game was to play the opening to, "keep the advantage" and if the opportunity appeared to play for the win. Thus he didn't give the capture too much thought at all. Besides, he was quite familiar with White's piece arrangement and confident that his game choice leads to a White pull.

13.Rfd1!? Bd7!?

I bring attention to the last two moves, as they were fraught with

tension with the audience in a state of acute distress. How could Black be gambling away a key pawn on the Kingside in a last round game for first place?

14.Kh1 b4 15.Nce2 0-0 16.Bh6 Ne8 17.c4?



Remarkably enough a blunder, which costs, White a pawn. Gilberto was so anxious to make the piece set up with Rooks doubled on the d-file and a c2-pawn on the c4-square that he played the text without realizing its consequences. After 17.Rd2 (Covering the b2-pawn.) a5!? 18.c4, White is moving towards the position that he wanted.

17...bxc3 18.Nxc3 Bf6!

Now the difference is clear, the b3-Bishop can't move without pitching the b2-pawn. The frightful realization of what he had done hit Gilberto squarely between the eyes and he now determined to buckle down and to save the position. He is helped by the fact that Black's position is quite cramped and that it's quite difficult for Judith to make progress.

19.Bg5 Bxd4 20.Rxd4 Nxb3 21.axb3 f6

Judith has to pause to prevent Bg5-e7, which would win the entrapped Rook.

22.Bd2!

Seizing the defensive. White intends to put his Bishop on the c3-square. Route his Knight to the e3-square and double Rooks on the d-file, when his position is nearly impregnable.

22...Qxb3 23.Nd1 a5!

Judith finds the only way to make progress. As long as the a-pawn remains on the a6- square, the fortress mentioned above will hold. The text envisions that the a6-pawn is better protected on the a4-square and the by ...a4-a3, White's Queenside is somewhat vulnerable.

24.Qe1!

Not falling for 24.Bxa5?, which will cost material due to the vulnerable f1-square: 24...Rxa5! 25.Rxa5 Qb6 26.Raa4 Bxa4 27.Rxa4 Qb5, is the winning stinger.

24...Qb6!

Judith certainly had good reason to avoid: 24...a4 25.Bb4 (25.Rb4!? Qc2 26.Bc3) when the plan of: 26.Ra3 Qc2 27.Rc3, could chase the Queen into White's clutches.

25.Rd3 a4 26.Bb4!?

Since pitching the pawn, Gilberto has repaired his position mightily and was beginning to feel things weren't all that bad. Even going so far as considering Rd3-a3, intending Nd1-c3 clipping the a-pawn. Eventually he decided to baton down the hatches by playing Nd1-e3, Ra1-d1, Qe1-d2 and Bb4-a3, when, "I can't possibly lose!" From

Judith's perspective, this was quite true. Since winning the pawn, it has been very hard for her to increase the scope of her pieces and she now makes it a priority.

26...Rf7! 27.Qd2?!

The text creates an unintended tactical danger by limiting the number of squares to which the d3-Rook might move. I've no clue how Black might crack the position after 27.Ne3 Bb5 28.Rd2, when White is ready double Rooks on the d-file and play Bb4-a3 keeping the Queenside clogged up.

27...Bb5 28.Rd4 e5!

Of course this was the move that Gilberto had hoped to induce. He now realized that his Rook is fortunate to have the a5-escape square.

29.Rd5 Rb7! 30.Bc3

Capturing the d6-pawn by: 30.Bxd6? Bc6 31.Bc5 Qa5, would cost White material. The text places the Bishop on the wrong diagonal but 31.Ba3? Bc4 would cost the exchange as the Rook is trapped.

30...Bc6?!

I'm not to sure what Judith had in mind by the text. My inclination would be to play: 30...Bc4 31.Ra5 Rxa5 32.Bxa5 Qb5 33.Ne3 Be6 34.Bc3, when its hard to see how exactly Black is supposed to expect his extra pawn to carry the day.

31.Rd3 Qa6?!

A little drifting here by Judith as she's wrestling with the opportunity of repeating the position while trying to find the best way of playing for a win.

32.Ne3 Bb5 33.Rd5 Qb6?



Black's aimless play had by this time calmed Gilberto down and he was no longer fearful of the loss. Black's extra pawn, the d6-pawn is firmly blockaded and the question for him became should he try to just "keep" the position or should he force the draw? Unfortunately for him he made a fateful decision.

34.Nf5?!

The start of a mistaken tactical operation. How would Black make progress after 34.h3!, making luft?

34...Ra6 35.Rd1??

In a word, the "howler." Gilberto was blithely unaware of the back rank issues and his mild time trouble encouraged his decision.

35...Bc4! 36.Nxd6 Nxd6 37.Rxd6 Qxd6 38.Qxd6 Rxd6 39.Rxd6



39...a3!

That one hurts, as the breakthrough is immediately decisive.

40.b4 Rc7 41.Kg1 Bb5 42.Bd2 a2 43.Rd8+ Kf7 44.Ra8 Rc2 0-1

The "FIDE Champions" Anatoly Karpov and Alexander Khalifman split the spoils at second and third.

Karpov continues to be as dangerous as ever as he has flashes of his former brilliance. A vintage Karpov performance was his victory over Jaan Ehlevest, a game that Ehlevest is still kicking himself for.

Queen's Indian Defense E15

23...Bc3 24.Re3 Rxd1+ 25.Qxd1 Bc8! 26.Qb3 Ba1!



It turns out that the diagonal is just long enough. That is how this diagonal gets its name by the way, the long diagonal... Yuck, yuck, yuck. Anyway, the previous sequence of moves were all quite forcing and I think it fair to say that since Karpov's novelty the crucial position has been reached. While it can certainly be argued that White has fine compensation

I don't think it is enough.

27.Ne1 Kh8 28.Nc2 f4!?

A sharp reaction in order to break open the Kingside. Afterwards, Ehlvest was convinced that this was a correct decision. I voiced support for: 28...Be5 29.Bxc6!? Bc7, intending ...e6-e5 and ...f5-f4 offering a promising imitative without weakening the King. As Jaan explained he already felt his position was better and he was justified in stepping up an attack.

29.gxf4 g5 30.Bxc6 gxf4 31.Rd3 Qg6+ 32.Kf1



It is easy to see what attracted Ehlvest to this position. All he needs to do is retreat his a1-Bishop and with the open g-file and possibilities of pushing his e-pawn, Black will be in his full glory.

32...Bg7?

A very strange retreat, which I don't understand at all. It seems far more favorable to keep the g-file open:

32...Bf6!, planning to push the e-pawn must favor Black.

33.Rd6!

An annoying pin to the e-pawn played just in time to prevent Black from getting active.

33...Qh5! 34.Qf3!

Fine play by both players. Karpov jettisons the h2-pawn in order

to gain time and harmonize his pieces by controlling the light-squares.

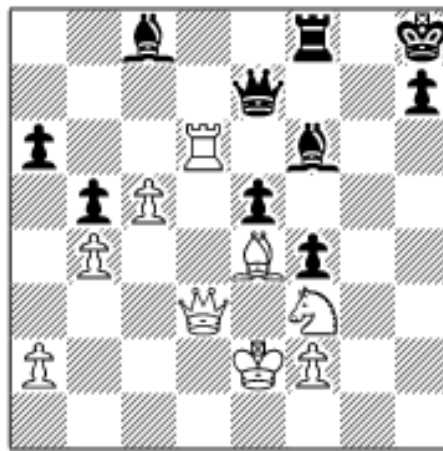
34...Qxh2 35.Ne1 a6?

A typical time trouble mistake as Black makes a wasted effort to save his b5-pawn. The position required resolute play. To this end 35...Be5 36.Rd1 Bc7 playing for ...e6-e5 and opening the diagonal for the c8-Bishop and seeking to occupy the g-file with the Rook was necessary.

36.Ke2 Qh6?!

In time pressure, Ehlvest is losing the thread as he makes a number of moves with his Queen only to end up nowhere.

37.Qe4 Qf6 38.Nf3 Qe7?! 39.Qd3 e5 40.Be4! Bf6



What an impressive transformation has taken place! White's pieces are coordinating beautifully owning nearly the entire board. Karpov is now in his full glory as he seeks to rope in the point.

41.Qd5!

Domination complete.

41...Qg7 42.Qc6 Qf7 43.Ke1

Bg4 44.a3 Bxf3 45.Bxf3 e4!

I'm not sure if a computer would recognize the hopelessness of the position and voluntarily jettison the e5-pawn. In reality this is Black's only chance to get counter play. Desperate or not, this is the only chance.

46.Bxe4 Qc4 47.Qd5 Bc3+ 48.Kd1 Qf1+ 49.Kc2 Bg7 50.f3! Qe2+ 51.Qd2 Qc4+ 52.Kd1 Qb3+ 53.Ke2 Qc4+ 54.Qd3 Qa2+ 55.Kf1 Qa1+ 56.Qb1 Qc3 57.Rd3 Qf6 58.Ke2 Qh6 59.Rd7 Re8 60.Qd3 Qf6 61.Qd5 Qb2+ 62.Kf1 Qc1+ 63.Qd1 Qc4+ 64.Kf2 Qa2+ 65.Qd2 Qe6 66.c6!

After an extensive period of maneuvering whereby White has avoided perpetual check threats he's earned the opportunity to advance his passer. Now there is another round of maneuvering when White again wins the tempo.

66...Qh6 67.Qd3 Qh2+ 68.Kf1 Qh1+ 69.Ke2 Qh2+ 70.Kd1 Qg1+ 71.Kc2 Qa1 72.Rd8! Qb2+ 73.Kd1 Qa1+ 74.Ke2 Qb2+ 75.Kf1 Qa1+ 76.Kg2 Qa2+ 77.Kh1 Qa1+ 78.Kh2 Qa2+ 79.Qd2!

Forcing a winning ending.

79...Qxd2+ 80.Rxd2 Be5 81.Rd7 Rc8 82.Rxh7+ Kg8 83.Ra7 1-0

While Karpov's opening approach to the above game may have been a bit dodgy, certainly the game showed signs of vintage Karpov play. I'm certain that Karpov felt that he could easily have been the tournament winner had he done more in his game with Judith Polgar... On the other hand he was fortunate not to lose to Jan Timman...

Our third winner, Alexander Khalifman played a fine tournament with a late tournament surge. Also undefeated, when he won Sasha was overpowering. His victory over Indonesia's best player, Utut Adianto, was a tour de force.

GM Alexander Khalifman (2656)

GM Utut Adianto (2584)

Japfa Classic Bali INA (7), 29.04.2000

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nc3 e6 5.g4 Bg6 6.Nge2 c5 7.Be3 Nc6 8.dxc5 Nxe5 9.Nd4 Nf6(!)

While this move has been played before, I'm quite skeptical that this move is best. Safer choices include: 9...Nc6, 9...Ne7 and 9...a6(!) which have also been played before in this very sharp line of play.

10.f4 Ned7?

Backing down from the challenge White has made. Black had to play: 10...Nexg4 11.Bb5+ Ke7 12.Bg1 Qc7, as was played in 1982 Mar Del Plata, between Braga and Timman a game in which I was an active kibitzer in the post-mortem!

White now has a bevy of attacking choices. Khalifman pulls all his attacking levers putting them to good effect. By the way conducting such a promising attack position isn't so easy. Sometimes its better to have one clear attacking option!

11.f5!

Blowing up Black's center as Black's King now becomes the object of attack.

11...exf5 12.c6!

Adianto had been hopeful about the variation: 12.gxf5? Bh5 13.Be2 Qe7!, when he saw chances to escape.

12...bxc6 13.Nxc6 Qc7 14.Bb5!

As always when attacking the name of the game is development.

Everyone should get invited to the party. The presence of the Bishop is immediately felt, as the pin on the a4- e8 diagonal will prove decisive.

14...a6



15.Qe2!

In good positions, it's easy to find good moves. Once more development is the key. The open e-file beckons a major piece and Black is now set up for a painful discovered check.

15...Qd6 16.Ba4!

Avoiding any irrational exuberance. There was a

strong temptation to show a brilliant tactical flare following: 17.0-0-0 axb5, but no one saw the follow up. Therefore the prudent retreat is best as White keeps all his trumps and prepares to castle long with a decisive attack.

16...f4

Adianto didn't want to return the pawn – his sole solace for suffering – but he needed to deal with the threats of White's free flowing attack. For instance: 16...Ne4 17.Nxe4 fxe4 18.0-0-0, planning c2-c4 would break up Black's position.

17.Bxf4+ Qe6 18.g5!

The decisive blow as the d5-pawn will soon fall.

18...Qxe2+ 19.Kxe2 Nh5 20.Be3 Bf5

Black has too many problems to cover. Black was also facing Nc6-e5, pressing the d7- Knight.

21.Nxd5 Bd6 22.Kf2

Stepping off the e-file and preparing to bring both Rooks to the central files.

22...Bh3

Black couldn't play: 22...0-0 23.Nce7+, which would cost the f5-Bishop. Neither was 22...Be6 23.Rad1, advisable, as Black's central pieces would be vulnerable.

23.Rad1 f6 24.Nb6 Nxb6 25.Bxb6 0-0

Agreeing to the loss of a piece. There was no real alternative as

25...Bf4 26.Nd8+ Kf8 27.Bc5+ Kg8 28.Bb3+ mates next move.

26.Rxd6 fxe5+ 27.Ke3 Rae8+ 28.Kd2

With an extra piece in his pocket, Khalifman's victory is not in doubt.

**28...Nf6 29.Rd8 h5 30.Rxe8 Nxe8 31.Bc5 Rf4 32.Ne7+ Kf7
33.Bb3+ Be6 34.Bxe6+ Kxe6 35.Re1+ Kd7 36.Ng6 Rf5
37.Re7+ Kc6 38.Rxe8 1-0**

In closing, I'd like to thank our International Arbiter Djamil Djamal for his fine direction and flexibility in governing the event and to Kristianus Liem for his excellent work on the bulletins and web site. Finally to the Indonesia chess fans and sponsors, hearty thanks, you were all terrific.



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