CHESS

DIAGRAM 1

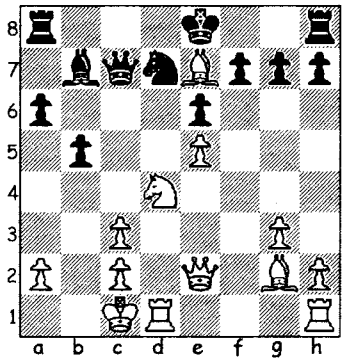
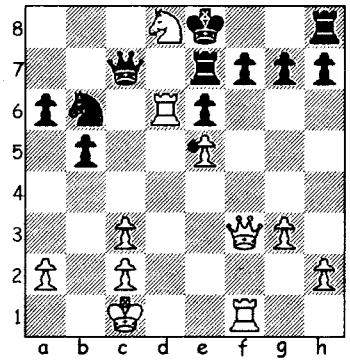


DIAGRAM 2



THE Dorset Closed Congress took place last weekend and the championship ended in a three-way tie for first place between Bruce Jenks, Andy Heard and Martin Simons, who won the trophy on tie-break.

In one of the best attended tournaments in recent years, Simons reached his 3.5/5 score and tie-break advantage with two remarkable recoveries in the second and fourth rounds, securing draws from lost positions against Bruce Jenks and Allan Pleasants respectively.

The Major (under-160) tournament was won by Chris Leeson with a 4/5 score, after he settled on a quick draw with runner-up Paul Jackson in the last round, while the Minor (under-135) winner was Tim Joyce, playing in his first tournament for 27 years, who compiled an impressive 4.5/5 score featuring four straight wins and another last round draw to finish a half-point clear of Stephen Docherty

The Corus tournament has been won by Magnus Carlsen, a half-point ahead of Alexey Shirov and Vladimir Kramnik, and the following game, taken from the penultimate round, features an unusual opening variation that reaps a remarkably quick reward.

Smeets, J – Van Wely, L
Corus Wijk aan Zee, 2010
Sicilian Najdorf (B96)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Nbd7 8.Qe2!? The more natural and main line alternative is 8.Qf3, but, rather than develop the king's bishop centrally, White intends to fianchetto, making this early block on the piece an irrelevance. **8...Qc7 9.0-0-0 b5 10.g3 Be7** In Shirov-Gelfand (Dos Hermanas, 1995) White, in typical fashion, sacrificed here with 11.Nd5?!, but, after 11...exd5 12.Bg2 Be7 13.Nf5 Nb6 14.Nxg7+ Kf8 15.Bh6 Kg8, Black survived the onslaught and a wild game drifted into a loss in 69 moves. **11.Bg2 Bb7 12.e5** Forcing the exchange of pawns, as 12...Bxg2 13.Qxg2 leaves both knight and rook under threat. **12...dxe5 13.fxe5 Nd5 14.Bxe7 Nxc3 15.bxc3 (Diag 1) Bxg2?** By capturing the king's bishop first Black cedes control of a crucial c6 square... **16.Qxg2 Kxe7 17.Nc6+** ...and now the black king must return to the back rank once more. **17...Kf8 18.Rhf1 Nb6 19.Qf3 Re8?** The d-file needed to be closed, although, even after 19...Nd5 20.Nb4 Rd8 21.Nxd5 Rxd5 exd5 23.Qxd5, the safety of Black's king remains in serious doubt. **20.Nd8! Re7 21.Rd6 Ke8 (Diag 2)** Answering the threat of 22.Nxe6+, but allowing a pretty finish. **22.Rxb6! Qxd8** After 22...Qxb6 23.Nxf7 Rg8 24.Qa8+ wins the rook. **23.Rxa6** and Black resigned, as 23...Rc7 24.Ra8 Rc8 saves the queen, but walks into 25.Qxf7 mate, while 23...Qd5 is met by the 24.Ra8+ and again the rook is lost.

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