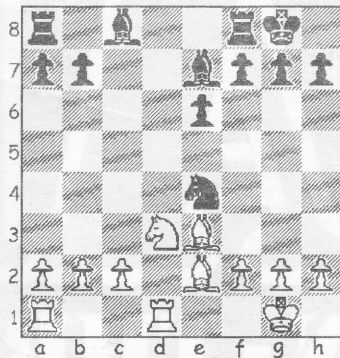


CHESS

by Alan Dommett

DIAGRAM 1



The 2010 London Chess Classic, held at Olympia last month, has been won by Magnus Carlsen for the second successive year, thereby providing a result that should now see the young Norwegian reclaim his place at the top of the official FIDE rating list. Reigning world champion Vishy Anand and England's Luke McShane finished with a share of the runners-up position in an event that has become a fitting finale to the annual world chess circuit

Carlsen's victory for the second successive year was watched by his mentor Garry Kasparov, who was present at the venue to comment on the last round of games. Final individual scores:- 1st Magnus Carlsen (13/21), 2-3rd Vishy Anand, Luke McShane (11), 4th Hikaru Nakamura (10), 5th Vladimir Kramnik (10), 6th Michael Adams (8), 7th David Howell (4), 8th Nigel Short (2), the games being scored as 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss.

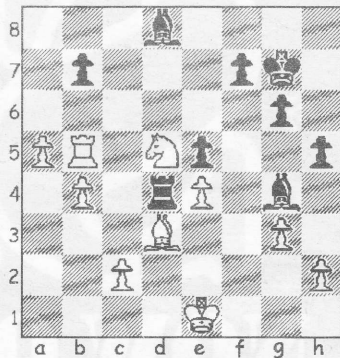
The following game is Carlsen's last round win against Short in which the English GM fails to make any headway in a passive variation of the French and is duly punished by some instructive positional play.

Carlsen, M - Short, N

2nd London Chess Classic, 2010
French Defence (C10)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Be7 Cautious in the extreme, whereas the main line alternative 5...Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 7.Bd3 c5 at least contests the centre. **6.Bc4 Ngf6 7.Nxf6+ Nxf6 8.0-0 0-0 9.Ne5** A strong outpost for the knight that stalls Black's queen-side development and virtually forces the central break referred to in the previous note. **9...c5 10.dxc5 Qxd1 11.Rxd1 Bxc5 12.Be2!?** Anticipating his opponent's next move and the response

DIAGRAM 2



required, White redirects a bishop that was biting on granite. **12...Ne4 13.Nd3 Be7 14.Be3 (Diag 1) h6** A telltale sign that once again Black cannot solve the usual puzzle in the French (activating the queen's bishop) as, after **14...Bd7 15.Bf3 Bc6 16.Ne5!** seizes the initiative and **14...b6 15.Nf4 Bb7?? 16.Rd7** would lose a piece. **15.a4 a5 16.g3 Rd8 17.Ne5 Nf6 18.Nc4** Threatening **19.Bb6** and leaving Black little option other than to accept an inferior line and an eventual loss of a pawn. **18...Rxd1+ 19.Rxd1 Nd5 20.Nb6 Nxe3** The situation is just as grim after **20...Nxb6 21.Bxb6 Bf6 22.c3**, when Black hardly has a good move at his disposal. **21.fxe3 Rb8 22.Kf2 e5** Freedom for the bishop that costs a fifth rank pawn. **23.Rd5 Be6 24.Rxa5 Rd8 25.Bd3 Bf6 26.e4 Rd4** Kasparov assessed this position as a technical win for White after **Rb5** and **a5** and the next passage of play merely confirms Carlsen's clinical finishing powers. **27.Rb5 g6 28.a5 Kg7 29.Ke2 Bg4+ 30.Kf2 Be6 31.Kf3 h5 32.Nd5 Bd8 33.b4 Bc8 34.Ke2 Bg4+ 35.Ke1 (Diag 2) f5** The b-pawn is left at White's mercy due to **35...Bc8 36.a6! bxa6 37.Rb8** picking up one of the two retreated bishops. **36.Rxb7+ Kh6 37.Ne3 Bf3** A last ditch attempt to regain material, but White is happy to see the long diagonal blocked as it removes any chance Black has of stopping the a-pawn. **38.a6 fxe4 39.Be2 Bg5 40.a7** and it was here that Black resigned rather than face **40...Rd8 41.Rb8** and an inevitable completed journey for the passed pawn.

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