

RUSSELL'S CHESS CHATS

18th Chess Olympiad was won by as usual USSR with 39½ points in Championship group. Yugoslavia was next at 31 then Bulgaria 30, USA 29½, West Germany 29. Canada finished 13th with 19. DUNCAN SUTTLES was the star for Canadian team playing 17 games winning 7 drawing 9 and losing only 1 and according to Chess qualifying him for grandmaster title! SUTTLES played 2nd board. In Group B finals Holland took top honors ½ point ahead of England while Group C went to Australia and Group D to Singapore. Best board scores were won by PETROSIAN 1st board 87.5%, TRINGOV of Bulgaria 78.6% on 2, KORCHNOI 84.6% on 3, KAGAN of Israel 80.8% on 4 while 1st reserve went to POLUGAYEVSKY of USSR 80.8% and 2nd reserve to SMYSLOV 91.7%. 53 nations took part. ROBERT FISCHER waste play for USA but did not like the lighting, had to have fluorescent, then too he had to be able to play his games in private. Were other things also when the two listed were not met he just up and left. DONALD BYRNE who was to be non-playing captain was now a playing member of the team. Players and spectators were very close together in the hall and PETROSIAN was in agreement that conditions were unsatisfactory, but he put up with them. Assume Chess Life will have quite abit to say about this. Wonder how much USCF paid Fischer? Scores for USA team were: RESHEVSKY 5-6-2 for 61½%, EVANS 4-5-3 for 54.2% BENKO 2-8-2 for 50% ROBERT BYRNE 4-7-1 for 62.5% LOMBARDY 5-5-1 for 68.2% and DONALD BYRNE 7-4-1 for 75%. Of interest to Canadian readers are score for their team YANOVSKY 4-4-6 42.9% SUTTLES 7-9-1 87.7% MACSKASY 4-5-4 50% ALLAN 4-4-4 50% DAY 3-1-8 29.2% and SCHULMANN 2-4-2 50%. Site for 1970 Chess Olympics is Siegen, West Germany and 1972 at Palma de Mallorca, Spain.

Larsen

By Jude Acers

CONVERSATION WITH A GRANDMASTER: BENT LARSEN
ASPEN, COLORADO - AUGUST, 1968

Q. Bent, I do not understand the ease with which you speak to skeptics and friends alike when your World Candidates match with Spassky is discussed. Surely it wasn't a mere statistic?

A. Well, hardly a mere statistic! It was primarily a disappointment with the World Chess Federation, with its long series of matches to get a World Championship match that bothers me. You must understand that the playing conditions in Sweden were not stipulated in advance and the Boris Spassky was very upset with the arrangements for our match when he arrived in Sweden. I had prepared for this match for so long and wanted to win badly. So I was not so careful in determining the fee to be payed and other items. When we got to Sweden it was simply too late to change the terrible affair. Of course for me there was the simple fact that I was unable to concentrate at the worst possible time. I would sit at the board and could not see a thing. I only wanted to get away as soon as possible without, naturally, throwing away games on purpose.

Q. Mr. Larsen, can you be more specific? Exactly what were the uncomfortable snags and who was responsible?

A. Well, the match was without notice scheduled in Sweden rather than Yugoslavia as both Spassky and I had requested. Yugoslavia is ideal, you know, with its fervent chess enthusiasts and ideal playing conditions (to say nothing of good money prizes for both players). 14

I am sorry to say that one man was responsible for all arrangements, FIDE President Folke Regard. Somehow he wished to use his sponsorship of the match to bolster his bid for the Presidency of the Swedish Chess Federation. This seems to be the sole reason for bringing the match to his nation.

Q. But Bent, that seems fantastic. He's already President of FIDE. Surely there must have been other Regard motives.

A. I do not understand the matter either but it is apparently true. Regard disappeared just after the opening moves of the 1st game and could not be located for an explanation of the prizes, virtually nothing, nor of the other match irregularities. Spassky arrived in Sweden a day before me and wanted to leave immediately after learning the match terms. He kept saying "I am a chess professional!" for all of the members of the press to hear despite the tendency of all the Russians to be listing themselves as journalists of students or what have you. Indeed, had I arrived on the same day it is very probable we would never have played the match in Sweden at all. As it were I arrived just three hours before the 1st game. By this time Mr. Regard had assured Spassky and his second that many adjustments would be made. The Russian Chess Federation was horrified to learn that it was responsible for Spassky's expenses and in foreign currency to boot. Payment in non-roubles is, as you know practically a disaster for a Russian agency. In fact this was the reason I could not play in the Moscow 1967 grandmasters tournament, because no arrangements could be made to allow me to take my winnings out of the country. And so Spassky and I wound up playing for about \$40.00, nothing whatsoever being changed as the match progressed. Regard has gotten a banker friend to allot a small amount for the match and though well meaning this patron knew nothing about chess at all. He only afterward learned the true conditions of the play and the meaning of the match to the chess world. Then he sent an apology and explanation of what a sad trick had been played upon us.

Q. You said something earlier, something fantastic happened as you were preparing to begin.

A. Yes! Folke Regard threatened me with reprisals if I should complain about the match on the Swedish radio and television. Imagine! He said that he would make life unlivable for me in Sweden during the match and that I would be unpopular generally. And do you think that Bobby Fischer is not well acquainted with this condition of FIDE? I should retaliate on my own television program in Denmark!

Q. Bent, are you and Spassky good friends?

A. Oh yes! We get along splendidly and often spend time analyzing and touring between rounds of tournaments.

Q. Who do you pick now in the Spassky-Korchnoi match?

A. Oh, well, Korchnoi of course. Why, what do you think?

Q. What?! ...Well...Of course I must choose Spassky because of the tremendous care with which he prepared for your match with him. Is it possible at your, shall we say "normal" playing strength to lose 3 games in a row as in the Spassky match?

A. Oh yes. You laugh but it happened in a small tournament last year to me. It is possible to play well and still lose if one is not chicken!

Q. Is it true that the Danish people really do make it pleasant for the best grandmaster in the country?

A. Yes. I was amazed to learn that a man in Copenhagen keeps records of the times a name, living or dead, is mentioned in the leading newspapers and such. Of all the sports figures I was first. That shows something. And of course financially things are well.

(To be continued next month, with what Larsen thinks of Petrosian, zonal system, FIDE, Fischer, etc.)

Larsen

By Jude Acers

(continued from last month)

Q. What do you think of World Champion Petrosian?
A. It is certainly true that he isn't much of a World's Champion but I think it is proper that the title is decided in along match. I certainly feel this way, so does Fischer, Spassky certainly. But Petrosian is perhaps, I think, the best match player.

Q. Bent, poof! I push a button and give you the right to change the world zonal system, How would you do it?

A. A panel of experts in FIDE would vote the eight strongest players into a tournament amongst themselves, preferably a double round robin. The selection of the eight strongest would not be difficult at all.

Q. Bent who would be decidedly be in these eight players today?

A. At present Fischer, Spassky, Ivkov, Portisch, Petrosian, Korchnoi, Tal and myself. Don't be mistaken, I greatly admire Botvinnik for remaining in the leading players in the World.

Q. You have expressed discontent with FIDE in this interview and with many other comments earlier. Would you consider the fantastic proposition of joining with Fischer in boycotting FIDE zonal events unless both of you are satisfied? In fact, later this year won't you be able to see Fischer and discuss this?

A. Again, your question is not so far fetched as you think. I have given careful thought to this matter of joining with Fischer in a mutual boycott as you say. But FIDE is changing Presidents in Lagano later this year so that the matter is wisely not followed through. Under a new administration a new chess scene may well be possible. But a boycott would be hardly a hindrance to FIDE.

Q. What do you think of William Addison?

A. I do not know him well but he should certainly play more.

Q. Did Fischer's withdrawal from Sousse Interzonal upset you?

A. It was surely not expected by anyone. You must remember that Bobby is an extremely nervous person. It is not an act when he waves away photographers in Santa Monica or complains about lighting and the playing schedule in Africa. He is truly bothered by these things, I think. And his withdrawal greatly encourages my plan for the World Championship Candidates to be decided by a closed round robin so that all conditions could be kept under control and every complaint within human reason could be swiftly dealt with. As for myself, personally, I was sorry to see Bobby leave. I had no part in his persecution or the so called "Russian plot". As your chess press has already reported, Gligoric and the other Yugoslavs would not even consider it either. Even Matulovic.

Q. Do you feel that through some strange choice or environmental handicap Fischer is a very lonely person?

A. Yes, I do. He is really a good person, quite friendly but somehow not happy and this appears in a tournament so large that irritations are bound to be as in Africa.

Q. What can be done to help Fischer?

A. It is not clear. Maybe Bobby only needs a little more stability and more confidence in the ability of things to work themselves out in a big tournament like Sousse's Interzonal. Of course if we say that his happiness is essential to his playing well in the World Championship events then we are perhaps saying that his chances for the title are not good now. But they could be greatly changed in the near future. And what others say is no matter, I do wish Bobby Fischer well, certainly.

Q. You have had many heartbreaking minus score and also ran events which were the subjects of **15**

bars by chess critics everywhere. Now in spite of everything you have developed into truly one of the greatest tournament players in history. Besides the asset attributed to you by Robert Byrne and William Addison-that you are able to play and play, hour after hour and living chess through the enjoyment of the sheer act of moving the chess pieces about, is there any other special feature of your play.

A. As you know I have confidence and am always trying to win. I never make deals and always compete to the end. I have the impression that I am willing to work on theory more than my opponents. Particularly in the openings but in the endgames as well. At Sousse nobody was quite sure that Reshevsky could not hold a bad queen and pawn ending. But after everyone was certain. It is learning from practise that inactive masters never obtain.

Q. Robert Byrne's recent last round win over you seemed very well planned. Do you think he is potentially a world title candidate?

A. He is very good, unquestionably. Perhaps underrated by players, a real grandmaster. But it is impossible to tell what the future holds.

Q. Do you think that the grandmaster title has been cheapened immeasurably by the standards FIDE allows for the title?

A. In the past ten years, yes, many so called grandmasters are not worthy of the title. I understand that Robert Byrne is proposing a scheme to make the title truly first rate, difficult to obtain without grandmaster playing strength and consistent evidence of it in international tournaments. But I am not involved.

Q. When you travel through the US and Canada in the next two months do you plan to study chess at all? Do you have a personal chess library on the road so to speak?

A. No. It may be difficult for you to imagine but I only came to this country for a rest and a real vacation. Of course I do have many volumes at home in Copenhagen and keep many notebooks. I mark books and magazines but mostly with comments like "nonsense", "foolish" and "wrong-wrong again." I enjoy playing chess very much and so it is not too much of a strain after the Spassky match playing almost immediately here.

Q. At the US Open there are young players like Norman Weinstein of New York and Greg DeFotis of Chicago. To my way of thinking it's just about impossible to get young players like these into training tournaments abroad as well as at home. I'm beginning to think nobody really cares about promoting talent in the whole English speaking world. What do you think?

A. It is mostly a matter of people not caring, really. Your government does not help chess-players as I understand it other than with a little aid here or there for an international team. Development of talent is left to chance as with Bobby. And it is very difficult to get Americans into European tournaments because of the cost involved. Even Fischer sometimes costs too much, Europeans think! But I do not know exactly what should be done. You must go to Europe if you are to be a good player.

Q. I could not really credit reports by friends and two newspapers as I was heading to this tournament that you were actually playing. When did you really decide to play in the US Open?

A. Aha! Well, your suspicions are well founded, I had received a very nice invitation for the US and Canadian Chess Federations to play in their leading summer tournaments but was really undecided. I was so very disappointed with my play with Spassky that I was really undecided about replying at all in fact. But on Thursday evening-just two days before the US Open began here in Colorado- I got a call from the director of your federation Ed Edmondson and he told me that the last possible plane to get me to the tournament in time for the 1st round was only a few hours away. So in the manner that I truly like to do things, man of the world you know and all that, I was on my way at the last

possible moment.

Q. I had really hoped that Mrs. Larsen, your famous second, would be here. Is she in Copenhagen and what does she think about chess?

A. Oh yes, she is in Copenhagen and works in a little kindergarden school in a slum district there. With little children you know! As for chess, certainly she approves and even my father has come to like my profession despite earlier warnings that I had gone mad, and that I should never succeed and would starve and all of this. My wife is really a wonderful person whom I love very much and I am sorry you cannot meet her.

Q. Speaking seriously about seconds, you really don't like to use one do you?

A. Right, because I am so very skeptical of all analysis that I read and am naturally strong enough to find mistakes in even a good pieces of work. Botvinnik feels the same.

Q. How do you like America?

A. Oh very much. I was here you know for Dallas 1957 and stayed with Larry Evans and the California player Ronnie Gross after. I learned something in Dallas and at the Hastings tournament that year- to sharpen my play when things were going badly, to be more aggressive than routinely. I should really call playing in tournaments like my series of five in 1967 and 1968 really stupid. Nobody should play like that, one tournament after the other.

(Robert Byrne then chipped in: YOU SHOULD TALK! IT'S NOT HARD FOR YOU TO SAY THAT. THE STUPID ONE WON THEM ALL!)

Northwest Chess wishes to thank Mr Jude Acers very much for sending in this very fine interview and allowing Northwest chessplayers to learn more about Bent Larsen.

INTERSTATE OPEN CHAMPIONS

1968	Viktors Pupols	(45)
1967	Ivars Dalbergs	(64)
1966	Clark Harmon	2(46)
1965	Ivars Dalbergs	(35)
1964	Ivars Dalbergs	(46)
1963	Duncan Suttles	(37)
1962	Ivars Dalbergs	(44)
1961	Richard Schultz or Ivars Dalbergs *	(34)
1960	Ivars Dalbergs	2(23)

*There is dispute about who won see March 1961 WCL.

OREGON OPEN CHAMPIONS

1968	Ivars Dalbergs	(50)
1967	Clark Harmon	(64)
1966	Duncan Suttles	(53)
1965	Viktors Pupols	(48)
1964	Elod Macskasy	(49)
1963	Ivars Dalbergs	(40)
1962	James McCormick	(31)
1961	James McCormick	(36)
1960	James McCormick	(32)
1959	Arthur Dake	(40)
1957	Viktors Pupols	(44)
1956	James McCormick	(37)
1953	Arthur Dake	(19)
1952	Ivars Dalbergs	(14)
1951	Arthur Dake	(13)
1950	Jim Schmitt	(11)
1948	Arthur Dake	(10)

OREGON WINNERS

OREGON STATE CHAMPIONS

1968	Ivars Dalbergs
1967	Clark Harmon
1966	Clark Harmon
1965	Ivars Dalbergs
1964	Don Turner
1963	John Bell
1962	James McCormick
1961	Ivars Dalbergs

puget sound league

Round 4

MARYSVILLE	7 - 3	BELLEVUE
Eero Jaaska	1½-½	Jerry VanDeene
John Kuehn	1½-½	Fred Klein
John Meller	2 -0	Karl Joiner
Lee Baldwin	2 -0	Larry Pratt
Steve Dykstra	0 -1	Ken Burton
Steve Dykstra	0 -1	Brad Martin

Round 5

Postponed to February 2, 1969

Round 6

SEATTLE CHESS C.	6½-3½	BELLEVUE
Frank Alexandro	2 -0	Fred Klein
Digne deLenea	0 -2	Karl Joiner
Robert Burns	*1 -1	Larry Pratt
Tim Kauppila	1½-½	Brad Martin
Les Cowan	2 -0	Ken Burton
*win by forfeit		

BELLINGHAM	6 -3	TACOMA
Gary Holmquist	1½-½	Forrest Dial
Dan Chin	1½-½	Jack Pi&kham
Vladimir Milicic	2 -0	Bob Martin
Wayne Chin	1 -1	Jim Albrecht
? Detroboy	0 -1	G. Hancock
THUNDERBIRDS	0 - 10	BOEING "A" (F)
MARYSVILLE	0 - 10	BOEING "B" (F)

LEAGUE STANDINGS

1. Boeing "A"	4	1	36½	12½
2. Bellingham	4	1	35½	11½
3. Seattle C.C.	4	1	33	17
4. Boeing "B"	2½	2½	25	24
5. Tacoma C.C.	2	3	25½	22½
6. Marysville	2	3	13½	35½
7. Bellevue	1	4	17½	32½
8. Thunderbirds	½	4½	9½	40½

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Thank you