

An Analysis Of World Chess Meet

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Here is the final placing in the championship candidates' chess tournament recently concluded in Zurich:

Smyslov, 18; Bronstein, Keres and Reshevsky, 16 each; Petrosjan, 15; Geller and Najdorf, 14½; Kotov and Taimanov, 14; Averbach and Boleslavsky, 13½; Szabo, 13; Gligoric, 12½; Dr. Euwe, 11½; Stahlberg, 8.

To get a good picture of the strength displayed, we should look more closely at the results of the first and second halves of this fantastic ompetition:

FIRST HALF

1. Smyslov 9½
- 2-3. Bronstein and Reshevsky 8½
4. Najdorf 8
- 5-7. Boleslavsky, Dr. Euwe and Petrosjan 7½
- 8-9. Keres and Taimanov 7
10. Kotov 6½
- 11-14. Averbach, Geller, Gligoric and Szabo 6
15. Stahlberg 3½

SECOND HALF

1. Keres 9
- 2-3. Geller and Smyslov 8½
- 4-8. Averbach, Bronstein, Kotov, Petrosjan and Reshevsky 7½
- 9-10. Szabo and Taimanov 6½
- 11-12. Gligoric and Najdorf 6½
13. Boleslavsky 6
14. Stahlberg 4½
15. Dr. Euwe 4

These two tables show, possibly with the exception of Stahlberg, that the masters were well matched. This is a surprise in itself, since many had considered the Russians head over shoulders better than the outstanding players from Western Europe and America. This tournament has proven that such is not the case, but comparison of results of the first and second halves does prove that the Russians have more consistency.

SMYSLOV'S AIM

Take the case of Dr. Euwe. In the first half, his games were certainly as good if not better than those of the Russians. In the second half, his daring or his will to win was gone completely. Possibly the fact that he was the oldest competitor (53) influenced his play. He did prove that he still belongs among the great of today, and that is very gratifying.

Smyslov deserved to win. His slogan for this tournament, "Main point is getting points and beautiful games are secondary," helped him. He did not, therefore, play beautiful games, but he has enriched chess literature with some finely played endings.

Bronstein is the opposite of Smyslov. Where Smyslov goes in for "safety-first" tactics, Bronstein is convinced that taking risks is the real secret of all chess success. In almost all games he battled from the start to the finish for a win, yet he ended up by having the most draws scored against him. Keres came into his own only in the second half. He is the most gifted player of them all, and his play reminds one strongly of that of Dr. Alekhine.

SPECTATOR'S PLAYER

Reshevsky's play was the most attractive from the spectators' point of view, because the American has made the time-control part of his secret weapon. He deliberately gets into time trouble and then surprises his opponents with some well-calculated combinations.

Without any sensational revelations, the black-haired Armenian, Petrosjan, ended in a high place. Neither he nor Geller seems to know the meaning of being tired, and that explains Geller's success in the second half. Najdorf disappointed in the second half. After a very bad start, Kotov showed once again what a fighter he really is, and he delivered some beautifully played games. One expected more from Boleslavsky and Taimanov. The latter is still young and will go places. Averbach did well. Szabo definitely had bad luck and Gligoric and Stahlberg were complete failures.

The King's Indian, Nimzo Indian and Sicilian were the most played defenses. Many new lines were brought to light, and some of the endings will serve as future texts for end-game technique.