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The Chess Column

Scotch Gambit Has A Good Record

By R. E. Fauber with Frank J. Garosi
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The Scotch Gambit is an opening with romance attached. Its first exploration was by a group of seven Berlin masters in the 1840s. The group experienced all sorts of romantic incidents. One contracted tuberculosis, another became ambassador to Argentina, yet another proved a better painter than chess player. There are several unwritten operas in the collective life histories of this band of diverse men, known to history as "The Pleiades."

The heyday of the Scotch Gambit, however, only began in the 1950s. At that point several modern realists made romanticism work. Since then it has rolled up a result in international tournaments of around 70 per cent, as good as the Ruy Lopez. Many Scotch Gambit analyses go almost as deep as the Lopez.

It has a particularly fearsome aspect for masters and grandmasters. Grandmaster Arthur Bisguier, recently, was asked why he always did so badly against it when he is renowned as a tactician. He replied that he just did not have the time to study it. There was too much else to study in the Lopez.

At the Lone Pine Masters - Plus Tourney there were two players whom everyone thought knew the gambit. When they met, the game revealed only how much pressure can be generated by sacrificing a

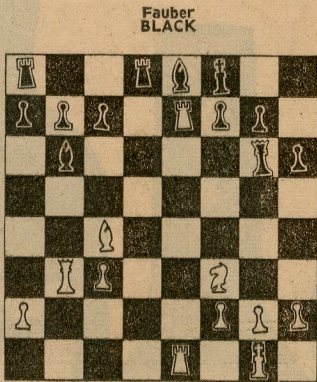
pawn and how useful a pawn can be, if only to give back.

Scotch Gambit

D. Sutherland vs. R. Fauber

1. P-K4, P-K4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. P-Q4, PXP; 4. P-B3, PXP; 5. B-B4, B-N5.

(Only the day before Sutherland had been showing an improvement for Black against this line after 5. . . ., N-B3; 6. P-K5, P-Q4; 7. PXN, PXB; 8. QXQch, NXQ; 9. PXP, R-KN1; 10. B-R6, N-K3 when the position is very unclear. White expects to lose his forward KNP but to get his R's active on the center files. Sutherland felt that Black should emerge better, but it is difficult to remember



such long analysis in a game situation and harder to trust it when it comes from your opponent. According to C. Bill Jones, a superb gambiteer, after Black's text move the best for White is to castle and then proceed with 7. P-QR3.)

(This seems better than 8. . . ., Q-K2 when White can easily pin the KN when

it develops and meantime generate menacing pressure on the K-file by 9. R-K1.)

9. B-K3, B-N3; 10. QN-Q2, KN-K2; 11. P-K5, PXP; 12. B-KN5, Q-N3; 13. BXN, KXN.

(White always gets a lot of pressure for his sacrificed P. About the only comfort the defense has is that all the threats are obvious.)

14. KR-K1, R-Q1!; 15. NXP, NXN; 16. RXNch, K-B1; 17. N-B3, P-KR3.

(At this point Black actually is contemplating a counterattack. The Problem was that 17. . . ., B-R6 or B-N5 lost to 18. R-N5.)

18. QR-K1, B-Q2.

(On 18. . . ., B-N5; 19. R-K7 poses deep problems.)

19. R-K7, B-K1.

See diagram.

(The crisis of the game. The tempting 20. N-K5 wins against 20. . . ., Q-B3?: 21.

RXBch; but 20. . . ., Q-B4 is another matter.)

20. N-Q4, R-Q2; 21. R7-K3, Q-N4!; 22. R-B3, BXN; 23. PXB, R-K2.

(Black pursues standard defensive strategy and tries to simplify at all costs. It is first necessary to secure the draw and only then go on to play for a win.)

24. Q-R3, P-QB4! 25. RXR, QXR; 26. R-K3, Q-Q3.

(The point of the defense is 27. QXP, QXQ; 28. PXQ, R-B1; 29. R-K5, P-QN3.)

27. R-Q3, P-QN3; 28. P-KR3, B-B3; 29. PXP, QXP; 30. QXQ, PXQ.

(From here there is a clear win, but White makes it easier because he has only eight minutes for the next 15 moves.)

31. R-Q6, R-B1; 32. B-R6, R-B2; 33. R-Q8ch, K-K2; 34. R-KN8, K-B3; 35. R-Q8, P-N3; 36. P-B3, B-Q2; 37. K-R2?, B-K3; 38. R-Q2, P-B5; 39. R-QB2, P-B6; 40. B-Q3, B-B4; 41. BXB, KXB; 42. K-N3, K-K4; 43. K-B2, K-Q5; 44. K-K2, R-K2ch; 45. K-Q1, K-Q6; 46. R-B2, R-N2; 47. K-B1, R-K2; 48. Resigns.

(The win is clear after 48. K-Q1, P-B7ch; 49. RXP, R-K8ch; 50. KXR, KXR.)