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Walt Mancini / Star-News

Viktor Korchnoi, left, makes winning move as referee George Koltanowki watches

Soviet no-show forfeits chess match

By SELWYN EIBER
Staff Writer

The semifinal chess match for the world crown was decided Saturday in Pasadena as expected — by Soviet Union forfeit rather than by board play.

Exactly one hour after Viktor Korchnoi opened by making a move called pawn-queen 4, referee George Koltanowski declared him the winner because Soviet opponent Garri Kasparov failed to appear. The Soviets had announced he would not attend.

There was much controversy over why 20-year-old Kasparov did not show. The Soviets had argued that the United States could not provide adequate security. There also was speculation that the Russians want to control FIDE, the World Chess Federation. FIDE President Florencio Campomanes denied these assertions.

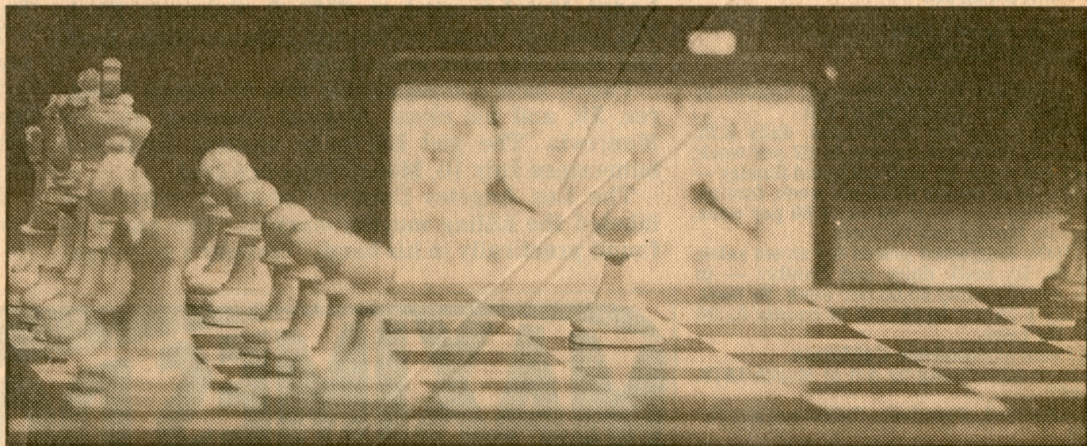
However, Korchnoi, a 52-year-old Soviet defector who lives in Switzerland, said the Russians "want to rule the international chess organization while Mr. Campomanes is in power."

Struggling with the English language, the grandmaster forcefully added: "I feel badly. It is a very sad moment. Not everyone comprehends it. It is a real intrusion of political factors into chess life. Every chess player must feel bad, not (just) me personally."

"I regret very deeply that the Soviet chess federation has not seen its way clear to allow Kasparov to be here," Campomanes said.

"But I stand here with a firm resolve that no federation, no player however strong, is above the organization that is FIDE."

It was also thought that one reason the Soviet Union did not send Kasparov to Pasadena



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A close look at winning pawn-queen 4 move

dena was the fear of another defection.

Steven Jones, the spokesman for the Pasadena-based Western Chess Club which helped organize the event, feels certain this fear was real. "I'd like to say that the only physical danger that anyone would be in would possibly be the Soviet delegation if they return to Moscow without Kasparov. That's the only security problem the Soviets have."

The match was to take place at Pasadena City College, although this site was far from being the first choice of the organizers.

Jones said the initial choice was Caltech, but the school was worried about its own security problems with the Soviets involved. The second preference was the Pasadena Civic Center, which was unavailable because of scheduling problems. The third choice

was Occidental College, but Jones said its asking price of \$65,000 was too high.

So PCC, which only was going to charge about \$5,000, was the compromise selection.

The Soviet Union also prohibited the other semifinal match from being played Saturday by withdrawing Vasily Smyslov. He was to face Zoltan Ribli of Hungary. But the Soviets declared that Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates and the site of the competition, was too hot.

The two semifinal winners will battle it out for the right to challenge another Soviet, world chess champion Anatoly Karpov.

After he was declared winner by forfeit, Korchnoi said he would play in the U.S. Open Chess Championship that starts today and runs through Aug. 19 at the Huntington-Sheraton Hotel in Pasadena.