

# ♣♣♣ CHESS BARBS ♣♣♣

by Jude Acers (US senior master) INTERZONAL NEWS & GAMES; Little known fact, but true, Mecking had a partner helping him conquer the Soviet colossus at Petropolis, Brazil. The number-two man behind the scenes all the way was none other than former world junior champion and one time Berkeley chess transient, international master Julio Kaplan of Puerto Rico.

Together they forged victory links out of the likes of Smyslov, Savon, Reshevsky, Gheorghiu, Kagan, Tan and Hug, while neutralizing ten others with draws. Only Karpov, also in his early 20's was able to perform as well at the Leningrad interzonal, and is generally regarded as the most promising contender for Fischer's throne in 1975.

Asked who he thought were the best players in the world, Mecking responded with an honest conceit, reminiscent of Capablanca: "In my view, there are three genuine chess players of superior quality in the world today: Fischer, Karpov and myself. But the playing styles of Fischer and Karpov do not seem to me sufficiently harmonious." Bragging or not, it is clear that Mecking was seriously underestimated by the Soviet team at Petropolis. Judge for yourself:

White: Vladimir Savon. Black: Henrique Mecking. Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 de cd 4 Nd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bg5 e6 7 f4 Nbd7 8 Qe2 Qc7 9 g4 b5 10 a3 Be7 11 Bg2 Bg7 12 0-0-0 Rc8 13 Bh4 Qc4 14 Qc4

Rc4 15 Bf3 Nc5 16 Be2 Nfe4 17 Ne4 Be4 18 Be7 Nb3ch 19 Kbl Rd4 20 Bd6 Bhl 21 cb Rdch 22 Bdl Kd7 23 Be5 f6 24 Bc3 Be4ch 25 Ka2 Kc6 26 a4 Rd8 27 Be2 e5 28 fe fe 29 Be5 Rd2 30 Bfl Rdl 31 abch ab 32 Bh3 b4 33 Bg7 Rd7 34 White resigned. A consummate blend of tactics and strategy!

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Lev Polugaevsky, who put in long, hard training for this event, rose to the occasion in the very last round, when in order to stay with the prize winners he upset Portisch in a difficult psychological duel. His win-loss column exactly matched that of his countryman, Geller, the lone loss coming at the hands of Argentine ace Oscar Panno.

White: Lev Polugaevsky. Black: Peter Biyiasas. Slav Defense 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 d5 4 Nc3 c6 5 e3 Nbd7 6 Bd3 dc 7 Bc4 b5 8 Bd3 a6 9 e4 c5 10 d5 e5 11 b3 Bd6 12 0-0 0-0 13 Rel Rb8 14 Bfl Re8 15 a4 b4 16 Nbl Nb6 17 Nbd2 Re7 18 Bb2 Ne8 19 Rcl f6 20 a5 Na8 21 Nc4 Rc7 22 Nfd2 Bd7 23 f4 Qe7 24 fe fe 25 Nd6 Nd6 26 Nc4 Nc4 27 Bc4 Black resigned. If 27...Qd6, then 28 Be5! Qe5 29 d6ch kills.

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Lajos Portisch almost lived up to pre-tourney expectations and looks upon his tie for second with Geller and Polugaevsky as just one more reason to redouble his efforts. "I am not going to make

a tragedy out of my (last round) defeat," he reflected stoically afterward. "A new stage in the struggle lies ahead and it is essential to prepare for it as well as possible."

White: Lajos Portisch. Black: Borislav Ivkov. Catalan Opening 1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 g6 3 Bg2 Bg7 4 c4 c6 5 0-0 0-0 6 d4 d5 7 Qa4 Nbd7 8 cd Nb6 9 Qa3 cd 10 Nc3 Nc4 11 Qb4 e6 12 Bf4 Re8 13 Ne5 Bf8 14 Qb3 Nd6 15 Bg5 Be7 16 Rfd1 Nf5 17 e4 Ne4 18 Be7 Qe7 19 Ne4 de 20 Be4 Rd8 21 Qc3 Nd6 22 Bg2 Bd7 23 Qa3 Be8 24 Racl Kf8 25 d5 ed 26 Rd5 f6 27 Nd3 Bc6 28 Rel Qc7 29 Nf4 Bd5 30 Bd5 Re8 31 Ne6ch Re6 32 Re6 Rd8 33 Rf6ch Kg7 34 Qf3 Rd7 35 Rf8 Nf5 36 Rg8 Kh6 37 Be6 Black overstepped the time limit.

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David Bronstein, who played a drawn match for the world title versus Botvinnik back in 1951, was included in the Soviet entourage following the untimely death of previous qualifier Leonid Stein. Instead of advance preparation against individual opponents, therefore, he had to rely on his innate creative reserves for success. He played the most imaginative chess of the tournament.

White: David Bronstein. Black: Florin Gheorghiu. Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cd 4 Nd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bg5 e6 7 f4 Nbd7 8 Qe2 Qc7 9 0-0 b5 10 a3 Rb8 11 Nd5 ed 12 edch Be7 13 Nc6 Nb6 14 Bf6 gf 15 g3 Bb7 16 Nb8 Qb8 17 Bg2 Qd8 18

Rhe1 f5 19 Rd3 Kd7 20 Qh5 Kc8 21 Qf5ch Kb8 22 Qf7 Bf6 23 Rde3 Bb2ch 24 Kb2 Nc4ch 25 Ka2 Ne3 26 Re3 Qb6 27 Re8ch Re8 28 Qe8ch Ka7 29 Qe4 Qf2 30 Kb2 a5 31 f5 Kb6 32 g4 h6 33 Bf3 Qh2 34 f6 Qh4 35 Qd4ch Kc7 36 f7 Black's flag fell.

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Former world champion Vasily Smyslov continued to show his class, and were it not for a loss to Bronstein he would have tied for first with Mecking. Even so, the old baritone tallied seven wins with his string of draws and drop-

ped only two games out of 17 (the other was to Mecking). His play was full of the finesse for which he is famous:

White: Werner Hug. Black: Vasily Smyslov. Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 f4 e6 4 Nf3 Nge7 5 d4 Nd4 6 Nd4 cd 7 Qd4 Nc6 8 Qf2 d5 9 ed ed 10 Bd3 Be7 11 Bd2 0-0 12 0-0-0 d4 13 Ne4 Qd5 14 c4 dc 15 Bc3 Bf5 16 Bbl Qc4 17 Qg3 g6 18 Nd6 Bd6 19 Rd6 Nb4 20 Bf5 Na2ch 21 Kc2 Nc3 22 Qc3 Qf4 23 Rd5 gf 24 Rd4 Qg5 25 Kbl Rac8 26 Qf3 b6 27 Rd5 Qg6 28 Rf5 Rc5 29 g4 Rd8 30 Qe4 Rdd5 31 Rhfl Re5 32 Qd3 h6 33 Qd8ch Kh7 34 Qd3 Rf5 35 gf Qf6 36 Kal b5 37 Qd7 b4 38 Kbl a5 39 Qdl Qe5 40 Qd3 Qd5 41 Qe2 b3 42 f6 Rc4 43 Rf3 Re4 44 White resigned.

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Samuel Reshevsky is 62 years old. What did you expect?

White: Samuel Reshevsky. Black: Ljubomir Ljubojevic. King's Indian Defense 1 d4 g6 2 c4 Bg7 3 e4 d6 4 Nc3 Nd7 5 Nf3 e5 6 Be2 c6 7 0-0 Nh6 8 Rbl 0-0 9 b4 f5 10 Bg5 Qe8 11 d5 Nf7 12 dc bc 13 Bcl Bb7 14 ef gf 15 Nh4 e4 16 Rb3 Qe6 17 Nf5 Qf5 18 Bg4 Qg6 19 Bd7 Ne5 20 Bh3 Rf3 21 Ne2 Nd3 22 Nf4 Rf4 23 Rd3 ed 24 Bf4 Bc8 25 Bc8 Rc8 26 Rel Rf8 27 Qd2 Qf5 28 g3 d5 29 c5 h5 30 h4 Bd4 31 Kg2 Rf7 32 f3 Kh7 33 Rdl Be5 34 Be5 Qe5 35 Qd3ch Kg8 36 f4 Qb2ch 37 Rd2 Qb4 38 Qg6ch Kf8 39 Qh6ch Rg7 40 Re2 Qc5 41 Qh8ch Kf7 42 Qe8ch Kf6 43 Qe6mate.

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The play-off match to decide who fills the remaining two slots for the candidates' series among Geller, Polugaevsky and Portisch has been tentatively scheduled for Portoroz, Yugoslavia between Sept. 5-22. For all practical purposes, Portisch enters the quadruple round robin contest a half-point behind, since his tie-breakers at Petropolis were lowest of the three who finished with 11-1/2-5-1/2. Thus, if the match ends in a three-way tie, then Portisch will be declared odd man out.

One final note. The World Chess Federation (FIDE) convenes on Sept. 25, so the play-off must be completed by then, at which time the drawing of lots to pair the qualifiers for the candidates' matches will take place.

