

Chess

Dutch courage

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The powerful tournament at Wijk aan Zee in Holland finishes at the end of this month and it is worth asking why Holland enjoys such a spectacular chess tradition. The main reason is that the Dutch Grandmaster, Dr Max Euwe, won the world title in chess for Holland against Alexander Alekhine in 1935. The whole Dutch public went crazy with enthusiasm for chess and the effects can be seen to this day: Wijk aan Zee can boast the presence of world ranked number one Magnus Carlsen, as well as the championship challenger Boris Gelfand and the now leading Dutch player, 17-year-old Anish Giri, fresh from his triumph in Reggio Emilia (see last week's article).

This week a game and position by the *fons et origo* of the Dutch chess movement.

Szabo-Euwe; Groningen 1946; Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 Nf3 a6 4 e3 Nf6 5 Bxc4 e6 6 O-O c5 7 Qe2 Nc6 8 Rd1 b5 9 Bb3 c4 10 Bc2 Nb4 11 Nc3 Nxc2 12 Qxc2 Bb7 13 e4 In principle, a weak move. 13 d5! is more energetic. **13 ... b4 14 e5** The logical consequence of White's previous move. The combination 14 d5 bxc3 15 dxe6 fails to 15 ... Qa5. **14 ... bxc3 15 exf6 gxf6 16 Qa4+ Qd7 17 Qxc4** This is already a serious error. After 17 Qxd7+ Kxd7 18 bxc3 Rg8 19 Ne1 Bd6 20 g3 Rab8 Black does not have any great advantage. **17 ... Rc8 18 Qe2 Rg8 19 Ne1 Qd5 20 f3 Bd6** The bishops become rampant! The deadly 21 ... Qh5 is threatened and Black already has an irresistible attack. **21 Kh1 Qh5 22 h3** (diagram 1) **22 ... Rg3** The best move. 22 ... c2 also looks strong: 23 Rd3 Qh4 24 f4 Bxf4 25 Bxf4 Qxf4 and wins. But in this line White would be better advised to play 24 Bd2! (24 ... Qg3 25 f4), when things are a lot less clear. **23 Be3 Ke7 24 Qf1 Rcg8** White has allowed the opponent to play his queen's rook to g8, and now there is no defence against the threat of ... Rxg2. **25 bxc3 Rxg2 26 Qxg2 Rxg2 27 Kxg2 Qg6+ 28 Kf2 Bg3+ 29 Ke2 Bxe1** Eliminating

Diagram 1

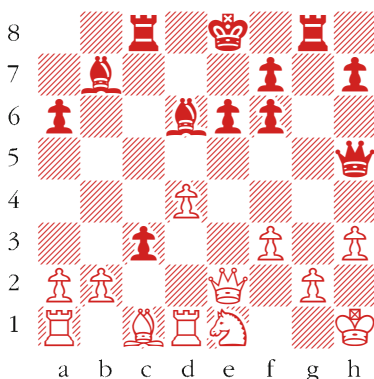
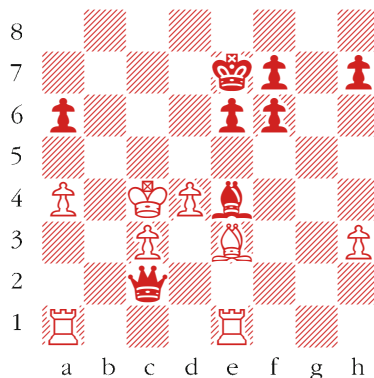


Diagram 2



the defensively important knight: the opposite-coloured bishops will merely be to Black's advantage. **30 Rxe1 Qg2+ 31 Kd3 Bxf3 32 a4 Be4+ 33 Kc4 Qc2** (diagram 2) **34 d5** White defends as well as he can; with this pawn sacrifice he gives his bishop more room to manoeuvre, which makes it more difficult for Black to weave a mating net. **34 ... Bxd5+ 35 Kb4 Kd7 36 c4 Qxc4+ 37 Ka5 Qc3+ 38 Kxa6 Bc4+ 39 Kb7 Qb3+ 40 Bb6 Qf3+ 41 Kb8 Ba6 42 Red1+ Ke8** White resigns 43 Kc7 Qb7+ 44 Kd6 Qxb6 is mate.

The puzzle below was the first indication that Dr Euwe was a serious contender to overcome Alekhine the following year.

PUZZLE NO. 203

White to play. This position is from Euwe-Alekhine, Zurich 1934. White can win in more than one way but what is the fastest method of execution? Answers to me at The Spectator by Tuesday 31 January or via email to victoria@spectator.co.uk or by fax on 020 7961 0058. The winner will be the first correct answer out of a hat, and each week I shall be offering a prize of £20. Please include a postal address and allow six weeks for prize delivery.

Last week's solution 1 Rxa6

Last week's winner Mark Jenkins, Cardiff

