

Time factor

Chess

venue like a multiple-star hotel where the charge for every seat at the dinner table is exorbitant. I believe social courtesy and consideration demands that people decide from before which invitation they will eat at before they flit to the next one, and inform their hosts so that they can include or exclude them from the food list.

Gift-giving is another topic. I maintain that in a city which is so receptive to innovative ideas especially when it comes to weddings, the American idea of leaving gift certificates for the bridal couple at some chosen stores in the city (like furniture, carpet, porcelain or appliance shops or even art galleries) where an account could be set up for the couple who could at their leisure buy items of their choice there would ease the problem for both giver and receiver. The giving of money is a provisional solution but not a graceful one. In my hesitation to using this solution, I actually am guilty of having attended many a wedding where my husband and I have not given a couple anything but our blessing and an invitation for the couple to come and spend a holiday in Rome with us! This has happened a few times and we have lavished our love and attention on our visitors in ways that money could not buy. Maybe I should slip such an invitation (of 'kind' and not 'cash') and give this to the next bridal couple!

I am amazed at the ingenuity of the present day wedding organisers. I have attended some delightful and entertaining weddings in Dhaka, with elaborate themes and exquisite decorations. The only reservation I have is that they seem to happen all at once, go on for days and that they set up a spirit of competition that can be wasteful. I am a visitor and have enjoyed witnessing the style and panache of both the glamorous weddings and the simple but elegant ones. Yet, somewhere in my heart, I pine for the understated and small family weddings of the past too. Why doesn't someone use that as a theme: a sort of Retro perspective, the 'ghorao' wedding of the 60's and 70's? It could become popular enough to become the accepted norm once again!

Wednesday passes too quickly. My friends have left; there are pizza crumbs and salad bits on the table; and still so much to chat about. Tomorrow I have to take my pony tail to the hairdresser. Let me linger a moment longer on my balcony. The lake shimmers, and there is a small boat with a sleeping boatman drifting on it. (Hmmm... maybe a rural wedding theme, with boats and guests wearing cotton saris and the gentlemen in colourful lungis?) ■

INTERESTINGLY, tournament chess has undergone big changes over the years as far as time on the clock is concerned. It is no longer a 40 moves in two hours affair with one hour added to your time for the next 20 moves. Adjournment has also been discarded to make it a shorter, livelier contest. The result is that very often two games are played a day. Today professional masters are playing in many more tournaments than they did in the past. It's really hectic business! Players need a lot more physical fitness and stamina to be in top 'running condition' throughout the year. This is all the more true about the players who tend to get upset, both mentally and physically, after losing a game. We have quite a few 'bad losers' here in Bangladesh!

How do these developments influence the game itself? Well, adjournment analysis was a fine art that modern players do not have to learn any more. Their ability to analyse a position very accurately must have been affected by the absence of adjournment sessions, which often dragged a game beyond six hours. That has also reduced the importance of play in the ending, as longer games invariably meant more end games which were a real test of a player's technique. Not that the players are finishing their opponents off in the middlegame all the time, but the stress often is on a thorough opening preparation and a sharp fight in the middlegame.

The introduction of incremental timing is another noteworthy development. You have 90 minutes on your clock to play the game and 30 seconds are added to the time for every move you make! Sounds a bit unfamiliar? But that is how the game is played these days. It is not an innovation without merit. You will never lose a game due to time trouble in a winning position, as you can gain extra time for making your moves. Obviously, the time pressure addicts now find it easier to win a game with virtually no time left on the clock.

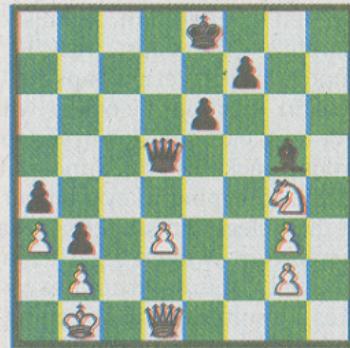
Here is a game that elevated Asian chess to a new height. The Filipino Grandmaster outplays the world champion in a double-edged position.

White-Anatoly Karpov

Black-Eugenio Torre[B67]

Manila, 1976

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 a6 8.000 Bd7 9.f4 b5 10.Qe1 Nxd4 11.Rxd4 Qb6 12.Rd2 Be7 13.Bd3 b4 14.Nd1 Bb5 15.Nf2 h6 16.Bh4 g5 17.fxg5 hxg5 18.Bg3 Nh5 19.Ng4 Nxg3 20.hxg3 Rxh1 21.Qxh1 Rc8 22.Kb1 Bxd3 23.cxd3 Qd4 24.Qd1 a5 25.Nh2 g4 26.Nxg4 Bg5 27.Rc2 Rxc2 28.Kxc2 a4 29.a3 b3+ 30.Kb1 d5 31.exd5 Qxd5 32.Nf2 Qxg2 33.Ne4 Be3 34.Nc3 Qc6 35.d4 Qc4 36.d5 e5 37.Qh1 Qd3+ 38.Ka1 Bd4 39.Qh8+ Kd7 40.Qa8 Qf1+ 41.Nb1 Qc4 42.Qb7+ Kd6 43.Qb8+ Kxd5 44.Qd8+ Ke6 45.Qe8+ Kf5 46.Qd7+ Kg6 47.Qg4+ Kf6 48.Nc3 Qf1+ 0-1



Position after 31...Qxd5

-PATZER