

Readers' Letters



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Dear Mr. Hughes,

I enjoyed Peter Bennett's article on Korchnoi and Zak as a publishing team. Ghost writing was rife under the Soviet system. Levenfish was used shamelessly. Smyslov admitted that he merely glanced at the work on Rook and Pawn endings and Zak actually copies Levenfish in the Batsford *King's Gambit* book.

Like Zak, Levenfish did not reap the rich reward of his masters and, as the only Soviet Grandmaster not to receive a State salary and banned from international competition, died in abject poverty.

Zak's fate is more interesting. According to Gennady Sosonko, (*Soviet Silhouettes*. New in Chess), he was imprisoned in a "refuge" from where he tried to escape several times, unsuccessfully. He obviously didn't benefit from the Western Publishing hard currency deals.

I can think of at least one recent book on the King's Gambit which recycles Zak's analysis on the Kieseritzky, Rosentreter and Muzio.

Let's face it, Peter has opened a can of worms here. How many opening books can you think of, written by GMs and IMs who are completely out of sympathy and without working knowledge of the Opening in question?

As with footballers' autobiographies, I suspect the Ghost Writer will never be out of work in chess publishing.

Yours sincerely,
Dan Naughton.

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I used to write quite a lot of limericks at one time but of late I've hardly put pen to paper. Your latest issue has re-inspired me.

On The Marshall Attack

It's well known the Marshall Attack
Is very aggressive for Black,
But first time 'twas played,
Capa', bold, unafraid,
Grabbed the pawn and gave Marshall a
whack.

On Alekhine

It's well known the great Alekhine
In his personal life was not fine,
But when he contemplated,
The game levitated:
His combinations were divine.

The Good Knight

It's often been said, on a rim
A knight looks incredibly dim,
But on a strong square
Like Q5, have a care:
Your good bishop is no match for him.

Caro Can't

When playing the Caro, and mated
In six moves, a student berated
His conqueror, for
The man said "You sure
A sap like you is FIDE-rated?"

Alexander Baron