

concerned about losing my extra pawn that I got into a pin and ended up losing back the piece and more, and ended up losing the game. I played it all the way to the end until it was a king against a king and queen. I must have been very irritating to him. But he was nice about it and said, "You played well. You're a pretty strong unrated player."

MJ: What moment are you most proud of in your chess career?

JP: Well, it's more like I remember a couple of times when everything really clicked. Winning the New England Open in 1971. I was an expert, I was ranked number 15 in the tournament. The last day I beat the two highest rated players in the tournament and took clear first place. It was completely unexpected. Even I didn't expect it! I mean, I was very optimistic and always thought I was going to have great results, but it was much more than even I expected.

That morning, I woke up around 6:00 a.m. It's normal for me now to get up at that time, it wasn't normal for me in those days. That morning I had plenty of energy and I got up and I wandered around the streets of Hartford, Connecticut, and there was nothing open. Finally, the tournament started and I played a great game. And then in the last round I beat Steven Jones, who lives out here now, who had beaten me four straight times. I finally won one.

Another day like that was in the U.S. Championship in 1975, the first U.S. Championship I played in. I got a point and a half in two minutes against GMs. I agreed to a draw in a game against Robert Byrne, a very exciting game. We were analyzing it and at that moment Lubomir Kavalek walked up to me and said, "I resign our adjournment." So I got a point and a half just like that. Kavalek resigning was the first time I had ever beaten a GM.

MJ: I remember from your *Rank and File* article that the other player you beat in the '71 New England Open was Andy Soltis, and that he wasn't too gracious about it.

JP: (Laughs) No, he wasn't. He said it was a cheapo! But he used to talk about cheapos all the time and he even wrote an article for *Chess Life* about it which he called *C.P.*, for "Cheapo Potential." So it's not completely an insult!

MJ: What's one of your worst moments in chess?

JP: (Laughs) There were so many! I remember when I first got invited to the U.S. Championship in 1975 and I was so honored. At the same time I was a little worried because I had not played many top players. At that point I had played five grandmasters and my score was 0-5. I hadn't even made a draw. And the first

round I made a draw against Walter Browne. I had a position against which almost any other player I would have played on and tried to win. Except I was so scared that I was going to end up with zero points that I took a draw. And then the next two rounds I lost to Reshevsky and Rogoff. I lost really badly to Ken Rogoff. So, after three rounds I only had a half-point.

I played in the Hasting tournament in England twice. The first time I played was the end of 1978, the start of '79. It was a tournament where not very much went right for me. I had 3½ points out of seven, for an even score. And I felt like, okay I'm playing well — now I'm ready to go up to plus one or plus two. And I lost five games in a row!

One of them I lost on time to Jonathan Mestel. I actually had an extra piece and my flag fell with one move to go to make time control! What was really galling was that he was the one that was in time pressure. I kept looking at the clock and seeing that he had, it seemed like, seconds left on his clock and I had a couple of minutes. And I used my time up and my flag fell first. That was very frustrating.

I also remember playing almost suicidally against Hartston. He had drawn a whole bunch of games. He was suppose to be a good player, but a chicken. I'm sort of the opposite. Not such a good player, but plenty of moxie. I decided on the second move of the game that I would play something unexpected for him. Well, it was unexpected for me too, as it was just a spur of the moment idea. It's the kind of thing you do when you're in a losing streak. And he punished me. My position was so bad he was never scared enough to offer me a draw!

MJ: What's the most nervous you've ever been against a "big name" player? Was it facing former World Champion [Tigran] Petrosian at Lone Pine?

JP: I really don't think like that during the game. I'm nervous playing anybody. I've been nervous playing people rated 800 points below me. Because no matter who I play, at some point in the game I see a move that they could play and I'll think, "Oh, I didn't see that move. They've got a good move." Now, they might not see it, but I can think that they'll find it and that will worry me.

MJ: But against Petrosian, you weren't sitting there thinking, "This guy was once world champion?"

JP: It's exciting to be paired against him, but once the game starts I really don't think about that.

MJ: Where did you get this confidence from?

JP: I guess I've always been a confi-

dent person. When I was a kid, with sports or school work, I always felt that if I put out the effort I could do it.

MJ: What about your infamous "this is not chess!" game with Eddie Gufield? Did his remarks irritate you?

JP: Well, I realized what was going on. He was getting upset near the end of the game and I was on the verge of resigning. There were several points where if he had played the right move I would have resigned. But he didn't play them. So, I thought well, I have to play a little longer. It's torture for the defender in that situation because he knows he's going to lose the game; he knows there's no chance to save it. But it still wasn't quite the right time to resign.

And I'm not the kind of person that resigns prematurely. I'll play a couple moves longer than most people would. So, I was just waiting for him to finish me off and he didn't finish me off. I could tell he was getting upset. He was using a lot of time on the clock. And then when he botched the ending and I was able to reach a drawing position, he got real angry. It's just part of his personality, he's not the kind of person who keeps things bottled up.

So, I knew that there was going to be some sort of emotional venting. It was the last round of the tournament, and if he would have won he would have tied for first. So, there was much more for him to gain in that situation.

MJ: As the story goes, he wanted to analyze with you afterwards and you simply said, "No thank you."

JP: Well, I didn't think he was behaving very well. I didn't want to spend any more time with him. However, he did call me the next morning and apologize for his behavior and we've been on good terms ever since.

MJ: What's the most important trait that you have to possess to be a good chessplayer?

JP: Determination. Because if you're determined, then you will be a good fighter at the board, and you'll learn from your mistakes and you'll do the preparation before the next tournament to make you better.

My most important advice is to play. And the second most important is to replay annotated GM games. Jeremy Silman recently wrote an article in *Chess Life* stating that the one common trait he's noticed among higher rated players is that they all like to play over GM games. Well, I told him that! We were talking about it and I said that you can really tell a chessplayer as somebody who likes to play over GM games. And if you put the smallest amount of effort into playing