

FORMER WORLD CHAMPS ANALYZE BOBBY N BORIS

AN UNINHIBITED BISHOP
by Smyslov and Botvinnik
(Russian Grandmasters)

The important psychological role played by the first game in a match is widely understood. By striving to start out with a win a chess player tries not only to score the point but also to weaken his opponent's confidence at the beginning of the contest and to place him in the uncomfortable position of having to catch up from behind. It was certainly no accident that in three matches between Botvinnik and Smyslov, in both Botvinnik-Tal matches, in Botvinnik's matches with Petrosian and in the second Petrosian-Spassky match the first game brought success to one of the combatants.

The first game between Spassky and Fischer for the world championship gave the impression that both grandmasters were more interested in avoiding an onslaught than in organizing one. The opening was a quiet variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defense, and when queens were traded on the 11th move, followed by exchanges of nearly all the remaining pieces, the assumption might well have been that an agreement to a draw would not be long in coming.

But chess contains ample fighting resources even in simple positions. All that was needed for the game to change radically was for Fischer to be taken in by the enemy KR2 on move 29. Immediately Spassky imprisoned Black's uninhibited bishop on his KR2 and Fischer was forced to part with his only piece.

Black's five pawns were then left to struggle against a bishop and three pawns, and even though Fischer's king was actively centralized, Spassky's material advantage proved to be the decisive factor.

(translated from "Sovetsky sport" July 14, 1972)

White: Boris Spassky.
Black: Robert Fischer.
Match Game No. 1, Reyjavik, July 11-12, 1972.

Nimzo-Indian Defense 1 d4(a) Nf6 (b) 2 c4 e6(c) 3 Nf3 d5 4 Nc3 Bb4(d) 5 e3 0-0 6 Bb3 c5 7 0-0 Nc6 8 a3(e) Ba5(f) 9 Ne2(g) dc 10 Bc4 Bb6(h) 11 dc(i) Qd1(j) 12 Rdl Bc5 13 b4 Be7(k) 14 Bb2 Bd7(l) 15 Ral(m) Rfd8 16 Ned4 Nd4 17 Nd4 Ba4 18 Bb3 Bb3(n) 19 Nb3 Rdlch(o) 20 Rdl Rc8(p) 21 Kfl Rf8(q) 22 Ke2 Ne4(r) 23 Rcl Rcl 24 Bcl f6(s) 25 Na5(t) Nd6 26 Kd3

Bd8(u) 27 Nc4 Bc7 28 Nd6 Bd6 29 b5(v) Bh2(w) 30 g3(x) h5 31 Ke2 h4 32 Kf3(y) Ke7(z) 33 Kg2 hg 34 fg Bg3 35 Kg3 Kd6(aa) 36 a4(bb) Kd5(cc) 37 Ba3 Ke4(dd) 38 Bc5 a6(ee) 39 b6(ff) f5(gg) 40 Kh4(hh) f4(ii) 41 ef Kf4 42 Kh5 Kf5(jj) 43 Be3 Ke4 44 Bf2 Kf5 45 Bh4(kk) e5 46 Bg5 e4 47 Be3 Kf6(ll) 48 Kg4 Ke5 49 Kg5 Kd5 50 Kf5 a5 51 Bf2 g5 52 Kg5 Kc4 53 Kf4 Kb4 54 Ke4 Ka4 55 Kd5 Kb5 56 Kd4 Bc4 resigas.

Annotations by former world champions Mikhail Botvinnik and Vassily Smyslov, translated from "64", No. 28, July 14-20, 1972, pp. 8-9 and "Sovetsky sport", July 14, 1972.

(a) Smyslov: And so the world champion elects to open with the queen's pawn. Whereas Fischer clearly prefers to play his king's pawn on the first move, Spassky's opening tastes are not restricted so severely, and varied openings are seen in his repertoire.

(b) Botvinnik: Spassky begins the first game of the match for the world championship with the queen's pawn. Arriving seven minutes late to the game, the challenger replies with his usual counter move.

(c) B: Fischer evades the Greunfeld Defense, with which he has already lost two contests to Spassky, and elects to play something rarely met in his games. This may be explained by the fear of a specially prepared opening variation by his opponent. S: In Fischer's practice one often meets complex opening systems with a fianchettoed king's bishop. Apparently, both players are adopting careful tactics in the first game, afraid of some analytical surprise.

(d) S: An interesting psychological moment. The challenger rejects his favorite 4...c5, opting instead for a move once suggested by V. Ragozin. But Spassky chooses a standard system of development and an ordinary position from the Nimzo-Indian Defense soon arises on the board. B: The American grandmaster somewhat surprisingly selects Ragozin's Defense. It is known that in this position White has a good continuation in 5 cd ed 6 Bg5, but the world champion prefers to transpose into a secure and well-analyzed variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defense.

(e) B: This position has occurred hundreds of times in tournaments and can be found in any opening manual. The most popular reply here is 8...Bc3.

(f) S: A well-known position. Most often played here is 8...Bc3. By stepping back with his bishop Fischer seeks the sharper 9 cd ed 10 dc Bc3 11 bc Bg4. In the first match game, however, the world champion does not allow himself to enter any lines likely to have been prepared in advance by the challenger and so selects a more restrained reply.

(g) B: A move in the style of the late grandmaster A. Tolush, who once was Spassky's chess trainer. Proceeding from the general considerations that his opponent's black-squared bishop has been taken away from the king side and stands on a5 instead of the normal square, e7, White does not mind initiating an attack on that flank and tries to concentrate as many pieces as possible there. In that case the knight will find his place on g3.

(h) B: Fischer does not like unclear positions. He agrees to lose yet another tempo with his bishop in order to introduce clarity into the position. Without overextimating White's attacking chances, Black probably still should have continued 10...cd 11 ed Bc7.

(i) B: In as much as White's pieces were bound to the defense of the d4 square, Spassky makes the completely rational decision to simplify into a better endgame. I have often played White in similar positions arising from the Queen's Gambit Accepted and the Nimzo-Indian Defense. An analogous situation came up in my match game with M. Tal and at Hastings with Yu. Balashov. Having achieved a lead in development, White also commands greater space. All this in conjunction with the possible rapid transfer of his king into the center assures White a tangible advantage.

(j) S: Such an early trade of queens creates the impression that both players are not looking for a fight and would rather not take chances. B: Fischer fears White's initiative that might result from 11...Bc5 12 Qc2.

(k) B: Curiously, this bishop now occupies its usual post on e7 after having completed a nearly circular tour of the board on the squares f8-b4-a5-b6-c5-e7. Naturally, such loss of time does not go unpunished.

(l) S: A good move that permits Black to equalize the game fully. The tactical justification of 14...Bd7 is 15 Bf6 Bf6 and the rook on a1 comes under fire. B: This is quite likely the theoretical nov-

elty that prompted the American grandmaster to enter into this entire variation. In 1958 Krogius played 14...b6 against Spassky and lost. Taking into account that 15 Bf6 Bf6 leaves White's rook on a1 under attack, Fischer wastes no time in finishing the development of the queen side.

(m) B: Perhaps it would pay to bring the king toward the center immediately or to withdraw the bishop to a2 ahead of time. Also worth considering is 15 e4 to restrict Black's space even further. The subsequent multiple exchanges simplify the position too much.

(n) B: Of course not 18...Rd4 because of 19 Ba4, and White obtains the bishop pair for the ending.

(o) B: The correct decision. Black has nothing to fear from an invasion along the "d" file by a White rook, as the d7 square is well covered.

(p) S: The many exchanges have bled the position and it would seem that a draw is not far off, but the game continues.

(q) B: Thus Black parries the threat of 22 Bf6 Bf6 23 Rd7, which would now be answered by 23...Rc3.

(r) B: Black refuses 22...Rc2 23 Rd2 Rd2 24 Nd2 (or 24 Kd2), preferring another way of eliminating the last set of heavy pieces.

(s) B: This preventive measure is hard to understand. More cautious would be to play the king to the center right away by 24...Ke8, e.g., 25 Na5 Nd6 26 Kd3 Kd7 27 Nc4 b5, with a draw.

(t) B: An alternate formation that deserves attention is 25 f3 Nd6 26 Nc5.

(u) B: Since White can strengthen his position by e3-e4, Fischer hastens to trade off the knights. More and more, the game takes on drawing tendencies.

(v) S: Prevents his opponent from getting in b5, which would fix White's queen-side pawns on black squares (a3 and b4). True, White's "h" pawn remains under attack, but taking it would put the bishop out of bounds.

(w) S: Anyway... Such moves in a match for the world championship leave the commentator at a loss. What besides an obvious oversight can explain Fischer's move? The calm response, 29...Ke7, leads to a draw. Now, however, the balance is radically disturbed in favor of White. B: The turning point. As will be seen, this move of Fischer's is based on a miscalculation. After 29...Ke7

30 h3 e5 and 31...Ke6 Black has a draw, since he does not risk losing either the bishop or the pawn ending.

(x) S: Of course! The bishop is trapped and no effort to save it can succeed.

(y) B: In condemning his bishop to self imprisonment Fischer thought he would achieve the fastest draw. Only here, apparently, did the challenger discover that 32...h3 falls due to 33 Kg4! Bg1 34 Kh3 Bf2 35 Bd2!, and the bishop dies just the same.

(z) S: Perhaps Fischer had counted on 32...h3 and only now noticed the simple refutation, 33 Kg4 Bg1 34 Kh3 Bf2 35 Bd2! and 36 Kg2.

(aa) S: Black has two pawns for the bishop, clearly insufficient compensation, but there are still hopes based on the limited number of pawns on the board and Black's active king.

(bb) B: Spassky defends the pawn and prepares to bring the bishop into play. In spite of Black having only two pawns for the piece, the realization of White's material plus is a rather complex business.

(cc) B: Black must lose after 36...Kc5 37 Ba3 Kc4 38 Bf8 g6 39 Be7.

(dd) B: But this move is doubtful. Black takes his king away from the queen side (where he must return in any event) and abandons control over the square e5. Also to be considered is 37...e5. S: The alternative was 37...Kc4 38 Bf8 g6 39 Be7 Kb3 40 a5 Ka4 41 b6 a6 42 Bf6 Ka5 43 Kf4 Kb6 44 Ke5 a5 45 Ke6, and White's passed "e" pawn wins.

(ee) S: If 38...b6, then 39 Bb6 ab 40 a5 Kd5 41 a6, and the "a" pawn queens. B: And not 38...b6 in view of 39 Bb6! ab 40 a5, winning instantly.

(ff) B: As becomes evident from the future course of the game, only this move retains winning chances for White. If Black were able to trade a pair of pawns on the queen side or, after the textmove, to provoke a4-a5, then the struggle would soon resolve into a draw.

(gg) B: Here, too, 39...e5 suggests itself, and if 40 Bf3, then 40...g6 (40...Ke3 41 Bg7 Kd4 42 Bf6 Kc5 43 Bd8 Kb4 44 Kf3 Kd4 45 Ke4 Kb5 46 Kd5! e4 47 Kd6 a5 48 Kc7 Ka6 49 Bg1 e4 50 Bcll puts Black in zugzwang for a White win).

(hh) B: The world champion conducts the ending with technical precision and foresight. Already

Spassky had begun to prepare for his king's sortie to c7.

(ii) S: In this position White sealed his next move. Following the probably 41 ef Kf4 an endgame results in which Spassky has very really winning chances. Only in a few variations does Black have tenuous hopes for a draw associated with White's pawn being on b6 and the possibility of Black's king running for the a8 corner of the board. The win requires exact handling, however, which Spassky demonstrates and Fischer never has the slightest opportunity to save the game. B: Eases White's task. More tenacious is 40...Kd5 41 Bf8 g6, striving to exchange off the pawn on e3, but without displacing his pawn chain. In this position the game was adjourned and analysis convinced me that Black was already lost. Here are some variations: 41 ef Kf4 42 Kf5! (the only move to win) Kf5 (Bad is 42...g5 43 Kg6! e5 44 Bd6! or 42...e5 43 Kg6 e4 44 Kg7 e3 45 Be3 Ke3 46 Kf6 Kd4 47 Ke6 Kc5 48 a5! Kb5 49 Kd6 Ka5 50 Kc7) 43 Be3 Ke4 44 Bcl (The game continuation was 44 Bf2, which shortens the solution but does not alter the situation.) Kd5 (After 44...Kf5 45 Bg5 e5 46 Bcl e4 47 Be3 Black gradually succumbs to zugzwang, while 44 Kd3 Kg6 45 Kc2 Kg7! 46 Kcl Kf6 47 Kc2 Ke6 48 Kb4 Kd6 49 Ka4 Kc7 wins on the spot.) 45 Kg6 Kc5 46 Be3 (Here and earlier, naturally, White may not play a4-a5, since then Black need only reach c8 with his king to secure a theoretical draw.) Kb4 47 Kf7! (not 47 Kg7 Ka4 48 Kf6 Kb5 49 Ke6 Kc6, and, pushing the "a" pawn, Black compels the "a" pawn, Black compels the White king to clear a path to the saving square, c8) Ka4 48 Ke6 Kb5 49 Kd7 a5 50 Kc7 Ka6 51 Bd4 g5 52 Bf6 g4 53 Be5 a4 54 Bd6! Once again, a familiar scene: zugzwang brings White victory. In my opinion, Fischer should have conceded immediately after 42 Kh5! That the American grandmaster aimlessly prolonged the game to the 56th move demonstrates only that he was unable to control his nerves.

(jj) S: White also wins after 42...g5 43 Kg6 e5 44 Bd6 g4 45 Kf6.

(kk) S: Preventing 45...g5.

(ll) S: The Black king has no choice but to retreat and open the way for the White king, which works to penetrate to the opposite flank where he will deliver the final blow.