

# Richard Shorman

# Chess

## THE EFFECT OF SURPRISE

When Fischer did not show up for the second game of the match for the world chess championship, Spassky was awarded the point by forfeit. Thus the third contest (which was played on Sunday in a small room isolated from spectators on the challenger's demand) began with the score standing at 2-0 in favor of the world champion. Perhaps this helps to explain why Spassky, with the white pieces, preferred cautious tactics throughout the struggle, while Fischer, who was two full points behind, played for sharp complications in a complex variation of the modern Benoni Defense.

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**ON THE ELEVENTH** move Fischer revealed his theoretical innovation, removing his knight to the KR file and permitting the doubling of his KR pawns. This move must have come as a surprise, as Spassky was unable to find the right plan and profit from the shattered king-side pawns. Meanwhile, Fischer utilized the strength of his black-squared bishop, which dominated much of the board, to launch active operations against the enemy queen side.

The initiative had shifted to Black, and White was compelled to conduct a passive defense. As Black's pieces brought White's KP under fire, it soon became clear that the pawn could not be saved. Although Fischer won the pawn at the price of many exchanges that led into an ending, both sides still possessed their queen plus a bishop. The bishops were of opposite colors, but the champion's situation was worsened by the presence of weak white squares and by the fact that his king was under heavy attack. The game was adjourned in a hopeless position for White and Spassky resigned the next day after viewing Fischer's winning sealed move.

(translated from "Sovetsky sport," July 18, 1972)

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## FISCHER'S FIRST WIN OVER SPASSKY

Comments and annotations by  
 International Grandmaster Yev-  
 geny Vasyukov, Translated from  
 "Sovetsky Sport," July 18, 1972

Chess players formulate their match strategy so that all contingencies are taken into account well in advance, i.e., what to do when leading, behind or even in score. Each situation produces a change of tactics and the match player's opening repertoire modifies according to his current standing.

Fischer chose to open with a variant of the King's Indian Defense, as Black, that not too long ago was quite successful in the hands of Mikhail Tal.

**White: Boris Spassky. Black: Robert Fischer.**  
**World Championship, Match Game No. 3.**  
**Reykjavik, July 16-17, 1972.**

### Benoni Defense

1 P-Q4	N-KB3	22 R/1-K1	Q-N3
2 P-QB4	P-K3	23 P-N3	R-K2(i)
3 N-KB3	P-B4(a)	24 Q-Q3	R-N1
4 P-Q5(b)	PxP	25 PxP	PxP
5 PxP	P-Q3	26 P-N4(j)	P-B5
6 N-B3	P-KN3	27 Q-Q2	R/1-K1
7 N-Q2	QN-Q2	28 R-K3	P-R4(k)
8 P-K4	B-N2	29 R/3-K2	K-R2
9 B-K2	O-O	30 R-K3	K-N1
10 O-O (c)	R-K1	31 R/3-K2	BxN(1)
11 Q-B2	N-R4(d)	32 QxB	RxP
12 BxN(e)	PxB	33 RxR	RxR
13 N-B4	N-K4	34 RxR(m)	QxR(n)
14 N-K3	Q-R5	35 B-R6(o)	Q-N3
15 B-Q2	N-N5(f)	36 B-B1	Q-N8
16 NxN	PxN	37 K-B1	B-B4
17 B-B4	Q-B3	38 K-K2	Q-K5ch(p)
18 P-KN3(g)	B-Q2	39 Q-K3	Q-B7ch
19 P-QR-4	P-N3	40 Q-Q2	Q-N6
20 KR-K1(h)	P-QR3	41 Q-Q4(q)	B-Q6ch
21 R-K2	P-N4	42 Resigns(r)	

(a) In the first game Fischer selected 3 . . . P-Q4 here, which led to a Nimzo-Indian Defense after 4 N-B3 B-N5.

(b) Essential if White is striving for an opening advantage. A quieter game results from either 4 P-K3 or 4 N-B3.

(c) Now we have a modern Benoni Defense, a major branch of the King's Indian.

(d) All these moves through 11 Q-B2 have been seen many times before. Against Gligorich, for example, Fischer played 11 . . . N-K4 (Mallorca, 1970). Following many complications the Yugoslav grandmaster miscalculated and lost the game. This time, however, Fischer has come up with a real novelty which does not appear in any of the opening treatises devoted to this system of defense. Spassky pondered over his reply for 20 minutes.

(e) The correct reaction. Black's active pieces do not easily counteract the defects in his pawn structure.

(f) Fischer used up a quarter hour on his clock before making this move. Part of Black's game plan requires the trading off of another set of minor pieces in order to accentuate the power of his two bishops. Spassky's knight maneuver (N-Q2-B4-K3) must therefore be judged ineffective. Also, instead of 15 B-Q2, better would have been 15 P-B3.

(g) This move deserves special explanation. By playing 18 P-KN3 White definitely indicates that he has abandoned thoughts of activity on the king side, since P-B3 would give free rein to Black's white-squared bishop. In my opinion, 18 B-N3 or 18 Q-Q2, intending P-B3 later, offers more prospects. As it stands, White soon finds himself on the defensive against Black's clearly defined strategic plan to advance his QNP, drive off the enemy knight and lay siege to White's KP.

(h) Perhaps this was the time to think about 20 Q-N3, trying to hold back an immediate P-QR3 and P-QN4 by Black.

i) Prepares to pile up on White's weak KP.

(j) Stopping the further progress of Black's QNP. If 26 . . . PxP, then 27 N-R2 leaves White with a reasonable game. Naturally Fischer avoids this line and pushes the QBP instead. The newly formed passed pawn has an important role to play as the battle wears on.

(k) Emphasizing that sooner or later White's KP must fall. Black first consolidates his position, while White can do nothing but await the inevitable.

(l) Fischer decides that the moment has come to pick off the pawn.

(m) Shunting the rook to the corner by 34 R-R1 is too risky, as Black's initiative increases in proportion to the number of fighting units on the board. Exchanging rooks theoretically should relieve the defender, since with opposite colored bishops drawing chances improve, even if a second pawn is lost, provided that the queens can be traded off.

(n) Both sides have weaknesses and the question for White is whether or not he can exploit those of his opponent. Spassky's vulnerable squares remain on white, allowing Black to initiate a direct king-side attack. If Spassky can bring his king to the center and re-deploy his bishop along the long black diagonal he will be able to hold the position.

(o) Not 35 BxP QxQP 36 Q-K5 because of 36 . . . Q-Q8ch 37 K-N2 B-B3ch.

(p) Fischer has succeeded in crossing Spassky's plan and has thrown his bishop into the attack besides.

(q) Unfortunately, 41 B-N2 fails against 41 . . . Q-B6ch 42 K-K1 Q-R8ch 43 K-K2 B-Q6ch 44 K-K3 Q-K5mate.

(r) After 42 K-K3 (forced) QxP Black's passed pawns guarantee victory, while White's efforts at counterplay achieve nothing. e.g., 43 B-N2 Q-B4 or 43 K-B4 Q-K8 44 B-N2 Q-Q7ch 45 Q-K3 QxB.