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Chess

AN IMPORTANT GAME FOR SPASSKY

Commentary and annotations by former world champion Vasily Smyslov, translated from "64" No. 31, Aug. 4-10, 1972, pg. 9.

Before the ninth game Spassky took one of the three "sick leave" days allotted to each player during the match. Besides getting a day's rest, the time off was important for the opportunity afforded for thoroughly renovating Spassky's opening system. Reports from Reykjavik indicated that the ninth game was played at a slower pace than usual. Fischer spent nearly an hour on his first dozen moves.

The ninth contest carried great significance for the world champion. Would he at last recover his championship form following a series of serious setbacks? It is still too early to pass judgment on this score. Fischer played cautiously, permitting no risky situations to arise. Such tactics are readily understandable, since the challenger thereby retains his advantage in points.

And so the battle wears on.

White: Boris Spassky

Black: Robert Fischer

World Championship, Match Game No. 9.

Reykjavik, August 1, 1972.

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 P-Q4	N-KB3	16 O-O(h)	Q-N3
2 P-QB4	P-K3	17 QR-N1	P-N5
3 N-KB3(a)	P-Q4(b)	18 Q-Q2	NxP(i)
4 N-B3	P-B4(c)	19 NxN	QxN
5 PxQP	NxP	20 RxP	Q-Q2
6 P-K4(d)	NxN	21 Q-K3	KR-Q1
7 PxN	PxP	22 R-1-N1	QxB
8 PxP	N-B3	23 QxQ	RxQ
9 B-QB4	P-QN4!?(e)	24 RxB	P-N4
10 B-Q3(f)	B-N5ch	25 R-N8ch(j)	RxR
11 B-Q2	BxBch	26 RxRch	K-N2
12 QxB	P-QR3	27 P-B3	R-Q7
13 P-QR4	O-O! (g)	28 P-R4	P-R3
14 Q-B3	B-N2	29 PxP	PxP
15 PxP	PxP	30 Drawn	

(a) Following additional analytical work Spassky returns once again to the continuation employed in the first and third games. From a psychological standpoint Spassky's move could be taken as a silent appeal to his opponent to repeat a known opening system.

(b) Match tactics to the fore. With a plus score Fischer does not strive for complications by 3 . . . P-B4, preferring instead a quieter game plan.

(c) Significantly, the challenger is broadening his opening repertoire in an attempt to avoid possible prepared variations. In the first match game he played 4 . . . B-N5 here. This time Fischer uses an opening with which he has had plenty of practical tournament experience.

(d) This active line has already been essayed in match games between Alekhine and Euwe, and now it seems to have been made a permanent part of Spassky's opening arsenal. Most frequently met here is 6 P-K3.

(e) According to reports from Reykjavik, Fischer consumed 20 minutes on his clock for this move. This idea of a pawn thrust on the queen side was probably the product of home analysis. But it is hard to evaluate the ultimate worth of 9 . . . P-QN4 on the basis of a single game.

(f) Black has more serious problems to solve after 10 B-K2, keeping open the possibility of pushing P-Q5 at an appropriate moment. As the text move sets up no obstacles in Black's path, he completes his development without hindrance.

(g) Thanks to his attack on White's QP, Black can afford to ignore the threat of 14 PxP, which he would answer with 14 . . . NxP.

(h) White must attend to the safety of his king. There is no time to win a pawn, e.g., 16 BxP RxRch 17 QxR Q-N3, with vigorous counterplay; or 16 RxR QxR 17 BxP N-R2, etc.

(i) Beginning a series of exchanges that rapidly leads to complete decimation of both armies. By swapping off pawns as well, the players reduce the game to absolute equality.

(j) The draw has now been finalized, with both sides apparently willing to conclude peace negotiations.

BENT LARSEN ON THE MATCH

In Reykjavik for the world championship match, Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen granted a telephone interview to a Soviet reporter from the newspaper "Moskovsky komsomlets".

—What are your impressions regarding the Spassky-Fischer match?

"First and foremost it is a match of nerves. So far the quality of the games has been rather low. The most 'decent' of them was the fourth, the one in which Spassky as Black in a Sicilian Defense obtained an advantage but missed the win. Concerning the third game, the move 11 . . . N-R4, which many annotators, including Soviet ones (I read Soviet periodicals attentively.), credited to Fischer as an innovation is definitely not new. Not long ago it was seen in a tournament in Holland in a game between Timman and Lubojevic.

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"**MANY COMMENTATORS** have praised the sixth game, and even Fischer termed it 'the best of the match.' I do not share this opinion. What is unclear to me is how Spassky could have been so ill informed in an opening variation that his second, Yefim Geller, specializes in."

—How is Spassky playing?

"Up until now he is unrecognizable. I think his game has been affected by the pre-match scandal caused by Fischer. I thoroughly condemn the American grandmaster's conduct. I can say that my indignation is shared by almost all Scandinavian chess fans. We like Spassky very much and wish him victory."

—Just before the match you stated publicly that Spassky will defeat Fischer. Have you changed your mind now?

"Yes. I said that only two players in the world can beat Fischer — myself and Spassky. Thus far he is not playing as well as he can. One advantage I thought the world champion would have in a match with Fischer was stronger nerves. But the American grandmaster has done everything possible to 'cut down the odds.'"

—You say that other than Spassky only you are capable of beating Fischer. But in your own encounter with him, Fischer convincingly refuted your contention.

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"**YES, FISCHER DID** defeat me by a score of 6-0. But I was stupid to agree to play in Denver. The temperature was enervating at 40 degrees Centigrade, which for me, a native of the north, was just unbearable. But do you think that I could not draw some games with Fischer? Of course I could have! But I did not want to. I played every game to win. I must win, I must always fight on. In doing so, of course, it is possible to suffer a fiasco, which is what happened to me. But winning is possible only by passionately desiring victory.

"This is the quest for victory that I sense each time I sit down at the board. And with my whole heart I wish to convey this feeling of victory to Boris Spassky."

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