

## Richard Shorman

# Chess

### SPASSKY'S BIG MISTAKE

Commentary and annotations by International grandmaster Salo Flohr, translated from "Soyetsky sport," July 29, 1972, Pg. 3.

In the eighth game of the world championship chess match Fischer opened with his QBP for the second time. Spassky emerged with a somewhat cramped position but the entire middlegame lay ahead. The world champion selected a double-edged plan involving the advance of his queen-side pawns, however, and found himself compelled to part with his rook for an enemy bishop.

Even in this highly complex situation all was far from lost, inasmuch as Black had an extra pawn to help compensate for being the exchange down. But Spassky committed an error, this time a decisive one, and lost the pawn, after which the issue was no longer in doubt. The challenger accurately prosecuted the technical phase of the game and the world champion had to resign, leaving the score of the match at 5-3 in Fischer's favor.

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White: Robert Fischer.

Black: Boris Spassky.

World Championship, Match Game No. 8.

Reykjavik, July 27, 1972.

English Opening

1 P-QB4(a)	P-QB4	20 N-Q5	QxQ
2 N-QB3	N-QB3	21 NxPch	K-B1
3 N-B3	N-B3	22 RxQ	KxN
4 P-KN3	P-KN3	23 RxB	R-N8ch
5 B-N2	B-N2	24 B-B1	N-B4
6 0-0	0-0(b)	25 K-N2	P-QR4
7 P-Q4	PxP	26 P-K4(g)	B-R8(h)
8 NxP	NxN	27 P-B4	P-B3
9 QxN	P-Q3	28 R-K2	K-K3
10 B-N5(c)	B-K3	29 R/2-QB2	B-N7
11 Q-B4	Q-R4(d)	30 B-K2	P-R4
12 QR-B1	QR-N1	31 R-Q2	B-R6
13 P-N3	KR-B1	32 P-B5ch	PxP
14 Q-Q2	P-QR3	33 PxPch	K-K4
15 B-K3	P-QN4(e)	34 R/4-Q4	KxP
16 B-R7	PxP	35 R-Q5ch	K-K3
17 BxR	RxB	36 RxPch	K-K2
18 PxP	BxP	37 R-B6	Resigns
19 KR-Q1	N-Q2?(f)		



(a) Fischer's past opponents could always be told that the American grandmaster had announced to the whole world that he opens with P-K4 exclusively. This time he is operating psychologically and practically much more cleverly, since Spassky cannot be certain of a KP opening. Fischer gave up on this opening following the fourth game, but I am convinced that 1 P-K4 is the American grandmaster's true love and that he will return to it. In the meanwhile, he now plays 1 P-QB4 for the second time and with devastating effect in both cases!

(b) Spassky chooses the symmetrical variation, which promises Black the easiest path to equality. Pessimists believe that it is risky to play symmetrical positions, since, in the end, Black cannot copy checkmate. Optimists, to the contrary, contend that Black stands well because White must make the first mistake!

(c) Fischer's patent? I honestly do not know. There are so many tournaments being conducted throughout the world that it is not possible to keep up with them all. Sometimes we label this or that move a theoretical innovation only to discover that it was already played before in Cuba or Australia. Most often met here are 10 Q-Q2 and 10 Q-Q3.

(d) What can be said about this queen sortie? There seems to be nothing extraordinary about it. But when a world champion consumes 50 (!) minutes thinking it over, something must be wrong. Fischer's 10 B-N5 and 11 Q-B4 have apparently caught the world champion completely unawares, and that, too, counts as a danger signal.

(e) Black already has some difficulties on the queen side, but there was certainly no valid reason for giving up the exchange. Good enough would be 15 . . . Q-R4. Could Spassky have blundered away the exchange?

(f) Let us assume that Spassky did not overlook the loss of the exchange, but sacrificed the rook for White's bishop. In either event, naturally, 19 . . . B-K3 was essential, and with a pawn for the exchange plus possession of the two bishops Black does have some compensation. But the text move can be evaluated in only one way: as a horrible blunder.

(g) After much delay Fischer plays P-K4 anyway . . .

(h) Such esoteric moves are usually reserved for end-game compositions. This whole game represents a bad study for Spassky, however. I am grieved both at the result and the play in this game, which significantly worsens the world champion's standing in the match. I am sorry that it has fallen on me to annotate this worst game not only of the match but probably also of Spassky's entire chess career. Fischer plays out the ending with force and precision (with the exchange up, I should think so) and the rest requires no comment.

## WHERE TO PLAY CHESS

The Hayward Chess Club, Palma Ceia Park (corner of Miami Ave. and Decatur Way). Monday and Friday, 8-12 p.m.

Cherryland Cafe, 22472 Meekland Ave. (corner of A St. and Meekland Ave.), Hayward, evenings, 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

The San Leandro Chess Club, 250 Dutton Ave. (Washington School cafeteria, between East 14th St. and Bancroft Ave.) Monday 7-11 p.m.

The Fremont Chess Club, 40204 Paseo Padre Parkway (near City Hall at Lake Elizabeth). Thursday, 7-11 p.m.

The Livermore Chess Club, Fourth and J Streets. Meets evenings, the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month.