

## Richard Shorman

# Chess

White: Robert Fischer. Black: Boris Spassky.

World Championship, Match Game No. 18.

Reykjavik, August 24-25, 1972.

Sicilian Defense

1 P-K4	P-QB4	25 N-Q3	K-B2
2 N-KB3	P-Q3	26 N-N4	P-R4
3 N-B3(a)	N-QB3	27 P-N3	R-K4
4 P-Q4	PxP	28 N-Q3	R-QN1!(f)
5 NxP	N-B3	29 Q-K2!	R-R4
6 B-KN5	P-K3	30 PxP(g)	PxP
7 Q-Q2	P-QR3	31 R-B2(h)	P-K4!(i)
8 0-0-0	B-Q2	32 N-KB5	BxN
9 P-B4	B-K2	33 RxB	P-Q4
10 N-B3	P-N4	34 PxP	<del>Q-QP?</del> (j)
11 BxN	PxB	35 N-N4	Q-Q2
12 B-Q3(b)	Q-R4	36 RxRP?(k)	BxN
13 K-N1	P-N5	37 BPxB	R-Q4
14 N-K2	Q-QB4	38 R-B1ch(1)	K-N2
15 P-B5	P-QR4	39 Q-K4	<b>R-QB1!</b>
16 N-B4	P-R5	40 R-QN1	K-N3
17 R-QB1(c)	R-QN1	41 R-R7	R-Q5
18 P-B3(d)	P-N6	42 Q-N6(m)	Q-B3
19 P-QR3	N-K4	43 R-KB7	R-Q3
20 KR-B1(e)	N-B5	44 Q-R6!(n)	Q-KB6
21 BxN	QxB	45 Q-R7	Q-B3
22 QR-K1	K-Q1	46 Q-R6	Q-KB6
23 K-R1	R-N4	47 Q-R7	Q-B3
24 N-Q4	R-R4	48 Drawn (o)	

(Condensed notes by international grandmaster Paul Keres, translated from "64," No. 35, Sept. 1-7, 1972).



(a) Apparently Fischer wishes to avoid the variation 3 P-Q4 PxP 4 NxP N-KB3 5 N-QB3 P-QR3 that he himself favors as Black. In response to 3 . . . N-KB3 he had probably prepared 4 P-K5.

(b) The position has become quite sharp. Black intends to expand on the queen side with his pawns, leaving his king in the center safeguarded by a mass of pawns and the two bishops. Meanwhile, White usually directs his attack against Black's KP spearheaded by P-B5. If Black reacts to this pawn push either by capturing or playing P-K4, then White's knight obtains a strong outpost on Q5.

(c) A good preventive move that anticipates Black's P-N6 and prepares to meet 17 . . . P-R6 with 18 P-QN3 followed by P-B3.

(d) Fischer correctly decides to lock up the queen side for king safety and a strong point on Q4 for his knight.

(e) Playing a waiting game, probably based on his good standing in the match. However, Black would have more difficult problems to solve with continued pressure on his KP after 20 N-Q4!, e.g., 20 . . . NxB 21 PxP! PxP (21 . . . NxR 22 PxBch KxP 23 RxN, with advantage to White) 22 QxN! P-K4 23 N-B4-K6 Q-B1 24 N-N7ch K-B2 25 N-4B5.

(f) Offering an interesting sacrifice of the exchange, which White rightly declines. On 29 NxR QPxN 30 N-B3 B-B3 and 31 . . . R-Q1 Black takes control of the queen file while retaining the two bishops.

(g) Now Black will constantly have to take into account the possibility of N B4.

(h) An immediate 31 N B4 QxQ 32 RxQ could be answered by 32 . . . R-K4 33 N-N6 K-Q1!, and if 34 NxR, then 34 . . . BPxN 35 N-B3 B-QN4, winning back the exchange with a good game.

(i) Gives rise to fascinating complications.

(j) An inaccuracy that allows his opponent a chance to seize the initiative. Of course, 34 . . . RxP? is bad because of 35 N-B4!, but 34 . . . R-Q! still forces White to overcome a number of complex obstacles, e.g., 35 N-N4 QxQ 36 RxQ BxN 37 BPxB R-4xP, and Black wins; or 35 N-B4 QxQ 36 RxQ K-Q3 with 37 . . . RxP, etc. White, however, has an interesting counter - resource in 35 R-B4! If now 35 . . . QxQP, then after 36 N-N4 BxN 37 RxB White's position is no worse than Black's. Accepting the sacrifice, 35 . . . PxR 36 QxBch R-Q2 (or 36 . . . K-B1 37 NxP) P-Q6ch K-B1, grants White a level game by 38 Q-B8ch! K-N2 (38 . . . R-Q1 39 R-K8) 39 R-K7 Q-B3 40 Q-K8!, etc.

(k) Securing the first rank against Black's coming threats was far more important than snatching this pawn. Black has plenty to think about after 36 Q-B4ch! K-N3 (or 36 . . . K-N2 37 Q-K4ch K-N3 38 P-B4!) 37 R B3.

(l) And this dangerous looking check in fact only amounts to a loss of time. White must bring his rook back into play by 38 R-R4, e.g., 38 . . . R-Q1 39 R-B4ch K-N1 40 R-1-QB1, with approximate equality.

(m) The game was adjourned here and Spassky sealed his move. In spite of his extra pawn, White must defend very carefully.

(n) Excellent defensive play, threatening 45 Q-K3ch while holding off 44 . . . Q-B7 with 45 RxP.

(o) A fighting game that does honor to both players.