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6363 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD

LOS ANGELES 48, CALIF

OLIVE 3-7170

August 14, 1961

Mr. Walter Fried,
President, American Chess Foundation
1372 Broadway
New York 18, N. Y.

Via Air Mail

Dear Mr. Fried:

Due to the unfortunate incident of the unplayed 12th game of the Fischer-Reshevsky match, which had to be awarded to Reshevsky by forfeiture, I feel it imperative to advise you of my observations in the matter. I am not a member of the Tournament committee, but as membership chairman of the Herman Steiner Chess Club, and as a chess devotee, feeling that chess is very much injured by such action as deliberate non-appearance to such an important event, I am writing this letter.

Various changes had been made in time-table by the Committee, to the partial non-concurrence, as I understood it, of both players at different times, sometimes in what appeared to be rather to Fischer's opposition, and other times to Reshevsky's.

Prior to Thursday, August 3rd, Lena Grumette had been requested by Bobbie Fischer to try to arrange games at the Beverly-Hilton, as he liked the playing conditions (evidently more quiet) there, rather than at the Herman Steiner Chess Club, I assume he made this request after he learned that the Beverly Hilton was very well pleased with the turn-out on opening night and the excellent publicity both prior to and after the fifth round game. Lena went to considerable extra trouble to get the Hotel to again grant the hall gratis, which she obtained for August 10th game by their agreement of Aug. 3rd. Playing hours had been changed to accommodate the public, from 7:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. and in the case of Thursday, August 10th., to 7:00 P.M. I understand that the Committee found it more expedient to change the playing time for the 12th round game for the following reasons:

1. No provision had been made for the final game's adjournment, and by starting 2½ hours earlier than originally scheduled time, the game could be played off the same evening, if adjourned.
2. Mrs. Piatigorsky, with her mother visiting from Europe, was anxious to attend both the game and the once in a lifetime joint concert of her husband and Jascha Heifetz scheduled for the same evening.
3. Referee Irving Rivise had to leave Los Angeles to participate in the United States Open at San Francisco, starting the following day.

I have been given to understand by members of the committee, and by Referee, Irving Rivise, that Fischer was advised as early as Aug. 3, of the change of schedule from 1:30 P.M. to 11 A.M. for the 12th round. I understand that Fischer objected to the change and never wholly agreed to it, but that also he offered no counter-compromise.

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Mr. Rivise, I am told, stated to Fischer before witnesses, that the time had been officially changed to 11 A.M., the press was so notified, even to the extent that Kashden's column published the change in the Los Angeles Times' column of August 6th.

On Thursday, August 10th, Bobby first stated that under no circumstances would he play Sunday's game except at 1:30 P.M. according to statements of the committee members. The announcements of change had been made at playing sessions to the audiences present, as well as to the press, and no other time could have been arranged on such short notice, as to the public.

It is the chess playing fraternity and the chess public that made this match possible, to say nothing of the strenuous efforts, at least insofar as this area is concerned, of such devoted individuals as Jacqueline Piatigorsky and Lena Grumette, to mention but two of the most strenuous workers on behalf of this match. To let them down was unthinkable, and for Bobby to have done it by non-appearance, merely to satisfy whatever urge he has to behave in such pattern should not go rewarded, in my earnest opinion.

A very unseemly incident took place while I was substitute referee at the adjourned session of the 11th game. Bobby said "draw", threw down some of the pieces, walked out and others in the outside room told me that he said something like the H--- with this XI-XI club (with ladies present). Just the evening prior, with the 11th game adjourned, Frank Hufnagel took him out to dinner, and tried to change his attitude towards playing at 11 A.M. Sunday, at which point, according to Frank, Bobby said "well, maybe", (the closest he had come to agreement as to the change). Having what he had considered a certain win under his belt, his entire attitude changed when Sammy for the second time succeeded in drawing a lost game. I understand that he also behaved poorly when Sammy succeeded in drawing the other adjourned lost game.

Bobby states that every one is against him and unless he begins to realize that the Chess fraternity is really working on his behalf, I feel that he does much more harm to chess and the prestige of American Chess than any good it derives by his particular chess genius.

Therefore, unless Bobby changes his behavior pattern, we of the Steiner Chess Club will do nothing in the future to support any of his chess activities.

Sincerely yours

Harry Borocho

HB/hsc

P. S. Needless to say, about \$100 was refunded to the audience, as well as further attendance of over 70 additional people who came after the forfeit, would have accounted for another \$100 at the gate.