

# Richard Shorman

# Chess

## THE FINAL CANDIDATES' MATCH

### An Unstoppable Pawn

by

International Grandmaster Salo Flohr

(translated from "Sovetsky Sport," October 2, 1971)

How anxious we all were to hear the news from far-off Argentina. To our great disappointment the first word was not very pleasant.

No less than Fischer, Petrosian sought a sharp fight and played for a win. Our grandmaster displayed his fine theoretical preparation by obtaining, to my mind, a fully satisfactory position.

During the fifth hour of play and in time trouble, Petrosian began to make errors. Robert Fischer, on the contrary, had played with his usual quickness, leaving him almost half an hour to spare on his clock.

Here, then, are the moves comprising this exciting encounter in Buenos Aires.

**White: Robert Fischer. Black: Tigran Petrosian.**

**Buenos Aires, Sept. 30, 1971, 1st Match Game.**

**Sicilian Defense**

1 P-K4(a)	P-QB4	21 P-B4	R-QB1
2 N-KB3	P-K3	22 N-K4	QxQ
3 P-Q4	PxP	23 PxQ	R-B7
4 NxP	N-QB3	24 R-Q2	RxR
5 N-N5	P-Q3	25 NxR	P-B4(f)
6 B-KB4	P-K4	26 PxP	R-K1
7 B-K3	N-B3	27 R-K1	N-B7
8 B-N5	B-K3	28 R-K2	N-Q5(g)
9 N/1-B3	P-QR3	29 R-K3	N-B7
10 BxN	PxB	30 R-R3	RxP
11 N-R3	P-Q4(b)	31 N-B3	RxP
12 PxP	BxN	32 RxP	RxP
13 NPxB	Q-R4	33 P-KR4(h)	N-K6
14 Q-Q2	O-O-O	34 RxP	R-Q8ch
15 B-B4	KR-N1	35 K-R2	R-QR8
16 R-Q1(c)	B-B4	36 P-R5	P-B5
17 B-Q3	BxB	37 RxBP	RxP
18 QxB	N-Q5	38 R-K4!	NxP
19 O-O	K-N1(d)	39 K-N3(i)	R-R4
20 K-R1	QxRP(e)	40 N-K5	Resigns(j)

(a) When Mikhail Tal became the world championship challenger in 1960, he declared that if he drew White in the first game against Botvinnik he would play 1 P-K4, and that is what happened. When dealing with Fischer, however, preparations can be made in advance, since it is well known that the American grandmaster always opens with the KP. And, as we know, Taimanov and Larsen suffered successive defeats at Fischer's hands in the Sicilian Defense. It may be asked, then, why did Petrosian elect to play the Sicilian anyway? The game itself supplies the answer. The team of Petrosian-Suetin-Averbakh extracted an interesting new improvement out of their bag of tricks. If Petrosian lost this game it was not the fault of the opening.

(b) The innovation. Taimanov played 11 . . . N-Q5 here. Whether or not this new move caught Fischer unawares is difficult to say. Fischer is a very hard worker, and he knows the systems he uses backwards and forwards. Fischer believes in the variations he plays and is not afraid to repeat them, even though he realizes that his opponent may have an improvement in store.

(c) Black's position cannot be bad. White has an extra pawn, or, rather, an extra half-pawn. It is not easy to see where Petrosian's pre-game preparation ends in this variation. Instead of his actual response, Black could have captured White's KNP, since 17 Q-K3 can be met with 17 . . . N-Q5. The sharp position resulting from 16 . . . RxNP 17 N-K4 B-N5 yields approximately equal chances. It is entirely possible that Petrosian already wanted more than equality.

(d) The reader will notice, of course, that 19 . . . QxN? followed by 20 . . . N-K7ch does not work because Black's queen is taken off . . . with check!

(e) Serious consideration should also be given to 20 . . . R-QB1 21 N-K4 QxQP, inasmuch as 22 P-QB3 allows Black the counter, 22 . . . P-B4.

(f) This very complex game was difficult to analyze in a short time, but the impression remains that Petrosian played the concluding phase nervously and without confidence. That Black could be lost at this stage in the proceedings is unbelievable. The active move, 25 . . . R-QB1 deserves thought.

(g) Fischer refused Petrosian's offer of a draw here.

(h) Petrosian has an extra pawn, but Fischer's passed pawn is so strong that nothing can stop it.

(i) In spite of their outward simplicity and "obviousness," Fischer's last two moves create a strong impression.

(j) The black knight — no longer a horse — has been "surmounted."

★ ★ ★

**White: Tigran Petrosian. Black: Robert Fischer. Buenos Aires, Oct. 5, 1971, 2nd Match Game. Gruenfeld Defense**

1 P-Q4 N-KB3 2 P-QB4 P-KN3 3 N-QB3 P-Q4 4 B-B4 B-N2  
 5 P-K3 P-B4 6 PxBP Q-R4 7 R-B1 N-K5 8 PxP NxN 9  
 Q-Q2 QxRP 10 PxN Q-R4 11 B-B4 N-Q2 12 N-K2 N-K4 13  
 B-R2 B-B4 14 BxN BxB 15 N-Q4 QxP/4 16 NxB PxN 17  
 O-O Q-R4 18 Q-B2 P-B5 19 P-B4 PxP 20 P-B5! Q-Q7 21  
 Q-R4ch K-B1 22 QR-Q1 Q-K7 23 P-Q6 Q-R4 24 P-B4 P-K7  
 25 PxB PxQR/Q 26 RxQ QxKP 27 R-KB1 P-B3 28 Q-N3  
 K-N2 29 Q-B7ch K-R3 30 PxP P-B4 31 RxP Q-Q5ch 32  
 K-R1 Resigns.