

Richard Shorman

Chess

BOTVINNIK ON FISCHER

(Former world champion Mikhail Botvinnik discusses the Fischer-Taimanov quarter-final candidates' match, now under way at the University of British Columbia. The excerpt below has been translated from "Shakhmaty v SSSR," No. 2, 1971.)

Everyone wonders how Taimanov will fare in his match against Fischer. I do not think that Taimanov is at his best in match play and so I believe that he will have a difficult time of it. But if he prepares thoroughly enough, Taimanov is capable of putting up very stern resistance.

Fischer took first place (at the candidates' tournament in Mallorca) by a wide margin. Does it follow that he will play as well in a match, that he will surmount the match-play barriers between him and the world championship?

In order to win the world title Fischer will have to contest matches against at least three Soviet grandmasters. The first consists of 10 games, the next involves 12, and the last requires 24. And he must win all three events. Based on past experience, I would say that, properly prepared, our grandmasters have little to fear from Fischer.

Fischer played especially well in the interzonal competition after he was virtually certain of first prize. While others worked under considerable pressure, Fischer was able to finish up calmly.

But victory over strong opposition in a tournament is not the same as winning match play, where the approach to training differs entirely. A tournament pits you against a new man each day. Playing match games with a single opponent demands preparation that is more thorough, concrete and precise.

Fischer and Larsen have proven that they know how to prepare well. Indeed, both Fischer and Larsen have shown themselves to be very good chess professionals. And today, only professionals can play good chess.

★ ★ ★

White: IGM W. Unzicker (West Germany). Black: IM O. Sarapu (New Zealand).

XIX Chess Olympics, Siegen, 1970.

Sicilian Defense

1 P-K4	P-QB4	11 R-B1	B-B4
2 N-KB3	N-KB3	12 N-N5	N-Q5ch
3 P-K5	N-Q4	13 K-Q1	N-K3
4 N-B3	P-K3	14 N-K4(c)	P-Q3
5 NxN	PxN	15 PxP(d)	BxP?(e)
6 P-Q4	N-B3	16 NxB	R-Q1
7 PxP	BxP	17 B-B4	NxB(f)
8 QxP(a)	Q-N3	18 QxPch	K-R1
9 B-QB4(b)	BxPch	19 Q-N8ch!(g)	RxQ
10 K-K2	0-0	20 N-B7mate	

(Notes translated from "Shakhmaty v SSSR," No. 1 1971, pg. 27)

(a) A gambit line that has long been a favorite with chess analysts. In this case, however, Black was not prepared to cope with the sharp complications that he provoked.

(b) Too passive is 9 Q-Q2 0-0 10 B-Q3 P-Q3 11 PxP R-K1ch, and Black has a promising game.

(c) An important theoretical position. Various attacking continuations have been tested here: 14 P-B3, 14 B-Q3, 14 Q-K4? and, lastly, the textmove, 14 N-K4. It is instructive to investigate why 14 Q-K4? bears a question mark. Black obtains excellent chances after 14 . . . NxN 15 BxN P-Q4!, e.g., 16 BxP QxP 17 K-K2 B-N5ch! (Pavlov—Radulesku, Bucharest, 1959. If now 18 QxB, then 18 . . . QxKPch 19 B-K4 QR-K1 recovers the piece with a pawn to the good.

(d) So far both players have followed recognized opening theory. After 15 . . . R-Q1 Black can handle the problems in the middlegame with relative ease. A sample finish might be 16 Q-R5 BxP 17 B-Q3 P-B4 18 RxP N-B1 19 NxB BxR 20 Q-B7ch K-R1 21 NxB Q-N8ch, with a draw by perpetual check (Chereminsin—Tenenbaum, Moscow, 1961).

(e) Black's very first independent move turns out to be the decisive error.

(f) Or 17 . . . QxP 18 B-K5.

(g) Black completely overlooked this stock combination.

WHERE TO PLAY

The Hayward Chess Club, Palma Ceia Park (corner of Miami Ave. and Decatur Way in old Palma Ceia village).

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

The Fremont Chess Club, 36025 Fremont Blvd. (Westridge Park Community Center). Thursday, 7-11 p.m.

The Livermore Chess Club, Fourth and J Streets (in the old library of the Carnegie Building). Evenings, the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month.