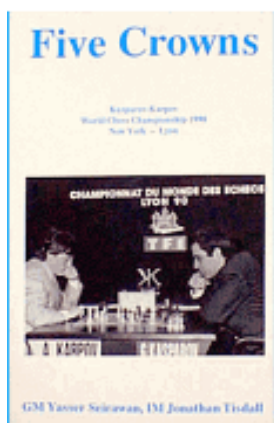


## Inside Chess

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## Yasser Annotates:

Fischer - Spassky, Sveti Stefan 1992

**Bobby Fischer-Boris Spassky**

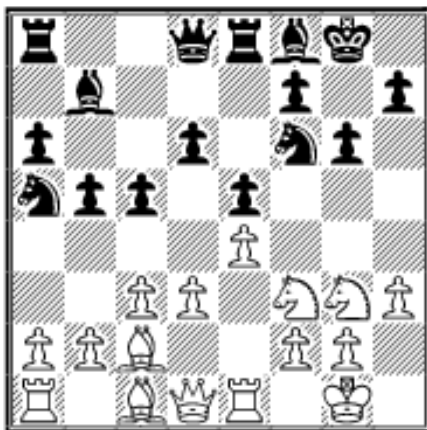
Sveti Stefan (7) 1992

Ruy Lopez C90

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 -5.O-O Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 -O-O 9.d3!?**

Bobby is the first to blink, deviating from the main lines of the Ruy. The text is quite modest in that White doesn't go for full central control, but instead aims for a slow migration of pieces to the kingside. This plan was the favorite of Richard Teichmann (1868-1925).

**9...Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.Nbd2 Re8 12.h3 Bf8 13.Nf1 Bb7 14.Ng3 g6**



So far standard theory, with the assessment that the position is roughly balanced. White will play for pawn-breaks with d3-d4 and f2-f4, while Black goes for ...d6-d5. Bobby will have to show something original to gain the upper hand.

**15.Bg5 h6 16.Bd2**

It might seem more natural to play 16.Be3 and reserve the d2-square for the queen, but then on 16...d5! the bishop on e3 becomes a target.

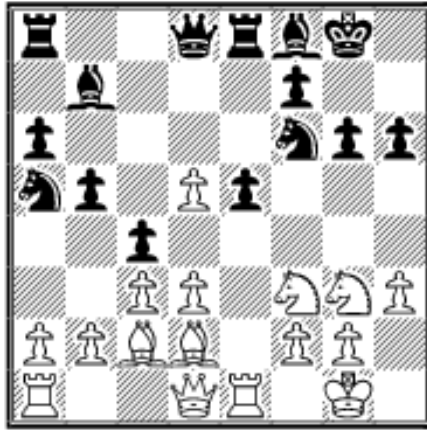
**16...d5?!**

This standard reaction comes as a surprise, because it is mistimed. The solid 16...Nc6, preparing ...d6-d5, offers sound equality.

**17.exd5**

Underscoring the problem behind Spassky's last move. Black's e5-pawn is targeted for termination. The position, however, still contains a lot of tricks.

**17...c4!**

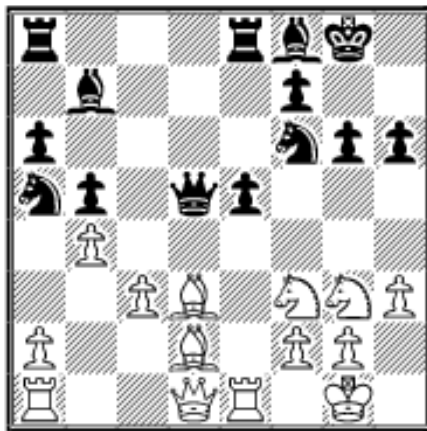


I don't know if Boris anticipated this move when choosing 16...d5, but in any case, it's quite necessary. After 17...Qxd5 18.c4! (hitting the a5-knight) 18...bxc4 (18...Qd8 19.Nxe5 wins a pawn free and clear) 19.Bxa5 cxd3 20.Bxd3 e4 21.Bc3 eventually wins a piece. The text rules out the above. Black intends to recapture the d5-pawn at his leisure.

**18.b4!**

Blow for blow. Only by this can White gain an advantage. It gives White a material plus.

**18...cxd3 19.Bxd3?! Qxd5?!**



Falling victim to a devilish trick. Black had to kiss his pawn goodbye: 19...Nc4 20.Bxc4 bxc4 21.Nxe5 Qxd5 22.Nf3 and White has won a pawn. In small compensation, Black has the two bishops. White has a clear advantage. The text gives Black a lost game.

**20.Be4!**

A killing shot. Boris clearly missed this one. The reasonable 20.Ne4 allows ...Nd7, when Black is OK. The text gets the d3-bishop out of capture, while generating threats.

**20...Nxe4**

If 20...Qc4 21.Qb1! (Fischer) 21...Nc6 22.Bxg6 fxg6 23.Qxg6+ Bg7 24.Nf5 wins. Other moves just lose a piece to b4xa5.

**21.Nxe4**

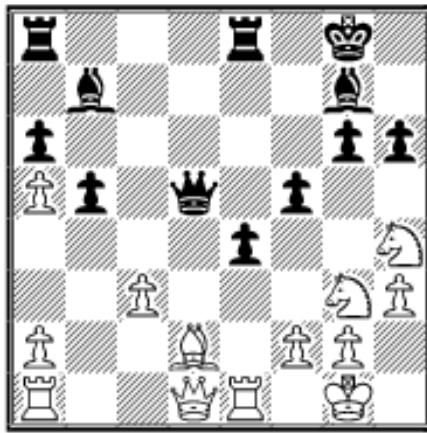
The point is clear. Black faces Ne4-f6+ and bxa5. Black loses a piece.

**21...Bg7**

Worse is 21...Re6? 22.bxa5 f5 23.Ng3 e4 24.Nd4 e3 25.f3 and the e6-rook is a target.

**22.bxa5 f5 23.Ng3!?**

A controversial move. I liked Fischer's choice, while GMs Gligoric and Velimirovic contended that 23.c4!? bxc4 24.Nc3 Qxa5 was as good for White. No doubt, but then 24...Qf7! keeps the game quite lively. For example, 25.Be3 Rad8 26.Qc1 e4 27.Nh2 Rd3 gives Black terrific compensation.

**23...e4 24.Nh4****24...Bf6?**

This accelerates Spassky's defeat. Boris consistently fails to make the most of his lot. Forced was 24...Rad8 25.Be3 Qf7! The knight on h4 is simply miserable. A line might run 26.Qc1 Rd3 27.Ne2 g5, when Black regains his piece. Another plausible line is 24...Rad8 25.Re2 Bxc3 26.Nxg6 Bxd2! with sharp play. Settling for 25.Bxh6 Bxh6 26.Nxg6 f4

isn't what White wants.

So back to 24...Rad8 25.Be3 Qf7 26.Qc1 Rd3 27.Bxh6, and now White has some chances of coordinating his wayward pieces. This whole series of lines had the assembled corps of GMs Tsheskovsky, Dolmatov, Barlov, Popovic, Gligoric, Velimirovic, Ivanovic and others-second-guessing Black's moves beginning with 16...d5. The general feeling was that the lines, while varied and complex, favored White. Spassky's choice lands him by force into an ending two pawns down. In his heyday Boris sacrificed his pieces with abandon. In his old age he's anxious to win them back! It is this move that is really the losing move.

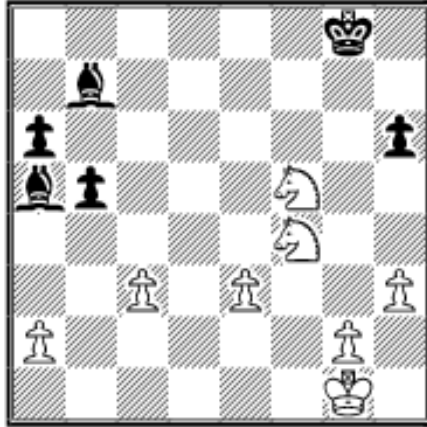
**25.Nxg6 e3 26.Nf4 Qxd2**

Black has won back his piece and jumps into a lost ending.

**27.Rxe3 Qxd1+ 28.Rxd1 Rxe3 29.fxe3 Rd8**

A sad necessity. If Black fails to challenge the d-file, White will easily weave checkmate based on 29...Bxc3 30.Nxf5 Bxa5 31.Rd7 Be4 32.Nxh6+, winning.

**30.Rxd8+ Bxd8 31.Nxf5 Bxa5**



**32.Nd5?**

A very strange mistake. Boris has forced Bobby into a winning ending which he promptly misplays. After 32.Ne7+ Kf7 33.Ned5 the knights dominate Black's bishops and king. Given time, White moves e3-e4 and Kg1-f2-e3-d4 is decisive. Black has to play 33...Bxd5 34.Nxd5 Ke6 35.Nb4 Bb6 36.Nxa6 Bxe3+ 37.Kf1 and resigns.

**32...Kf8!**

Boris makes White's task as difficult as possible.

**33.e4**

White gives back a pawn to rob Black of one of his bishops. This was the clearest path. Difficulties lie in 33.Nb4 Bb6, when Black's bishops are coordinating quite well.

**33...Bxd5 34.exd5 h5 35.Kf2**

Centralizing the king.

**35...Bxc3 36.Ke3 Kf7 37.Kd3**

Black's remaining hopes are on the queenside. The text nips this in the bud with gain of tempo.

**37...Bb2**

If 37...b4 38.Kc4 is easy, since 38...a5 39.Kb5 ends all counterplay.

**38.g4**

Time to queen a lady.

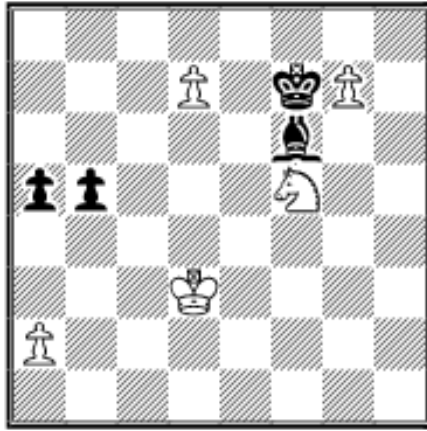
**38...hxg4 39.hxg4 Kf6 40.d6 Ke6 41.g5!**

An artistic finish. The simple point is that 41...Kxf5 42.d7 is a girl. Chasing the bishop to b2 is paying dividends.

**41...a5 42.g6 Bf6 43.g7 Kf7**

Since 43...Bxg7 44.Nxg7+ Kxd6 44.Kd4 is a simple technical win.

**44.d7 1-0**



Black faces 44...b4 45.Nd6+ Kxg7 46.Ne8+ and Nxf6. Also, 44...Bd8 45.Nd6+ Kxg7 46.Nb7 Bc7 47.d7=Q wins.

It was a very uneven and poorly played game, but at least Bobby had the pleasure of leveling the score. The theoretical novelty of the day was the glass barrier that was inserted in the doorway through which the spectators watch the players. Apparently even the

faintest noise is too much for Bobby. Well, at least he keeps the carpenters working.

Controversy from Camp Kasparov: In interviews he has referred to the match as being between “two has-beens.” He has also raised the possibility that the match is “fixed.” Further, Game One was “bad,” but Games Three, Four and Five were “good.” Such comments are guaranteed to raise Fischer’s hackles and fan the flames for a possible match. At present Bobby has to regain the form he showed in Game One to have any chance against Gazza.

**Fischer and Spassky after the seventh game:**

**Dukelic:** Mr. Fischer, are you satisfied with your play today?

**Fischer:** Yes, overall I think I played pretty well. He had a reasonably good opening, then he made a very bad mistake, blunder.

**Spassky:** You mean ...d5.

**Fischer:** Yes, this is a losing move.

**Spassky:** Maybe... Yes, it looks like a losing move. Maybe I could have played better, because I had another way to get compensation.

**Fischer:** I didn’t see it.

**Spassky:** You didn’t see it. I mean that after Ne4, then ...Qc4.

**Fischer:** That’s finished.

**Spassky:** I mean, after Be4, ...Qc4, because my knight takes from a5 to b7.

**Fischer:** What are you talking about?

**Spassky:** When you played Be4 and I took with my knight, I had a better move, ...Qc4.

**Fischer:** Qb1. It's a killer.

**Spassky:** Oh.

**Dukelic:** Thank you very much.

Following the game, Yvette [Yasser's wife] and I had dinner with Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam from *New in Chess*. Dirk had come for a few days visit. His most important mission, however, was not reporting. Fischer had requested his office in Holland to send the NICBASE program and database for use during the match. NIC was pleased to honor the request and didn't trust the postal system, so Dirk had an audience with Bobby when he delivered the goods.

Dirk had to overcome feelings of panic while the game files were being successfully accessed. He then engaged the great man in a little conversation. It seems Bobby is carrying on a lot of private wars these days with publishers, the U.S. Government, the Soviets (Russians) and so on. There was little news that was positive.

I found myself wondering whether this match was a one-shot affair, Bobby's last appearance. He had won today. If he wins the match, does he take his millions and his crown and go home? Why risk defeat again? But then, why this match in the first place? Bobby has disdained financial offers for 20 years. What motivates him? Dirk's brief encounter offered no clues.



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