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## Days of Fotroro Post

Bent Larsen the Fighting Dane． Pt． 1

By Stan Ward
Between the early 1960＇s and the mid 1970＇s Bobby Fischer was considered one of the top 2 or 3 chess players in the world and by the time he emerged from his self－ imposed exile in 1970，he was the strongest player in the world．Some would say of all time．But in that timeframe who was number two behind Fischer．Spassky maybe．Or Petrosian？And who was considered second best after Fischer in the West at that time？Many say that it was Denmark＇s＇Bent Larsen．

Known as＂The Fighting Dane＂，Jørgen Bent Larsen was born on March 4th，1935， in Tilsted，Denmark．In 1942， his family moved to another town，Holstebro，and here he learned how to play chess．In 1954，at the age of 19 he won
the Danish Championship， and became an International Master 2 years later after his stellar performance in the 1956 Olympiad in Moscow， gaining 14 points in 18 games as Denmark＇s $1^{\text {st }}$ board in Group A．

B．Larsen vs S．Gligoric
Moscow，USSR ． 1956 Olympiad． Najdorf，Sicilian B92

1．Nf3 c5 2．e4 d6 3．d4 cxd4 4．Nxd4 Nf6 5．Nc3 a6 6．Be2 e5 7．Nb3 Be7 8．O－O O－O 9．Bg5
Nbd7 10．a4 b6 11．Bc4
Bb712．Qe2 Qc713．Rfd1
Rfc814．Nd2 h615．Bxf6
Nxf616．Bb3 Bc617．Nc4
Nxe418．Nxe4 d519．a5 dxc4 20．Qxc4 Rf8 21．axb6 Qxb6
22．Nd6 Bb5 23．Nxb5 axb5
24．Qd5 Rxa1 25．Rxa1 Bc5
26．Ra8 Bxf2＋27．Kf1 Qf6
28．Qxf7＋Qxf7 29．Bxf7＋Kxf7
30．Rxf8＋Kxf8 31．Kxf2 Ke7
32．Ke3 Kd6 33．Ke4 b4 34．c3 b3
35．c4 g6 36．g4 h5 37．gxh5 gxh5
38．h4 Kc6 39．Kxe5 Kc5 40．Kf5
Kd4 41．Kf4 Kc5 42．Ke5 Kxc4
43．Ke4 Kc5 44．Kd3 Kd5 45．Kc3
Ke4 46．Kxb3 Kf5 47．Kc3 1－0

## IN THIS ISSOR

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Over the next 8 years Larsen had inconsistent results but in 1964 at the Interzonal in Amsterdam he was sensational tying for first place with Smyslov，Tal and Spassky．

B．Larsen vs B．Spassky
Amsterdam，Netherlands． Interzonal 1964. Bird Opening，A03

Annotations for the following games are by Eric Brondum

1．f4
A rare guest in this kind of competitions，but from Larsen you might expect almost everything！Larsen had already
qualified for the Candidates', but due to the somewhat funny rule saying that there may not be more than three participants from each country, Spassky could not feel quite safe. The positions in the top were : Spassky and Smyslov 16 Tal, Stein and Larsen 15 Y2 Bronstein 15 etc.

1. ...d5 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. e3 g6 4. b4

Interesting. It is obvious that the queen's bishop aims for b2, and i n order to secure its future 4. b4 seems to be a natural move. Instead, 4 . b3 would have welcomed black to play 4. - c5 followed by a possible . . . Nc6 and . . .d4

## Bg7 5. Bb2 O-O 6. Be2 Bg4

Spassky wants to play e5. The value of the two bishops is in this position only academic!

## 7. O-O c6 8. a4 Nbd7 9. Na3 Bxf3 10. Bxf3 Re8 11. d4

Otherwise black would play e5 with a fine game.

## 11. ...Ne4

However strange it may seem, this natural move does not seem to be quite correct. White's problem would have been much more complicated after the simple: 11. -

Nb6, intending the knight maneuver Nc8-Nd 6-Ne4 with complete equality.
12. Bxe4 dxe4 13. Nc4 Nb6 14. Na5 Nd5 15. Qe1 Qd7 16. c4 Nf6 17. b5 Qc7

In order to answer 18. bxc6 with b6
18. Rb1

The first subtlety. Now, if black plays 18. axb5 19. axb5 b6 20. Nc6 a6 21.d5 axb5, white has the interpolating move 22. Be5! followed by 23 . Rxb5 $\pm$
18. ...Ng4 19. bxc6 b6 20. Qe2 f5 21. Nb3 Qxc6 22. d5!?

This is true Larsen, but to be fair it should be said that white also has another possibility: 22. ...Ra1+-

22 ... Qxa4 23.Bxg7 Kxg7 24. Nd4 Rec8 25. h3 Nf6 26. Rfcl Qd7 27. g4!

This quiet move is the point of white's play. Now Spassky's position is difficult, but in the following he displays great ingenuity in how to handle such positions!
27... Kf7 28. g5 Ne8


## 29. Qa2!?

Very tempting but perhaps not the best? 29. h 4 ! was a serious candidate (Expression borrowed from Kotov's book: How to Think Like A Grandmaster) if then 29. Nd6 30. h5 would be the unpleasant answer, but perhaps Spassky would have played the inventive 29. - h5! after which the outcome remains highly unclear?
29. ... Nd6 30. h4 Qe8 31. Ne6 Qh8 32.h5 h6 33.Rb2 gxh5 34. Rh2 hxg5 35. Nxg5+ Ke8 36. c5

In for a Penny, in for a Pound! This is exactly what Larsen says here, but 36. Rg2 !? was also very interesting.

Rxc5 37. Rxc5 bxc5 38. Qa4+ Kf8 39. Rg2 Re8?!

In mutual time scramble Spassky commits a slight inaccuracy. The natural move was 39. - Rb8, but even 39. - a5 was worth consideration.

## 40. Qd7 Qh6

The threat was a nice smothered mate: 41. Qe6 .42. Qf7+. 43. Ne6++ but again, 40. ...Rb8, was a possibility.

## 41. Qxa7 Qh8

This time 42. Qa1 was threatening.
42. Qd7 Qh6


This was the sealed move. During the analysis Larsen could not find a sure win, nor could Spassky find a sure draw! Polugajevsky, (Smyslov's second) claimed that: 42. Rb8 was an easy draw and probably he was right, but it is always difficult to
admit a move being an error,( In this case Spassky's 40th move).

## 43. Ne6+ Kf7 44. Ng5+

Of course not: 44. Nd8+ Rxd8!--
44. ... Kf8 45. Kh2 h4?!

Spassky, (or perhaps his second, Bondarevsky!) is playing with fire now. There was no need for this move; besides, 45. ..c4 looks obvious.
46. Ne6+ Kf7 47. Ng5+ Kf8 48. Kh3 c4 49. Ne6+ Kf7 50. Ng5+ Kf8 51. Rg1

An excellent move, forcing the black pawn to the 6th rank, but to an unprotected square!
51. ...c3 52. Qe6!

What is this?? . . Two pawns down and still Larsen offers the exchange of queens!

52 . . Qxe6
He must do this. 52. ...Qh8?? allows the brilliant 53. Qf7+, and 52. ...Qg7? would lose a piece to 53. Qe5!
53. dxe6 Kg7

Clearly the only move.

## 54. Nxe4+ Kh6 55. Nxc3 Kh6

This is the position that white has been aiming for. Material is even, but the initiative is clearly in white's hands, and Spassky is short of time!

55 ... Ne4??


Panic! Even with only seconds left on the clock this is a remarkable misjudgment of the position leading to immediate disaster. Instead, 55. ...Rd8!! (Discovered by Larsen only several years later.) seems to keep the draw in hand if only by a hair's breadth!
55. Nxc3 Ne4 56. Nxe4 fxe4 57. Kxh4 Ra8 58. f5 Ra2 59.Rg8 Rf2 60. Rf8 1-0

From this point on he may have been the most successful tournament player between the mid 1960's and mid 1970's. In 1967-68 he finished $1^{\text {st }}$ in tournaments in Havana, Winnipeg, Sousse, Mallorca and Monaco. In 1969 has also won in Mallorca and Busum as well as Lugano and Vinkovei in 1970, and Manila in 1973 and Biel 1976. Quoting Eric Brondum's book, "Bent Larsen-The Fighter, published in 1978: "Since 1964, Larsen has been a regular candidate for the World championship. In 1965, he won matches against Ivkov and Geller but Iost to Tal. Again in 1968, he defeated both Portisch and Tal only to lose against

Spassky, who went on to be the next world champion. In 1971 he beat UhImann, but then lost horribly to Fischer. Finally, in the 1976 Inter-Zonal at Biel, Larsen won $1^{\text {st }}$ prize ahead of: Petrosian, Portisch and Tal. In the 1977
Candidates' his first opponent appeared to be Lajos Portisch of Hungary, and for the fourth time Larsen failed to qualify for a match against the world champion.

Here is a win against future World Champion Bobby Fischer from the historic $2^{\text {nd }}$ Piatgorsky Cup, held in Santa Monica, Ca. August 1966. This is a fabulous tournament book edited by the legendary 2time US Champion Isaac Kashdan. Each game is annotated by at least one of the participants. Worth the purchase.

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R. Fischer vs B. Larsen Santa Monica, 1966. Second Piatgorsky Cup. Ruy Lopez, C82
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1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4

Some months later Fischer went to the Olympiad in Cuba. Probably he had reflected quite a deal upon this game, because fighting the Lopez he came up with a little surprise. Using the "harmless" Exchange Variation he won brilliant games against both Portisch and Gligoric thus turning this forgotten variation to its most popular use against the Lopez.
Nf6 5. O-O Nxe4 6. d4 b5 7. Bb3 d5 8. dxe5 Be6 9. c3 Bc5!?

Typical Larsen! The move actually played is very risky, but one has to know all the hidden points in this double-edged position to prove that. A difficult task even for a Fischer!
10. O-O 11. Bc2 Bf5 12. Nb3 Bg4 13. Nxc5 Nxc5


About this position Larsen has the following to say: "Black has given up the pair of bishops in order to gain other advantages: The attack against the white king's pawn, the bishop maneuver, Bh5-g6 and finally the possibility d5-d4. Keres finds the variation interesting. Euwe thinks it is dubious, and Pachman claims 11. ...BfS to be a mistake!"
14. Re1 Re8 15. Be3 Ne6 16. Qd3 g6 17. Bh6 Ne7 18. Nd4 Bf5 19. Nxf5

More accurate was 19. Qd2! Now complications arise, which each player considered to be in his own favor!
19. ...Nxf5 20. Bd2 Qh4 21. Qf1!?


One of Fischer's deep ones! He could not of course play 21. Qxd5? Rad8 22. Qc6 Ne7-+, but 21. Qf3!? was a possibility. However, after 21. ...Ng5 22. Qf4 Qxf4 23. Bxf4 Ne6 24. Bd2 c5 the position would be fairly even.
Therefore, 21. Qfi!? is an ingenious try to continue the "declaration of war" launched by his aggressive: 19. Nxf5.
21... Nc5 22. g3 Qc4 23. Qg2
23. Nd3 24. Bxd3 Qxd3 25. Bg5 c6 26. g4 Ng7


## 27. Re3 Qd2 $28 . \mathrm{b} 3$

The correct decision. Fischer saw that the intended: 28. Bf6 Qxb2 29. Rd I Qxa2 30.Qh3 Qc2 31. Rf1 failed to, 31. .. g5!! and if: 28. f3 then 28. ... Qxg2t would leave
him with some difficulties in the ensuing endgame.
28... b4 29. Qh3 bxc3 30. Qh6 Ne6 0-1

Here follows a beautiful game, his $16^{\text {th }}$ round win against then World Champion Tigran Petrosian also from the Second Piatgorsky Cup.

## T. Petrosian vs B. Larsen Santa Monica, 1966. Second Piatgorsky Cup. King's Indian Def, E61

1. c4 Nf6 2. Nc3 g6 3. g3 Bg7 4. Bg2 O-O 5. d4 d6 6. e3

A solid line, no doubt about that. But on the other hand a rather harmless one, leaving black with a variety of active plans.
c6 7. Nge2 a5
The beginning of a strong maneuver, the point of which lies in his $15^{\text {th }}$ move.

## 8. b3 Na6 9.O-O e5 10. Bb2 Re8 11. a3

Already Petrosian has problems, e.g. 11.e4! exd4=, and 11. d5 e4!+

Rb8 12. h3 h5 13. Qc2 Be6 14. Kh2 Qc7 15. Rac1 b5

After this fine and logical move black takes over the initiative.

## 16. cxb5 cxb5 17. Qd1 Qe7 <br> 18. Nb1 Bd7 19. Nd2 e4 20. Nf4

Petrosian, who is considered to be something of a specialist on the subject: exchange sacrifice, wisely refrains from 20. d5?! Nc5 21. Rxc5 d xc5 22. Bxf6 Qxf6 23. Nxe4 Qb6! with a very fine game for black.
20. ..d5 21. Qe2 Qd6 22. Rc2 Rec8 23. Rfc1 Rxc2 24. Rxc2 h4 25. Nf 1 hxg3+ 26. fxg3

26. ...b4!

An excellent move, clearing up an important diagonal (a6-fi). According to Larsen, black is now in a winning position.
27. a4 Rc8 28. Rxc8+ Bxc8 29. h4 Nc7 30. Bh3 Bxh3 31. Nxh3 Bf8 32. Kg2 Qc6 33. Qd1 Bd6

Move by move Larsen increases the activity of his pieces.
34. Nf2 Ne6 35. Bc1 Ng7 36. Bd2 Nf5 37. Kh3 Qc8 38. Kg2 Kg7 39. Nh1 Nh6 40. Be1 Qa6

Black has achieved his goal: All his pieces are beautifully placed, and the white army is totally paralyzed!
41. Nf2


41. ...Nf5

The sealed move. There could be little doubt that black was in a winning position. Larsen analyzed the adjourned game until 7:00 in the morning being well aware of all the points in the position. By the way, black's last move was not only strong, it also contained a real threat, e.g. 42. Qc2?? Qxf1 +! and it is all over.
42. Qd2 Bb8 43. Nd1 Ng4 44.
Kg1 f6 Kg1 f6

A convincing plan. It seems logical to open up more lines, and in some variations, it may prove useful to have an entry into the white camp via the rook's file.
45. Kg2 g5 46. Nf2 Ngh6 47. hxg5 fxg5 48. Nd1 Kg6 49. Nh2 g4 50. Qc2 Bd6 51. Nf1 Ng8 52. Nh2 Nf6 53. Nf1 Kh5 54. Nh2 Kg5 55. Nf1 Nh5 56. Bf2 Nf6

White can do nothing but wait, and Larsen, being very sleepy, only wants to pass the second time control. Funny, but it is very seldom you see Larsen using this so-called waiting tactic in contradistinction to e.g.

Petrosian and Karpov both using it very often

## 57. Be1 Nh5 58. Bf2 Qa8 59.

Be1 Qh8 60. Qc6 Bxg3 61. Bxg3 Nhxg3 0-1

An outstanding performance by Larsen, and certainly one of his most beautiful games ever played!

To be continued.
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By Eric Brondum
Dansk Skakforlag/ Skakhuset, Kebenhavn, 1978 First published 1978 Sats og tryk: Speciai-Trykkeriet Viborg a-s

ISBN 8787187086


## The $65^{\text {dth }}$ Squares Gamez from Chaturanga Clab Members.

Club member Steve Coladonato submitted a game that is a rare thing indeed: a simul game he played against this issue's featured Grandmaster Bent Larsen! "I was working at the Budd Co. in Philadelphia", Steve says. "I had actually started a Iunch time chess league at Budd and there were about a dozen players. It was all part of the Fischer generated interest in chess at the time. King of prussia had a club on the 2nd floor of the mall, and I joined. I believe King of Prussia had about 4 teams (Red, Purple, etc) and we played matches at local clubs (Feltonville, Germantown, Post-396, and even Chaturanga) in the Philadelphia area. I played a fellow named Kline from Chaturanga in 1971, a game which I actually won!). I think Jorge knows who he is. Great fun." This simul took place in August of 1972. The backdrop was the World Championship taking place in Iceland with all of the Cold War drama at a fever pitch. Larsen, who had been hammered by Fischer in the candidates' match, was in the Philly area at the time. "I
believe Bent was in town doing analysis for the Fischer/Spassky match", Steve relates, "and somehow King of Prussia got him to come to the club in the mall and do an analysis and a simul. I think he played upwards of 20 boards and I don't remember him losing any. My game was one of the last to complete. At the end, he graciously signed my scorebook. I remember him as a pretty nice guy."

## B.Larsen vs S.Coladonado Simultanious Exhibition 8/26/1972

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 d5 3.Bg2 e6 $4 . \mathrm{OO}$ c5 5.d4 Nc6 6.c4 Be7 7.dxc5 dxc4 8.Qa4 Bd7 9.Qxc4 Na5 10.Qc2 O O11.b4 Nc6 12.a3 Rc8 13.Rd1 b6

14.cxb6 Qxb6 15.Be3 Qa6 16.Nc3 Qb7 17.Nd4 Ng4 18.Qe4 f5 19.Qd 3 Nge5 20.Qb1 a6 21.Qa2 Rf6 22. Rac1 Qb8 23.Nxc6 Bxc6 24.Bxc6 Rxc6 25.Bf4 Rd6 26.Rxd6 Bxd6 27 .Na4 Nf7

28.Bxd6 Qxd6 29.Nc5 h6
30.Qc4 e5 31.a4 Kh7 32.b5 axb5 3 3.axb5 e4 34.b6 Ne5 35.Qc3 Nd7 3 6.Nxd7 Qxd7 37.Qc7 Qb5 38.Rc5 Qxb6

1-0


Steve Coladonato in the 1970's

Scoresheet from simul with auttograph.


Larsen, right foreground, circa 1970.

## Road Trippin' with Joe Mucerino.

Normally if you want to play over-the-board (OTB) chess on the Fourth of July, you would play at the World Open. With coronavirus spreading throughout the country, World Open side events were held online. This year, the Chess Club of Fairfield County (CCFC) in Connecticut decided to run one of their weekly quads on the Fourth. The pre-entries were sufficiently strong enough to persuade me to enter the quads for the second week in a row.

Last week the CCFC drew sixteen players, and on the Fourth they got twelve. I moved up to quad 1 which meant that I played in a side room reserved for the top players, where they play on wooden boards that are hooked up to showcase the games in the main playing hall as well as the Internet.

## C. Yang(2119) vs J. <br> Mucerino(2052) <br> CCFC Saturday G/45 Quads! <br> Round 1, July 4, 2020

Annotation by Joe Mucerino
Yang won the top quad the previous week. He is also ranked \#31 for 14 -year-olds in the country.
1.d4 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5 e6 4.e4...

Transposing into a French Defense, although I did not realize it at the time.

## 4...dxe4 5.Nxe4 Be7 6.Ng3

The computer preferred trading off everything on f6. White obviously wants to win, so he's keeping the pieces on. The knight can become very dangerous if black castles kingside and it can reach h5 without being traded off.
6...Nc6 7.Nf3 Qd5 8.a3 0-0 9.c4 Qd7 10.Bd3 Rd8 11.Be3 b6 12.0-0 Bb7 13.Qe2?!


Allowing black to equalize. Better was 13. Bc2.

## 13...Nxd4 14. Nxd4 c5 15. Nxe6 Qxe6 16. Bf5?!

I think the knight would want to land on this square.
16...Qc6 17.f3 g6 18.Bc2 Bf8
19.Ne4 Bg7 20.Rad1 Rxd1
21.Rxd1 Nxe4 22.Bxe4 Qc7
23.Bxb7 Qxb7 24.Bf2 Qc6 25.b3 Re8 26.Qd3 Bf6 27.Qd6 Qxd6 28.Rxd6 Kg7 29.Rd7 Re2 30.b4?

Losing a pawn. Better is 30.Kf1 or 30.Rxa7.

## 30...Rc2 31.Kf1 cxb4 32.axb4 Rxc4 33.b5 Rb4 34.Rd5 Rb2?!

If I remember correctly, I offered a draw on this move, because time was winding down (the time control was G/45; d5),
and I did not think my extra pawn gave me too much of an advantage, especiailly since my queenside pawns are on the same color as his bishop. But the computer found the simple 34...Kf8 and black can still press for a win.

## 35.g4 h6 36.h4 Rb1+ 37.Ke2 g5?!

Now I've lost all my advantage. 37...Kf8 was still the way to go.
38.h5 Rb3 39.Be3 Rb2+ 40.Kd3 Rb3+ 41.Ke4 Rb4+ 42.Kf5 Rb3 43.Ke4 Rb4+ 44.Kf5 Rb3 45.Ke4 $1 / 2-1 / 2$

Here I claimed that 45...Rb4 would repeat the position three times. My opponent did not agree, but, in time pressure, he did not write down some moves while I had. Since I was playing in the side room on the special wooden boards, the game was recorded on computer, so the tournament director had no problem verifying my claim.


Joe Mucerino in heavy combat!



## Tactics, Tactics, Tactics.

## More Diamond Dust!


\#1 White to move.

\#2 White moves.

\#3. Black moves.

\#4. Black moves.

\#5. White moves.

\#6. Black moves.

## Answers

\#1. 1. Re5! Ne5 2. f4+-
\#2. 1. Qa6+ Rxa6 2. Bxa6+ Kb8 3. Rc8++
\#3. 1. ...Qh3 2. Qb3 Rh6 3. Qxd5+ Kh8 4. fxe4 Qxh2+ 5. Kf1 Rf6+ 6. Qf5 Rxf5 7. exf5 Rxe2 and Black mates next move.
\#4. 1. ... Re1? And the game was drawn many moves later. The game could have ended quickly with 1. ...R5h5 with the threats of checks on $h 8$ and $h 7$.

If white plays 2. gxh5 then Black has the mating attack 2. ...Qg4+ 3. Kh1 Qf3+ 4. Kg1 gxh5 5. Rg1 h6 6. Kf1 Re6! followed by Qhst+
\#5. 1. Rxa6 Kb8 2. Qa3 and the threats of Qa5 and Ras+ are too much.
\#6. 1. ...Re1 2. Kg2 Rg1+ 3. Kh3 Rg3++. If 3. Kf3 then Ne5+! 4. Kxf2 Nxf7 5. Kxg1 d2.

by Tony
Sullivan

"Everything's fine - you're just a little hoarse!"

## Hollywood plays chess!



Guy Williams, TV's Zorro plays chess with his wife, Janice. After 2 years as the famous swordsman Williams went to Italy and made "Sword and Sandal" movies like "Captain Sinbad" and "Damon and Pythias." After a short stint on "Bonanza", (1964), Williams landed the starring role on Irwin Allen's "Lost In Space" (1965-1968) as the heroic father John Robinson. Was ranked \#38 in TV Guide's list of the "50 Greatest TV Dads of All Time" June 2004.


