

(The annotations to this game, by V. V. Smyslov, are from his autobiographical work *V poiskakh garmonii* (Fizkultura i Sport, 1979). The translation from the original Russian is by Douglas Griffin.)

### Smyslov (Moscow) – Spassky (Leningrad)

Board 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> round, Leningrad v. Moscow match, Leningrad, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1959

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6**

An ancient continuation. This opening system was already encountered in the games of the masters of the last century, the brothers L. and W. Paulsen. Characteristic of it is the development of the queen on c7 followed by ...b7–b5. In our time L. Paulsen's system has gained great popularity.

**5.c4**

White's tasks include establishing control over the centre and obtaining a free game. This plan is considered strongest. This plan was considered strongest, until more reliable defensive methods for Black were found.

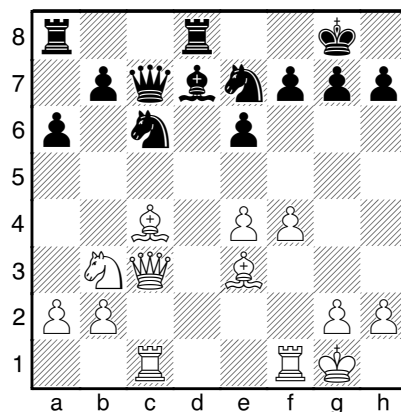
**5...Nc6**

Theory recommends here 5...Nf6 6.Nc3 Bb4, with a defensible position. Spassky avoids the known variations, and wrongly: he does not manage to avoid opening difficulties.

**6.Nc3 Bc5 7.Nb3 Bb4 8.Bd3 Nge7 9.0–0 0–0 10.Qc2 Bxc3**

The exchange on c3 is associated with the idea of the advance ...d7–d5, but in so doing the play takes on an open character, where the advantage of the two bishops is quite real. Better was 10...Ne5 11.Be2 Qc7 12.a3 Bxc3 13.Qxc3, and Black could still have fought for equality.

**11.Qxc3 d5 12.Be3 dxc4 13.Bxc4 Qc7 14.Rac1 Rd8 15.f4 Bd7**



At first sight Black has managed to safely complete development and to retain a cramped, but

seemingly solid position.

### 16.Qe1!

A fine positional manoeuvre. The transfer of the queen to f2 reveals the Achilles' heel in Black's defensive set-up – the b6-square. In addition, the threat of f4–f5, opening the f-file, is in prospect.

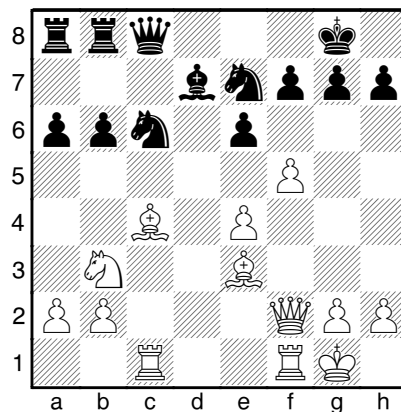
### 16...b6

No better is 16...b5 on account of 17.Be2 Be8 18.Qf2 Rab8 19.Nc5, and White's pressure increases.

### 17.Qf2 Rdb8 18.f5!

A decisive pawn break, based on a simple variation – 18...exf5 19.♙f4, winning the exchange. Exploiting the deflection of the black pieces onto the queen's flank, White now proceeds to a direct attack on the king.

### 18...Qc8



### 19.Nd4!

This is still stronger than 19.f6 Ng6 20.fxg7 Qe8, and Black can resist, exploiting the outpost on the e5-square for his knights.

### 19...Nxd4

It is difficult to advise anything better. In the case of 19...e5 20.Nxc6 Nxc6 21.Bd5 Qe8 22.f6 the attack is very dangerous, while if 19...exf5, then 20.exf5 with the threat of f5–f6.

### 20.Bxd4 Nc6 21.fxe6 Bxe6 22.Bxe6

Black resigned. On 22...Qxe6 decisive is 23.Rxc6 Qxc6 24.Qxf7+, and mate on the following move.