

CHAPTER 5: 1963 – 68

Fridrik spent most of the five years from 1963 to 1968 in his home town Reykjavik, with law studies and his family as the main priorities. In 1964 his countrymen fortunately started the new biannual international tournament “Reykjavíkur Skákmotid” which also became the forerunner to our time’s annual Reykjavik Open.

Fridrik Ólafsson playing against Freysteinn Thórbergsson in the first Reykjavik International tournament 1964, with Svetozar Gligorić walking behind.



FROM LOS ANGELES TO REYKJAVIK

In July 1963 Fridrik Ólafsson seized a nice opportunity to take part in the “First Piatigorsky Cup” tournament in Los Angeles, a world class event and the strongest one in the United States since New York 1927. The new World Champion Tigran Petrosian was a main attraction, and all the other seven grandmasters had also participated at the Candidates tournament level. They gathered in the exclusive Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles for a complete double round event of 14 rounds.

The tournament was initiated and sponsored by the wealthy Piatigorsky couple. The husband Gregor was a famous cellist, and his wife Jaqueline Piatigorsky (1911-2012!) was both a chess player, an author and a sculptor. Three years later they also sponsored a Second Piatigorsky Cup, with the same format which was won by Spassky ahead of Fischer.

The First Piatigorsky Cup confirmed that Fridrik Ólafsson had a strength amongst the world’s best players, when he just missed the victory and finished behind the Soviet stars Keres and Petrosian. In the introduction to his win

against Reshevsky in round 10 Fridrik admits that he “played some excellent games in this tournament”.

For his 1976 book Fridrik picked only this one game from the Los Angeles tournament. We add a few more from this special event. For his birthday greetings to Fridrik in “Skák” 2005 Jan Timman showed the game against Pal Benkö from round 6. We will also have a look at some critical games which decided why Fridrik did *not* win this tournament although he was leading through several rounds of the second half.

In retrospect we see that the first and most ambitious half of Fridrik’s international chess career finished with the “Piatigorsky Cup” in 1963. To some degree it had already finished more than a year ago, since after the Stockholm Interzonal he only played, for his country, in the Varna Olympiad. He had chosen to jump off the international “chess circus” to be able to carry through his law studies, and then from 1968 to have a governmental job home in Iceland. Five and half years would pass from Los Angeles to his next par-

ticipation in a top tournament abroad, which occurred January 1969 in the Dutch village Wijk aan Zee.

Meanwhile from 1964 the new biannual Reykjavik chess international gave valuable playing practice to both their own chess hero and to the second best home players, plus provided continued attention to chess when Fridrik Ólafsson competed on home ground against some famous foreign players. Already, from the first edition onwards, the Soviet Union sent two of their well-known players, in 1964 Ex-World Champion Tal and Women’s World Champion Gaprindashvili, to the series of “*Reykjavíkur Skákmótid*” tournaments.

Law student Fridrik performed relatively modestly in the first of the new Reykjavik tournaments in 1964, when he lost not only to Tal and Gligorić, but also to Robert Wade whom he defeated on other occasions. As we shall see, Fridrik did much better in most of the next seven editions of the Reykjavik tournament when he always participated, including 1978, until he was elected president of FIDE.

THE BEST STRATEGIC GAME

In July 1963 I participated in a very strong tournament in Los Angeles, USA. This tournament was named after the famous cello virtuoso, Gregor Piatigorsky, who died some time ago. He and his wife Jacqueline, born Rothschild, were responsible as sponsors and organizers of these tournaments.

Mrs Piatigorsky, herself a chess player, had played a considerable role in the field of chess, for example by organizing a match between Fischer and Reshevsky which became famous at the time. A second Piatigorsky Tournament was held in Los Angeles in the summer of 1966, but since then these tournaments have not taken place.

In the Piatigorsky Tournament 1963 I was, from the beginning, in the running for first prize when an unexpected or rather unnecessary loss against Pal Benkö in the 11th round put me off so that I only scored one more point in the three final rounds. I played some excellent games in this tournament, and in my estimation the following game against Samuel Reshevsky is one of the most strategically perfect games that I have ever played. At first sight it may perhaps not seem impressive, but in a strategic respect the play can hardly be improved. White gains the freer play in the opening, after which events progress unswervingly, step by step. Black's position on the king's side grows steadily more precarious, and he attempts to turn things in his favour by a counter attack. This, however, only further reveals the weaknesses in Black's king's position, and White does not have any difficulties in turning them to his account.

□ **Friðrik Ólafsson** –
■ **Samuel Reshevsky**
Piatigorsky Tournament, Los Angeles
July 18 1963 (10)
King's Indian (E68)

1.c4 Nf6 2.d4 g6 3.g3

It is noticeable that the Sämisch Variation (3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 etc.) met with little success in this tournament although it is considered one of White's sharpest continuations in this opening. Black generally managed to equalize without any effort. More recently this variation has been adopted in an improved form (White castles on the king's side meeting his opponent's offensive on the king's side by a counter attack) with rather good results.

3...Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.Nf3 d6 6.0-0 Nbd7
Reshevsky has stuck faithfully to this old line of development although different lines have been adopted such as the Panno Variation (6...Nc6) and the Yugoslav Variation (6...c5).

7.Qc2 e5 8.Rd1

The opening runs along the same lines as my game against Geller, Bled 1961, but soon there is a departure. It is relevant to have that game for comparison in order to better understand the development in this game. Besides 8.Rd1, 8.Nc3

comes strongly into consideration. This move is perhaps more precise as White, in many instances, needs the rook on the e-file. Formerly this was considered to be a dubious move because of the continuation 8...exd4 9.Nxd4 Nb6 10.b3 c5 11.Ndb5 a6 12.Na3, and now either 12...d5 or 12...Bf5 with a considerably better position for Black, but then it came to light that 10.Rd1! secures White a strong initiative, for example, 10...Nxc4 11.Ncb5 a6 12.Qxc4 axb5 13.Nxb5 Bd7 14.Be3 d5 15.Qb3 c6 16.Nc3 Re8 17.Bd4 and White's position is more mobile, Lisitsin-Tal, USSR 1954.

8...Re8 9.e4 c6 10.Nc3 exd4

Reshevsky prefers to ease the tension in the centre as Geller did in the game mentioned above, but this line of play has its darker sides as is clearly revealed. A safer move is no doubt 10...Qe7 in which case White has to decide whether to maintain the tension in the centre (11.h3 exd4 12.Nxd4 Nc5 13.Re1!?) or close it by 11.d5. In my game against Vasjukov in the Reykjavik tournament 1966, I chose the second alternative, but with little success. After 11.d5 c5 12.a3 Nb6 13.Qd3 a5 14.b3 Bd7 15.Rb1 Rec8 16.Re1 Ra6 17.Bg5 h6 18.Bd2 Ne8 19.Nd1 Nf6 20.h3 Be8 21.Ne3 Raa8 22.Nh4 Bd7 a draw was agreed.

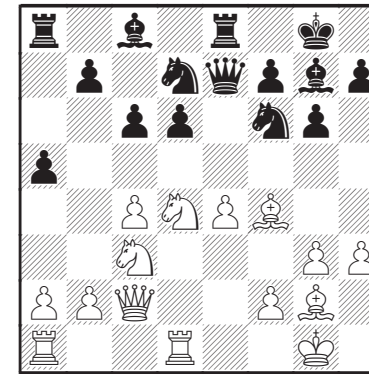
11.Nxd4 a5

Geller tried 11...Qa5 in Bled with poor success.

12.h3

With 12.f3 White could have done away with any further worries about the e-pawn. That move, however, is not compatible with my plans for development. The f-pawn has a different function ahead.

12...Qe7 13.Bf4!



13...Rd8?

Reshevsky obviously considered that 13...Nc5 was not possible because of 14.Nf5 (or 14.Ndb5) followed by 15.Bxd6 and he prepares this move by playing Rd8. With this he eases the pressure off the e-pawn giving White a free hand in his development. It was better for Black to play 13...Nc5 because White does not appear to gain much by the hazard that follows 14.Nf5 (or 14.Ndb5). The following examples should give some idea of the possibilities: a) 14.Nf5 gxf5 15.Bxd6 Qe6 16.Bxc5 Qxc4 and Black can be pleased. Or 16.exf5 Qxc4 17.b3 Qb4



Grandmasters Gligorić and Ólafsson together with Jaqueline Piatigorsky, and to the right the sculptor Peter Ganine, who designed the Piatigorsky Cup.

18.Na4 b6 19.Bxc6 Bd7 and Black has no trouble because the Ra1 is under attack after 20.Bxc5 bxc5 21.Bxd7 Nxd7 etc. The most that White can hope for in this variation is a rook and two pawns in exchange for two minor pieces; b) 14.Ndb5 Ncxe4 15.Nxd6 Nxd6 16.Bxd6 Qe6 and White has a slightly more mobile game. Clearly Black cannot afford to accept the sacrifice 14.Ndb5. After 14...cxb5 15.Bxd6 Qe6 16.e5 Nfd7 17.Nd5 his position is in ruins. The struggle for the d6 pawn does not really pay; White's position is too good for that. It must be to his advantage to preserve his position as it is, but the situation is by no means simple because Black threatens to capture the e4 pawn. The most plausible move is 14.Re1 with the question arising whether Black can in any way turn this "volte-face" of the white rook to his account. 14...Nfxe4

15.Nxe4 Bxd4 is not possible because of 16.Nf6+ and 14...Nh5 15.Be3 Nf6 does not have any effect because of 16.Rad1!. Now White has the opportunity to execute his plans undisturbed because the pawn on e4 is "poisoned" (16...Nfxe4 17.Nxe4 Nxe4 18.Bxe4 Qxe4 19.Bd2!). Black's best choice is probably 14...Nfd7 15.Be3 (15.Rad1? Bxd4 16.Rxd4 Ne6) 15...Ne5 16.b3 and Black is not without some counter chances.

14.Rd2 Nc5 15.Rad1 Ne8

Black now has to pay the penalty for his 13th move. He cannot play 15...Nfd7 because of 16.Nf5 gxf5 17.Bxd6 followed by 18.Bxc5.

16.Be3

Black threatened 16...Bxd4 17.Rxd4 Ne6.

16...Bd7 17.Re2

White intends to march his f-pawn

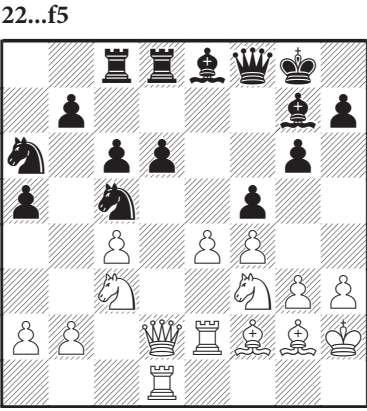
forward, but first the protection of the Be3 must be attended to. After 17.f4 Black can free himself by f5.

17...Nc7
Trying to gain counter chances by b5.

18.f4 Rac8 19.Bf2 Be8
Reshevsky seemed to aim at playing 19...b5, but no doubt he did not like the position arising after 20.cxb5 cxb5 21.Nd5 etc.

20.Kh2 Qf8 21.Qd2 N7a6
Black is unable to do much as this move shows.

22.Nf3
White now organizes the final attack on the king's side. The rough outline of his plan is this: 23.g4, 24.Bg3 and 25.f5 etc. It is clear to Reshevsky that the tide is turning against him. He therefore decides to initiate a counter attack on the king's side to prevent the further advance of White's pawns. By this he seriously weakens the defence of his king's side which White immediately, on the next move, takes advantage of.

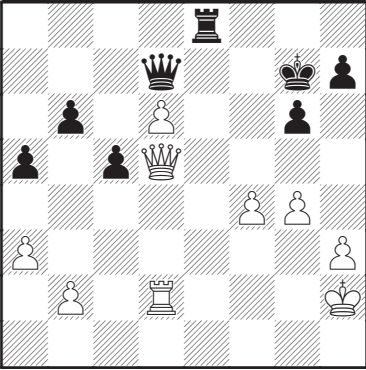


23.Bd4!
After the removal of Black's best defensive piece, the weakness in his position is revealed.

23...fxe4 24.Bxg7 Qxg7 25.Nxe4 Nxe4 26.Rxe4 d5
White threatened to capture the d-pawn by 27.Rd4, but Reshevsky tries to save it by tactical means. But its fate is already sealed.

27.Rd4 Nb4 28.Ng5! Bf7 29.Nxf7 Qxf7 30.a3 c5

What else?
31.Rxd5 Nxd5 32.Bxd5 Rxd5 33.cxd5 Re8 34.d6 Qd7 35.g4 b6 36.Qd5+ Kg7 37.Rd2



37...Re6?
Under heavy time pressure Reshevsky overlooks the obvious answer. Nevertheless his position is utterly lost.

38.Qxe6 1-0
After 38...Qxe6 39.d7 Qe3 40.d8Q Qxf4+ 41.Kg2 Qe4+ 42.Kf2 Qf4+ 43.Ke1! Black will soon run out of checks.

Jan Timman

A TYPICAL ATTACKING GAME

In 1958 Friðrik Ólafsson qualified for the Candidates Tournament. With his unorthodox and enterprising style he posed a threat for all top players, including the Soviet elite. He started off badly and never really recovered from that. Still he beat Petrosian twice and also his wins against among others Fischer and Keres were worthwhile.

Four years later his play had matured, and he shared third/fourth place in the first Piatigorsky Cup in Los Angeles. I conclude with a fine attacking game by Friðrik, quite typical of his style.

□ **Friðrik Ólafsson** – ■ **Pal Benkö**
Los Angeles 11 July 1963 (6)
Sicilian Paulsen (B49)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6

5.Nc3 Qc7
Benkö's favourite system at the time.

6.Be3 a6 7.a3
An interesting move. It is also typical of

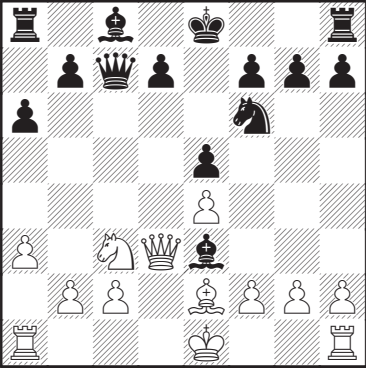
Friðrik that he wanted to avoid trodden paths in the opening. He always tried to find his own way.

7...Nf6 8.Be2 Bd6
Quite unusual as well.

9.Qd2
Not 9.Ndb5, because of 9... axb5 10.Nxb5 Qa5+ 11.Bd2 Bb4! and Black gets the upper hand. For example 12.Bxb4 Nxb4 13.0-0 Nc6 14.Qd6 Nxe4.

9...Nxd4 10.Bxd4 Bf4 11.Qd3 e5
Benkö plays with good positional understanding. He is behind in development, but some trumps will compensate for this.

12.Be3 Bxe3



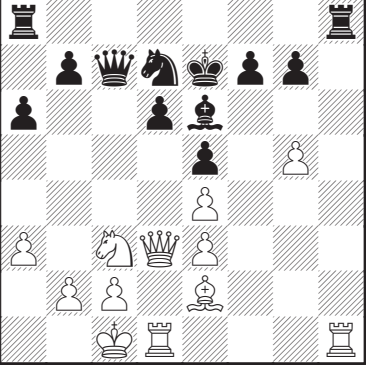
13.fxe3!
In the tournament book Reshevsky rightly gives an exclamation mark here. White is ready to castle and put pressure along the half open d-file.

13...d6 14.O-O-O Ke7
Modern play. Black keeps his king in the centre to protect the d-pawn.

15.g4!
White keeps on playing for an attack.

15...h6?
A mistake. Black should have kept the h-file closed. Best was 15...Be6 although White has some initiative after 16.g5 Nd7 17.Bg4

16.h4 Be6 17.g5 hxg5 18.hxg5 Nd7



19.g6!
Straightforward!

19...Rxb1 20.Rxb1 Nf6 21.gxf7 Rf8
A better defence was 21...Rc8.

22.b3 Rc8 23.Kb2
Now White has a solid position around his king and can start thinking about the attack again.

23...Bxf7 24.Rg1 g6 25.Bg4
Gaining space.

25...Rh8
If Black had exchanged on g4, his position would have been lost from a strategic viewpoint.

26.Nd5+!
An excellent decision. White starts to break through Black's defence.

RESULTS 1963-68

Reykjavik Championship 1963:
1 *Friðrik Ólafsson* 5 /7 (after playoff),
2 I.R. Jóhannsson 5

International tournament Torshavn 1963:
1 *Friðrik Ólafsson* 8 /9, 2-4 B.H. Wood, ENG, I. Asmundsson, ISL & F. Ronsperger, SUI 7 (14)

First Piatigorsky Cup Los Angeles 1963:
1-2 P. Keres & T. Petrosjan, URS 8½, 3-4 M. Najdorf, ARG & *Friðrik Ólafsson* 7½, 5 S. Reshevsky, USA 7, 6 S. Gligorić, YUG 6, 7-8 P. Benkö, USA & O. Panno, ARG 5½

Reykjavik Skákmótid tournament 1964:
1 M. Tal, URS 12½, 2 S. Gligorić, YUG 11½, 3-4 S. Johannessen, NOR & *Friðrik Ólafsson* 9, 5 R.G. Wade, ENG 7½, 6. G. Palmason, ISL 7, 7 I.R. Jóhannsson, ISL 6, 8-9 N. Gaprin-dashvili, URS & M. Solmundarson, ISL 5 (14)

Copenhagen Open 1964:
1 J. Hvenekilde, DEN 6, 2-5 B. Brinck-Claussen, DEN, *Friðrik Ólafsson*, B. Andersen, DEN & O. Jakobsen, DEN 5½, 6 Bent Larsen, DEN 5

June tournament Reykjavik 1965:
1 *Friðrik Ólafsson* 4½ /5, G. Sigurjonsson 3½

Reykjavik Skákmótid tournament 1966:
1 *Friðrik Ólafsson* 9, 2 E. Vasiukov, URS 8½, 3 A. O'Kelly, BEL 8, 4 G. Palmasson 7, 5 F. Thórbergsson 6½, 6-7 E. Böök, FIN & R.G. Wade, ENG 5, 8 J. Kristinsson 4½ (12)

Chess Olympiad Havana 1966:
Friðrik on board 1: 11½ points of 18 = 63,9%. Iceland no. 11.

Dundee tournament 1967:
1 S. Gligorić, YUG 6½, 2-3 B. Larsen, DEN & *Friðrik Ólafsson* 5½, 4-5 A. O'Kelly, BEL & J. Penrose, ENG 5 (10)

Reykjavik Skákmótid Fiske Memorial 1968:
1-2 E. Vasiukov & M. Taimanov, URS 10½, 3 *Friðrik Ólafsson* 10, 4. R. Byrne, USA 9, 5 W. Uhlmann, DDR 8½, 6-7 P. Ostojic, YUG & L. Szabo, HUN 8, 8-9 W. Addison, USA & G. Sigurjonsson, ISL 7½ (15 players)

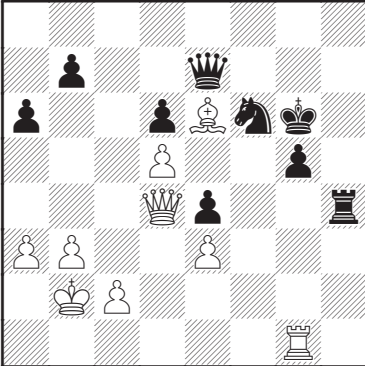
26...Bxd5 27.exd5 e4
Giving up squares, but there was no choice.

28.Qd2 Kf8
Black is desperately trying to build a defensive line.

29.Be6
Now the knight is being dominated by White's powerful bishop.

29...Rh6 30.Qd4 Kg7 31.Rf1 g5 32.Rg1!
Targeting the g-pawn again

32...Rh5 33.Bf5 Qe7 34.Bg4 Rh4 35.Be6 Kg6



36.Qc3!
After subtle manoeuvring with the bishop, White now succeeds on entering with his queen.

36...Qg7 37.Kb1 Rh2 38.Qc8
Now White has a double threat.

38...Rf2
Keeping the bishop from f5.

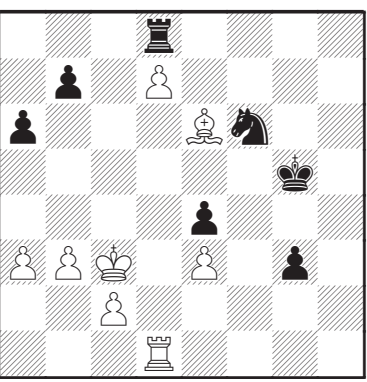
39.Qd8
But this threat could not be prevented.

White wins the d-pawn and has an easy win.

39...Qh7 40.Qxd6 Qh2 41.Qxh2 Rxh2 42.Rd1

Thematic. White places his rook behind his passed pawn.

42...g4 43.d6 Rh8 44.Kb2 Kg5 45.Kc3 Rd8 46.d7 g3



47.Kd2 Ng4
Reshevsky gives 47...Nxd7 as a better chance. But after 48.Ke2 g2 White has a direct win. Instead of Reshevsky's move 49.Kf2, White can play 49.Bxd7 since 49...Rxd7 50.Rxd7 g1Q 51.Rg7+ wins.

48.Ke2 Nf2 49.Rd5+ Kh4 50.Kf1 Nh3 51.Kg2 Ng5 52.Bf5 Nf3 53.Bxe4 Ne1+ 54.Kf1 g2+ 55.Bxg2 Nxc2 56.Kf2 Nxa3 57.Bf3 1-0

This was first printed in «Skák» 2005 as part of Timman's birthday greetings to Fridrik.

Samuel Reshevsky

A TREMENDOUS BATTLE

Ólafsson emerged from the opening with a freer game. He gradually improved his advantage by outplaying his opponent in the middle game. He could have scored the point at several stages of the game, but somehow faltered each time. One gets the feeling that Ólafsson wanted to win the game in grand style, instead of taking a measly pawn and winning simply.

□ Friðrik Ólafsson – ■ Paul Keres
Los Angeles, 8 July 1963 (4)
Reti Opening (A07)

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 Bg4 3.Bg2 Nd7 4.c4 c6 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.O-O Ngf6 7.Nc3 e6 8.h3 Bh5 9.d3 Bc5 10.e4 O-O 11.Bf4 Nb6 12.Qe2 Rc8 13.Rac1 a6 14.g4 Bg6 15.Bg3

The immediate 15.Nh4 can be met by 15...Nxe4 16.Nxg6 Nxc3.

15...Nfd7 16.Nh4 Re8 17.Kh1 d4
The only way of preventing the powerful f2-f4-f5.

18.Nb1 e5 19.Nf5 f6 20.f4 Bxf5 21.gxf5 Bd6 22.fxe5 Bxe5 23.Bf2

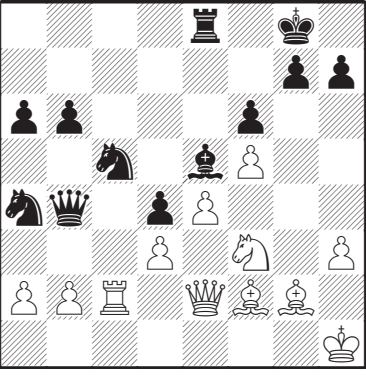
White must retain the two bishops, otherwise his game would be bad because of his remaining inactive bishop.

23...Qe7 24.Nd2 Qb4 25.Nf3 Na4 26.Rc2 Rc5 27.Rxc5 Ndx5 28.Rc1 b6



The participants of the First Piatigorsky Cup 1963, from the left Pal Benkö, Svetozar Gligorić, Fridrik Ólafsson, Miguel Najdorf, Tigran Petrosian, Samuel Reshevsky, Paul Keres and Oscar Panno.

29.Rc2



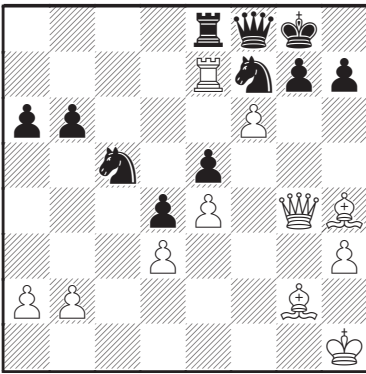
29...Nb7
This permits White's rook to get to the

seventh rank. More prudent was 29...Qb5 30.Bf1 Qd7. If 30.Nxd4 then 30...Qxd3 31.Qxd3 Nxd3 and Black would be pretty well off.

30.Nxe5 fxe5 31.Rc7 Nd8 32.Qg4 Qf8 33.Bh4
White has his opponent on the run now.

33...Nc5 34.f6 Nf7
Best. If 34...Nxd3 then 35.Rxg7+ Kh8 36.Qh5 and wins. If 34...Nce6 then 35.Re7, with the devastating threat of f7, which cannot be parried.

35.Re7



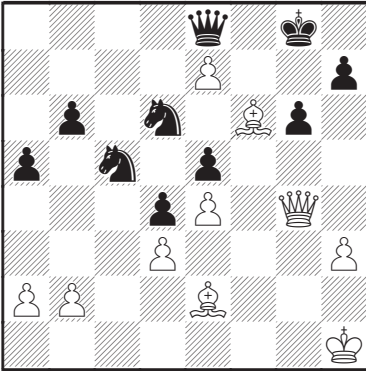
Keres is in a very uncomfortable position. The immediate threat is, of course, 36.Rxe8, followed by 37.Qxg7 mate.

35...Rxe7
There is nothing better. If 35...g6 then 36.b4! Nxd3 37.Bf1 Nxb4 38.Bc4 Rxe7 39.fxe7 Qe8 40.Qe6 and wins, because of the threat 41.Qxf7.

36.fxe7 Qe8 37.Bf6 g6 38.Bf1 a5 39.Be2

Stronger was 39.h4 to be followed by 40.Bh3, threatening Qc8.

39...Nd6



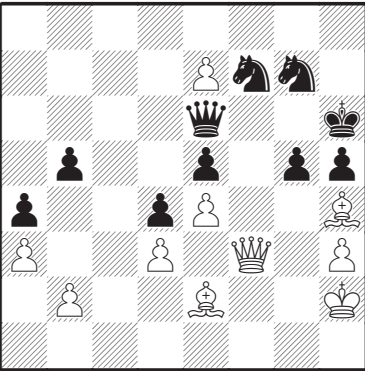
40.Qg5?
It appears as if Ólafsson is not satisfied to win simply, otherwise he would have continued with 40.Bxe5 Qxe7 41.Bxd4.

40...Nf7 41.Qc1 Nd6 42.Qg5
Ólafsson again misses a chance to win. 42.Qh6 Qf7 (forced; if 42...Ne6 then 43.Bg4 wins) 43.Qg5 Ne8 44.Bxe5 Ne6 45.Qg1 Qxe7 46.Bxd4.

42...Nf7 43.Qg4 Qc6 44.Qg3 Ne6 45.Bd1 a4 46.Qf2 b5 47.Qc2 Qd7 48.Qd2
48.b3 is better.

48...Nc7 49.Bg4 Qc6 50.Qf2 Ne8 51.Bh4
51.Bxe5 fails, because of 51...h5! 52.Be2 Nxe5 53.Qf8+ Kh7 and White has nothing for his sacrificed piece.

51...h5 52.Be2 Qe6 53.Qg3 Kh7 54.a3 Ng7 55.Kh2 Kh6 56.Qf3 g5



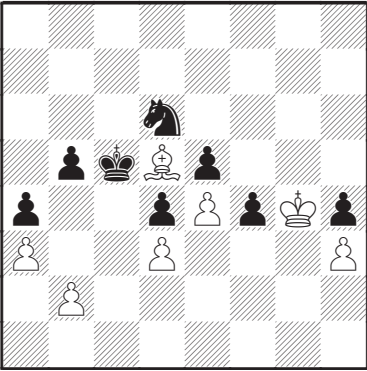
(In a potentially difficult position a more simple draw was achieved by 57.e8D! Qxe8 58.Qf6+ Kh7 59.Bxg5.)

57.Be1 Qxe7 58.Bb4 Qe6 59.Bf8 Kh7 60.Qf1

60.Bxg7 Kxg7 61.Qxh5 Qb3 and Black devours the queen's side pawns.

60...Qg6 61.Qf3 h4 62.Qf2 Kg8 63.Be7 Qe6 64.Bb4 Qb3 65.Bf1 Ne6 66.Qf5 Nf4 67.Qc8+ Kh7 68.Qf5+ Kg7 69.Be7 Qe6 70.Qxe6 Nxe6 71.Be2 Nh6 72.Bd1 Kf7 73.Bb4 Nf4 74.Bd2 Kf6 75.Bxf4
Forced, for if 75.Bc2 then 75...g4 decides.

75...gxf4 76.Kg2 Nf7 77.Kf3 Kg5 78.Kf2 Nd6 79.Bg4 Kf6 80.Bd7 Ke7 81.Bc6 Kd8 82.Kf3 Kc7 83.Bd5 Kb6 84.Kg4 Kc5



85.Kxh4
(The computer shows that only here White loses the game. 85.Be6! is a draw, with a main variation starting 85...b4 86.Bd7 bxa3 87.bxa3 Nb5 88.Kxh4 Nxa3 89.Bxa4 Kb4 90.Bd1 Kc3 91.Kg5 Kxd3 92 h4. A continuation like the game: 85...Nc4? now just loses to 86.dxc4 bxc4 87.Bd7!)

85...Nc4 86.Kg4 Ne3+ 0-1
A fine demonstration of courageous defence and endgame tactics by Keres.

Notes to this game by Reshevsky, abbreviated from the 1965 tournament book.

Øystein Brekke

FIGHTING FOR THE TOURNAMENT VICTORY

It was never obvious who would win the tournament in Los Angeles. After the first half, 7 rounds, Gligorić was leading with 4½ points, ahead of Keres and Najdorf 4, Petrosian, Ólafsson and Reshevsky 3½, Benkö and Panno 2½ points. Gligorić had beaten Petrosian.

But next Gligorić lost a long endgame to Fridrik in round 8 and then lost to Petrosian who got his revenge.

Meanwhile Fridrik also beat Najdorf and strengthened his lead, together with Keres who beat Benkö. After nine rounds Keres and Ólafsson had the score of 5½ points, ahead of Petrosian's 5.

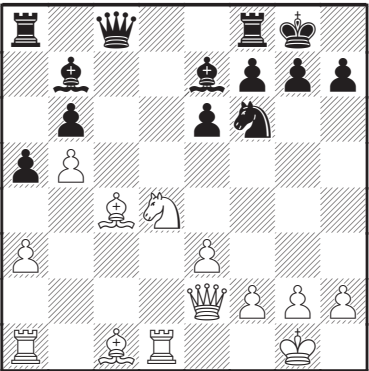
Fridrik's game against the Argentinian grandmaster Najdorf is another example of the Nimzo-Indian often serving him as a "simple and strong" weapon against 1.d4:

□ **Miguel Najdorf** – ■ **Friðrik Ólafsson**
1st Piatigorsky Cup (9), 17 July 1963
Nimzo-Indian (E54)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 c5 5.Bd3 0-0 6.Nf3 d5 7.0-0 dxc4 8.Bxc4 b6 9.Qe2 Bb7 10.Rd1 Qc8 11.Nb5 cxd4 12.Nbxd4 Nc6 13.a3 Nxd4 14.Nxd4 Be7 15.b4

Safer is 15.b3 to avoid the soon appearing weaknesses in White's pawn structures.

15...a5! 16.b5

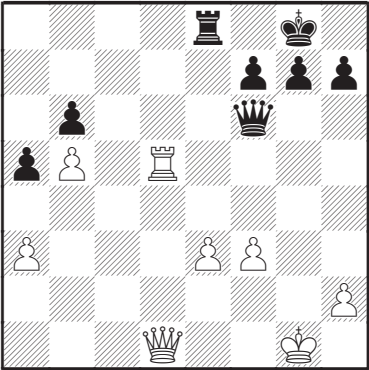


16...e5! 17.Nf3 Bxf3! 18.gxf3 e4 19.fxe4 Nxe4 20.Bb2 Bf6 21.Bxf6 Nxf6 22.Rd6 Rb8 23.Rc6 Qf5 24.Rd1 Rbd8 25.Bd3 Qh3 26.f3
26.Rxb6 Rd5! seems too dangerous.

26...Rfe8 27.Bc2 Rxd1+ 28.Bxd1 Nd5 29.Rd6!

Saves the e-pawn and forces a further exchange, so 28...Qf5 might have kept more black pressure.

29...Nc3 30.Qd3 Nxd1 31.Qxd1 Qf5 32.Rd5 Qf6

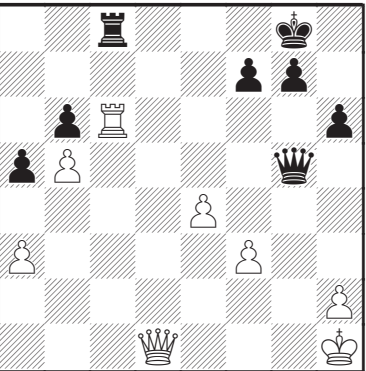


33.e4(?)
White has some potentially weak pawns and an open king's position, but since Black needs one move to secure

his last rank, Najdorf had his chance to keep the balance with 33.Qd4! Qg6+ 34.Kf1 h6 35.Rd8.

33...h6! 34.Kh1 Rc8 35.Rd6?!
Somewhat better was 35.a4, but after 35...Rc3 White has a tough job to defend everything.

35...Qg5! 36.Rc6



36...Rd8! 37.Qg1
Losing by force, but 37.Rd6 Rxd6 38.Qxd6 Qxb5 did not help much.

37...Qxb5 38.Rxb6 Qe2! 39.Rb1 Qxf3+ 40.Qg2 Rd1+ 41.Rxd1 Qxd1+ 0-1
White loses also a second pawn after 42.Qg1 Qf3+ 43.Qg2 Qxa3.

“
Ólafsson frequently took more than two hours for 20 moves, and then had to play rapid-transit chess. An amazing score with this handicap!

The California Chess Reporter,
July 1963

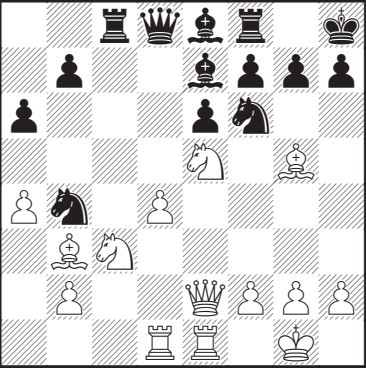
NEVER-ENDING DUELS WITH PETROSIAN

Tigran Petrosian was Fridrik Ólafsson's most frequent opponent among the world champions. They had many tough duels, and also two interesting ones in the Piatigorsky Cup 1963 which for once were both drawn. This time Petrosian was the World Champion, after winning quite clearly the match against Botvinnik.

□ **Friðrik Ólafsson** – ■ **Tigran Petrosian**
First Piatigorsky Cup 1963 (12) 22 July
Nimzo-Indian /Queen's Gambit (D27)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 c5 5.e3 0-0 6.Bd3 d5 7.0-0 cxd4 8.exd4 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Nc6 10.Bg5 Be7 11.Re1 a6 12.a4 Bd7 13.Qe2 Nb4 14.Ne5 Be8 15.Rad1 Rc8 16.Bb3 Kh8!?

More expected, and later played in other games, are moves like 16...Qc7, Qb6 or Nfd5.



17.Qf3

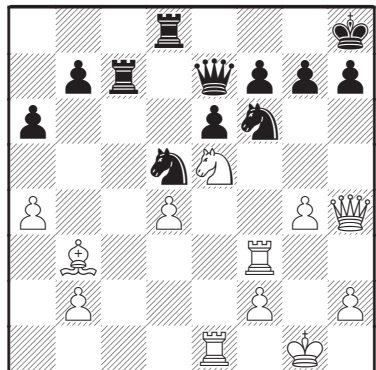
Black seems to just defend OK after the natural try 17.d5 Nbx d5 18.Nxf7+!? Bxf7 19.Nxd5 Nxd5 20.Bxe7 Qxe7 21.Bxd5 Qb4!

17...Bc6 18.Qh3 Nfd5 19.Bxe7 Qxe7 20.Qg3 Nf6 21.Qh4 Bd5 22.Nxd5 Nbx d5 23.Rd3 Rc7 24.Rf3 Rd8?!

Strengthens control of d5, but weakens f7, which gives White a promising attack. Better was probably 24...Kg8.

25.g4!

How now to defend against g5 coming... do you see the only one hope to survive?



25...g5! ½-½(!?)

The legendary defender Petrosian played this only move not losing on the spot, and offered a draw. Fridrik accepted.

As Reshevsky wrote in the tournament book: “But Petrosian defended himself resourcefully. In the meantime, Ólafsson found himself in serious time pressure, and gladly accepted the offer of a draw.”



Photo: Alamy

Fridrik Ólafsson, to the right, before his game against Tigran Petrosian in the Alekhine Memorial tournament in Moscow 1971.

The engines agree that White is much better after 26.Qxg5 Rg8 27.Qh6 Nxg4 28.Nxg4 Rxg4+ 29.Rg3, and then 29...Rxg3+ 30.hxg3 “with a small advantage”, writes Reshevsky, but Black has big problems, after e.g. 30...Rd7 31.Bc2 f6 32.Bf5! Nc7 33.Re4 Qg7 34.Qe3! probably winning for White. So Black will have to try 29...Nf6, when White is still better with 30.Ree3! Easy to say, but it appears that even against the World Champion many of the next moves would have been very natural finds for Fridrik Ólafsson.

Thus Petrosian kept his equal score against Fridrik, which he achieved in Stockholm, after his position had been lost. After 11 tough games the score between them was now 5½-5½, with

three wins each and five draws. Later they played also two quite short draws in 1971 and one in ‘75, so their lifelong score was 7-7.

This draw cost Fridrik much better odds to win the tournament. Still in the lead, his next game - Black against Keres - became his only “deserved” loss. He chose a less promising Grünfeld variation, and Keres played very well. In the last round Fridrik was White against Panno who equalized in a Spanish game. But on move 27 Panno blundered a pawn, and then a piece, offering a draw which Ólafsson surprisingly accepted. However a win would now still have left him half a point away from the tournament victory.

FROM THE FIRST COPENHAGEN OPEN

In August 1964 Fridrik took part in the first Copenhagen Open tournament, the forerunner of the later grand tradition “Politiken Cup” still later named “Xtracon Cup”. In the 1960s open tournaments were something rare.

Fridrik won four games and also made four draws, and finished half a point behind the surprise winner Jørgen Hvenekilde and half a point ahead of Bent Larsen, who a few months earlier had tied for first in the Amsterdam Interzonal tournament, and started his ambitious march towards the world top.

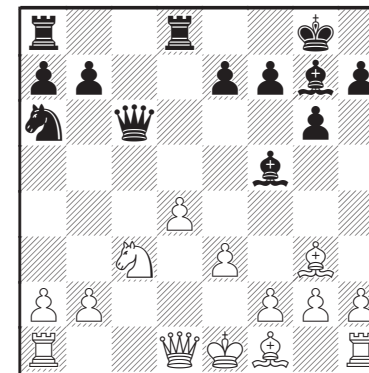
Bent Larsen lost one game, against his promising countryman Svend Hamann (23), who became an International Master (IM) the next year, and now had to face another grandmaster in the next round. We got a miniature game:

□Svend Hamann – ■Friðrik Ólafsson
Copenhagen Open 1964 (4)
Grünfeld-Indian D84

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bf4 Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nxd5 Qxd5 8.Bxc7 Bf5!?

Later the main variation is 8...Na6 9.Bxa6 Qxg2 10.Qf3 Qxf3 11.Nxf3 bxa6 with even chances.

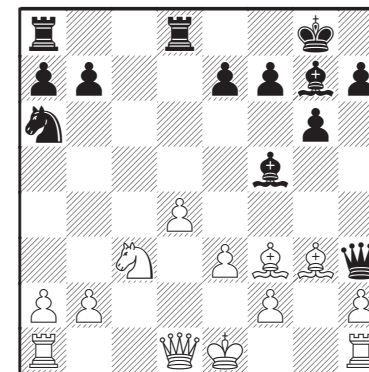
9.Ne2 Na6 10.Nc3 Qc6 11.Bg3 Rfd8



12.Be2!?

After 12.Qb3 Rac8 13.Qb5 Qxb5 14.Bxb5 Nb4 15.0-0 a6 16.Be2 e5 17.dxe5 Rd2 18.Bf3 Rxb2 White was a little bit better, but Black won the game, Fedder – Jansa 1992, also in the Copenhagen Open.

12...Qxg2 13.Bf3 Qh3



14.Qb3?

The situation is uncomfortable for White. The engines suggest that he might try to survive with 14.Bxb7 Nb4 15.Bxa8 Rxa8 16.Qb3 Nc2+ 17.Kd2 or probably best 14.Ne4(!) Bxe4 15.Bxe4

Nc5 16.Bf3 e5 17.Bg4! Qh6 18.Rc1 and White is still alive.

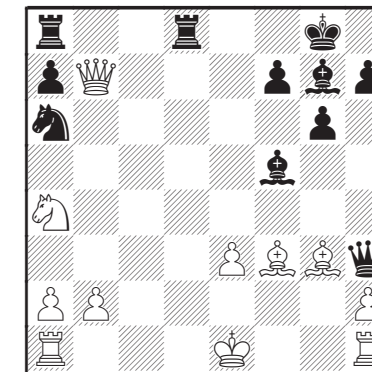
14...e5! 15.Qxb7?!

Probably White’s last practical chance was 15.Nd5, but after 15...exd4 16.Nf4 Qh6 17.0-0 Nc5 Black is close to winning.

15...exd4! 16.Na4

With a king’s position like White’s there is no real defence available.

16...dxe3 17.fxe3



17...Bd3! 18.Rd1

White is defenceless. 18.Kf2 Black can refute “brilliantly” with 18...Rab8! 19.Bxb8 Rxb8 20.Qe7 Bc2 or Qf5.

18...Qf5 19.Bf4 Rac8! 20.Rxd3 Qxd3 21.Be2 Qc2 0-1

Friðrik Ólafsson

THE THEORY WAS QUITE SUFFICIENT

Thanks mainly to the enterprise of the late chess master Freysteinn Þorbergsson, the so called “June Tournament” in Reykjavík 1965 was organized. Originally this was simply to be an ordinary, final competition for seats in the national team, but Freysteinn, who had undertaken the organization of it, felt that it offered an excellent opportunity to bolster the tournament by involving Guðmundur Sigurjónsson and me as participants. Thus it came about that Guðmundur and I for the first time met at the chessboard.

The outcome of the tournament was decided in the last round in my game against Guðmundur. Before the final round we had both scored 3,5 points each. It made all the difference, however, that I had quite recently been studying the variation which happened to occur in this game, and, as a consequence, did not have to take much trouble. The theory was quite sufficient.

□ **Guðmundur Sigurjónsson** –
■ **Friðrik Ólafsson**
June Tournament, Iceland, Jun 1965
Sicilian (B88)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bc4

Fischer's favourite variation. It is stored in my opponent's arsenal.

6...e6 7.0-0

The Velimirovic Variation 7.Be3 followed by 8.Qe2 was relatively unknown in these years. In Fischer's estimation 7.Bb3 is the most precise move in this position.

7...Be7 8.Bb3

(The more common move here is 8.Be3, but this is mostly a matter of taste.)

8...Nxd4

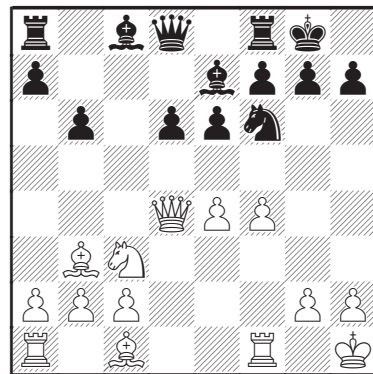
This exchange characterizes the beginning of a variation which I think the Soviet grandmaster Boleslavsky was the first to use.

9.Qxd4 0-0 10.f4

A plausible move in this position, but unsuitable because of the possibility of counter attack by Black on the queen's side and in the centre. 10.Bg5 was a safer move.

10...b6 11.Kh1

Perhaps 11.Qd3 was a better move to prevent Black's next.



11...Ba6!

A much more aggressive move than the usual 11...Bb7.

12.Rf3

After 12.Re1 White would also be in difficulties as happened in the game Klavin-Boleslavsky in the Preliminary Tournament to the USSR Championship in 1957 where Boleslavsky demonstrated how precarious White's king's side is: 12.Re1 d5 13.exd5 Ng4 14.Ne4 Bc5! 15.Qd2 Qh4 16.g3 Qh5 17.Nxc5 bxc5 18.Qg2 Bb7 with insurmountable problems for White.

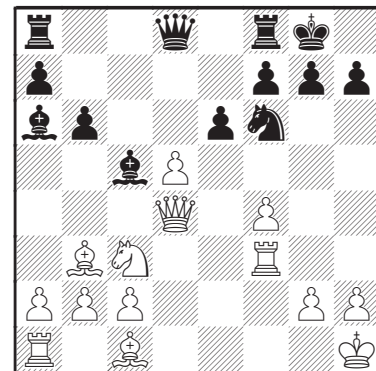
12...d5

The key move. Now all floodgates open up.

13.exd5

13.e5 is perhaps a better move although the position is not very promising after 13...Ne4.

13...Bc5



Participants of the first Reykjavikur Skákmotid 1964. Seated are the titleholders and foreign guests, from left to right Ingí R. Jóhannsson, Svetozar Gligorić, Friðrik Ólafsson, Mikhail Tal, Nona Gaprindashvili, Robert Wade and Svein Johannessen. Standing behind, from left to right Áki Pétursson, Magnús Sólmundarson, Trausti Björnsson, Arinbjörn Gudmundsson, Jón Kristinsson, Guðmundur Pálmason, Ingvar Ásmundsson and Eidur Gunnarsson. Freysteinn Thórbergsson was missing from the picture.

14.Qa4

This move was also played by Fischer in the game against Geller at Curacao 1962 in which Fischer landed in difficulties. After the game it was maintained that White could hold his position through 14.Qd1, but Bent Larsen has shown that it is hardly correct. The continuation could be: 14.Qd1 exd5 15.Nxd5 Re8 16.Be3 Nxd5 17.Bxc5 Be2 18.Qxd5 Bxf3 19.Qxf7+ Kh8 20.Bb4 (threatening 21.Bc3) 20...Re2! and Black wins. Having come to this conclusion it is possible to maintain

that White is in difficulties immediately after his 11th move because his moves are almost forced after that.

(The conclusion is valid although the engines show that in this variation 20.Bb4 is the losing move, when White nearly or maybe holds with 20.gxf3!, but Black could win earlier with the right move order 15...Nxd5! 16.Bxd5 and now 16...Re8!)

14...Bb7 15.f5

Fischer played 15.Be3 and after 15...exd5 16.Bd4 Geller could have finished the game by 16...a6. The threats are so overwhelming (above all b5) that

White's position is out of control, for example 17.Bxf6 gxf6! 18.Rg3+ Kh8 19.f5 d4. White cannot avoid losing a piece in this position.

15...exd5 16.Bg5

16.Qh4 d4 17.Rh3 dxc3 18.Bg5 causes no danger to Black because of 18...h6 19.Bxh6 Ne4 20.Bg5 Nf2+ and Black wins.

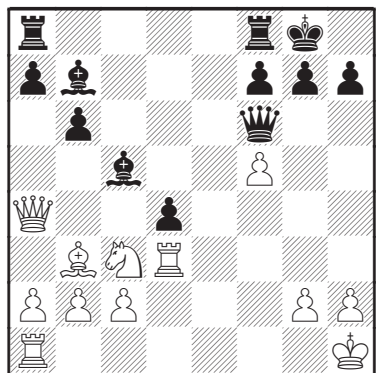
16...d4 17.Rd3 Qd6

Now threatening 18...Ng4.

18.Bxf6 Qxf6



Friðrik Ólafsson and Bobby Fischer, here during their game in the super tournament in Bled 1961, won nicely by Fischer with the white pieces.



19.Ne2

19.Nd5 is prevented by 19...Qd6 20.c4 a6 21.f6 Bxd5 22.cxd5 b5 23.Qa5 Bb4 winning the queen.

19...Rae8 20.Nxd4

White's position is hopeless no matter what he does.

20...Re4 21.c3 Rg4 22.Rg1

Or 22.Rg3 Rxd3 23.hxd3 Qh6+ 24.Kg1 Qd2 and wins.

22...Qg5 0-1

Øystein Brekke

LAST ROUND IN REYKJAVIK 1966

The strong Soviet grandmaster Evgeny Vasjukov was Friðrik's main rival to win the 1966 Reykjavik International tournament. To secure a sole win Friðrik had to defeat in the final round his compatriot Jon Kristinsson, who was later to become champion of Iceland in 1971 and 74. He got the opportunity in a quite brilliant way.

□Jon Kristinsson – ■Friðrik Ólafsson
Reykjavik International 1966 (11)
King's Indian (E74)

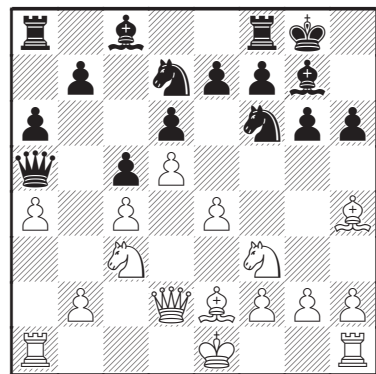
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Lg7 4.e4 d6 5.Bg5!? h6 6.Bh4

A safer continuation is 6.Be3 Ng4 7.Bc1 e5 8.d5.

6...0-0 7.Be2 c5 8.d5 a6 9.a4

The developing move 9.Nf3 seems to keep the balance for White(!).

9...Qa5! 10.Qd2 Nbd7! 11.Nf3



Now it is a little bit late. Black attacks:

11...b5! 12.cxb5

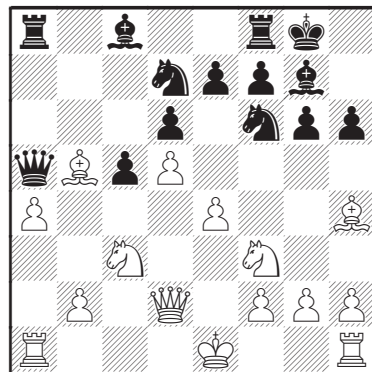
The engines prefer 12.Nd1 although Black is better after 12...Qxd2+ 13.Nxd2 bxc4.

12...axb5

Maybe White thought he was still OK, but there is no satisfactory option for his uncastled position. The move in the game gives Black the opportunity to give the queen for two rooks and White's miserable king's position.

13.Bxb5

Also 13.Bxf6 Nxf6 14.e5 b4 15.exf6 bxc3 16.bxc3 Bxf6 17.Ra3 Ba6 18.0-0 Bxe2 19.Qxe2 Bxc3 20.Qxe7 Qb4 21.Ra2 Qb3 is quite hopeless for White. Or 13.Nxb5 Nxe4 14.Qxa5 Rxa5 15.Bxe7 Re8 16.Bxd6 Rxb5 17.Bxb5 Nxd6+.



13...Nxe4! 14.Nxe4 Qxb5! 15.axb5 Rxa1+ 16.Ke2 Rxb1 17.Nc3

Also 17.Bxe7 Re8 18.Nxd6 Rxe7+ 19.Kd3 Nb6 wins for Black.

17...Re8 18.Qd3 Nb6 19.Nd2 e6 20.Qe3 Bd7 21.Kf3 exd5 22.Qf4 Re5 23.Na4 Bxb5 24.Nxb6 g5 0-1

White's "extra queen" is lost, too.

LARSEN'S KNIGHT SACRIFICE IN CUBA

Later in 1966 Friðrik got a great chess excursion to Fidel Castro's unique Havana chess olympiad. When Iceland qualified for the A-final, the first board player was also back to a series of games with strong grandmasters, and Friðrik made a result a bit below his past, and future, level.

The Nordic duel with Bent Larsen was again something special. Maybe the active world star Larsen had underestimated his more inactive "old rival", and thought that with complicated positions he would prevail in the Icelandic's unavoidable time trouble?

□Bent Larsen – ■Friðrik Ólafsson
Havana Olympiad 1966 A-final (6)
Reti opening (A05)

1.g3 Nf6 2.Bg2 e5 3.Nf3!? d6 4.0-0 c6 5.d3 Be7 6.c4 0-0 7.c5!? d5 8.Nxe5 Bxc5 9.Nc3 Re8 10.d4 Bf8 11.Bg5 h6 12.Bxf6 Qxf6 13.e3

A slow move. With 13.f4 or e4 White would be slightly better.

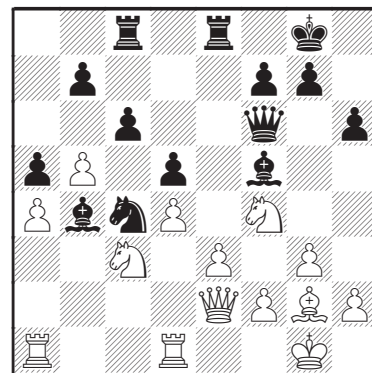
13...Nd7 14.Nd3 Nb6! 15.b4?!

A minority attack, but giving Black's knight the outpost c4.

15...a6 16.a4 Nc4 17.Qe2

With 17.a5! White would still be reasonably OK.

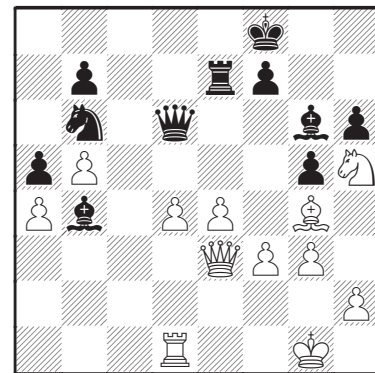
17...Bf5! 18.b5 a5 19.Nf4 Rac8 20.Rfd1 Bb4!



21.Ncxd5?!

A rook to c1 was a normal move, and Black is just better. In a difficult position Larsen's impatience is understandable, but in spite of the two pawns Friðrik never gives him real compensation for a sacrificed piece.

21...cxd5 22.Nxd5 Qg6 23.Rac1 Nd6! 24.Rxc8 Nxc8 25.Nf4 Qb6! 26.e4 Qd6! 27.Qc2 Bh7 28.f3 Nb6 29.Bh3 g5 30.Nh5 Bg6 31.Bg4 Kf8 32.Qb3 Re7 33.Qe3



Here 33...f5! was winning immediately, but Friðrik's continuation – in some time trouble – was also safe and good enough.

33...Nd5 34.Qf2 Nc3 35.Rd3 Nxe4 36.fxe4 Rxe4 37.Re3 Qxd4 38.Rxe4 Qxe4 39.Nf6 Qb1+ 40.Kg2 Qc2 41.Bf3 Qxf2+ 42.Kxf2 Bc3 43.Ne4 Bd4+ 44.Ke2 b6 45.h4 g4 46.Bg2 Ke7 0-1

Friðrik kept a lifelong plus score against Larsen due to a clear plus with the black pieces. Bent sometimes seemed a bit too eager to surprise his opponent. In Havana Friðrik also played – and lost – his last tournament game with Bobby Fischer, who was already probably the

world’s strongest player. In the 1960s Fridrik had six black games against Bobby and lost five of them. They played a draw in Buenos Aires 1960. Fridrik never got a white game with Fischer after 1959, so with that colour he kept his early positive score of two wins, one draw and one loss. In Havana Fridrik Ólafsson also faced his statistically second-worst opponent, Boris Spassky, but with the white pieces this was a well-played draw. With the white pieces Spassky achieved a total score of 3½-½ against Fridrik, while with the opposite colours their two encounters were both drawn.

AN INSTRUCTIVE BLITZ-ATTACK

In Havana Iceland beat Mongolia with 3½-½. Fridrik’s opponent became an IM that year, and became famous for Fischer’s beautiful win against him in the Sousse Interzonal 1967. This game is easier, but with another very instructive attack.

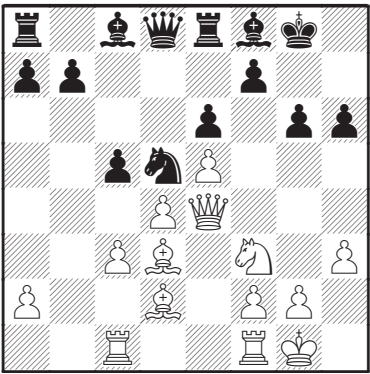
□ Friðrik Ólafsson –
■ Lhamsuren Myagmarsuren
Havana Olympiad Qual group B (4) 1966
Queen’s Gambit (D37)

1.c4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.Bf4 0-0 6.e3 Nbd7
Later this became a very topical variation, and 7.c5 is the main variation after Anand-Carlsen, Sochi WCh 2014 (1-0). Even later Carlsen is a big specialist on this with the white pieces.

7.Rc1 c6
Here 7...c5! seems to equalize.
8.Bd3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Nd5 10.Bg3 N7f6 11.0-0 Nxc3 12.bxc3 Ne4 13.Bf4 Qa5
Better was 13...Ba3 14.Rc2 Bd6. Now White gets a strong pawn centre for free.

14.Qc2 Nf6 15.e4 c5 16.Bd3
A typical position where White is somewhat better, and threatens e5. Now Black’s best try may be 16...Nh5 17.Be3 Bd7.

16...h6?! 17.Qe2 Re8 18.h3 Bf8 19.e5 Nd5 20.Qe4 g6 21.Bd2 Qd8
Also 21...Bd7 22.c4 Nb4 23.Qg4! Bg7 24.Bxg6 fxg6 25.Qxg6 Re7 26.Bxh6 is much better for White. Now it is White to attack and win:



22.h4! h5
Or 22...Bg7 23.h5 Ne7 24.Qg4 Rf8 25.Qh3.
23.g4! hxg4 24.Qxg4 Bg7 25.h5 gxh5 26.Qxh5 f5 27.Kh1!
The white rooks are ready to decide the battle. There is no defence.

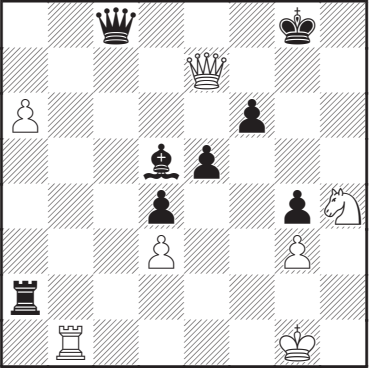
27...Re7 28.Rg1 Bd7 29.Bh6 Be8 30.Qg5 Rc7 31.Bxg7 Qxg5 32.Nxg5 Rxg7 33.Nxe6 Rxg1+ 34.Rxg1+ Kh8 35.Bxf5 Nxc3 36.Nxc3 Bc6+ 37.Kh2 Ne2 38.Rg4 Rf8 39.Rh4+ Kg8 40.Bh7+ Kf7 41.Bd3 b6 42.Bxe2 1-0

CENTENARY IN DUNDEE

In 1967 Fridrik worked hard to finish his studies well, and played only one tournament. In Dundee, Scotland he participated in the Centenary Tournament which celebrated the early Dundee Chess Congress of 1867, famous as the first one where draws were counted as half a point. That tournament was won by Gustav Neumann with 7½ points ahead of Wilhelm Steinitz 7 points. In the earlier all-play-all tournament of London 1862 drawn games were replayed until a winner was decided, as they had to do in the other tournaments of those days which were all knockout elimination events.

Leading Yugoslav grandmaster Svetozar Gligorić won the 1967 edition in Dundee with 6½ points, ahead of Fridrik Ólafsson and Bent Larsen who shared second place with 5½, including some drawn games. Fridrik’s first game in Dundee was one of his most dramatic, and “tragic”, encounters with Larsen, which tells a lot. Fridrik was worse, he was equal, he was better, and he was winning, until in two moves he overlooked the beautiful win, and the position was a draw, and

the next move blundered the rest. This must have been extreme time-trouble. In this position Larsen had just defended against mate with 64.Rb1.



Here Black finally had his chance to be decisive thanks to the strong bishop into White’s king’s position. The nice winning move was 64...Rh2!! threatening Rh1+ followed by Qc2 mate, so White must take the rook. After 65.Kxh2 Qc2+ 66.Kg1 Qxb1+ 67.Kf2

Black’s safe winning line is 67...Qb2+ 68.Kg1 Qc1+ 69.Kf2 Qd2+ 70.Kf1 Qxd3+ 71.Kf2 Qc2+ 72.Kg1 Qc6 73.a7 d3. White may try 74.Qb4, but there follows 74... Qc1+ 75.Kf2 Qc2+ 76.Kf1 d2 77.Qxg4+ Kf8 78.Ng6+ Kf7 79.Nh8+ Ke8 80.a8D+ Bxa8 81.Qe6+ Kd8 82.Nf7+ Kc7 83.Qd6+ Kb7 84.Qd7+ Ka6 85.Qd6+ Bc6 86.Qa3+ Kb6 87.Qe3+ Ka5 88.Qa3+ Ba4.

Ólafsson played instead 64...Rxa6? and Larsen answered 65.Nf5! threatening mate. Now Black must “of course” play 65... Bf7, and after 66.Nh6+ it seems to be a

draw after 66..Kg7 67.Nxf7 Re6 68.Nd6+ Rxe7 69.Nxc8 Rc7 70.Nd6 Rc3.
There followed instead: 65...Qf8?? 66.Nh6+ 1-0
In the diagram position, Black’s other natural move, 64...Rc2, would also lead to a draw...



Boris Spassky and Bent Larsen during the tournament in Leiden 1970.

Friðrik Ólafsson

A KNIGHT’S FORCEFUL MOVE

The Reykjavik International Chess Tournament 1968, also dedicated to the memory of the great friend of Iceland, Professor W. Fiske, started only two days after I had finished my examination for a Degree of Law, so I did not expect to have enough energy left to last through this tournament. I, therefore, considered it to be to my advantage to give full vent to my fortune by trying to avoid complicated struggle.

This “policy” proved in many ways successful although I sometimes pressed too hard. The following game against Uhlmann was played in this spirit, at least in the beginning. The

opening is very interesting, revealing among other things that a strong pawn centre is not always the solution to the secrets of development. Uhlmann lands in difficulties in the opening, managing

through care and resourcefulness to hold his ground. After exchanges leading to the endgame a draw appears to be on hand, but Uhlmann, being in time pressure, does not fully realize

the hidden dangers in the position. On the 29th move, Black's forceful knight literally paralyzes White's position after which the rest of the game is merely a matter of technicalities.

□ **Wolfgang Uhlmann** –
■ **Friðrik Ólafsson**

Fiske Tournament Reykjavik, Jun 1968
Modern Defence (A42)

1.d4 g6 2.c4 Bg7

This opening strategy (1...g6 and 2...Bg7) playable against any opening whatsoever might well be called the “Modern Defence” because it has been very fashionable in recent years.



From the Reykjavik tournament 1968: The Soviet players Mark Taimanov, to the left, and Evgeny Vasiukov watch the latter's game against Fridrik, sitting to the right. Behind the two Laszlo Szabo of Hungary. In the end Taimanov and Vasiukov won the tournament, half a point ahead of Fridrik, so Vasiukov got his revenge after he had come second behind Fridrik in 1966.

3.e4 d6 4.Nc3 c6

Bent Larsen once dealt with this variation in Dr Euwe's «Loseblatt» – especially regarding the strategy c6, a6, b5 etc. He considers that Black may feel quite happy provided that White does not get the opportunity to create a strong centre through f2-f4. To my mind this game shows that Black need not fear such a broadside.

5.f4 Qb6!?

This is the basic idea underlying Black's strategy against the pawn phalanx. He starts the attack before White can complete his development.

