

# All in a spin

AFTER 12 draws and one win apiece it took a roulette wheel to decide the winner of the deadlocked Candidates match between Robert Hubner and Vassily Smyslov. The Russian ex-world champion Smyslov had red, West German Grandmaster Hubner had black, and, as might have been expected, green (zero) came up on the first spin — the 13th draw, as it was dubbed. On the second go it was Smyslov who emerged as the world championship semi-finalist — a last piece of bad luck for Hubner that, in some ways, typified the whole contest.

The very first game at Velden, in Austria, had more significance than an outsider might realise. The 62-year-old Smyslov surprised everyone by choosing the solid Petroff Defence — rendering redundant Hubner's pre-match preparation for the Ruy Lopez opening. Hubner still obtained an advantage, but in later analysis he and his Grandmaster second Lubosh Kavalek unearthed improvements for Black. Unable to find an antidote, the versatile 34-year-old intellectual switched to queenside openings, only to encounter enormous difficulty penetrating the Smyslov defensive barriers.

In game four Smyslov scored his sensational win, and the match became a race against time. Hubner persistently gained good positions, and Smyslov continued to defend with a tenacity acquired from decades of experience in such contests. It was not until game nine that Hubner finally equalised the score, necessitating a four-game play-off when the match was still level after 10 games. As late as game 13 Smyslov survived a piece-for-two-pawns disadvantage, to reach the roulette stage. All credit, however, to the great master's remarkable feat, qualifying for the Candidates semi-finals 25 years after his last world title fight with Botvinnik.

Sadly, however, the two did not finish the match on good terms. Hubner ceased to shake hands from game six when Smyslov protested about the West German's practice of having scalp massages during the games. Apparently this unusual request had earlier been granted by the Soviets.

Here is the fourth game.

## ENGLISH OPENING

V. SMYSLOV	R. HUBNER
1. Nf3	Nf6
2. c4	c5
3. Nc3	Nc6
4. g3	d5
5. cxd5	Nxd5
6. Bg2	Nc7
7. d3	e5
8. Nd2	Bd7
<i>Necessary, as 8...Be7? 9.Bxc6 ch cripples Black's pawn structure.</i>	
9. 0-0	Be7
10. Nc4	f6
<i>The pawn sacrifice with 10...0-0 11.Bxc6 Bxc6 12.Nxe5 Be8 is considered slightly speculative these days.</i>	
11. f4	b5
12. Ne3	Rc8
13. Ned5	Nxd5

Jon Blau/Camera Press



Vassily Smyslov: big winner on the red.

14. Nxd5	0-0
15. fxe5	Nxe5
16. Bf4	Nc6
17. a4	b4
18. Rc1	Be6
19. e4	Bd6
20. Be3	Na5

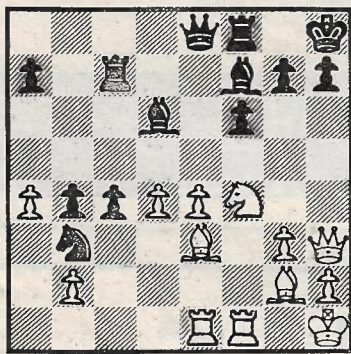
*Black can also play safe with the centralising 20...Nd4.*

21. d4

*Smyslov concedes Hubner a queenside pawn roller in return for a central and kingside initiative. The position is highly unbalanced.*

21. ...	c4
22. Nf4	Bf7
23. Qg4	Qe8
24. Rce1	Nb3
25. Kh1	Kh8
26. Qh3	Rc7?

*Better was 26...Bxf4 (eliminating a major attacker) followed by counterplay with...c3. Now the storm clouds, hovering over the kingside, finally burst.*



27. e5!	fxe5
28. dxe5	Bxe5
29. Be4	g6
30. Bxg6	Qa8 ch

*If 30...Bxg6 31.Nxg6 ch Qxg6 32.Rxf8 ch.*

31. Kg1	Bg8
32. Bxh7!	

*My guess is that Hubner had missed this move.*

32. ...	Rxh7
33. Ng6 ch	Kg7
34. Qd7 chl	

*The final point to the combination — 34...Kxg6 is impossible because of 35.Qg4 mate.*

34. ...	Rf7
35. Rx7 ch	Bxf7
36. Nxe5	Qd5
37. Qxa7	

*Taking another pawn just to make sure. Now 37...Qxe5 loses to 38.Bh6 ch followed by Rx5.*

37. ...	Rh5
38. Nx7	Qx7
39. Bd4 ch	Nxd4
40. Qxd4 ch	

*40.Re7 Nf3 ch 41.Kf2 also wins, but this is just as effective.*

40. ...	Kh7
41. Qe4 ch	Kg7
42. Rf1	Qa7 ch
43. Rf2	Qc5
44. Kf1	c3
45. bxc3	bxc3
46. Qe6	Qg5
47. Rf7 ch	Kh8
48. Qc8 ch	Resigns

MURRAY CHANDLER