

# FEATURE

## MARK N TAYLOR



The editor acknowledges the contributions to this obituary by Joseph Mucerino and Greg Maness, used with permission.

# Ruben Shocron (1921–2013)

On March 8, Georgia, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania lost one of their former state champions at age 92. Born in Buenos Aires, Ruben Shocron played in South America for several decades. For most of the years between 1921 and 1952, the championship of Argentina was decided not by using a tournament, but a match between the champion and a challenger, similar to a world championship match. In 1952 Shocron became the challenger for the national title, but the following year lost the championship match to the legendary Miguel Najdorf by a score of 4½ - 0½. Najdorf would win this event eight times. (We might say he was the Boris Kogan of Argentina!) In 1959, Shocron played his most famous game, a loss to a sixteen-year-old named Bobby Fischer. Fischer was so impressed with this encounter that he made it game n° 6 in *My 60 Memorable Games*. Here is another game from that same tournament, against Najdorf, who tied for first place with Ludek Pachman (Fischer finished a half-point behind).



Shocron (left) playing Najdorf in 1953.

### Ruben Shocron – Miguel Najdorf

Mar del Plata; Mar del Plata, Argentina, March 26, 1959 (4)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 e5 6.Nge2 c6 7.Be3 0–0 8.Qd2 exd4 9.Nxd4 d5 10.exd5 cxd5 11.Be2 dxc4 12.Bxc4 a6 13.0–0 b5 14.Bb3 Bb7 15.Rad1 Nbd7 16.Qf2 Qc7 17.Rc1 Qe5 18.Nc2 Rac8 19.Bd4 Qh5 20.Rcd1 Rfe8 21.g4 Qh3 22.Qg3 Qxg3+ 23.hxg3 Ne5 24.Nb4 h6 25.Nbd5 Nxd5 26.Bxd5 Bxd5 27.Nxd5 a5 28.b3 Re6 29.Kg2 a4 30.bxa4 bxa4 31.Rf2 Rc4 32.Bb2 Nc6 33.Bxg7 Kxg7 34.Rdd2 Nd4 35.Rb2 Rc1 36.Rfd2 Nc6 37.Rbc2 Ree1 38.Rxc1 Rxc1 39.Kf2 Ne5 40.Ne3 Rc3 41.Rc2 Nd3+ 42.Kf1 Rxc2 43.Nxc2 Kf6 44.a3 ½–½

Here is a game from some years earlier against Herman Steiner:

### Ruben Shocron—Herman Steiner

Mar del Plata 1953 (11)

1.d4 d5 2. f3 e6 3.c4 c6 4.g3 d6 5. g2 f5 6.O-O d7 7.b3 e7 8.a4 a5 9. c2 g6 10. c3 g6 11. b1 e4 12. e1 h5 13. f3 df6 14.h4 xc3 15. xc3 e4 16. c2 g7 17. f4 e7 18. c1 f6 19. e5 g5 20.hxg5 xg5 21.cxd5 h4 22.dxc6 hxg3 23.fxg3 O-O

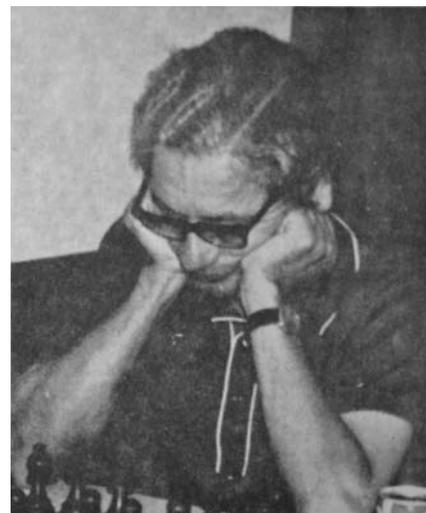
24. d7 xd7 25.cxd7 xd4+ 26.e3 f6 27. xb7 ad8 28. c6 e5 29. xg5 xg5 30. g2 e4 31. c4+ g7 32. e6 c3 33. f4 b4 34. bf1 f6 35. e5 g6 36. e8+ 1-0

Shocron emigrated to the United States in 1960 and won the state title in three different states: Georgia (1972), New Mexico (1982), and Pennsylvania (ties in 1986 and 1992).

Shocron's arrival in Georgia set a new standard for play in the state in the early 1970s.

At 2325, he was highest rated player to date to win the Georgia

state championship in 1972 (130 points higher than Klaus Pohl) and he did it with a perfect score. He also tied with Pohl in the previous Georgia Open. Additionally, he tied for first at the Southern Chess Congress that year and had several other successes. An industrial engineer, he worked for Concord Fabrics in Milledgeville.



Shocron in 1975

White: Jared Radin Black: Ruben Shocron Georgia Closed 1972

1.PK4 PK4 2.NKB3 NCB3 3.BN5 PCR3 4.BR4 NB3 5.0-0 BK2 6.RK1 PCN4 7.BN3 PC3 8.PKR3 (Allows the following exchange. More played is PB3) CNR4 9.PB3 NxB 10.CxN 0-0 11.PC4 BN2 12.CN2 NCB2 13.NB1 BKB3 14.NN3 RK1 15.PCR4 PxCp 16.PxCp PB4 17.RPxP BfXP 18.PxP NB4 19.CC1 BxRP! (Better than RxRP which allows 20.RN1!) 20.NxP? (It was necessary to play 20.RR3 BB5 21.CC2 PN3 with advantage to black.) BxN 21.CxB NN6 22.CR4 NxB 23.CxN BC6 white resigns. (Notes by Ruben Shocron)

Greg Maness recalls that Ruben came to a couple of his tournaments up in tiny Elberton, Georgia, back in the 1970s. “Very nice guy,” Greg said, “and his wife was a hoot. One tournament, he didn’t win any prize money, and he and his wife were joking about they were going to have to eat at Burger King that night!”

In the latter years of his playing days, he played the majority of his tournaments in the Harrisburg area. His last event was a US Team competition in 2005.

He was an outstanding player, and an outstanding man, and he will be missed by many. ♣

In round two Shocron again gained an advantage from the opening and maintained it. Hyder:White, Shocron:Black.  
1.PC4 NKB3 2.PCB4 PK3 3.NCB3 BN5 4.PK3 PB4 5.BC3 NB3 6.MK2 PC3 7.0-0 BxN 8.PxB PK4 9.PC5 NK2 10.PK4 NN3 11.PB4 PXP 12.BXP NxB 13.RxN NN5 14.CQ2 NK4 15.NN3 QN4 16.QRK31 NN3 17.R/4B2 QxC 18.RxC NK4 19.NB5 BxN 20.PxB PB3 21.RN1 0-0-0 22.BK2 KRK1 23.R/2N2 RC2 24.KB2 R/2K2 25.PCR4 RC1 26.PR5 R/1Q2 27.RN2 NB2 28.PR6 PN3 29.CK3 KN1 30.RK1 RxC 31.KxR NK2ch 32.RK2 RxCch 33.BxR NK4 34.KC2 KB2 35.KB2 NC2 36.PR4 NN1 37.BR5 NxB 38.PN4 PR3 39.BK8 NN1 40.KC3 NC2 White resigns.

Two games Shocron played in Georgia in 1972.