



SKITTLES  
ROOM

## *From the Archives*

Hosted by  
Mark Donlan



## From the Archives...

Since it came online many years ago, [ChessCafe.com](http://ChessCafe.com) has presented literally thousands of articles, reviews, columns and the like for the enjoyment of its worldwide readership. The good news is that almost all of this high quality material remains available in the [Archives](#). The bad news is that this great collection of chess literature is now so large and extensive – and growing each week – that it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate it effectively. We decided that the occasional selection from the archives posted publicly online might be a welcomed addition to the regular fare.

Watch for an item to be posted online periodically throughout each month. We will update the [ChessCafe](#) home page whenever there has been a “new” item posted here. We hope you enjoy *From the Archives*...

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Although the chess world never completely lost hope in the possibility of a rematch between Alexander Alekhine and José Capablanca, it never happened. After a few years, the two were not on speaking terms. When Alekhine heard rumors that Capablanca might play in a tournament being organized in Pasadena, California in 1932, he fired off the following letter to the tournament’s organizer...

## Alexander Alekhine Letter

May 19, 1932

(Russell Collection #1706)

From: Alexander Alekhin

To: Mr. McMahan

Date: May 19, 1932

Dear Mr. McMahan:

I was about to mail the foregoing letter to you, when I received yours of the 5th May and to save time I am replying with this P.S.

Your letter of the 5th May completely alters the entire character [sic] of the tournament as I had understood it, and when the conditions that were agreed

upon between your committee and myself were proposed, I was led to believe that the tournament was not to be a big international event.

Capablanca's participation in the Chess Congress tournament where he would meet me for the first time since I won the World Title from him would oblige me to consider the tournament from a new business point of view. I shall be very glad to keep my engagements with you and to have the sportingly welcome occasion to meet Capablanca in a tournament, but I must have an additional fee of 2,000 (two thousand) dollars for this.

I believe you should have no difficulty in raising this extra sum considering the importance of the first meeting Alekhine-Capablanca in a tournament since Buenos-Aires; as you so aptly put it "first-rate world-wide news."

As for a "set" game twixt myself and Capablanca, as suggested by your president Mr. Nickerson, an individual encounter between us is impossible unless Capablanca organises a return match with me on the same conditions as those of the Buenos-Aires match.

Will you kindly cable me immediately on receipt of this letter and make your reply explicit:

- 1) Does our original agreement hold?
- 2) Does Capablanca participate in the tournament and does your committee agree to pay me in that case 2,000 dollars extra fee?

As the time is now so short, I trust that you will realize the importance to me of an answer without delay as otherwise I cannot make my arrangements of the voyage and book my passage by the "Aquitania."

Looking forward to the pleasure to meet again all of my California friends

I remain

Sincerely yours,

/s/ A. Alekhin



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