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## From the Archives

Hosted by  
Mark Donlan



*Chess Mazes*  
by Bruce Alberston

## From the Archives...

Since it came online over eight 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 at least once each week, usually on Thursday or Friday. 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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From the January 1905 issue of *Lasker's Chess Magazine* - interesting insights on challenges to his title...

## Lasker On Championship Matches

by Emanuel Lasker

The following article appeared in the January, 1905 issue of *Lasker's Chess Magazine*, under the heading of “From the Editorial Chair.” It represents an interesting perspective by the then reigning world champion, Emanuel Lasker, of world championship matches, the rights to games and master chess.

The pending negotiations for the match between Mr. Marshall and Mr. Lasker for the title of chess champion of the world, brings up for discussion a few questions which, it is believed, have never been fully considered by the chess public, and a study of them forcibly demonstrates the necessity of some kind of organization by chess masters and the leading men of the chess world.

A match for the chess championship involves a long period of training, the incurring of extra expenses during the contest, the effort of playing, which may occupy several months, and the loss which a person necessarily undergoes as a consequence of abstention from regular duties. Added to these is the work of arranging for the contest with clubs or other places where the best interests of

the players will be cared for, the gathering together of one's backing and the expenditure of time and care in covering all the points that have to be considered in the negotiations. All of these matters are a drain upon the strength of a player that cannot be estimated by anyone who has not experienced them.

In arranging the match for the championship, which was played between Mr. Steinitz and Mr. Lasker in 1894, six months were occupied in the negotiations, and there was a great amount of correspondence before the contest was finally settled. The match lasted from the beginning of March to the 26th of May. The stakes were \$2,000 a side. The contributions of clubs and the amount paid by the public for tickets reached the sum of \$1,200 which was equally divided between the two players. The match was followed with close attention by chess players in every part of the world, and the games were published in thousands of newspapers and magazines. At the conclusion of the contest two books were published giving the games in full, one by the *British Chess Magazine*, and the other by the veteran master, Bird. But neither the newspapers nor the publishers of the two books contributed in any way to the match funds.

Under the plan which has been adopted in chess matches, the men who subscribe to the fund which makes up the stake receive, if the player wins the match, their money back, and fifty percent in addition as a bonus. Hence it will be seen that though the stakes in the Steinitz-Lasker match were \$2,000 a side, the winner of the match received but \$1,000 of the stakes, his backers receiving the other \$1,000 for the loan of their money. With this arrangement the total compensation for the enormous labor involved in the nine months was \$1,600 for the winner and \$600 for the loser.

The entire European chess world contributed nothing for the games, and nothing to the backing of the challenger, still, it cannot be doubted that there were many who would gladly have added their quota for the benefit of the players had the opportunity been afforded. Considering the fact that thousands of players derived enjoyment from the games, and that a large amount of money must have been paid for the space which they occupied in newspapers, and for the sale of the books on the match, the recompense to the players themselves was far from a fair proportion of the amount extended by the chess public at the time.

Property rights in the games in a championship match are as clear as are those of any other form of mental effort, because the product of that effort remains to the world. But it would be a difficult problem to solve to decide just what means would be best to adopt to retain to the players of a match their full rights in the literature of the contest. Publication of the games in a newspaper is a virtual gift of all rights, as the copyright of a daily newspaper is only for a day, and nothing could prevent reproduction. Whether the chess public would be content to wait till the match was finished, receiving only the daily reports of the results of each game, and then accept all the games in book form with all the rights which copyrights afford is a very doubtful matter. The whole question is fraught with difficulties, and should be amicably settled by the masters, the press and the organized chess world.



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