



SKITTLES
ROOM



The Lost Match: Rubinstein - Marshall, Warsaw 1908

by IM Nikolay Minev

There are many famous and fascinating matches in chess history. This is the strange story about one of them: the match between Akiba Rubinstein and Frank Marshall held in Warsaw, October 25 -November 14, 1908. A match not mentioned anywhere at that time, and even now, after 80 years, one which still remains in shadows.

That a match between these two all-time greats is virtually unknown may strain credulity. The facts – rather, the lack of facts – prove otherwise. The match is not reported in *The Yearbook of Chess* (London, 1907-1917); nor does it appear in the extremely popular series by Mieses, *Das Buch der Schachmeisterpartien* (Volume 4, 1906-1912). Even the well-known book *Classical Chess Matches 1907-1913*, by F. Wilson, makes no mention of it. If this seems puzzling, then consider also that not a word about the match appears in Marshall's autobiography, *Frank J. Marshall's Best Games of Chess*.

Worse, the facts that have surfaced are reported incorrectly. The *American Chess Bulletin* (Volume 25, Number 3, March 1928) claims that Rubinstein won the match with 4 wins and 2 losses. But as the crosstable below shows, Rubinstein actually won the match by a score of 4½-3½.

Rubinstein	1	0	1	1	½	0	½	½	4½
Marshall	0	1	0	0	½	1	½	½	3½

The games themselves have not fared well, either. For all practical purposes, they are impossible for the casual observer to track down. One will search in vain for them in Razuvaev and Murakhveri's book published in the Soviet Union (Moscow 1980) about the chess career of Rubinstein.

I have been fortunate enough to find all the games of the match. During the several months I worked on this article, I lived buried in old magazines and books with the games of Marshall and Rubinstein. I uncovered 31 of the 36

games played between them, and looked at more than 500 of their other games.

The two opponents could not have had more disparate styles, and the match proved to be a dramatic battle between a great tactician and, in my opinion, the finest strategist of all time. This contest was truly a classic match – an interesting, important, and, for reasons hard to understand, forgotten part of chess history, particularly in the United States. It deserves to be known.

The annotations to the games presented below are mine. My intention in these notes is to build a bridge between past and present chess theory. Furthermore, I wish to make known the undercurrents of the match, both away from and over the board. I acknowledge that this task may well be impossible, but the importance of the match to chess history is such that I am honor bound to attempt it.

Now, let the games speak!

Game 1

Akiba Rubinstein - Frank Marshall

Warsaw Match, 1908

Four Knights [C49]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bb5 Bb4 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 d6 7.Ne2 Bg4

It's an incredible, but undeniable, truth that in every new book, the theory of the Four Knights is getting smaller and smaller! By way of apology, the authors of such books say that more space is granted to the other openings because (I quote from a recent example): "In the Four Knights, with a working knowledge of theory, Black can work his way through to a very comfortable equality."

Perhaps. But did you pay attention to the game Spassky-Gligoric, Sarajevo 1986, *Informant* 41/371? In 1986, Spassky played several games with the Four Knights as white, and was successful! Or glance through recent evidence of this illusory equality, bound up here with 7...Ne7 (instead of 7...Bg4) 8.c3 Ba5 9.Ng3 c6 10.Ba4 Ng6 11.d4.



Taimanov in *ECO* gives 11...Re8 12.Bb3 h6 13.h3 Be6 (13...exd4 14.Nxd4 is slightly better for White according to Dvoretsky, as 14...Nxe4? fails to 15.Nxe4 Rxe4 16.Bxf7!) 14.Re1 Bb6 15.Be3 Qc7, and assesses the position as equal on the basis of Sveshnikov-Yusupov, USSR (ch) 1979.

The game continued 16.Qd2!? exd4, and here 17.Bxd4 is given by Dvoretsky as a slight edge for White. On the other hand, the sacrifice 16.Bxh6!? dxc3 (16...gxh6? 17.Qxh6 and Nf5) 17.bxc3 d5 is very interesting and completely unclear after 17.exd5 or 17.e5 Ne4, and now 18.Nxe4 dxe4 19.Rxe4 – see *Informant* 28/254. But where is the convincing equality?

Batsford Chess Openings offers something else: 11...d5 (with an exclamation mark) and ... equality!? Do you believe that a symmetrical position with White to move is always equal? How many more times can Black repeat White's moves without some damage? Why don't they show here Dvoretsky's suggestion 12.Bg5!?, which beyond a doubt arouses suspicion about 11...d5? I think that this "equality" does not have both feet on the ground.

Let's return to our game and 7...Bg4, at that time considered the weaker continuation.

8.c3 Bc5

Today's theory also is well-advanced in years: 8...Bxf3 9.gxf3 Bc5 10.d4 Bb6 11.Bg5 h6 12.Be3 Nh5 13.Ng3 Nxg3 14.hxg3 Qf6 15.Bxc6 bxc6 16.Kg2 Qe6 =, Honfi-Byvshev, Budapest 1959. Some of the moves which deserve investigation and probably promise more for White are 10.Ng3!? followed by f3-f4. Or White might try 11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.Bg5 or 13.Ng3.

9.Ng3 Nh5 10.Nf5

Pillsbury's idea, recently considered as White's best.

10...Bb6

So far as I know, this is Marshall's innovation, and a tricky one at that. If now 11.h3 then 11...Bxf5 12.exf5 Ng3, winning a pawn. The game Nimzovitch-Shories, Ostend 1907 (a tournament participated in by Rubinstein and Marshall) continued 10...Bxf5 11.exf5 Nf6 12.d4 ("This

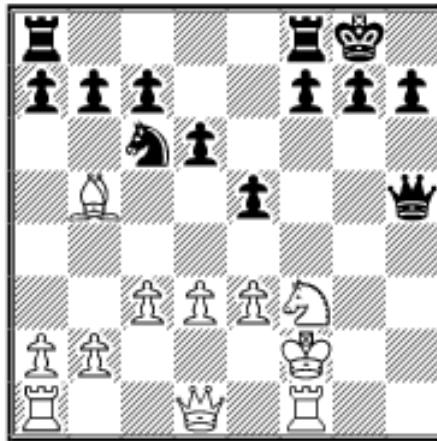
move is the only one to counteract Black's advantage in the opening" – Nimzovitch. This is an interesting opinion, rejected completely later on.) 12...exd4 13.cxd4 Bb6 14.h3 Ne4?! 15.Qc2 Re8 16.Bxc6 bxc6 17.Re1 (17.Qxc6?! Qf6!) 17...Ne4 18.Bg5 Qd7 19.Bxf6 gxf6 20.g4 Rxe1+ 21.Rxe1 Re8 22.Re4! and White eventually won, though the position in the opening was unclear.

Another game, Nimzovitch-W.Cohn, Ostend 1907, is more interesting for us: 10...Qf6 11.h3 Bxf5 12.Bg5 Qe6 13.exf5 Qxf5 14.g4 Qe6 15.gxh5 Qxh3. As we shall see, Marshall adopted this sacrifice, improving it with 10...Bb6, which gains a tempo.

11.Be3

11.d4 (Canal-Euwe, Venice 1948), with an advantage for White, is the final conclusion in *ECO*. Note that 11...exd4 12.cxd4 (if 12.N5xd4 then Nxd4 13.cxd4 Qf6) 12...Bxf5 13.exf5 Nf6 transposes into Nimzovitch-Shories above.

11...Qf6 12.h3 Bxf5 13.Bg5 Qe6 14.exf5 Qxf5 15.g4 Qe6 16.gxh5 Qxh3 17.Be3 Bxe3 18.fxe3 Qxh5 19.Kf2



For recent theory, we are in new territory. White has won a piece for three pawns, but has to submit to a dangerous attack – an appropriate position for Marshall's style, but Rubinstein's accurate defense proves triumphant.

19...e4!?

Tempting, but probably premature.

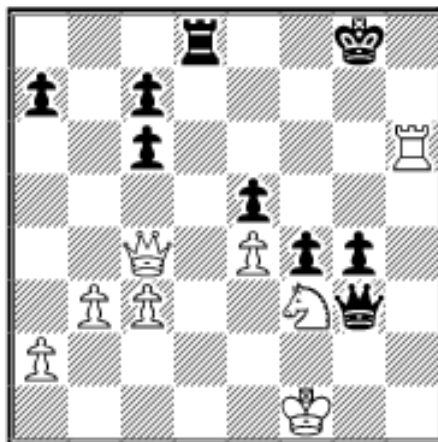
20.Bxc6 bxc6 21.dxe4 Rab8

Necessary. If 21...f5 then 22.Qb3+ Kh8 23.Rh1.

22.b3 f5 23.Rh1 Qg6 24.e5 f4 25.e4 Qg3+ 26.Kf1 dxe5 27.Qe2 Rbd8 28.Rd1 h6

Maybe 28...Rd6 is better.

29.Rh5! g5 30.Rxh6 g4 31.Rxd8 Rxd8 32.Qc4+



32...Rd5

There is nothing else. The try 32...Kg7 fails to 33.Rh7+! Kxh7 34.Qf7+ Kh8 35.Qf6+.

33.Ne1 Kg7 34.Qxc6 Rd6 35.Qxc7+ Kxh6 36.Qxd6+ Kh7 37.Qe7+ Kg6 38.Qe6+ Kh7 39.Qxe5 Qh3+ 40.Ke2 f3+ 41.Kf2 Qh4+ 42.Qg3 Qd8 43.Qxg4 Qd2+ 44.Kxf3 Qd1+ 45.Kf4 Qd2+ 46.Kf5 Qxe1 47.Qg6+ Kh8 48.Ke6 a5

49.Kf7 1-0

Game 2

Frank Marshall - Akiba Rubinstein

Warsaw Match, 1908

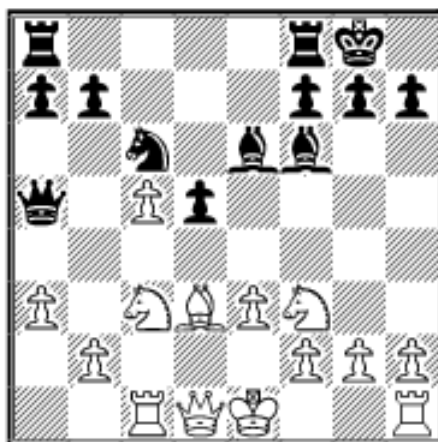
Queen's Gambit, Tarrasch [D32]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nf6?!

Even at that time, it was clear that 5...Nc6 was the most accurate reply. Only Rubinstein tenaciously ventured to defend the doubtful standing of 5...Nf6.

6.Bg5 Be7 7.dxc5 Be6

We are again in a critical juncture for recent theory. There is no doubt that Euwe – who no doubt did not know of this important game – many years later established White's best line on the basis of the earlier game Marshall-Rubinstein, Lodz 1908: 8.Rc1 0-0 9.Bxf6 Bxf6 10.e3 Qa5 11.a3 Nc6 12.Bd3.



Euwe assesses the position as advantageous for White. His assessment, adopted by Kasparov, can be found in the latest edition of *ECO*. For more than 40 years, this evaluation has been hypnotizing people!

The remainder of this theoretical example, with Marshall's original notes, shows quite a different pattern: 12...Qxc5 13.h4 (13.0-0 Qe7 gives nothing to White) 13...Qe7 14.Ng5 (14.Bxh7+?

Kxh7 15.Ng5 Kg6) 14...h6 15.Nxe6 fxe6 16.Bb1 Bxh4! 17.g3 Bxg3! 18.fxg3 Qg5 19.Qd3 and now, according to Marshall, 19...Ne5! (instead of 19...Qxg3+? 20.Kd2 Rf2+ 21.Ne2 Ne5 22.Qh7+ Kf7 23.Rc7+ Kf6

24.Rxh6+! 1-0) and Black's attack should succeed: 20.Qh7+ Kf7 21.Rf1+ Ke7, and White has no good move.

I think Marshall is right, and the recent theoretical position diagrammed above must be reassessed as being equal, or at least unclear, with a double-edged situation.

The plan used by Marshall in this match game looks better. Instead of the questionable exchange 9.Bxf6, he keeps the bishops and increases the pressure against the isolated d-pawn.

8.e3 0-0 9.Bd3 Bxc5 10.Rc1 Nc6 11.0-0 Be7 12.Bb1 Rc8 13.a3 Qa5 14.Qd3 g6 15.Ba2



It seems that White has a slight edge. Rubinstein's following miscalculation loses a pawn without compensation.

15...Ne4?

15...Rfd8 is the correct continuation.

16.Bxe7 Nxe7 17.Nxe4 dxe4 18.Qxe4 Bxa2 19.Qxe7 Bd5 20.Rxc8 Rxc8 21.Qe5!

The remainder is played by Marshall with instructive accuracy.

21...Qc5 22.e4 Be6 23.Qxc5 Rxc5 24.Nd4 a5 25.f4 b5 26.Rd1 Kf8 27.Kf2 Ke7 28.Rd2 h5 29.Ke3 a4 30.Rc2! Bc4 31.Nf3 Rc8 32.Ne5 Be6 33.Rxc8 Bxc8 34.Kd4 Bb7 35.h3 f5

Seeking counterplay in a lost endgame.

36.Nxg6+ Kf6 37.Ne5 fxe4

Or 37...Bxe4 38.g4.

38.g4 h4 39.Nd7+ Ke7 40.Ne5 Kf6 41.Ke3 Ke6 42.Ng6 Kd5 43.f5 Kc4 44.Ne7! 1-0

Game 3

Akiba Rubinstein - Frank Marshall

Warsaw Match, 1908

Dutch Stonewall [A84]

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 c6 3.c4 e6 4.e3

If White doesn't know how to escape with a whole skin from the 4.Nc3 dxc4 "jungle," the text is one of many alternatives, e.g., 4.Qc2, 4.cxd5, 4.g3, etc.

4...Bd6 5.Nc3 f5

An actual variation! Before comparing this completely forgotten game with the most recent example I know of, Speelman-Seirawan, (5), St. John 1988, we need a short trip in the books.

According to existing theory, this variation is OK for Black. The main line runs as follow: 6.Bd3 Nf6 7.0-0 0-0 8.Qc2 Ne4 9.Ne5 Nd7, etc. =, *ECO* [A85]. It is clear from this line that White's hope for some advantage

depends on his knight jumping to e5, but 8.Ne5 (instead of 8.Qc2) gives Black the advantage after 8...Bxe5! 9.dxe5 Ng4 10.f4 dxc4 11.Bxc4? (11.Be2!?-Euwe) Qh4 12.h3 Nxe5!.

Hence, the g4-square must be protected. So the idea of Ne5 goes together with Be2!.

Now let's see briefly the Speelman-Seirawan game mentioned above: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 c6 3.c4 e6 4.e3 f5 5.Be2! (my mark) Nf6 6.0-0 Bd6 7.b3 Qe7 8.Bb2 Nbd7 9.Ne5! (Yasser's mark). For the rest of the game, with Seirawan's remarkable annotations, see *Inside Chess*, Issue 5 (March 9, 1988), page 13.

It is more interesting for us that instead of the theoretical line with Bd3, Speelman placed his bishop on e2, followed by Ne5. The right plan, in a different move order, is demonstrated by Rubinstein in this game.

An old, indisputable truth: When a player at the top plays a book line, he knows more than the existing theory.

6.Ne5!? Bxe5

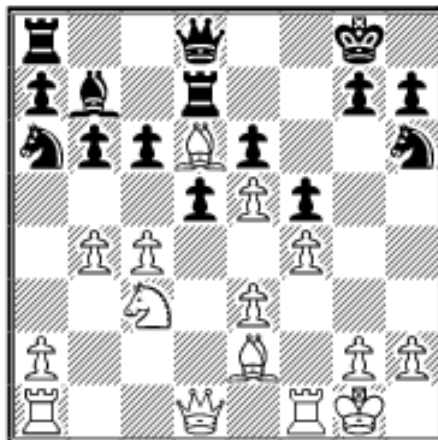
If 6...Nf6 then White can play 7.f4 Bxe5 8.dxe5 Ng4 9.Be2! or, maybe better, 7.Be2!? followed with f2-f4.

7.dxe5 Nh6 8.f4 0-0 9.Be2! b6

After 9...Qh4+ 10.g3 Qh3 11.Bf1 Qg4 12.Qxg4, White has an advantage

because of Black's dark-squared weaknesses.

10.0-0 Bb7 11.b3! Na6 12.Ba3 Rf7 13.Bd6 Rd7 14.b4!



14...Nf7

Now Black's position collapses. His last hope was 14...Rxd6 15.exd6 Nxb4, but it's hard to believe that Black will survive after 16.a3 Na6 17.cxd5 exd5 18.Nxd5 cxd5 (18...Qxd6 19.Nb4) 19.Bxa6 Bxa6 20.Qxd5+ Nf7 21.Rfc1 Rc8 22.d7.

15.cxd5 exd5 16.b5 Nc7 17.bxc6 Bxc6 18.Bxc7 Rxc7 19.Bf3 Kh8

If 19...d4, then simply 20.exd4 or 20.Qxd4. The following moves indicate that Black is in serious time trouble.

20.Nxd5 Rd7 21.e6 Rd6 22.exf7 Bxd5 23.Bxd5 Qd7

Or 23...Rxd5 24.f8=Q+ and White wins.

24.Bxa8 Rxd1 25.f8=Q mate 1-0

It's no wonder that after the shock of such a downfall, Marshall plays uncertainly in the next game. Very quickly he reaches an inferior position. The rook endgame is another forgotten masterpiece of Rubinstein's technique, which I believe should take its place in the endgame guides. As for the opening and the move 6.a4, we will speak of it in Game 6. The moves and the diagrams will tell you all the rest.

Game 4

Frank Marshall - Akiba Rubinstein

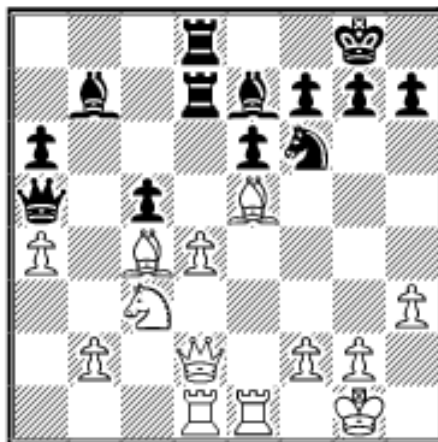
Warsaw Match, 1908

Queen's Gambit Accepted [D27]

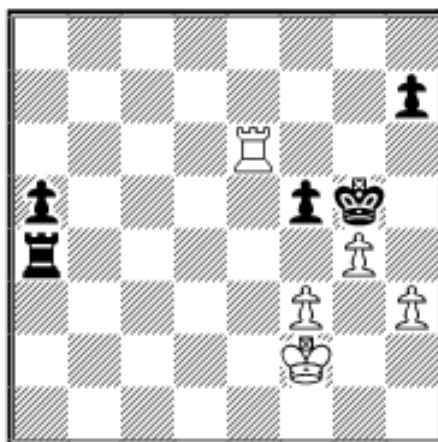
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 dxc4 4.e3 Nf6 5.Bxc4 a6 6.a4 c5 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.0-0 cxd4 9.exd4 Be7 10.Bf4?!

The oldest continuation, not even mentioned in the last edition of *ECO*.

10...0-0 11.Re1 Qa5 12.Ne5?! Rd8! 13.Nxc6 bxc6 14.Qd2 Ra7! 15.Rad1 Rad7 16.Be5 Bb7 17.h3 c5!



18.Nd5 Qxd2 19.Nxe7+ Kf8! 20.Rxd2 Kxe7 21.Rd3 Ne8 22.Rg3 cxd4 23.Bxg7 Nxb7 24.Rxg7 d3 25.Rd1 d2 26.f3 Rd4 27.Rg4 f5! 28.Rxd4 Rxd4 29.b3 Bd5 30.Bxd5 Rxd5 31.Kf2 Rd3 32.Ke2 Rxb3 33.Rxd2 Rb4! 34.Ra2 a5 35.g4 Kf6 36.Kf2 Kg5 37.Re2 Rxa4 38.Rxe6



38...Ra2+ 39.Ke1

39.Kg3 f4 mate.

39...f4! 40.Re7 h6 41.Rf7 a4 42.Kd1 a3 43.Rf5+ Kh4 44.Rxf4 Rf2 45.Ra4 a2 46.Kc1 Kxh3 47.Ra5 Kg3 48.g5

If 45.Ra3 then Rxf3 and wins.

48...a1=Q+ 0-1

Because of 49.Rxa1 Rf1+ 50.Kb2 Rxa1 51.Kxa1 hxg5.

The first half of the match is completed, and Rubinstein dominates by the score of 3-1. Especially in the third and the fourth games, he was almost perfect; his opponent looked totally broken down.

But as if by magic, the second half represents quite the reverse. Marshall's opening variations are much better: In every single game he creates an arena for his style. His imagination in the middlegame often surprises Rubinstein. Ultimately, Marshall misses his chance to achieve the victory that would have equalized the score, as we shall see in the last game, because of the weakness which haunted him all his life: an eagerness to immediately exploit an advantage in positions where patience and technique are needed.

Game 5

Akiba Rubinstein - Frank Marshall

Warsaw Match, 1908

Dutch Defense [A84]

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 e6 3.e3 Nd7 4.b3 Ngf6 5.Bb2 Ne4!?

Perhaps home preparation. Marshall avoids the unnamed system 5...Bd6 6.Bd3 0-0 7.0-0 c5 8.Nbd2, followed with Ne5 [D05], used often, and successfully, by Rubinstein.

6.Bd3 Bb4+ 7.c3

Now the opening will transpose into the Dutch Defense, here in a better edition for Black than in Game 3. It is possible that 7.Nfd2 deserves attention, but such opening acrobatics are not in Rubinstein's style.

7...Bd6 8.c4 0-0 9.0-0 c6 10.Nbd2 f5 11.Ne5 Rf6 12.f3 Nxd2 13.Qxd2 Rh6 14.Rac1

14.cxd5 exd5 15.Bxf5 Nxe5 16.dxe5 Bxf5 17.exd6 Qxd6 is equal.

14...Qh4 15.g3 Qf6 16.f4 Qf8!

Avoiding 17.g4. It looks as though Black is plunging into a rash adventure and that White's position is preferable. In reality, this position is well-suited to Marshall. His initiative on the kingside will soon acquire significant dimensions.

17.Nxd7 Bxd7 18.c5 Bc7 19.b4 Qf7 20.a4 a6 21.Bc3 Kh8 22.b5 axb5 23.axb5 Rg8 24.bxc6 Bxc6! 25.Rf2 g5 26.Rb1 gxf4 27.exf4 Qh5 28.Rg2

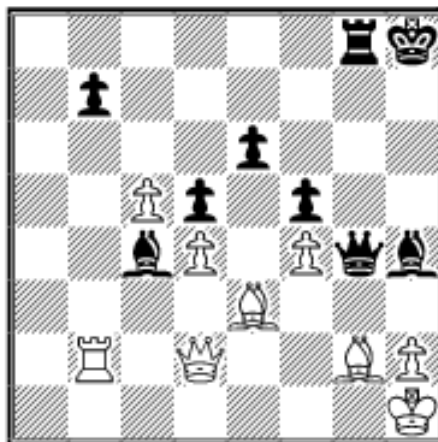
28.Bb5? Rxc3+!

28...Rhg6 29.Qf2

29.Bb5 Qf3!? 30.Bxc6? Bxf4 or 30.Rf1 Bxf4.

29...Qh6 30.Bd2 Qg7 31.Ra1 h5 32.Bf1 Bd8 33.Be3 Bf6 34.Ra2 h4 35.gxh4 Rxc3+ 36.Bxc6 Qg4 37.Qd2 Bxh4 38.Kh1 Bb5! 39.Rb2 Bc4

39...Ba6!?



40.Qc2

If 40.Rxb7? then 40...Be2 wins.

40...Ra8?

40...Ba6!?

41.Rxb7! Be2 42.Rb1 Rg8 43.Rg1 Bf3
44.c6 Bd8 45.Qf2 Bxg2+ 46.Qxg2 Bc7
47.Qxg4 fxg4 48.Kg2 Kg7 49.Rb1 Kf6
50.Rb7 Rc8 51.Kg3 Kf5

Even with an extra pawn, White still has some problems.

52.Bd2 Ke4 53.Kxg4 Kxd4 54.Rb3 Bd8 55.Bc1 Kc4 56.Rb7 Rxc6 57.Bb2
Bc7 58.Be5!

58.h4 d4 is in Black's favor.

58...Bxe5 59.fxe5 d4 60.Rd7 Rc5 61.Kf4 Kd3 62.Rd6 Rc1 63.Rxe6 Rf1+
64.Kg5 Ke4 65.h4 d3 66.Rd6 Rf5+ 67.Kg6 Rxe5 68.h5 Rd5 Draw

Game 6

Frank Marshall - Akiba Rubinstein

Warsaw Match, 1908

Queen's Gambit Accepted [D27]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 dxc4 4.e3

Today's theory gives 4.e4 as White's best.

4...a6 5.a4

The so-called Rubinstein Variation, according to many books and articles. But wait a minute! Rubinstein adopted the move a2-a4 following this match, after failing with the Black pieces in this and the eighth game. Though Rubinstein played this variation many times subsequently, and improved some ideas, he did not do so more than some other players. Marshall, for instance, played it regularly before and after this match; in the book *Marshall's Best Games of Chess*, for instance, we see Marshall playing the line against Janowsky (Ostend 1906), Hodges (New York 1911), and Grünfeld (Warsaw (ol) 1935). Further, the most fundamental ideas were developed before Rubinstein started to use the system.

Why, then, is the line called the Rubinstein variation, and not the Marshall

variation? Or the Marshall-Rubinstein variation? The answer is that some author at some time named this variation without considering all the evidence, or because of political and chauvinistic reasons; the nomenclature was then used without question by other authors.

Controversies surrounding the names given to openings and variations are not new. About thirty years ago, FIDE tried unsuccessfully to put order to this confusion. And things are going from bad to worse.

5...Nf6 6.Bxc4 c5 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.0-0 Qc7



This position was revived at the end of the 60's and early 70's, and still is the critical point of the whole variation. By good fortune, I was at that time involved very much in the theoretical dispute, investigating new ideas for the black side together with grandmaster Radulov, and playing the white side on several occasions. Take my word for it – this and especially the eighth game provide very interesting information for those who continue to research the line.

9.b3

Today's theory considers only 9.d5 or 9.Qe2, and White gains nothing! Marshall's 9.b3 is another move order which can transpose into a recent line with 9.Qe2 (as in Game 8), but as we shall see, is probably more consistent.

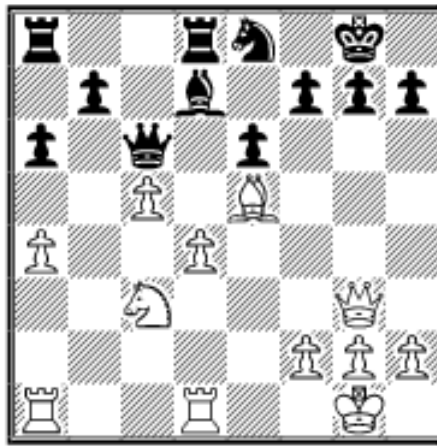
9...cxd4 10.exd4 Na5?!

It is tempting to exchange White's bishop, but the move is not the best. Instead, Black has the choice between 10...Be7 and 10...Bd6.

11.Qe2 Nxc4 12.bxc4 Be7

If now 13.Bb2, then we will have a recent theoretical position (by transposition), assessed as slightly better for White. With the text move, we see a hitherto missing practical example with a different idea, probably worthy of investigation.

13.Ne5!? 0-0 14.Bf4 Rd8 15.Rfd1 Bd7 16.Qf3 Bd6 17.c5 Bxe5 18.Bxe5 Qc6 19.Qg3 Ne8



20.d5!? Qxc5

Necessary. 20...exd5 21.Nxd5 Qxc5
22.Nf6+ Nxf6 23.Bxf6 loses
immediately.

**21.Ne4 Qf8 22.Nf6+ Nxf6 23.Bxf6 Re8
24.d6 Rac8 25.Rab1 b5 26.axb5 axb5
27.Ra1 Ra8 28.Be7 Rxa1 29.Rxa1 Ra8!
30.Rc1 Rc8! 31.Re1 Qe8 32.Bf6 Qf8
33.Be7 Qe8 34.Bf6 Qf8**

Starting with move 21, it is hard to say where White could have played better against Rubinstein's superb defense. Now 35.Be7 is a draw, but the score – and his character, of course – forces Marshall to take a big risk.

**35.h3 Kh8 36.Be7 Qe8 37.Qe5 h6! 38.Re3 f6! 39.Bxf6 gxf6 40.Qxf6+ Kh7
41.Rf3 Rd8 42.h4 Bc6 43.Rg3 Rd7 44.h5!**

Marshall finds fresh resources for his dead-looking attack. The following moves clearly indicate that Black is in serious time trouble (the time control is probably 50/3); facing many threats, he finally overlooks a mate!

44...Qxh5 45.Qxe6 Qd1+ 46.Kh2 Qxd6??

After 46...Qh5+ 47.Kg1 (47.Rh3 Qg6) Qf7, Black still has difficulties, but should win.

47.Qg8 mate! 1-0

A dramatic finale.

Though Rubinstein is a little more lucky, Marshall is undeservedly ignored in recent theory.

Game 7

Akiba Rubinstein - Frank Marshall

Warsaw Match, 1908

Queen's Gambit Declined [D30]

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4

Obviously not satisfied with the opening of the fifth game, Rubinstein returns to classical schemes.

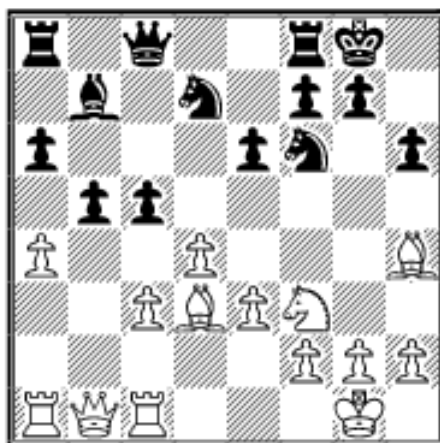
3...Nf6 4.Bg5 h6 5.Bh4 dxc4 6.e3

At the time of this match, it was still not confirmed that the text is a dubious gambit. Also, 6.Nc3 Bb4 is in Black's favor. According to recent theory, White should immediately regain the pawn with 6.Qa4+.

6...b5 7.a4 c6 8.Be2 Bb4+ 9.Nc3 Nbd7 10.0-0 Bxc3 11.bxc3 Bb7?

A blunder. 11...a6 keeps the extra pawn.

12.Qb1! a6 13.Bxc4 Qc8 14.Bd3 0-0 15.Rc1 c5!?



A practical decision. Instead of defending a passive position, Marshall sacrifices the pawn in return for a measure of counterplay.

**16.axb5 c4 17.Be2 Be4 18.Qb4 Nd5
19.Qxc4 Bxf3 20.Qxc8 Rfxc8 21.gxf3
Nxc3 22.Bd3 Nxb5 23.Rxc8+ Rxc8
24.Rxa6 Nc3**

A clear advantage for White, but this time the acclaimed technique of Rubinstein is sterile. By the way, against Marshall, more than any other player, Rubinstein failed to capitalize on the winning positions he achieved!

25.e4 e5! 26.Ra7

If 26.d5, then Black still has defensive chances after 26...g5 27.Bg3 f6 28.Rc6 (or 28.Rd6 Rc7) Rxc6 29.dxc6 Nb6 30.Ba6 Na8.

26...Nf8 27.dxe5 Ne6 28.Bg3 g5! 29.Ba6 Rc5 30.Ra8+ Kg7 31.Rc8

Loses a pawn, but it's hard to say how White can win.

**31...Ne2+ 32.Kf1 Nxc3+ 33.fxc3 Rxe5 34.Bc4 g4! 35.Bxe6 Rxe6 36.Kf2
gxf3 37.Kxf3 Ra6 38.Kg4 Ra2 39.h3 Re2 40.Re8 Re1 41.Re5 f6 42.Re7+
Kf8 43.Rh7 Rxe4+ 44.Kf3 Ra4 45.Rxh6 Kg7 46.Rh5 Ra3+ 47.Kf4 Ra4+
48.Kf3 Draw**

Game 8

Frank Marshall - Akiba Rubinstein

Warsaw Match, 1908

Queen's Gambit Accepted [D27]

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 dxc4 4.e3 Nf6 5.Bxc4 a6 6.a4 c5 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.0-0
Qc7 9.b3**

A repetition of the opening of the sixth game. In comparison with recent theory, the most interesting point of Marshall's move order is that he leaves Qe2 for later and gives priority to the quick development of the queenside, trying to use the c-file.

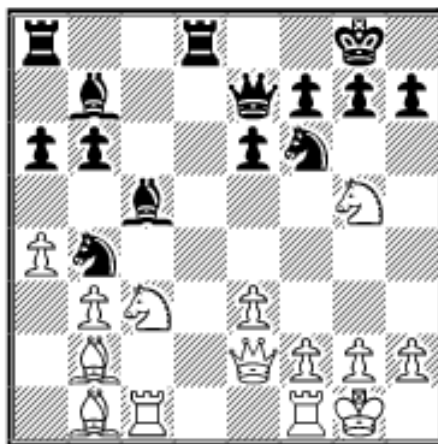
9...Be7

Evidence that ...Na5 and ...Nxc4, as played in Game 6, didn't yield a satisfactory result.

10.Bb2 0-0 11.dxc5

Instead, 11.Qe2 Bd7 12.Rfd1 Rad8 can transpose into today's book line. Here, 13.Rac1 (Minev-Pantaleev, Bulgaria 1967) or 13.d5 (Uhlmann-Hennings, GDR 1968) are the examples shown in *ECO*, in both cases with slightly better chances for White.

11...Bxc5 12.Rc1 b6 13.Qe2 Bb7 14.Bd3 Qe7 15.Ng5 Nb4 16.Bb1 Rfd8



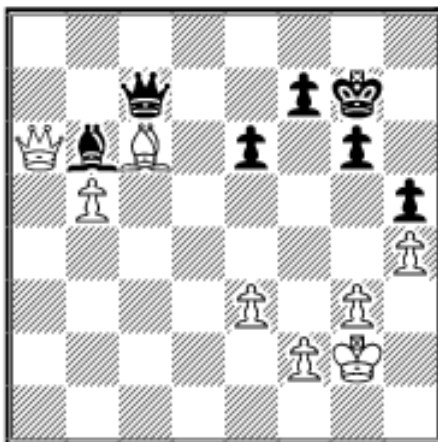
17.a5!? h6

17...bxa5 18.Na4 Bd6 (not 18...Rac8? 19.Bxf6! gxf6 20.Qh5!) is not so clear, but creates a tactical commotion.

18.Nge4 Nxe4 19.Nxe4 Bxe4 20.Bxe4 Rac8 21.axb6 Bxb6 22.Ba3

An ineffective idea that decides the fate of the match. It wins a pawn, but not the game. The patient 22.g3 maintains the slight edge for a long time and offers many more practical winning chances.

22...a5 23.Rxc8 Rxc8 24.Rd1 Qe8 25.g3 Rd8 26.Rc1 Rc8 27.Rd1 Rd8 28.Rc1 Rc8 29.Rxc8 Qxc8 30.Qb5 Qd8 31.Bxb4 axb4 32.Qxb4 g6 33.Qc3 Qd6 34.b4 Qc7 35.Qf6 Qd8 36.Qf4 Kg7 37.b5 Bc7 38.Qf3 Qf6 39.Qe2 Qc3 40.Bc6 Bb6 41.Kg2 Qe5 42.Qc2 Bc5 43.Qa2 Bb6 44.Qa6 Qc7 45.h4 h5



An interesting position for the next volume of *Encyclopedia of Chess Endings*. The extra pawn is balanced by the opposite-color bishops, and the presence of the queens doesn't change this assessment.

46.Qa1+ Kg8 47.Qf6 Qd8 48.Qf4 Qc7
49.Qf3 Qd8 50.Qe4 Kg7 51.Qc2 Qc7
52.Qc3+ Kg8 53.Kf3 Qd8 54.Qa1 Qd3
55.Qe5 Qd1+ 56.Kg2 Qd8 57.Be4 Qc7
58.Qa1 Qd8 59.Kf3 Qd6 60.Bc6 Qd3

61.Qa8+ Kg7 62.Qa1+ Kg8

And the game finished in a draw after 32 more moves.

A Modern Assessment

I am under the impression that we haven't completely appreciated the feats of these two great players. Despite the existing books with selected games, or perhaps because of them, there still remain hundreds of fascinating games and ideas completely forgotten and out of the reach of the public at large. Though Rubinstein is a little luckier, Marshall is undeservedly ignored in recent theory.

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