



COLUMNISTS

The Kibitzer

Tim Harding

It's all Down in Black and White

A relatively little-known master tournament for six players was held in London in 1893. The reason for its obscurity seems to be that the sponsoring periodical claimed the sole right to publish the games and so it was not well reported elsewhere.

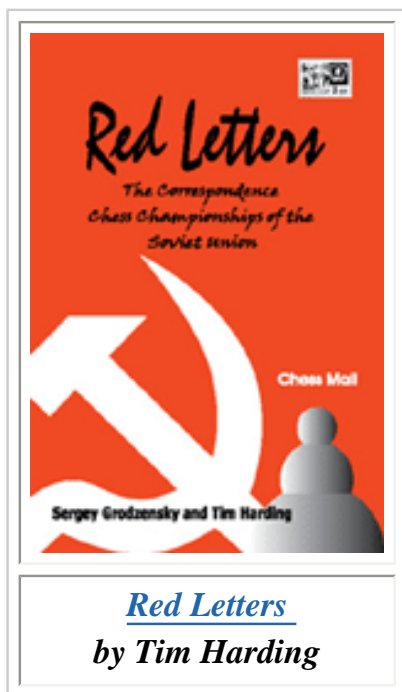
That, at least, was the explanation given by Samuel Tinsley, one of the competitors, who wrote a survey of chess events in the years 1892-3 for the 7th edition of *The Chess Player's Annual and Club Directory* edited by T.B. and F.F. Rowland. Tinsley, who later wrote about chess for *The Times* of London, made a reference to a sixpenny weekly called *Black and White* organising a master chess event that didn't get publicity because of restrictions about the games.

It's not entirely true that the event lacked publicity, because Tinsley, who played in the tournament himself, wrote a report for *British Chess Magazine* (April 1893), but he scrupulously observed the embargo by printing only some games and the final result — which by this time had appeared in the sponsoring journal. For the rest, he gave a verbal description of games (see some examples below) without actually giving any moves or diagrams.

“I had the privilege of making the first and last moves in the recent Masters' Tourney, at the Divan. My first move was Pawn to Queen's Fourth and my last was Kt to King's sixth, mate...”

The 15 games played in this event are in fact included in Chessbase's *MegaBase* CD, but they are identified only as random games played in London in 1893, not from a tournament. The *Black and White* event consisted entirely of players who were living in England at the time, but since one was Irish, one Dutch and one German it can be considered as an international contest. Moreover, the winner was an acknowledged player of the first rank; a grandmaster, only that term was not current in the 1890s.

After some diligent hunting in various searchable library catalogues available online, I was eventually able to identify *Black and White* and ultimately to read the relevant volumes in the library of Trinity College, Dublin — and extremely weighty tomes they are too! This Kibitzer column and the next tell



Red Letters
by Tim Harding

the story of the tournament and of the chess column that organised it.

Since doing the bulk of this research, I obtained a copy of the late Ken Whyld's last book *Chess Columns: A List* (Moravian Chess, 2003) that does indeed mention *Black and White* but doesn't give the start-date of the column, which I am now able to supply.



The Sponsor

The first issue of *Black and White*, which described itself as “a weekly illustrated record and review,” was published in London on Friday February 6, 1891 by Black and White Publishing Company, Limited, of 33 Bouverie Street, E.C.

Black and White was registered as a newspaper with the G.P.O. (General Post Office) and a copy did indeed cost sixpence. The first number had 36 pages and annual Christmas issues were larger, but issues typically had 32 lavishly-illustrated pages of a format that was similar to today's tabloids.

At the beginning, there was no chess column. There were many advertisements, some taking a whole page, so clearly there was a market for such a publication. The publishers proudly announced:

“The three pillars of our enterprise are good art, good literature and good printing. For the last twenty-one years no illustrated journal of importance has been established in Great Britain...”

“Every week will be recorded in *Black and White* whatever is important in home and foreign politics, in the social movements of England and abroad, in literature, in art and in science. In home politics we shall be neutral...”

For the present, no serial stories would be carried, but each issue would have a complete short story by an eminent writer. The absence of serials I take to indicate a sign of confidence and an assurance to prospective subscribers that crude cliff-hangers would not be resorted to in the hope of retaining their loyalty.

The formula seems to have succeeded for more than a decade. So far as I have been able to ascertain, *Black and White* was published weekly until early in 1912 when, according to the catalogue of the British Newspaper Library, it became incorporated in another publication called *The Sphere*.

In the early years at least, a supplement was published at the end of each June and December, containing a detailed index to text and illustrations in the 6-month volume just ending. From these indexes, it can be seen that there was no chess content in 1891-92 and I did check several sample issues from the first four volumes without finding any.

It was in the fifth volume, dealing with the first six months of 1893, that I found what I was looking for. If Whyld's useful book had already been in my possession, I need not have checked the earlier volumes, yet it was interesting to have a look at them anyway.

In the year 1893, the paper was being published (or at least dated) the Saturday of each week instead of the Friday. The first issue which concerns us is that of Saturday, March 4, 1893, which begins with a photograph below the paper's masthead, of new US President Grover Cleveland (bearing a startling resemblance, to the modern eye, to Joseph Stalin). Near the front of that issue on page 246 there was an editorial announcement, laid out exactly as follows.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It has been decided to add to the many other features of "BLACK AND WHITE" a

WEEKLY CHESS COLUMN.

In order to make this Column especially attractive, it has been decided to begin with

A MASTERS' TOURNAMENT,

In which the competitors are Messrs. H. E. BIRD, J.H. BLACKBURNE, TEICHMANN, JAMES MASON, S. TINSLEY, and VAN VLIET.

A report and analysis of the games will be found in the chess column on pages 272 and 274.

The chess column itself was to be found on the top half of those pages (the lower halves and the whole of page 273 being advertisements). The title of the column was *The Chess Board* and the paper had a small line-art graphic to head it, although in some later weeks this was omitted due to pressure on space.

The Organiser

The columnist was Leopold Hoffer (1842-1913), the Budapest-born chess writer who had come to Britain in 1870. Hoffer begins:

“In response to the wish of a large number of our readers we have decided to add a weekly Chess Column...”

“We have organised a Masters’ Tournament, the games in which will be the exclusive property of this Journal.”

I am not sure if this ploy was a novelty; the fact that Tinsley remarked on it may suggest that it had not been attempted hitherto. Subsequent attempts of this kind have also been resisted by the chess world. However, since the article in *BCM* was written by one of the players and the tournament organiser, Hoffer, was the editor of the other main English magazine of the time, *Chess Monthly*, he was able to control what these publications said about the event.

In B&W he wrote, “Six of the best players compete, and judging from the play in the first round, which commenced on February 27, it bids fair to be one of the most interesting tournaments ever held. The players are as nearly as possible of equal strength, and the contest promises to bring out some first-class games.”

The March issue of *Chess Monthly* announced the event, giving round one results, and stated: ‘The tournament is endowed by *Black and White*, the games to be the property of that journal, and published weekly, with annotations by Mr. Hoffer, who has been entrusted with the conduct of the chess column, which will form one of the additional attractions of this highly artistic illustrated paper’.

Of course a 6-man round-robin only meant 15 games and so it would have been all the more important to *Black and White* and to Hoffer that the quality be good.

The Players

The competitors as listed in the announcement quoted above, but adding Teichmann’s initial R, though strangely not that of Mr van Vliet. According to the recognised authority in such matters, Jermeý Gaige’s *Chess Personalia*, the minor master Louis van Vliet was born circa 1868 in the Netherlands and died on June 15, 1932 in London. His Elo historical rating is given by Gaige as 2400, but the games suggest he was the weakest player in this tournament.

Samuel Tinsley (1847-1903) was the least distinguished of the home representatives but appears to have been of genuine master strength in this decade. Certainly he did not disgrace himself at Hastings 1895, where he won several games.

The former world title contender Isidor Gunsberg, who lived in England, had been invited but did not play, probably due to ill health; he does not feature

in *MegaBase* at all in the years 1893-4.

Hoffer sounded a bit piqued at the unavailability of Gunsberg, which doubtless lowered the prestige of his event somewhat. He wrote:

“Mr Gunsberg, who entered originally and signed the conditions, withdrew at the last moment, and it having been left to the five competitors to choose a sixth in his stead, they have voted for Mr Teichmann. He has won his first game against Van Vliet, and it is expected that he will make a good fight.”

Teichmann had apparently come to live in England in 1891 or 1892, working initially as a language instructor. Jack Spence's game collection *The Chess Career of Richard Teichmann* (The Chess Player, Nottingham, 1970) has no game from 1893 and does not mention the *Black and White* tournament. Instead Spence's introduction states:

“He made his debut in master circles at Leipzig in 1894 where he was 3rd to Dr. Tarrasch and Paul Lipke as part of the English contingent which included Blackburne and Mason”.

It's true that the 9th DSB Congress in Leipzig was a more illustrious and lengthy event, with 18 players, but the *Black and White* tournament was Teichmann's true international master debut. Indeed it was perhaps his relative success in this event that led to his being invited to participate in Leipzig the following year. He had shown he could compete in such company.

The other three players — Henry Edward Bird (1830-1908), Kilkenny-born James Mason and Joseph Henry Blackburne (1841-1924) — were all regular participants in major chess tournaments of this era.

The Conditions

The games were played at Simpson's Divan in the Strand on five successive days, February 27-March 3, but as they were to be spread over many weeks of publication, it was important to all that some secrecy was maintained. There was no attempt to keep the results secret as the second column gave the final crosstable, but the game scores were not released.

This reminds me of the launch of the BBC TV *Master Game* series (in the 1970s); I attended one of the early recordings, if not the very first. Everyone attending had to promise not to reveal what happened in the games and I am not aware of any breach of security (though possibly there were some in later series).

The main conditions of the Tournament were: All-play-all. Time limit 40

moves in 2 hours, then 20 moves per hour. Daily 2-6 adjournment session 7.30-11pm. Prizes: £30, second £20 and third £10.

Hoffer made some remarks about public opinion favouring shorter contests. "Tournaments of longer duration tire the attention and finally flag altogether". His private view was probably different; I suspect from his comment in the April Chess Monthly ("The tournament was as successful as short contests are expected to be.") that he would have liked a bigger event but had to settle for what the sponsor's budget would allow.

He remarked that different conditions would have been made regarding draws "had the drawing up of the conditions not been left with the players". Mason was the only one who "was in favour of curtailing the value of the draws" (i.e. he would have preferred draws to be replayed apparently); yet in the end Mason had four of them.

Hoffer's report in Chess Monthly also sounds a bit peeved on this point. He listed results with the openings and gave crosstable. Then he said:

"If the drawn games could have been eliminated it would have improved the standard of the games; but as the proprietors of *Black and White* imposed no conditions, beyond that the games should be published originally in their journal, it could not have been expected that the players, who were permitted to draw up their own rules, would adopt any conditions which might entail additional exertions."

Again he remarked that: "Mason was the only one who advocated a modification of counting draws; but his proposal found deaf ears."

Hoping, no doubt, that readers would be tempted to buy the paper, Hoffer only gave one more paragraph about the event in his magazine.

"The usual playing to the score occurred, Blackburne trying to keep just his bare half game a-head of the next best men, and drawing a game so long as it did not endanger his prospects. Teichmann really had the best chance of tie-ing with Blackburne, had he not thrown away a game with Mason, which he could have drawn easily. Bird, of course, did not play up to his mark; but with him it is now a matter of health. It should also be mentioned that Van Vliet could have changed places with Tinsley, had he won the game with him, which he had entirely in his own hands."

Pairings and dates for each round were listed in the first column, adding that:

"Reports and analyses of the games will appear from week to week in this column during the progress of the Tournament."

Since all games had actually been played before the first column was published, this may seem a strange way of putting it. However, deadlines and printing/distribution meant that only the first round had been played when Hoffer was writing the bulk of the column and he did add the second round results (without the moves) in a final paragraph.

The first column showed two annotated games from round 1: Blackburne-Mason and Van Vliet-Teichmann (see below). There was also a chess problem and two short notices; one was about the upcoming Oxford-Cambridge universities chess match to be held and the other concerned a 100-board match to take place between the Metropolitan and Ludgate Circus chess clubs. Hoffer was an energetic chess organiser as well as journalist. He was probably the main force behind the staging of both these contests.

The First Round (Feb 27)

The fact that the draw matched the favourites in the very first round may have accounted for the caution with which the following game was played. Tinsley's description of it for *BCM* was:

“...After an irregular opening, Blackburne with a view to attack and scarcely expecting it to be taken, threw forward his K Kt P, and nothing coming of it, he drew by perpetually attacking the Queen at move 17.”

Joseph Blackburne – James Mason

Black & White tourney, London (rd. 1), 27.02.1893

1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 d4 exd4 5 Nxd4 Nxd4

Hoffer's notes are not very enlightening; he seems a bit baffled by the transpositions in the opening. At this point he wrote: “Black was probably misled by these sudden transpositions, and might not have recognised the opening, for he should have continued 5...Bb4 6 Nxc6 bxc6 or 6...dxc6, as usual in this variation.”

6 Qxd4 d6

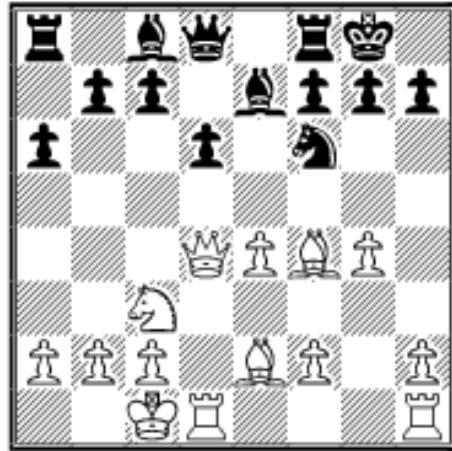
Then he contradicted himself: “Now we have a third and final change, viz. Philidor's Defence. It is just probable that Mr Mason designedly selected this defence, for he is rather partial to games of this kind, such as the Philidor, the Petroff, or the French.”

7 Bf4 Be7 8 0–0–0 0–0 9 Be2

“A natural move; it develops a piece and prevents the adverse knight from

attacking the bishop. As it turned out, however, 9 h3 followed by the advance of the g-pawn, would have been better,” said Hoffer.

9...a6 10 g4!?



10...Nxg4 11 Bxg4

Hoffer's weakness as an analyst is evident in his note here: "11 Rhg1 would have been better, and might have probably led to a winning attack. Supposing Black to have continued with 11...Bf6 then White would have replied 12 Qd2 Nxf2 13 Bh6 Nxd1 14 Bxg7 and wins."

In that variation, 13...Nxd1 is a losing blunder, whereas after 13...Kh8 the capture on g7 doesn't even lead to a clear draw. Blackburne's choice seems better but Mason seems to acquiesce in a draw rather too easily.

11...Bxg4 12 Rdg1 Bf6 13 Qe3 Be6 14 e5 dxe5 15 Bxe5 Qe7

Hoffer doesn't comment here but this looks like a wasted tempo and 15...Re8 would have been better.

16 Bxf6 Qxf6 17 Ne4 Qe7 18 Nc5 Qf6 19 Ne4 Qe7 20 Nc5 Qf6 21 Ne4 Qe7 22 Nc5 Draw agreed.

The two continental players also met on the first day. Here is what happened in their game, and I include Hoffer's notes in full. My impression is that Hoffer repeats himself and states the obvious; when he is not doing this he is often making crass remarks or outright errors?

Louis Van Vliet - Richard Teichmann

Black & White tourney, London (rd. 1), 27.02.1893

Hoffer B&W vol.5 p272-4.

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 d3 d6 6 c3 Be7

The text-move is one of the oldest, but perfectly safe, defences.

7 h3

This precautionary move, unless it is intended to support the advance of the g-

pawn, might be dispensed with.

7...b5 8 Bc2

8 Bb3 and if 8...Be6 then 9 Bc2 is preferable.

(Presumably Hoffer meant that 8...d5 then could be met by 10 Ng5 so that Black might have to play 9...h6 but this isn't very convincing.)

8...d5 9 Qe2 dxe4 10 dxe4 Be6 11 Bd3 Qd6 12 0-0 Rd8 13 Rd1

13 Ne1 so as to be able to advance f4 at an opportune moment seems preferable.

13...Bc4 14 Ne1 0-0 15 Na3 Bxd3 16 Rxd3 Qe6 17 Nac2 Qc4 18 f3 Bc5+ 19 Be3 Nh5 20 Kh2 Nf4

He might have taken the bishop previous to the text move as he gets a doubled pawn by the transaction.

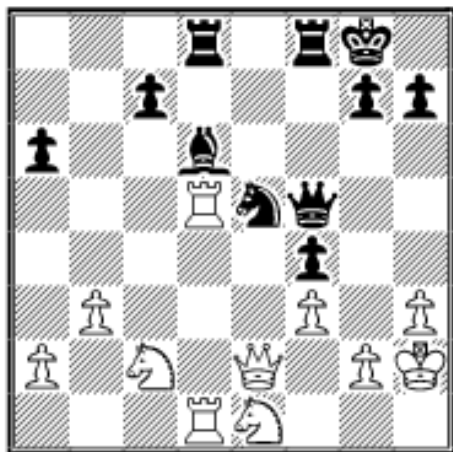
21 Bxf4 exf4 22 b3 Qe6 23 Rad1 Qg6 24 Rd5 Bd6 25 c4 bxc4 26 Qxc4 Ne5 27 Qe2

He cannot take the a-pawn because of 27 Qxa6 Ra8 etc.

27...f5

Being able to undouble this pawn and open another file gives Black a decided advantage.

28 exf5 Qxf5



29 Nd3?

An oversight which loses the exchange and practically the game.

(Tinsley's comment on White's 29th was: "It was a case of bad luck for White, but an oversight all the same".)

29...Ng4+ 30 hxc4 Qxd5 31 Nf2 Qg5 32 Ne4 Qh4+

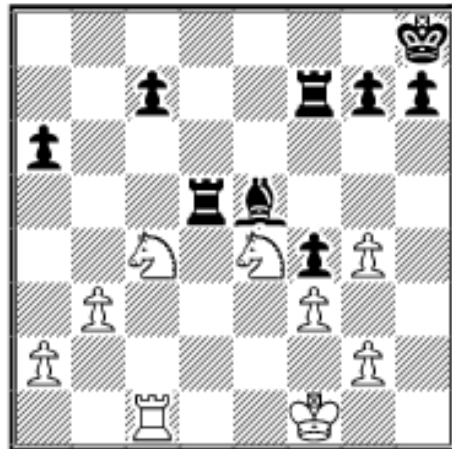
32...Qh6+ would have saved a move.

33 Kg1 Be5 34 Qc4+ Kh8 35 Rf1 Qh6

This move he could have saved had he checked at h6 on his 32nd move.

36 Re1 Qb6+ 37 Kf1 Qb5 38 Na3 Qxc4+ 39 Nxc4 Rd5 40 Rc1 Rf7

To defend the c-pawn since White threatens Nxe5 and Rxc7.



41 Ng5 Re7 42 Ne4 h6 43 Ke2 a5 44 Nxe5 Rdx5 45 Rc4 Rd5 46 Kf2 g5 47 Rc2 Kg7 48 g3 Rd4 49 gxf4 gxf4 50 Nc3 Red7 51 Ne4 Re7 52 Rc5 a4 53 bxa4 Rxa4 54 Nc3 Ra3 55 Nd5 Rxa2+ 56 Kf1 Rd7 57 Rxc7 Rxc7 58 Nxc7 Kf6 59 Nb5 Ke5 60 Nc3 Ra3 61 Ne4 Rxf3+ 62 Nf2 Rxf2+

Simple and speedy.

63 Kxf2 Ke4 0–1

Resigns, for if 64 K moves, then the f-pawn advances, followed by ...Kf4 etc. It is to be regretted that Mr Van Vliet's oversight mars the soundness of this well-fought game.

The game between the two English amateurs was published in the following week's *Black and White* chess column (March 11, 1893, pages 304-6). Tinsley's own comment in *BCM* was that his game with Bird "was a good fight, hard and prolonged. The feature was an advanced a-pawn which Black might possibly have captured in the middle-game by exchanging Kt for B."

Here is what happened.

Samuel Tinsley – Henry Bird

Black & White tourney London (1), 1893

Notes by Hoffer (shortened) from B&W vol. 5 pp304-6.

1 d4 f5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e3 Bb4 5 Qb3 c5

The drawback of this move is that it leaves the d-pawn weak, and gives White an open d-file.

6 dxc5 Bxc5 7 Nf3 Nc6 8 Be2 0–0 9 0–0 b6 10 Rd1 Bb7 11 Na4 Be7

11...Na5 at once would have compelled the queen to retire, and the game would have ensured a different shape. Some variations which we have tried on examining the position turn out more favourable for Black. But as Mr Bird had a good enough game right up to the end, his line of play might as well stand.

12 c5 Na5 13 Qa3 Ne4

13...bxc5 would be inferior because of 14 Nxc5 Ne4 15 Nxe6 dxe6 16 Rxd8 Bxa3 17 Rxa8 Bxa8 18 bxa3 with a pawn ahead.

14 b4 Nc6 15 Rb1 Qe8 16 Bb2 a5

This is somewhat dangerous, if not of doubtful value.

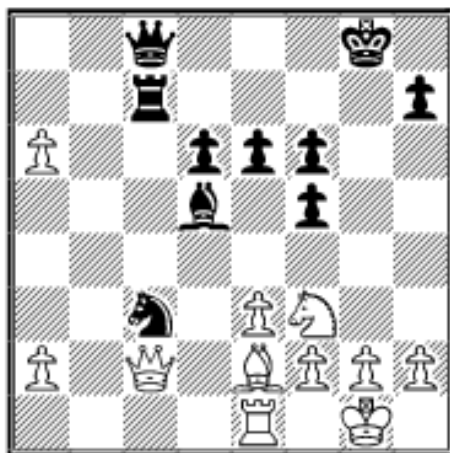
17 b5

17 Nxb6 axb4 18 Q moves, Nxc5 with a better game.

17...Nb8 18 Bd4 bxc5 19 Nxc5 Bd5 20 Rbc1 d6 21 Na6 Nxa6 22 bxa6 a4

Or the alternative move 22...Qd8. The choice, however, though difficult in such a complicated position, should be with the latter move, since Black loses a pawn.

23 Rc7 Rc8 24 Rxc8 Qxc8 25 Qxa4 Bf6 26 Bxf6 gxf6 27 Re1 Nc3 28 Qc2 Rf7 29 Kh1 Rc7 30 Kg1



Mr Bird lets the opportunity slip to at least equalise the game now with 30...Nxe2+ 31 Qxe2 Rc2 32 Qb5 Rxa2 and probably also [R will soon take] White's weak a-pawn.

30...Nxa2 31 Qb2 Nc3 32 Bf1

The advanced a-pawn becomes dangerous supported as it now is by White's bishop.

32...e5 33 Ra1 Ba8 34 a7 Kf7 35 Qb8 Nd5 36 Rb1 Ne7 37 Nd2 Nc6 38 Nc4 Ke6

If 38...Nxb8 39 Nxd6+ K moves, 40 axb8=Q and wins at least a piece.

39 Qb3

White's position is so strong that he could even leave his queen *en prise*, and play 39 Nb6 and win.

39...d5 40 Nb6 Qd8 41 Nxd5 Rb7

The knight cannot be taken because of 42 Bc4.

42 Nf4+ Ke7 43 Qe6+ Kf8 44 Rxb7 Bxb7 45 Nh5 Qe7 46 Qxf5 Nxa7 47 Nxf6 Bc8 48 Qxh7 Qc5 49 Qg8+ Ke7 50 Qg7+ Kd8 51 h4 Nc6 52 h5 1-0

“A very good game, full of ingenuity and equally creditable to winner and loser.”

The Second Round (Feb 28)

In the second round, Bird played his own opening although Hoffer called it the ‘King’s Bishop’s Pawn Opening’. Tinsley summarised for *BCM* readers thus: “Bird got a fine game against Van Vliet but overlooked a move by which his opponent gained a pawn with a Kt attack, a crushing sort of move, which he followed up by a fatal check. It was a splendid finish in 27 moves.”

Henry Bird – Louis Van Vliet

Black & White tourney London (2), 1893

Notes based on those by Hoffer, B&W vol.V p333.

1 f4 d5

1...e5 2 fxe5 d6 3 exd6 Bxd6 “has proved one of the best continuations to this opening” observed Hoffer.

2 Nf3 g6 3 e3 Bg7 4 c4 e6 5 Nc3 Nf6 6 d4 b6 7 Bd3 Bb7 8 cxd5 exd5 9 0-0 Nbd7 10 Ne5 Ne4

He should have castled now, said Hoffer.

11 Nxe4 dxe4 12 Bb5 Bxe5 13 fxe5 Qe7



14 Bc4

“Of course White could play 14 Bxd7+ and post his rook at f6, where it could not be dislodged; he has also an open c-file; but having the advantage thus early in the game, Mr Bird prefers not to give any drawing chances to his opponent, by remaining with bishops of opposite colour.”

14...f5 15 Bd2 0–0–0 16 Qb3?

This hasty move costs a pawn, and probably the game. 16 Qe2 followed by bringing the rooks on to the open c-file, left White with winning chances.

16...Nxe5 17 Bb4 c5 18 dxc5 bxc5 19 Be6+ Kb8 20 Bc3



20...Qc7

A subtle device; though apparently the best move.

21 h3 Nf3+!

As pretty as it is forcible.

22 Rxf3

If 22 gxf3 Qg3+ 23 Kh1 exf3 and wins.

22...exf3 23 Bxh8 Rd2 24 e4 Rxc2+ 25 Kf1 Rg1+ 26 Kf2

26 Kxg1 Qg3+ and mates in two more moves. The clever final combination initiated with the 20th move was vigorously carried out by Mr van Vliet.

26...Qg3+ 27 Ke3 f2+ 0–1

Teichmann's inexperience was revealed in the next game, of which Tinsley gave this account: “A curiosity was the game (Four Kts) Teichmann v. Mason. The German brought his forces to bear upon Mason's king, and Mason's position looked bad, when he quietly moved a pawn one square, defending, assumed a little attack, and there was nothing for Teichmann but resignation, his king being insecure (22 moves).”

Richard Teichmann – James Mason

Black & White tourney London (2), 1893

B&W vol.V p368.

1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 Bb5 Bc5 5 0–0 0–0 6 Nxe5 Nxe5 7 d4 Bd6 8 f4 Nc6 9 e5 Be7 10 exf6 Bxf6 11 Ne2 d5 12 f5

Hoffer's comment here was: "White's idea being to confine Black's queen's bishop. This could have been done better with 12 c3 and if then 12...Bf5 (and if 12...Bg4 then 13 h3 followed by an immediate advance of the king's pawns with advantage.) 13 Ng3."

12...Bd7 13 Rf3?! Re8 14 c3?



14...Nxd4

"Mason took a considerable time before capturing this pawn but having detected the flaw in White's combination, he saw that he could do so with impunity."

15 Nxd4 Bxd4+ 16 Qxd4 Bxb5 17 Bh6 f6 18 Rg3 Re7 19 Qg4

"Here at last is the flaw. Teichmann, probably in conceiving his plan,

overlooked that he cannot now take the f-pawn with his queen, because of the reply 19 Qxf6 Re1+ and his queen is lost. He is, therefore, reduced to the text move, and his game is lost."

19...Qd7 20 h3 Rae8 21 b3 Kh8 22 Bc1

"22 Bf4 is somewhat better; but he would have lost the game too. There is only one combination in the whole game, and this having failed, there is nothing more in it."

22...d4 23 Qf3 Re1+ 24 Kh2 Rf1 0–1

The meatiest game of the second round was the following, about which the second player observed: "Blackburne v Tinsley produced a somewhat novel variation of the King's Gambit Declined and Blackburne won a Pawn. There was a weak spot in White's game, however, on the Q side, and to this Black devoted unceasing attention, keeping White occupied in difficult defence, until at move 36 Black, to avoid checks, instead of drawing, walked into the enemy's country, and a fine quiet Blackburnian move won the Kt or mated by force (50 moves). This was a game of uncommon interest."

Joseph Blackburne – Samuel Tinsley
 Black & White tourney London (2), 1893
B&W vol.5 pp368-70.

1 e4 e5 2 f4 Bc5 3 Nf3 d6 4 Bc4 Nf6 5 Qe2 Nc6 6 fxe5 dxe5

Not 6...Nxe5? 7 Nxe5 dxe5 8 Bxf7+ Kxf7 9 Qc4+.

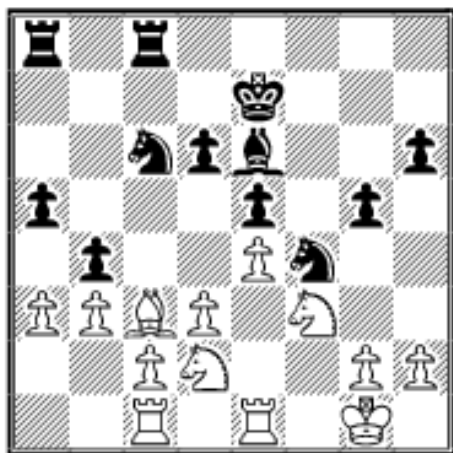
7 Bxf7+ Kxf7 8 Qc4+ Ke7

He cannot interpose 8...Be6 because of 9 Ng5+ etc.

9 Qxc5+ Qd6 10 Qxd6+ cxd6 11 d3 h6 12 0–0 Be6 13 Bd2

Hoffer said 13 Nh4 would be a good move here; he also criticised White's 14th move.

13...g5 14 Bc3 Nh5 15 Nbd2 b5 16 b3 Rhc8 17 Rac1 a5 18 a3 Nf4 19 Rfe1 b4



20 axb4 Nxb4 21 Bxb4

He cannot play 21 Nc4? at once because of 21...Na2.

21...axb4 22 Nc4 Bxc4 23 dxc4 Ra2 24 g3

“Here we would suggest 24 Nd2 followed by Nf1 and then Ne3 where the knight would be well posted commanding d5 and guarding the weak c-pawn, thus

relieving the queen's rook from defending that weak spot.

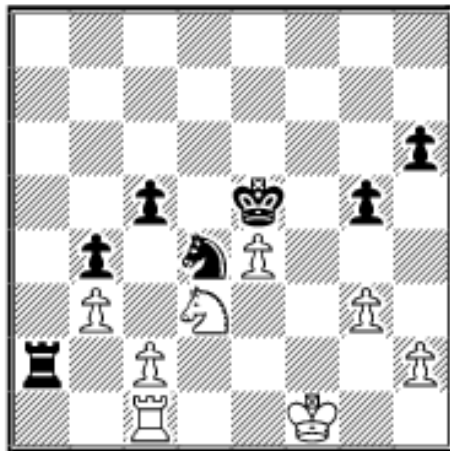
24...Ne6 25 Red1 Nc5 26 Nd2 Rb2 27 Rf1 Ne6

“Mr Tinsley took advantage of his opponent's omissions with ability, and kept him on the alert up to this point. He might have maintained and even increased the pressure by threatening to double his rooks on White's c-pawn by ...Ra8 and then the same rook to a2.”

28 Rf2 Rf8 29 Rxf8 Kxf8 30 c5

“Now Mr Blackburne gets a chance of resuming the attack. “

**30...dxc5 31 Nc4 Ra2 32 Nxe5 Nd4 33 Kf1 Ke7 34 Nd3 Kd6 35 Ne1 Ke5
36 Nd3+**



36...Kxe4!? 37 Nxc5+ Ke3??

“This is an oversight but Mr Tinsley played the latter part of the game, commencing with the offer of exchanging one of the rooks, less energetic than the previous part. Of course, if he could bring his king to the rescue, he had now winning chances but he did not calculate far enough.”

Black should play 37...Kf5 but Hoffer wrote: “The alternative was 37...Kd5 38 Nd3 Kc6 etc. (not 38...Nxc2?? because of 39 Rxc2 Rxc2 40 Nxb4+ and wins).” Of course after 38...Kc6 White has 39 Nxb4+ so maybe he had set up the position wrongly with the black rook on b2.

38 Rd1!

“This fine move wins the game. Black must lose the knight to save the mate at d3. The rest is plain sailing, but Mr Blackburne does not deserve to win the game, for he rarely played more indifferently.”

38...Kf3 39 Rd3+ Kg4 40 Rxd4+ Kh3 41 Rd2 Ra1+ 42 Kf2 Rh1 43 Ne4 Rxh2+ 44 Kf3 Rxd2 45 Nxd2 h5 46 Ne4 g4+ 47 Kf2 Kh2 48 Nf6 h4 49 Nxg4+ Kh3 50 gxh4 1–0

The column in *Black and White* for March 11, 1893 gives the final table and comments and the third game from the first round (Tinsley-Bird) plus various news items.

However, while Hoffer did not keep his readers in any further suspense, and published the crosstable in his second column, this may have been because he feared the news was about to leak out anyway. The games themselves were withheld and published at intervals over the next few weeks.

I shall be crueller than Hoffer, however, and make you wait until next month's Kibitzer column to discover how the tournament came to an exciting conclusion!

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