



C O L U M N I S T S

The Kibitzer

Tim Harding

One Hundred Years Ago:
Chess in 1902

As regular readers know, my January column always looks back to the chess scene of 100 years ago.

The year 1902 was, frankly, not a vintage year. Once more, Emanuel Lasker was otherwise occupied and left the stage to others. The world champion did not return to the professional chess scene until 1904.

The immensely talented American, Harry Nelson Pillsbury, returned to the chess scene in Europe. He had missed the previous year's top events due to his marriage. Despite excellent results, he failed to win either of the season's top prizes, however.

Pillsbury toured Germany and other parts of Europe after playing the Monte Carlo tournament (February 1–March 12) in which he had to settle for second prize by the smallest possible margin, a quarter of a point, behind the Hungarian Geza Maroczy.

The quarter of a point arose because of the system of scoring draws. These were replayed, as in many former tournaments, but with the difference that the first game was scored $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ with the second game deciding the second half point.

This made for a tough schedule if you had several draws. However, as the event was spread over five weeks this was perhaps not too arduous.

With 20 players, there were 19 rounds but one of the back-markers, L.Eisenberg, had to play 23 games. With a draw and then a loss against Marshall, Eisenberg would have scored $\frac{1}{4}$ -pt and Marshall $\frac{3}{4}$ -pt under the rules of the event. In all, Eisenberg had four first-round draws of which he lost three replays (for $\frac{1}{4}$ -pt apiece) and won one replay (for $\frac{3}{4}$ -pt), and his total score for these four mini-matches was $1\frac{1}{2}$ points. He scored $\frac{3}{15}$ in the matches that were concluded by the first game.

Tournament winner Geza Maroczy (Hungary) had an even more arduous time, playing 24 games. With Janowski, Mason, Chigorin and Tarrasch — all very tough opponents — he not only began with a draw but also the replays were a draw, so it took him 8 games to score 2 points against them! His other draw was against Mieses but he managed to win the return game with Black to score three quarters of a point in this mini-match.

Against the other fourteen players in the tournament, he made 12 wins and 2 losses at the first attempt, including the decisive win against Pillsbury. His losses were to Gunsberg and Schlechter.

In the little book *Games From Monte Carlo vol. 1* by former Scottish Champion P. Wenman (published in 1945) the following draw is described as “one of the best games of the tournament”.

Queen’s Gambit/Stonewall Dutch

James Mason – Geza Maroczy Monte Carlo 1902

1 c4 e6 2 Nf3 d5 3 e3 Nd7 4 Nc3 c6 5 d4 f5 6 cxd5

This exchange prevents a normal Stonewall Dutch from arising. I am unsure what the ECO code for this line should be! Chessbase 8.0 classifies this as A13 (because of White’s 1 c4) but I don’t believe that is right.

6...exd5 7 Bd3 Qf6 8 Qc2 Nh6 9 Bd2 Bd6 10 g3 Nf8 11 Qa4 Nd7 12 Qc2 0-0 13 h3 Rf7 14 Be2 Nf8 15 0-0-0 b5 16 Rdg1 a5 17 Ne1 Rc7 18 Nd3 Qe7 19 Kb1 a4 20 Bf3 Nf7



21 Bxd5?!

Wenman commented: "A speculation. He wins a Pawn but has to put up with a strong attack in consequence". But what if the bishop is captured? Wenman does not say.

21...cxd5 does seem playable, for if 22 Nxd5 Rxc2 (22...Qd8!?) 23 Nxe7+ Bxe7 24 Kxc2

White has Rook and two pawns versus Bishop and Knight, but who does this favour here? After 24...Bb7 White's rooks are awkwardly placed, and to avoid material loss White would have to play 25 Rh2, which looks very ugly.

21...b4?!

Maroczy preferred to be the one giving up material for an attack, but this choice seems misguided.

22 Bxf7+ Qxf7 23 Nxa4 Rxa4 24 Qxa4 Ra7 25 Qc2 Qxa2+ 26 Kc1 b3 27 Qb1 Qa4 28 Bc3 Be6 29 Kd2 Qb5 30 Qf1 Bc4 31 Qe2 c5 32 Ra1 cxd4



This was the turning point according to Wenman, who said White should have taken the rook with at least a draw.

33 exd4 Re7

"After this move, Maroczy should have won the game" wrote Wenman.

34 Qf3 Bd5 35 Qxf5! g6 36 Qc8 Be4 37 Qa6 Qg5+ 38 f4 Qxg3 39 Rhe1 Bxd3?

Wenman correctly identified the point where Black missed a win. He gives 39...Re6 and if 40 Qc4? (I reckon 40 Rxe4 is a better practical chance.) 40...Bxd3 41 Qxd3 Bxf4+ etc.

40 Qxd6 Rxe1 41 Rxe1 Bc4 42 Re8 Qd3+ 43 Ke1 Qf1+ 44 Kd2 Qd3+ 45 Ke1 Qf1+ 1/2-1/2

Despite his large selection of games, Wenman did not include one victory by the tournament winner in his curious book! I suppose that he could not fathom Maroczy's undramatic but effective style. To rectify this, here is the great Hungarian's win against the runner-up.

Petroff Defence (C42)

**Geza Maroczy – Harry Nelson Pillsbury Monte Carlo
Monaco, 1902**

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bd3
Be7 7 0-0 Nc6 8 Re1 Bg4** White now has a choice between
9 c3 and 9 c4, two very different approaches to the question
of the centre in this variation, but see what happens.

9 c3 f5



10 c4!?

Maroczy considers Pillsbury's 9th to be a weakening move that changes the situation and so he sacrifices a tempo to punish it. The critical replies are 10...dxc4 and 10...Bh4 but even today top players are not agreed on who this line favours.

10 Qb3 0-0 11 Nbd2 Kh8 12 Qxb7 is considered critical here but Maroczy shows no interest in pawn-grabbing.

10...0-0 11 cxd5 Qxd5

Not 11 ..Nxd4? 12 Bxe4 fxe4 13 Qxd4 exf3 14 Qxg4.

12 Nc3 Nxc3 13 bxc3 Bxf3

Perhaps better here is 13...Bd6 14 Qb3 Qxb3 15 axb3 f4 16 Be4 and White is slightly better according to GM Jangjava's recent book on the Petroff.

14 Qxf3 Qxf3 15 gxf3 Bd6 16 Rb1 Rab8 17 Rb5

Despite his doubled f-pawn, White's active rooks and bishops give him a definite advantage, which Maroczy patiently converts to an endgame win.

**17...f4 18 Be4 a6 19 Rb1 Rfe8 20 Bd2 Kf7 21 Bd5+ Kf6
22 Rxe8 Rxe8 23 Rxb7**

Now is the time to cash in.

**23...Ne7 24 Be4 Nf5 25 Ra7 Rb8 26 Rxa6 g5 27 c4 Rb6 28
Rxb6 cxb6 29 Bc3 Nh4 30 h3 h5 31 c5 bxc5 32 dxc5+ Be5
33 c6! 1-0**

Like Maroczy, Pillsbury also played 24 games. He drew twice with Teichmann and made three quarters of a point against both Gunsberg and Heinrich Wolf. However with Chigorin and Marco he lost both the re-matches (with Black). An expensive loss for him was to the lowly-placed Eisenberg. However, Pillsbury did win a prize for the next game.

French Defence, MacCutcheon Variation (C12)
Harry Nelson Pillsbury - A. Reggio Monte Carlo, 1902

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Bb4

The MacCutcheon variation of the French was fashionable around this time and there were several games played in Monaco with Black scoring 50%. J.L. MacCutcheon himself was testing and promoting it; Black won both games in a correspondence match he played against Kenneth S. Howard in 1902.

5 e5 h6 6 Bh4!?



This move is probably underestimated nowadays, the bishop normally retreating to d2 or sometimes e3. In later years 6 exf6 was tried. The erudite book on the MacCutcheon by W. John Lutes (Chess Enterprises, 1991) says that although 6 Bh4 is sometimes attributed to Ossip Bernstein on the basis of a game

played in 1904, it had been played on several previous occasions and was probably Curt von Bardeleben's invention. He played it in a game, circa 1894, which was published by *Deutsche Schachzeitung*.

6...g5 7 Bg3 Ne4 8 Nge2

8 Qd3 was an awkward-looking move played in Mortimer-Gunsberg at Monte Carlo; Black eventually won.

8...c5

8...Nc6 is strange-looking but perhaps playable. 9 a3 Bxc3+ 10 bxc3 (10 Nxc3!? may be better.) 10...Qe7 11 f3 Nxc3 12 Nxc3 h5 13 Be2 Bd7 14 f4 g4 15 h3 gxh3 16 Rxh3 h4 17 Nh5 0-0-0 18 Nf6 Na5 19 Qb1 c5. This was played in Gunsberg-Mason, with a difficult struggle. Black won in a long endgame.

9 a3 Ba5?!

9...Bxc3+ was played in Monte Carlo between the two great American masters: 10 Nxc3 Nxc3 (This seems inferior. 10...Nxc3 11 hxg3 cxd4 12 Nb5 Nc6 was recommended in the *Handbuch*.) 11 bxc3 Qa5 12 Qd2 cxd4 (Marshall tries to improve on 12...c4 13 Be2 Nd7 14 0-0 Nb6 15 f4 Na4 16 fxg5 hxg5 17 Qxg5 Nxc3 18 Bh5 Ne4 19 Bxf7+ Kd7 20

Qg7 Qd8 21 Be8+! 1-0 Janowski-F.J.Lee, London 1899.) 13 cxd4 Qxd2+ 14 Kxd2 Nc6 15 c3 Bd7 16 h4 Ke7 17 hxg5 hxg5 18 Bd3 Na5 19 Ke2 Rxh1 20 Rxh1 Rc8 21 f4 Rxc3 22 Be1 Rb3 23 Bxa5 Rb2+ 24 Bd2 gxf4 25 Rb1 Rxb1 26 Bxb1 Kd8 27 Bxf4 Kc7 28 Bd3 b5 29 Bd2 Kb6 30 Bb4 a5 31 Bc5+ Kc6 32 Kf3 Bc8 33 Kf4 1-0 Pillsbury-Marshall, Monte Carlo 1902.

However, MacCutcheon theory advanced rapidly at this time and the man himself found an improvement (or was told it by Marshall). Instead of 10...Nxc3 or 10...Nxg3, MacCutcheon himself played 10...Qa5 11 Bb5+ (11 Qd3 Nc6 occurred later in Bernstein-Swidorski, Coburg 1904 and this is given as the main line of 6 Bh4 in the *Handbuch des Schachspiels*. I think that 11 dxc5!? also comes into consideration.) 11...Bd7 (Getting rid of the bad bishop, very different from Pillsbury-Marshall!) 12 Bxd7+ Nxd7 13 Qd3 Nxc3 (Black heads for a good endgame.) 14 Qxc3 Qxc3+ 15 bxc3 Nb6 16 Rb1 0-0-0 17 h4 Kb8 18 Ke2 Rc8 19 Rhc1 Na4 20 Kd2 cxd4 21 cxd4 Nc3 22 Rb3 Ne4+ 23 Ke3 Rc4 24 c3 Rhc8 25 hxg5 hxg5 26 Bh2 Rxc3+ 27 Rbxc3 Rxc3+ 28 Rxc3 Nxc3 29 Kd3 Nb5 30 a4 Na3 31 g4 Nc4 32 Kc3 a5 33 f4 gxf4 34 Bxf4 Kc7 0-1 Howard-McCutcheon, corr USA 1902. This game was published with notes by W.E.Napier in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, March 23, 1903.

10 b4!?

This is sometimes given an exclamation mark but it is not clearly best. 10 dxc5 is also supposed to be good for White, despite his broken pawns: 10...Nxc3 11 Nxc3 Bxc3+ 12 bxc3 Qa5 13 Qd2 Nd7 14 h4! Rubinstein-von Freymann, Vilnius 1912. This is the main reason why 9...Ba5 should be rejected.

10...Nxc3

Although not immediately disastrous, 10...cxb4 11 Nxe4 dxe4 12 axb4 Bxb4+ 13 c3 is unpleasant for Black despite his passed a-pawn, because his pawns are all over the place and his king will have no secure home. Now 13...Ba5 (13...Be7 14 Qc2! Qd5 15 h4) 14 h4 is a variation attributed by Lutes to Schwarz's book on the French. (Rolf Schwarz's theory books were essentially compilations containing nothing original, so this line probably stems from Pillsbury, or a contemporary annotator.)

11 Nxc3 cxb4 12 Nb5 bxa3+?!

This is definitely bad as it develops the white queen's rook. In my database I find the following given as Pillsbury-J.Ramos, 1903: 12...Nc6 13 h4 (13 axb4!? Bxb4+ 14 c3 looks sensible.) 13...f6 14 Nd6+ Ke7 15 exf6+ Kf8 16 hxg5 h5 17 Qg4 e5 18 Rxh5? (18 Nxc8 favours White) and now not 18...Bxg4?? 19 Rxh8 mate, but 18...b3+ 0-1. It is hard to believe this was a real Pillsbury game (unless from a simultaneous display). Can any reader clarify?

However, Black does seem to have a genuine improvement here. 12...b3+!? 13 c3 b2 14 Rb1 0-0 (threatening ...a6) is the sort of continuation that computers favour. Perhaps Black's counterplay is more real than might appear at first sight. 15 Qc2 a6 16 Nd6 and 15 Qh5 Kg7 both look unclear.

13 c3 Bc7 14 h4! a6 15 Rxa3 Bd7

This is hopeless. 15...Rg8 prevents White winning a pawn but the pieces invade instead: 16 hxg5 hxg5 17 Rh7 Bd7 18 Qh5.

16 Nxc7+ Qxc7 17 hxg5 Nc6 18 gxh6

Black has totally misplayed the variation and White is a pawn up with a winning position.

18...Na5 19 Qc1!

Supporting the queenside and heading for the kingside.

19...Bb5 20 Bh4 Bxf1 21 Kxf1 Nb3 22 Qg5 Qc4+ 23 Kg1 Kd7 24 Qe7+ Kc6 25 Rh3 Rh7 There is an alternate score that are given in some sources: 25...Rhe8 26 Qd6+ Kb5 27 Qd7+ Kb6 28 Ra4 Qc6 29 Rb4+ Ka7 30 Qxc6 bxc6 31 Rxb3 1-0 Now White simplifies to an endgame with an extra piece. 25...Rxb3 is the alternative. Now 26 Qd6+ Kb5 27 Qd7+ Kb6 28 Bd8+ is given by Lutes, citing the book *Schachmeister Pillsbury* by Bachmann, but 26 Rxb3! is stronger and probably what Pillsbury would have played: 26...b5 (Others lose at once e.g. 26...Qxb3 27 Qc5+ mating rapidly) 27 Rf3 Rh7 (27...f5 28 Rg3) 28 Rb4 Qe2 29 Rxf7 Qe1+ 30 Kh2 with an extra piece and a mating attack.

26.Qd6+ Kb5 27.Qd7+ Kb6 28.Ra4 Qc6 29.Rb4+ Ka7 30.Qxc6 bxc6 31.Rxb3 Rxb3 32.Be7 Rxb3 33.Bc5# 1-0

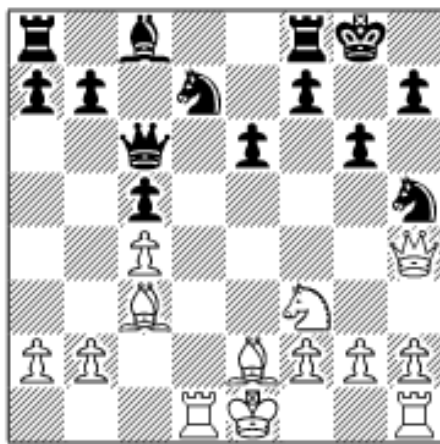
The English-born American, William Napier, also made a good showing in the year's two big events while the coming man of American chess, Frank Marshall, also impressed. In Monte Carlo, Marshall demolished Chigorin's own defence to the Queen's Gambit and against Schlechter he played his 4 e4 gambit against the Semi-Slav Defence which is very trendy at present.

Marshall,F - Schlechter,C [D31] Monte Carlo Monaco, 1902

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 c6 4 e4!? dxe4 5 Nxe4 Bb4+ 6 Bd2 Qxd4 7 Bxb4 Qxe4+ 8 Be2 Nd7 9 Nf3 c5

Trying to reduce the degree of weakness on the dark squares.

10 Bc3 Ngf6 11 Qd6 Qc6 12 Qg3 0-0 13 Rd1 Nh5 14 Qh4 g6?!



Schlechter doesn't want to play ...Nhf6 with a possible draw by repetition of moves. However, that is what he should have done.

15 Rxd7!

White wins two pieces for a rook because if 15. ..Bxd7 16 Ne5.

15...Qxd7 16 g4 Qd8 17 gxh5 Qxh4 18 Nxh4

Black still suffers from acute weaknesses and Marshall concludes efficiently.

18...e5 19 hxg6 hxg6 20 Rg1 Re8 21 Nf3 f6 22 Rxd7 Kf7 23 Rg3 Bd7 24 Nd2 Rh8 25 Ne4 b6 26 Rf3 f5 27 Bxe5 Rh4 28 Nd6+ 1-0

Final scores for all the players at Monte Carlo were: Maroczy 14¾, Pillsbury 14½; Janowski 14; Teichmann 13¼; Wolff, Tarrasch and Schlechter each 12 points. Chigorin 11½; Marshall 11; Gunsberg 10¾ and Napier 9½ pts. Below the 50% mark came Mieses 9¼; Mason 9; Albin 8½; Marco 7¾; Von Popiel 7¼; Von Scheve 5; Eisenberg 4½; Reggio 2 and Mortimer 1. Poor Mortimer's sole point came at the expense of Eisenberg.

So Monte Carlo 1902 was the strongest of the annual series of tournaments played in the principality of Monaco, beside the French Riviera, in the early years of the 20th century. It was the most star-studded tournament to be staged there until the appearance of Bobby Fischer in 1967. Chigorin was starting to decline, but still made a dangerous opponent for anyone. Tarrasch must have been disappointed with his result, too, despite winning this miniature, which is still in the theory books.

Sicilian Four Knights (B45)

A. Reggio - S. Tarrasch Monte Carlo, 1902

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Ndb5 Bb4 7 Bf4?!

7 a3 is a positional continuation, which should give White a

definite edge.

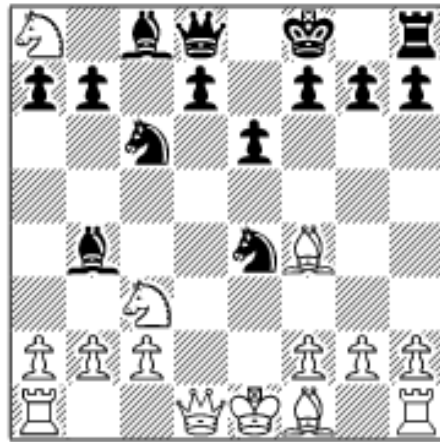
7...Nxe4! 8 Nc7+?

8 Qf3 is necessary but I would not rely on this path for White.

8...Kf8


The king is safer here. 8...Ke7?! 9 Qf3 d5 10 0-0-0 is complicated but probably favours White.

9 Nxa8?



This loses by force, as Tarrasch vividly demonstrated. 9 Qf3 transposes to some of the 8 Qf3 lines.

9...Qf6 10 Qf3 Nxc3 11 Bd2 Nd4!

 White's position will be utterly demolished in a handful of moves. Now 12 Qxf6 gets checkmated by 12...Nxc2.

12 Qd3 Qe5+ 13 Be3 Na4+ 14 c3

If 14 Kd1 then 14...Nxb2+ forks king and queen.

14...Nxb2 15 Qb1

Or 15 Qd2 Bxc3 16 Qxc3 Nf3+ 17 gxf3 Qxc3+

15...Bxc3# 0-1

Schlechter probably found his style unsuited to the system of replayed draws. He also had to play 24 games. He beat the tournament winner, Maroczy, but suffered several losses — to Chigorin, Marshall, Pillsbury and Tarrasch. Later

in the year, Schlechter reasserted his class by trouncing Janowski 7½-2½ in a match played in Karlsbad (now Karlovy Vary in Czechoslovakia). Having won this miniature in Monte Carlo must have helped his confidence.

Queen's Gambit (D31)

Carl Schlechter – Dawid Janowski Monte Carlo, 1902

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 a6

This is a mysterious move, possibly intending a delayed acceptance of the c-pawn. White's next squashes that idea.

4 cxd5 exd5 5 Qb3 c6

Janowski now has a big hole on b6. Schlechter just takes advantage of Black's time-wasting with a kingside attack.

6 e4 dxe4 7 Bc4 Qe7 8 a4 Nf6 9 Nge2 Bf5 10 0-0 Bg6 11 f4 exf3 12 Rxf3 Qd7 13 Nf4 Bd6 14 Re3+ Kf8 15 Rf3 a5 16 h3 Na6 17 Nxg6+ hxg6 18 Ne4!



18...Re8

If 18...Nxe4 19 Rxf7+ or
18...Be7 19 Ng5.

**19 Nxd6 Qxd6 20 Bf4 Qxd4+
21 Be3 Rxe3 22 Rxe3 Rh4 23
Rd1 1-0**

This same year Schlechter demolished Janowski in a match played at Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary). This is somewhat surprising in that the Janowski won the other great tournament of 1902, the German Open Championship, played in Hannover, in which he scored. It was a good year for the exiled Pole — who also won two small events that year in Paris, where he was now living — with the exception of that match with Schlechter, which makes the Austrian's crushing match victory even more impressive. The solid positional Schlechter apparently had just the right style to make life uncomfortable for Janowski.

When Janowski held the initiative, he was very dangerous as the following

game shows.

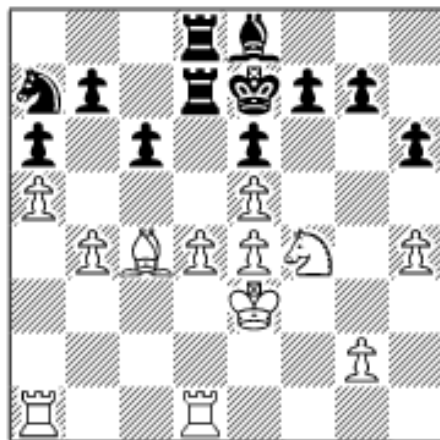
Queen's Gambit (D60)

Dawid Janowski - Mikhail Chigorin Hannover 1902

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 c4 e6 4 Bg5 c6 5 Nc3 Be7 6 e3 Nbd7 7 Bd3 0-0 8 0-0 dxc4 9 Bxc4 Nd5 10 Bxe7 Qxe7 11 Qd2 Rd8 12 Rfd1 Nf8 13 e4 Nb6 14 Bb3 Bd7 15 Qe3 Be8 16 a4 Qb4 17 Na2 Qa5 18 Qc3 Qh5 19 Nc1 Nbd7 20 Ne2 Nf6 21 Bc2 Ng6 22 a5 Qh6 23 b4 Nh5 24 Qe3 Nhf4 25 Nxf4 Qxf4 26 e5 Qxe3 27 fxe3 Ne7 28 e4

White has a grip on the position and the better minor piece.

28...Rd7 29 Kf2 Rad8 30 Ke3 Kf8 31 Bb3 h6 32 Ng1 Nc8 33 Ne2 Ke7 34 Nf4 a6 35 h4 Na7 36 Bc4



The pressure builds up and Chigorin tries to break out, but in only gives scope for Janowski's combinative ability.

36...c5 37 d5 cxb4 38 d6+ Kf8 39 Rf1 Kg8 40 Nxe6! fxe6 41 Bxe6+ Kh7 42 Rf8 Nc6 43 Rxe8! Rxd6 44 exd6 Rxe8 45 Bd7 Rb8 46 Bxc6 bxc6 47 Kd4

Janowski has rightly judged that his advanced passed pawn and active king are what count here.

47...Kg6 48 Rf1

White takes time to cut off the enemy king, having calculated that he will not need to blockade the b-pawn.

48...b3 49 Kc5 b2 50 d7 Rb3 51 d8Q Rc3+ 52 Kd4 Rc1 53 Qe8+ Kh7 54 Rf8 1-0. When black queens his pawn, White

gives mate by Rh8.

Pillsbury managed second prize at Hannover, with 12 points. Maybe he would have run Janowski closer, or even been first, if he had kept his energies for the main event. However, he also played a blindfold simultaneous against 21 opponents, some of them masters, who were competing in other sections of the Congress. This was a tough assignment, which took eleven and a half hours to complete for a minus score (+3 –7 =11). Nevertheless, later in the year Pillsbury beat his record with 22 simultaneous blindfold games against Moscow players.

Hannover 1902 is also noteworthy for the third prize taken by the great English master Henry E. Atkins (1872-1955), half a point behind Pillsbury. Atkins was a true amateur who played very few international tournaments. This was before his great run of nine victories in British Championships (including seven successive wins) began in 1905, a record that stood until Dr Jonathan Penrose had an even more fantastic streak in the 1950s and 1960s. FIDE awarded Atkins the IM title retrospectively in 1950 but his Hannover result was clearly a grandmaster norm performance.

Italian Game (C50)

James Mason – Henry Atkins Hannover 1902

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d3 d6 5 Be3 Bb6

White's slow opening makes no headway against the sound style of his opponent.

6 Nc3 Nf6 7 h3 Be6 8 Bb5 0-0 9 Bxc6 bxc6 10 0-0 Nd7 11 Bxb6 axb6 12 d4 f6

Atkins holds the strong-point e5 and White now makes a fateful decision which unbalances the pawn majorities.

13 d5?! cxd5 14 exd5 Bf7 15 Nh4 g6 16 Qd2 g5 17 Nf3 Bg6 18 Rfe1 Rf7 19 a4 h6 20 b4 f5

Methodical play by Atkins. His kingside pawn phalanx is more important than White's potential outside passed pawn.

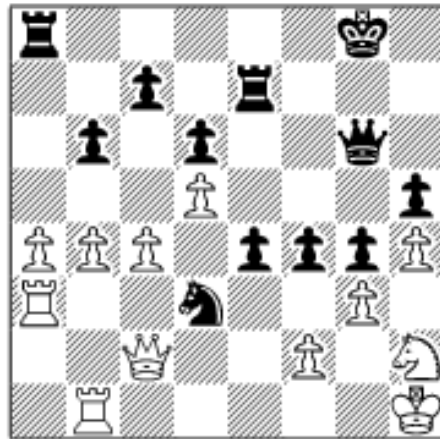
21 Nh2

21 a5 looks better but concedes a square: 21...bxa5 22 bxa5 Nc5.

21...h5 22 g3?

This passive move only helps Black to force open lines.

22...g4 23 h4 f4 24 Ne4 Bxe4 25 Rxe4 Qf6 26 c4 Qg6 27 Ree1 e4 28 Qc2 Re7 29 Ra3 Ne5 30 Kh1 Nd3 31 Rb1?



Now it is a rout; 31 Rf1 was necessary.

31...Nxf2+! 32 Qxf2 e3 33 Qe1 Qe4+ 34 Kg1 f3 35 Rxe3 Qxe3+ 36 Qxe3 Rxe3 37 Nf1 Re2 38 Ra1 Rae8 39 a5 bxa5 40 bxa5 Re1 41 Ra2 R8e2 42 Ra3 Rg2+ 0-1

Below Janowski, Pillsbury and Atkins in the 18-strong Hannover field came several who had also played in Monte Carlo: Mieses, Napier, Wolf, Chigorin, Marshall, Gunsberg, Von Popiel and Mason. The rest of the field was less distinguished perhaps, but more even. Unlike Monte Carlo, there were no patzers propping up the table with huge minus scores.

A selection of games played in the year 1902 can be downloaded in ChessBase or PGN format from my website: <http://www.chessmail.com/freegames.html>. This file will be available only for the weeks while this column is current, so don't delay, download today!

Next month I shall return to the topic of the Italian Game and I will try to bring the analysis to some kind of conclusion, taking into account readers' comments and queries, in the March column.

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