

29.IX.1996

Dear Dr Nunn,

As promised in my telefax 23 September, this weekend I have prepared a list of observations on Golombek's book about Capablanca. In accordance with your request, I have concentrated on historical matters rather than the annotations.

One general comment regarding spelling of players' names. Golombek had an eccentric love of German spellings. These include "Znosko-Borowski", "Dus-Chotomirski", "Löwenfisch", "Subarew", "Ragosin" and "Alatorzeff". I haven't systematically mentioned these throughout the list below, since I assume that you are able to do a spell-check to ensure consistency. Nor have I mentioned at all a number of prominent masters whose names Golombek writes peculiarly. Regarding the best spelling to use, I would recommend following Gaige's Chess Personalia wherever possible.

Since you mentioned that the forthcoming Batsford edition will omit the crosstables, I have disregarded them. For your information, they contain a number of errors.

In case you wish to check or discuss any matters with me, please note that next weekend I shall be abroad (in the UK). After two days at home, I then go off to Oslo (9-12 October).

Pp. xiii-xvi: a number of corrections to spellings and dates are required to the games list, in accordance with corrections given below.

P. 2: Dr Alekhine. As far as is known, Alekhine had no doctorate.

P. 2: 25, not 21 draws in the 1927 Capablanca v Alekhine match.

P. 2: for Capablanca's age read thirty-nine instead of thirty-eight.

P. 2: for date of AVRO tournament read 1938, not 1937.

P. 2: Capa celebrated his 50th birthday during the AVRO tournament, so was not "nearly fifty".

P. 2 and p. 3: Instead of José Raoul the more precise José Raúl is to be preferred. (+ young Raoul on p. 3)

P. 3: for Vasquez read Vázquez.

P. 3: At the time of the Corzo match Capablanca was not now aged twelve. He celebrated his 13th birthday during the match.

P. 3: Capablanca did not win the Corzo match 7-5. Depending how one interprets the match rules (see p. 116 of The Unknown Capablanca), the result was either +4 -2 =5 or +4 -3 =6. (I prefer the latter.)

P. 3: Capablanca first went to the Manhattan Chess Club in 1904, not 1905.

P. 4: for In that year, 1908, read In 1909

P. 4: for He played 168 games in ten consecutive séances before losing read He played 184 games in ten consecutive séances, conceding only two draws, before losing

P. 4: at the end of the paragraph the scores of his first tour should read 571 wins, eighteen draws and only thirteen losses, and not 703 wins, nineteen draws and only twelve losses.

- P. 5, line 5: for five consecutive games read six consecutive games
- P. 6: (list of countries at top of page): during that tour Capablanca also gave exhibitions in Prague and Budapest.
- P. 6: and yet 100 per cent. results were no isolated instances. In fact, Capablanca scored 100% only once in the 24 exhibitions.
- P. 6: for After he left Europe in 1912 read After he left Europe in November 1911
- P. 6: There were a few small tournaments. Not so. There were no tournaments at all in 1912.
- P. 6: The New York tournament in which Capablanca won all thirteen games (including a win by default against Stapfer) should be mentioned after, not before, Havana, 1913.
- P. 6: The reason Capablanca finished second to Marshall at Havana, 1913 was not that he lost one game to Janowski but that he lost two games, to Janowski and to Marshall himself.
- P. 6: on his way to St Petersburg, Capablanca gave exhibitions not only in London, Paris and Berlin but also Frankfurt, Warsaw and Lodz.
- P. 7 (line 5): for Vienna, Paris and Berlin read Vienna and Paris
- P. 7: for such as Nimzovitch, Dr Bernstein, Alekhine and others of the same class read such as Dr Bernstein and Tartakower. Alekhine should not be mentioned since he played no exhibition games with Capablanca beyond the two (1913 vintage) already dealt with at the top of p. 7. Capablanca played one exhibition game against Nimzowitsch, but it too was in 1913.
- P. 7: Of ten games he won eight and drew two. Whichever way the facts are looked at, this statement is untrue.
- Pp. 8-9: paragraph beginning An analysis of his results. The statistics are unfathomable. Instead, it could be said that from his 1909 match against Marshall to the Hastings, 1919 tournament, Capablanca lost only nine games (or ten games if exhibition games are included).
- P. 9: paragraph beginning As a matter of interest, after that date... Which date? It can hardly be 1919, since critics have not noticed a "great falling off" in Capablanca's play from that date. Moreover, it is specified that the "second period" includes the match against Alekhine ("Dr Alekhine"), without mention of the match against Lasker. That being the case, the statistics provided by du Mont are meaningless.
- P. 9: match against Lasker. For fourteen draws read ten draws
- P. 9: the first full masters' tournament in which he took part. London, 1922 was his first tournament after becoming world champion, and I don't see the point of the word full
- P. 10: At Moscow, 1925 Ilyin-Genevsky came equal ninth, not tenth.
- P. 10: At Moscow, 1925 Verlinsky came equal twelfth, not fourteenth.
- P. 10: At Lake Hopatcong, 1926, Kupchik was second with 5 points, not 4 1/2 points.
- P. 10: New York, 1927 was not a double-round affair. The masters played four games against each other.
- P. 10: ...should the champion fail to win, the winner was to be the accepted challenger. If the champion won, the runner-up would be entitled to a match. All this is untrue.
- P. 10: Capablanca's score at New York, 1927: for nine wins and eleven draws read eight wins and twelve draws.
- P. 10: Capablanca was 4 1/2 points ahead of Alekhine, not 3 1/2
- P. 11: chart of Capablanca v Alekhine results: Capablanca had 4

tournament wins, not 5. There were 8 tournament draws, not 7. For 3 exhibition game wins for Capablanca read 2. The totals should thus read (in Capablanca's favour) + 9 = 33 - 7 and not +11 - 32 - 7.

P. 11: in the next paragraph, beginning Omitting the exhibition games, the figures 8 wins, 32 draws, 7 losses should read 7 wins, 33 draws, 7 losses.

P. 11 (final paragraph): Capablanca's score at Budapest, 1928 should be given before Berlin, 1928 (incorrect chronological order).

P. 11: for Ramsgate, Barcelona and Budapest read Ramsgate, Budapest and Barcelona.

P. 11-12: no mention that Capablanca won Hastings, 1929-30.

P. 12: ...when he resumed his activities in 1935. He resumed at the 1934-35 Hastings tournament.

P. 12: for Semmering read Semmering-Baden (as elsewhere in the book).

P. 12: for date of Semmering-Baden tournament, read 1937, not 1935.

P. 12: at AVRO, 1938 Alekhine ("Dr Alekhine") was forty-six, not forty-seven.

P. 13: at Buenos Aires, 1939 Capablanca won seven and drew nine (not won six and drew four).

P. 13: Capablanca died of a heart attack. Not so: cerebral haemorrhage.

P. 14: first line: for In 1913 read In 1911

P. 14: autumn of 1941. Ilyin-Genevsky died on 3 September 1941.

P. 15: In 1935, after an interval of almost three years... A meaningless remark. Moscow, 1935 was 10 years after his last visit to the Soviet Union and one month after his last tournament (Hastings, 1934-35) but not "almost three years" after anything.

P. 15 (bottom line): for Principles of Chess read Chess Fundamentals

P. 16: Botvinnik had his revenge against Capablanca at Rotterdam in 1938 (AVRO), not Amsterdam.

P. 16: It is not correct that Capablanca wrote three books. There were also Cartilla de Ajedrez, his Havana, 1913 tournament book and his book on the Lasker match.

P. 16: subsequent reference to the first two [books] also requires amendment.

P. 17: Alekhine's two volumes of best games have 220 (annotated) games, not 250.

P. 17: It is untrue that Chess Fundamentals gave all his losses. He ended the book with fourteen of his games, including six of the ten losses he had ever sustained.

P. 18: The Capablanca/Vidmar anecdote cannot be true. See pp. 317-318 of my book on Capablanca.

Pp. 19-20: the tournament and match results have countless errors. For example (and this is only a sample): there was no New York, 1914 tournament; errors of chronological order; Hastings, 1929-30 is omitted; wrong score at Buenos Aires, 1939; wrong date of Corzo match; wrong number of draws in Lasker match; wrong date of Euwe match. I therefore suggest that you use the Capablanca tables on pp. 135-137 of my book World Chess Champions.

P. 21: Marshall was reckoned as well in the running for the world's championship. That was hardly the case in 1909, given his heavy loss to Lasker in 1907.

P. 21 and p. 23: since there is much doubt as to whether the

Capablanca v Corzo match was for the championship of Cuba, I do not think that the claim should be left uncommented upon in the headings to games 1 and 2.

P. 21: Heading to Corzo game: read EIGHTH MATCH GAME

p. 21: Heading to Corzo game: for 1900 read 1901

P. 22: final line: for twelve-year-old player read thirteen-year-old player

P. 23: Heading to Corzo game: read ELEVENTH MATCH GAME

P. 23: Heading to Corzo game: for 1900 read 1901

P. 23: 1W: Capablanca invariably played P-Q4. With the exception of the first match game, in which Capablanca played 1 e4.

P. 25: 9W: reference should read: Capablanca-Lasker, third match game, 1921

P. 26: Heading to Marshall game: for NEW YORK read MORRISTOWN

P. 27: 4B: Speyer may not be wrong, but Speijer is the usual spelling. After his name add 2nd match game. The date of the Lasker-Speijer game should read 1908, not 1909. Moreover, its actual move order was: 4 O-O Bd7 5 c3 g6 6 d4 Bg7 7 Bg5.

P. 29: in the heading, for NEW YORK read WILKES-BARRE

P. 33: 10B: This move (10...Kt-B3) has a question mark on p. 78, but not here.

P. 41: 10W: Regarding the Tartakower v Réti reference, Golombek implies that this is the best play on both sides. However, in the tournament book Alekhine criticized 14 P-Kt3.

P. 41: 10B: better is 12 B-Kt5. The Folkestone, 1933 tournament book recommends 12 B-Q2.

P. 42: 31B: The translator of the German edition (R. Teschner) expresses doubt about the proposed 31...Ng6, on account of 32 h5 Ne7 33 Nh6.

P. 43: Detailed analysis of the soundness of Capablanca's combination appears in Vuković's Art of Attack in Chess.

P. 44: heading to game 11: add: FIRST ROUND

P. 44: 8W: Panov says that 8 Bd3 "??" would lose the queen to 8...Ne6, but he does not mention 9 Nd5 in reply.

Pp. 46-50: games 12 and 13 are in the wrong chronological order and therefore need to be inverted.

P. 46: 11B: in the reference to Alekhine-Fine, for the date read 1937 and not 1936. (It was played at Hastings, 1936-37.)

P. 47: 12W: for Rauser read Rauzer

P. 47: 12W: for 1934 read 1936

P. 49: 8W: Lasker questioned 11...B-Kt5, recommending instead ...P-B4.

P. 54: 23B: Strange that Golombek does not mention Tarrasch's claimed improvement (23...Q-Kt5).

P. 55: 8B: For Sämisch read Sämisch, as elsewhere.

P. 55: 8B: The Pistyan, 1922 tournament book (p. 133) states that the game Sämisch v Selesniev went 10 Qd2 O-O 11 O-O Nxc3 12 Qxc3 b6 13 Qd3? Rd8 14 Qe2 c5 15 Rad1 Bb7 16 dxc5 Nxc5 Drawn.

P. 56: 20B: winning a piece?

P. 56: 26B: there is a shorter mate. See p. 78 of my book on Capablanca.

P. 57: 7W: the Tarrasch game in fact went 5 d3 g6 6 c3 Bg7 7 O-O Ne7 8 cxd4 Bxd4 etc.

P. 59: Marshall did not beat Capablanca in a tournament in New York (or anywhere else) during this phase. Marshall only won one tournament game from the Cuban, at Havana, 1913 (i.e. during the period covered by Chapter II).

P. 59: for **Servian** read **Serbian**

P. 62: heading to Kupchik game: add **SEVENTH ROUND**

p. 63: heading to Chajes game: add **FIFTH ROUND**

Consequently, the order of the Chajes and Kupchik games needs to be inverted in the book.

P. 65: 29B: This note is taken from Capablanca's My Chess Career, but p. 142 of the 1994 algebraic edition of that book referred to "30 Bg6?? Rxc6??", stating that 30...Nxc6 wins a piece.

P. 65: heading to Schroeder game: add **TENTH ROUND**

P. 66: 8W: the lack of a comma after 8 P-B5 gives the incorrect impression that Capablanca played both 8 P-B5 and 8 P-QR3 in his match against Alekhine. In fact he played only the latter. Moreover, from Golombek's note no-one would imagine that Capablanca also played 8 Pxp twice in the 1927 match.

P. 67: heading to Janowsky game: add **FINAL SECTION, THIRD ROUND**

P. 67: 5W: **Gothilf** rather than **Gotthilf**

P. 68: 5W: Golombek presents these moves from Torre-Gothilf without comment, but in the Moscow, 1925 tournament book Bogoljubow gives 11...Bxb3 a question mark and says that 11...Nc6 had to be played.

P. 69: 34W: In the German edition Teschner discusses 34 Rc1 Rxf4+

P. 77: 86W: for **Jugoslav** read **Yugoslav** (or **Serbian**, as noted under p. 59 above).

P. 79: 7B: the Noordwijk, 1938 tournament book states that the Eliskases v Landau game went 17 Rc1 cxd4 18 exd4 Nf6 19 Ne5.

P. 79: 7B: the Keres v Smyslov game actually went 6...b6 7 cxd5 exd5 8 Bd3 Bb7 9 Qc2 Nbd7 10 0-0 etc. Also, Golombek puts **Moscow, 1939**, but Keres' own collection has **Training tournament at Leningrad and Moscow, 1939**

P. 79: 8W: for **Rotlevi** read **Rotlewi**

P. 79: 9W: all the moves quoted for the 7th match game between Capablanca and Lasker are one move out of sequence here. The one-move discrepancy is explained by the move losses mentioned in note 2 on p. 317 of my book on Capablanca.

P. 96: 3B: both 5...P-KR3 and 8...P-QR4 are criticized in the Lachaga book on Semmering, 1926.

P. 96: 6W: it needs to be added that the Colle-Euwe game was the **5th match game**

P. 102: **The sacrifice of the Pawn is, however, unsound for Black. A very dogmatic, summary dismissal of the Marshall Gambit.**

P. 105: Chess Review 1953 had an article on game 34 which pointed out annotators' contradictory views.

P. 105: 6B: For the reference to Euwe-Keres, add **11th match game**. For the date, read **1940**, not **1939**. (The match took place in 1939-40, but this 11th game was played on 7 January 1940.)

P. 105: 6B: Black's 13th move in Eliskases v Bogoljubow was ...P-K4, not KtxKt.

P. 106: 10B: Inconsistent spelling **Janowsky** (elsewhere **Janowski**)

P. 106: 10B: The moves of the Marshall-Janowsky game are not correct. Play went 10...Kt-B3 11 Castles Castles 12 P-B4 P-KKt3, etc. Another

example of Golombek's indifference to accuracy regarding move transpositions.

- P. 118: 3B: the Réti-Grünfeld game went 6...c5 7 d3 0-0 8 e4.
P. 119: 6B: the Tartakower-Janowsky game went 9...Bg4 10 f3.
P. 120: game heading: for SUBAREW read SUBAREV
P. 122: game heading: for GOTTHILF read GOTHILF. His initial was S.
Pp. 122-127: since (as Golombek states) the Bogoljubow game was played one round earlier than the Gothilf one, the order of the two games needs to be transposed.
Pp. 124-127: there are some corrections of Golombek's analysis of Game 40 in my article in the 3/1996 New in Chess.
P. 127: game heading: add SIXTH ROUND
P. 133: 12B: for the date of the Tarrasch-Lasker match, for 1915 read 1916.
P. 136: 9B: Alekhine gave it a question mark in brackets, i.e. a minor error.
P. 140: 7B: This move does not have a question mark on p. 245.
P. 140: 8B: no mention of 8...Qd7, which on p. 245 is described as better than 8...e6.
P. 142: 41W: Capablanca missed a forced mate. See C.N. 1449 (pp. 20-21 of Chess Explorations).
P. 143: 9W: 9 B-R4 was not an innovation. See C.N. 1536 (pp. 98-99 of Chess Explorations).
P. 143: 16B: for Soultanbeieff read Soultanbéieff
P. 154: 2B: In the German edition this odd-looking recommendation of 2...e5 has been replaced by: "Nach 2...e5 3 S1c3 wäre eine geschlossene Spielart entstanden".
Pp. 159-170: the games are in the wrong chronological order, since the Budapest tournament predated the Berlin event. Consequently, the references to these events on p. 148 also need to be changed.
P. 161: heading: add TWELFTH ROUND
P. 162: 9B: it needs to be specified that Monticelli's opponent at Budapest, 1929 was Rubinstein.
P. 164: 2B: for Maroczy read Maróczy
P. 169: 7W: that previous game (against Marshall) had actually gone 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 a3 Nd4
P. 171: nobody has had the courage to employ it since this game (variation of the Queen's Indian Defence). Surely that can't be allowed to stand...
P. 174: 5B: add reference 7th match game. (The match itself took place in 1928-29 but the seventh game was indeed played in 1929.)
Pp. 177-189: although the round numbers are specified, the Carlsbad, 1929 games are not in the correct sequence.
P. 177: 5A: for 1926 read 1925. (It was played at Hastings, 1925-26 - on 30 December 1925.)
P. 177: 5B: for Ujpest read Budapest. The former was given by MCO-6, the latter by MCO-7.
P. 177: 5B: for Flohr-Botvinnik, specify 6th match game
P. 177: 7B: for Rubinstein-Sämisch the actual moves were 8 e3 Be7 9 Rd1 a6 10 Be2 Bb7 11 0-0 d6
P. 185: 7W: Rubinstein-Geiger began: 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 Nbd2 c5 4 e3 b6 5 Bd3 Bb7 6 0-0 Be7 7 dxc5 bxc5 8 b3 0-0 9 Bb2 Nc6 10 c4 Qc7 11 h3 Ne8 12 a3 f5 13 Qc2 Bf6.

- P. 188: 11W: see the notes I gave on p. 24 of Kingpin #16.
- P. 190: 8W: for Semmering read Semmering-Baden, as elsewhere.
- P. 191: 26B: the German edition has a translator's note saying that if 26...R6e7 then 27 Rd8 wins.
- P. 191: 5W: White's ninth move against Nimzowitsch was P-KKt3, not P-K3.
- P. 194: 22B: penultimate move in this note (PxP) is ambiguous.
- P. 195: 31W: incorrect note explaining Black's resignation.
- Pp. 195-202: Barcelona games in wrong chronological order, although round numbers are given for some games.
- P. 199: heading to game 72: initial of Torres: J.
- P. 199: heading to game 72: add: **ELEVENTH ROUND**
- P. 200: 6B: in Dake-Fine reference, specify 6th match game
- P. 200: heading to game 73: add: **EIGHTH ROUND**
- P. 201: 5W: for Lissitzin read Lisitsin
- P. 201: 5B: the Moscow, 1936 tournament book says that 15 P-K4 was weak.
- P. 203: final paragraph: the Capablanca v Steiner game was prearranged. See C.N. 2037.
- P. 205: game 74: add heading: **NINTH ROUND**
- P. 206: game 75: add heading: **SIXTH ROUND**
- Consequently the order of games 74 and 75 needs to be inverted.
- P. 207: 5W: for reference to Alekhine game read **Game No. 12** instead of **Game No. 13** (once the Alekhine and Dus-Chotimirsky games have been transposed, as indicated above).
- P. 209: 23W: It seems that the line Kh2 and f4 would also have worked on moves 24 and 25 (Chess Life, March 1990, p. 41).
- P. 210: heading to game 77: for F. **MARSHALL** read **P.J. MARSHALL**, as elsewhere.
- P. 211: 10W: the game mentioned in this note went 7...P-B4 8 PxP PxP 9 O-O Q-B2 10 Q-B2 O-O.
- Pp. 212-217: games 78 and 79 need to be inverted (to put eighth match game before ninth match game).
- P. 213: 20B: The German translator gives at the end of this note 23...Bc3.
- P. 214: 6B: Euwe-Spielmann: add reference 4th match game. The game went 13 Nd3 Nc6 14 Qa4.
- P. 214: 6B: the Euwe-Alekhine reference should be to the 21st match game. It went 10 QxKt B-KB3 11 QR-Q1.
- P. 213: 8B: For Semmering read Semmering-Baden
- P. 215: 9B: Euwe-Flohr reference: 2nd match game
- P. 218: 8B: It is strange to see the Capablanca-Lasker game (a 49-move draw) called "famous". Certainly it is the least well-known of their three games at St Petersburg, 1914.
- P. 224: Game heading: Alatorsev's initial was V.
- P. 226: 5B: for the date of Lienthal-Capablanca read 1935, not 1934. (It was played at Hastings, 1934-35.)
- P. 230: 3B: remarkable opening dogmatism in this note.
- P. 231: 15B: for his read her
- P. 232: heading to game 85: for **EIGHTEENTH ROUND** read **NINETEENTH ROUND**.
- P. 239: 2B: for Emmanuel read Emanuel
- P. 242: 6B: the Bogoljubow game (against Becker) went 7 Bb3 c6.

P. 242: 10W: date of Golombek-Michell: for 1935 read 1936. (It was played at Hastings, 1935-36.)

P. 244: game heading: Ilyin-Genevsky's initial was: A.

P. 250: he won a tournament in Paris in the next year in overwhelming fashion. But he was only half a point ahead of Rossolimo.

P. 255: Fine-Maróczy went 9 B-B4 PxP 10 BxBP Kt-R4 11 B-K5. Fine recommended 9...Kt-Q4.

P. 256: 4B: for Von read von

P. 258: 6B: the game mentioned in the notes went: 5 Qb3 c6 6 Bf4 O-O 7 e3 dxc4 8 Bxc4 etc.

P. 259: 6B: for Semmering read Semmering-Baden.

P. 259: 10W: for R4 read B4.

P. 266: Persitz wrote an article on this game on pp. 276-278 of the July 1985 BCM. I made a brief reply on p. 392 of the September 1985 issue.

Two random thoughts in conclusion:

a) after I criticized the BCM reprint of Golombek's book, quoting numerous examples of mistakes left uncorrected, my reward was ridicule (see, for instance, the BCM, October 1992, p. 520, which tried to make out that my complaint about the book concerned just one point of detail).

b) On p. 81 of the January 1951 CHESS, Golombek denied that there were errors in the Bell edition of his book: "To the best of my knowledge it contains only one misprint".

Yours sincerely,

Edward Winter