

Vienna

1922

by

Larry Evans

Foreword by John Donaldson



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Russell Enterprises, Inc.
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Vienna 1922
by
Larry Evans

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Vienna 1922

Foreword

Vienna 1922 Revisited

Vienna 1922 is remembered as one of the first great tournaments after World War I. All the stars of the day (Alekhine, Bogoljubow, Grünfeld, Maróczy, Réti, Spielmann, Tarrasch and Tartakover) played except Capablanca and Lasker, but it was Akiba Rubinstein who was to turn in an outstanding success scoring an undefeated $11\frac{1}{2}$ from 14 to finish a point and half ahead of second place Tartakover and two and a half (!) points ahead of Alekhine. This was the same Alekhine who had been dominating the tournament arena of the early 1920s having taken first place at The Hague, Budapest and Triberg the year before and Hastings a few months earlier.

Hindsight allows us to know that Vienna 1922 was an aberration, that the future would belong to Alexander Alekhine, but for fans of the great Rubinstein this was one last chance to dream that he might yet battle for the world championship title. Certainly his victories over Alekhine (the last of his career), Bogoljubow (which won the first brilliancy prize) and Spielmann compare with the best games he ever played. Every tournament winner needs a little luck and Rubinstein used his to save a difficult and theoretically important ending against his compatriot Tartakover in what proved to be the crucial game in the battle for first place.

Vienna 1922 will also be remembered as the greatest result in the career of the Austrian master Heinrich Wolf who finished an outstanding third with 10 points, beating both Alekhine and Bogoljubow. The journeyman master Wolf, who was to perish at the hands of the Nazis in 1943, played in many other international events in his career but with nothing resembling the success he enjoyed at Vienna 1922.

The influence of the Hypermoderns was felt in this event. While the participants opened overwhelmingly with $1.e4$ and $1.d4$, the Nimzo-Indian, Grünfeld (featuring a win by the creator of this opening with his favorite weapon against Alekhine) and Alekhine all saw action. Curiously, while four games opened $1.e4 \text{ ♘f6}$, none featured Alekhine either as Black or White.

Many famous chess writers were in attendance at Vienna 1922. Alekhine, Tartakover, Tarrasch and Réti are remembered as not only great players but also for their literary contributions to the game. While no one would ever compare Vladimir Vukovic and Imre König as players to this illustrious group their classic works *The Art of Attack* and *From Morphy to Botvinnik*, are still read with benefit by chess players today.

Vienna 1922 was the international debut for König, who was studying in Vienna at the time and, at 21, was the youngest player in the tournament. This writer had the honor of talking with König at his home in Santa Monica, California in 1990.

Foreword

A gentlemen of the old school with a sharp sense of humor, König's memory was still sharp in his 90s. He vividly recalled the pleasures and distractions of studying in Vienna in the 1920s when the famous coffeehouse culture was still going strong.

The author of this work, Larry Evans, is best remembered today for his books and columns and serving as Bobby Fischer's second, but his abilities as a player should not be forgotten. A junior talent when they were not nearly as common as today, Evans finished in the middle of the field (10th place with 11 from 19) in the 1948 U.S. Championship, the year this book was written. Two years later he would make his debut for the United States in the 1950 Olympiad at Dubrovnik, scoring an excellent 8 from 9 (tied for the best result in the event with Rabar) less than a month after being in a serious automobile accident. The next three decades Evans would be a regular member of the U.S. national team and would win the U.S. Championship five times.

This book marked the beginning of what turned out to be one of the longest and most productive literary careers in American chess history. A complete list of all of grandmaster Larry Evans' contributions would require a small book but one can mention his co-authoring *My Sixty Memorable Games* with Bobby Fischer, his revision of *MCO-10*, his magazine *American Chess Quarterly* and his long-running column in *Chess Life* as some of the highlights.

John Donaldson
Berkeley, California
October 2010

Publisher's Note

This was the first book ever written by American grandmaster Larry Evans. The then 16-year-old master self-published it in 1948 with English descriptive notation, no diagrams, with a plastic ring binding, mimeographed. In early 2010, when we contacted Larry, he was persuaded to revise and update it, making use of modern figurine algebraic notation, and many diagrams, not to mention annotations that have made him one of the most popular chess writers of our era.

Just when this book was being prepared to go to press, however, the tragic news flashed around the world: Larry Evans had died. As far as chess in America was concerned, he had been a national treasure. But his loss was not felt only in the U.S. He was admired as a chessplayer, journalist and author worldwide.

As noted by John Donaldson in his Foreword, this book marked the beginning of what turned out to be one of the longest and most productive literary careers in American chess history. It also tragically turned out to be Larry's swan song. It is unlikely that the chess world will ever see another chessplayer who accomplished so much both with the pieces and with the pen.

Round 3

Round 3

While König holds Tarrasch to a draw, Réti equalizes effortlessly against Spielmann, also drawing. Rubinstein turns in a great effort against Bogoljubow in a game that will be awarded the First Brilliancy Prize. Tartakower notches another win, and Alekhine, Wolf and Maróczy also gather the full point. Vukovic has the bye.

After three rounds, Tartakower has yet to lose or draw and maintains his half-point lead over Rubinstein, Maróczy and Alekhine. At the other end of the crosstable, both Takács and Kmoch are still looking to put some kind of score in the plus column.

(15) König – Tarrasch

QGD, Tarrasch [D34]

A series of wholesale exchanges executed with masterly precision.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 c5

Tarrasch essays the Tarrasch Defense!

4.c×d5 e×d5 5.♗f3 ♘c6 6.g3 ♗f6
7.♕g2 ♕e7

Preferring rapid development to
7...c×d4 8.♘×d4 ♖b6 9.e3 ♗g4
10.♗a4.

8.0-0 0-0 9.d×c5 ♗×c5

More enterprising (but no better) is
9...d4 10.♗a4 ♗f5.

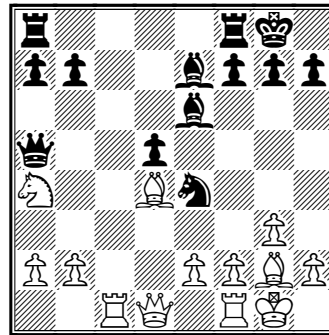
10.♗a4



Siegbert Tarrasch

Instead of decentralizing a piece, it's better to exert more pressure on d5 with
10...♗g5 ♗e6.

10...♗e7 11.♗e3 ♗e4 12.♞c1
♗e6 13.♗d4 ♗×d4 14.♗×d4 ♖a5

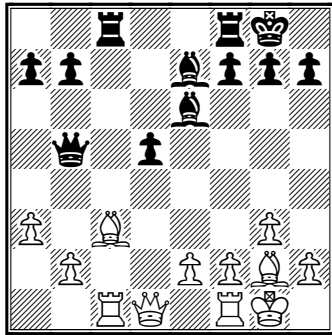


15.a3

Alekhine-Euwe, match game 1927 continued
15.f3 ♗f6 16.♗c5 ♖×a2
17.♗×e6 f×e6 18.♗h3 ♖a6 19.♗d3
♗d6 20.♗e3 ♗f7 and Black holds.

Vienna 1922

15...♖ac8 16.♗c3 ♗xc3 17.♕xc3 ♜b5



18.♜d4

With this maneuver White dissipates whatever opening advantage that he might have had. A better try is 18.Qd2 Rc6 19.Rfd1.

18...♗f6 19.♜xa7 ♗xc3 20.bxc3 ♖a8 21.♜d4 ♖xa3 22.♖b1 ♜xe2 23.♗xd5 ♗xd5 24.♜xd5 ♖xc3 25.♜xb7 ½-½

(16) Rubinstein – Bogoljubow
Grünfeld Defense [D94]

This game was strangely awarded the First Brilliancy Prize.

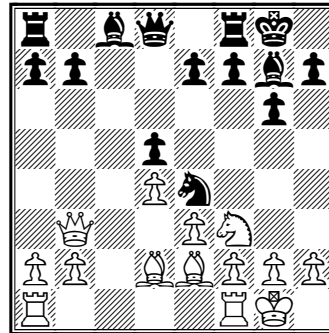
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 ♗f6 4.♗c3 g6 5.♗f3 ♗g7 6.♗e2 0-0 7.0-0 ♗bd7

Better was 7...dxc4 and 8...♗bd7 keeping eventual freeing moves like ...c5 and ...e5 in hand.

8.cxd5! ♗xd5 9.♗xd5 cxd5 10.♜b3

Puts lasting pressure on the queenside and prepares speedy occupation of the c-file.

10...♗f6 11.♗d2 ♗e4



My preference now would be 12.♗b4 to preserve the two bishops.

12.♖fd1 ♗xd2

A better bid for freedom is 12...♗g4, inviting 13.♜xb7?! ♖b8 14.♜xa7 ♖xb2.

13.♖xd2 ♜d6 14.♖c1 b6

14...♖b8 could have been tried to avoid weakening the queenside, but Black's already in trouble.

15.♖dc2 ♗b7 16.♜a4

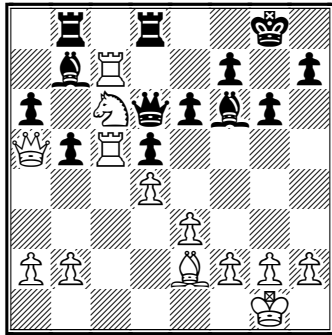
A good move. Among other things it prevents Black's a8-rook from moving.

16...a6 17.♖c7 b5 18.♜a5 ♖ab8 19.♖1c5 ♖fd8 20.♗e5 ♗f6

Not 20...♗xe5? 21.dxe5 ♜xe5 (or 21...♜e6) 22.♖xb7! and wins. But White already has a decisive advantage.

Round 3

21. ♖c6 e6



The point. After 22. ♖xb8 ♜xb8 (threatening ♜d8 which regains the exchange) but 23. ♜xb5! ♜d8 24. ♜e8 still wins.

22. g3! ♜dc8 23. ♖xb8 ♜xb8
24. ♜xb5! ♜d8

If instead 24...axb5, then 25. ♖a7 etc.

25. ♜e8! ♜f8

25...♜xc7 is obviously no better.

26. ♜xb7! ♜xa5 27. ♜xb8 ♜d6

28. ♜xf7+ was threatened.

28. ♜b7 ♜b6 29. ♜c6 ♜b4
30. ♜xf7+ 1-0

(17) Tartakower – Grünfeld
Vienna Game [C26]

A swindle in Tartakower's finest style.

1.e4 e5 2. ♖c3 ♖f6 3. g3 d5 4. exd5
♖xd5 5. ♜g2 ♜e6

Tartakower-Spielmann, Vienna 1913
continued 5...♖xc3 6. bxc3 ♜c5 7. ♖e2

♖c6 8.0-0 0-0 9. d3 ♜e6 with an equal position. The text is also okay..

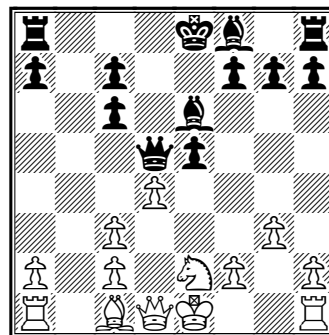
6. ♖ge2 ♖c6

6...c5 is more energetic, aiming for a Maroczy Bind in reverse.

7. d4

Better is 7. d3 ♜e7 8.0-0 0-0 9. f4 exf4
10. ♖xf4 with equality. Black now stands well, but he misses his way.

7...♖xc3 8. ♜xc6+ bxc6 9. bxc3
♜d5!



The doubled pawns are more than compensated for by White's weakness on the light squares, and his inability to castle because of ...♜h3.

10. ♜g1 ♜d6 11. ♜d3 0-0 12. dxe5
♜xe5 13. ♜f4 ♜a5 14. ♜xd6 cxd6

If 15. ♜xd6 ♜fe8 is devastating.

15. ♖d4 ♜d7 16. ♜d2 ♜fe8
17. ♜ge1 ♜h5 18. h4 ♜h6+

My experience has been that it pays to take advantage of the lull with a move like 18...g6 to prevent any back rank mates once and for all.

