

Blinding form

BLINDFOLD — playing chess without sight of board or pieces always amazes beginners and non-players. And of all the exercises for the mind, simultaneous blindfold chess is perhaps the most torturous yet devised.

The master in Philidor's day (1726-1795) was required to play three games at once

to astound the public. The world record now is 56.

Forbidden in Russia as dangerous, top players elsewhere sometimes submit to 10 or more blindfold games simultaneously — and still maintain a high standard of play.

Who though was the greatest ever blindfold artist? Was it Alexander Alekhine? True, his personal record of 32 has been smashed, but what of the quality of play?

Take, for instance, the following blindfold beauty which Chernev calls "The immortal blindfold game".

London 1926

Kings Indian Defence

Alekhine	Schwartz
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	g6
3. g3	Bg7
4. Bg2	O-O
5. Nc3	d6
6. Nf3	Nc6
7. d5	Na5
8. Qd3	b6

Black makes an escape for his knight, but at the cost of weakening his c6 square.

9. Nd4

The weakness is immediately taken advantage of.

9 ...	Nb7
10. Nc6	Qd7
11. O-O	a5
12. b3	

a3, immediately, fails to 12 ... a4!

12 ...	Nc5
13. Qc2	Bb7
14. h3	Rae8
15. a3	Bxc6
16. dxc6	Qc8
17. b4	axb4
18. axb4	Na6

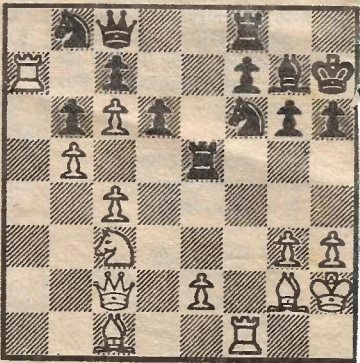
If 18 ... Nce4 then 19. Nb5 with advantage.

19. Ra4	Nb8
20. b5	

The unfortunate knight's career prospects are not bright.

20 ...	h6
21. Ra7	e5
22. Kh2	Kh7
23. f4	Re7
24. fx e5	Rxe5

SCHWARTZ



ALEKHINE

25. Bf4	Ree8
After 25 ... Rh5 26. Nd5 Nxd5 27. cxd5 no insurance company would cover the Rook on h5.	
26. Nd5	Nxd5
27. Bxd5	

Alekhine prefers an active Bishop to undoubled pawns which would result after 27. cxd5.

27 ...	Qd8
28. h4	Qe7
29. e3	Kh8

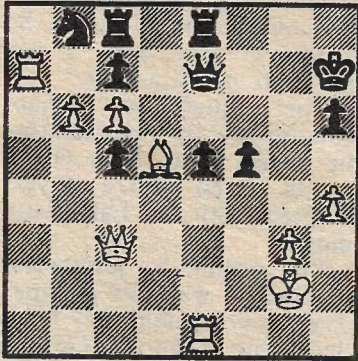
Now Black decides to go after White's bishop, and is threatening to win it with 30 ... g5. Alekhine protects it with a king move!

30. Kg2	f5
Black sees g5 would fail to 31. hxc6 hxc6 32. Rh1 ch.	
31. Re1	Kh7
32. e4	Be5
33. exf5	gxf5

"How far ahead does a chessplayer see?" I have been asked that many times. Well here Alekhine "sees" at least 12 moves and the variations, or else his whole combination would have no point.

34. c5!	bxc5
35. b6	Rc8
36. Qc3!	Rfe8
37. Bxe5	dxe5

SCHWARTZ



ALEKHINE

38. Qxe5!!
Can Alekhine not count? Even a rabbit can see the pawn is defended twice.

38 ...	Qxe5
39. Rxe5	Rxe5

White is temporarily a rook down and his bishop is attacked. But white is also Alekhine!

40. Rxc7 ch	Rxc7
41. bxc7	Re8
42. cxb8=(Q)	Rxb8
43. Be6!	

And the familiar kick at the end of an Alekhine inspiration. White wins a Rook for the loss of one pawn, leaving the ending won.

43 ...	Kg6
44. c7	Rf8
45. c8=(Q)	Rxc8
46. Bxc8	c4
47. Ba6	c3
48. Bd3	Kf6
49. Kf3	Ke5
50. Ke3	h5

51. Bc2	Kf6
52. Kf4	Kg7
53. Kxf5	Kh6
54. Kf4	

Consistant to the last move. Kf6 would have produced a stalemate.

54 ... Resigns
A brilliant game even without the blindfold.

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