

# Chess Record Play--As Rough as a Channel Swim

CHESS, ~~from~~ usually associated with ~~redundant~~ old men and unco-ordinated prodigies, can sometimes occasion displays of courage and stamina as dramatic as marathon running or swimming the English channel.

Such a display will take place on Sunday, December 4, when George Koltanowski—with the aid of several hundred Northern California players—attempts to break the world's record for the number of games played by one man in 12 hours.

Some idea of the amount of endurance required in this uniquely gruelling sort of event is implicit in the record: only four of the modern chess masters—Koltanowski included—have attempted the feat.

In 1927, in Cleveland, Jose Capablanca became the first man ever to play over a hundred games; the following year, the great American champion, Frank Marshall surpassed Capablanca's per-

formance, playing 156 games in Montreal.

Koltanowski's own official record was set in 1932, when he played 160 games in Antwerp, Belgium. Merely concluding a number of games is, of course, a relatively small part of what is required. A win-lose record consistent with the position of a master must be maintained throughout the contest. In the Antwerp exhibition, Koltanowski won 135, drew 18, lost only 7 games.

## A Score in Texas

Nine years later, in Dallas, Koltanowski made his greatest score—though it was not official. Playing for 12 hours under the sponsorship of the Texas Chess Association, he completed 226 games, winning 196, drawing 18, losing only 9.

To make such a score official requires an unusual set-up of judges and recorders; for this rea-

son, rumor and even myth surround such unofficial performances as Koltanowski's in Dallas. There is even a story—discounted by most chess men—that a Swede named G. Stahlberg played continuous chess in the Argentine for 24 hours, completing 400 games.

The results of Koltanowski's San Francisco exhibition, The Chronicle Chess Festival, will be official. But so they will not be challenged, even by rumor, the master has determined to reach the astonishing mark of 260 games in the allotted 12 hours, winning a minimum of 80 per cent.

## Strong or Weak

In order to reach this mark, he urgently requests all players—strong or weak, beginners or experts—to register for boards. In order to play 260 games, he must have 260 opponents. Even for tyros, the opportunity to participate in making what may very likely be important chess history should be lure enough.

Response so far indicates that challengers will not be lacking. Challengers should send the \$1 registration fee plus an indication of preferred time for starting to The Chronicle Special Services Office, Fifth and Mission streets immediately. Boards have been engaged from as far away as Santa Barbara, Fresno and Klamath Falls. Outstanding group entry so far has been that of the Woodland Chess Club, which will send 13 players.

Spectators, too, are invited and will be provided with free tickets of admission to the Marines' Memorial Building—obtainable from the same address as above.

The performance which they will see is suggested by Koltanowski's reminiscences of the Denver exhibition in 1941: "I started at 10 a. m.," he says. "I was on my feet every minute from then until 10 p. m. Occasionally they would bring me coffee or a sand-

wich. But I was playing about 40 games simultaneously right along, and trying to keep them all in my head—so I didn't want to be interrupted by resting or stopping to eat.

## Second Wind

"About 2 p. m. I began to get tired. By 3 I was almost ready to quit—when my second wind came. After that I played, hardly conscious of the time, until someone said it was 8 o'clock, after which no new games could be started. There was very little to break my chain of thought. One man, by mistake, made two moves while I was at the other boards. I had to start again at the beginning with him and reconstruct the entire game. Another had bet with a friend that he would beat me, and the friend told me; so every time I came to his board I was conscious money was involved and worked even harder. I managed to beat him—but if any of

## Leisure Chess Problem

Presented by George Koltanowski, World's Blindfold Champion

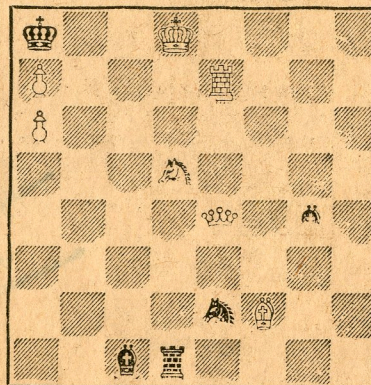
Problem No. 81

By Helm-Voigt, Vienna

White to play and mate in two moves.

(Solution to Problem No. 80 is: 1.B-B6, R-N1; 2.QxKNPch, etc.; or 1...PxN; 2.Q-QR1, etc.)

Today's problem is the 55th in The Chronicle's ladder-solving competition. Solutions must be mailed to George Koltanowski, P. O. Box 124, Santa Rosa, and postmarked before midnight Tuesday.



the Chess Festival players make bets, don't tell me.

"Otherwise, I hardly noticed whether it was man, woman or child I was playing. I played against the boards.

"Toward the end, my feet gave

out. And since I'm ten years older now, The Chronicle is going to provide a wheel chair so if they become too tired December 4, I can be wheeled from board to board. After the exhibition was over, I slept 24 hours."