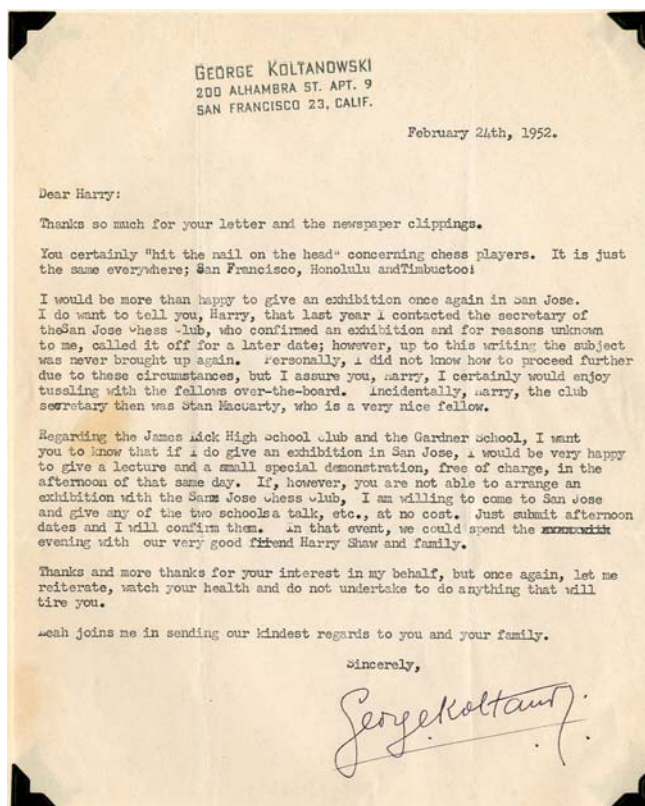


GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI: FATHER OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHESS

Chess flourished during the Great Depression, but when World War II started the entire country was galvanized to defeat the Axis. Chess interest went into hibernation: or would have, if not for a small group of masters like Kolty. Of course, everyone knows that he set the world's blindfold record in September of 1937. What they may not know, is that after he received a U.S. visa in 1940, he spent the next 7 years criss-crossing the country promoting chess with exhibitions and lectures. Post war Northern California was a chess desert. Most of the chess clubs had dissolved before or during the war. The only two that were left, the Mechanics' Institute Chess Room and the Sacramento Chess Club, stood in isolation. It wasn't until 1947 when he settled down in Santa Rosa, California, that the Northern California chess clubs and chess league started re-forming again. It wasn't a coincidence; he jumpstarted dozens of chess clubs, city by city, via lectures, and simultaneous and blindfold exhibitions...he was a fantastic showman. His first column, in 1947, was for the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. A year later he started writing a column for the San Francisco Chronicle. In November, 1947 he launched his first magazine called appropriately 'California Chess News'. It ran through 1949, after which it changed its name to 'Chess Digest'. 'Chess Digest' folded on December of 1950. (See http://www.chessdryad.com/articles/lawless/art_12.htm)

After he moved to San Francisco in 1949, he continued to promote chess at the individual, club and city level. He was a professional and did accept money for his services, but, when he saw a need, didn't hesitate to perform or teach for free.



In 1950, Koltanowski was among the first masters to be awarded the International Master title.



Kolty giving chess lesson in San Jose, 1950



Kolty on far right giving Blindfold Chess Exhibition at the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club in the early 1950's.

In 1952, George pioneered idea of a chess magazine coupled with an organization, on the local level. Thus, Chess Friends of Northern California was born (there was also a short lived Chess Friends of Southern California as well). It was quickly follow by the magazine, 'Chess in Action', which lasted until 1970. Because CFNC was fairly insular and had its own rating system, it quickly faded when Bobby Fischer started his run toward the World Championship.



STEVE JOPLIN (LEFT), KOLTANOWSKI AND FRED WREDEN
U. S. Junior Championship tournament

The Chess Column

By George Koltanowski

Sonoma will have its famous Open Air Chess Festival next Sunday. Players can still sign up with Lois McVeigh, Secretary, Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce in Sonoma. Include \$1.50 entry free.

Here follows the fifth list of entries:

Arthur W. Roy, Redwood City; Nick Molchanov, Palo Alto; Robert J. Gaffney, San Mateo; Leighton Allen, S. F.; John Rosenberg, S. F.; John Wilson, San Anselmo; Don Sutherland, S. F.; Roy Hooper, S. F.; Frank Bocek Jr., Oakland; Arthur C. Atkins, Santa Rosa; Walter C. Tonelli, El Cerrito; H. Baltzer, Sonoma; George Sonne, Belvedere; William A. Bailey, Belvedere; Max Gross, Albany; Robert Chers, Richmond; Milo Ayers, Oakland; Ray Bogas, Berkeley; S. G. Behrends, Loma; Robert C. Blakemore, S. F.; Lowell O. Tullis, S. F.; Elvina C. Gled, S. F.; Paul Bogosian, S. F.; Embree E. Reynolds and Karen E. Reynolds, Marysville; Ivan Vagvary, S. F.; Dan McLeod and Nancy McLeod, San Bruno; Alexander Horne, S. F.; Louise Horne, S. F.; Louise Corlen, S. F.; Oliver A. Turley, Vallejo; Agnes Blewett, Hayward.

LOOKING AROUND—Dallas has great plans for an international tournament this coming November. Seeing is believing. It reminds me too much of the publicity made by the same group regarding the Yugoslav visit, and we are still waiting and hoping for the Yugoslavs to get to the United States . . . Lev Bello-

vasky, a Russian instructor at the Army Language School in Monterey won the Monterey Peninsula championship . . .

The Russian chess master V. I. Sosin died at 59 in Moscow . . .

Donald Byrne tied with Larry Evans in the Midwestern tournament at Milwaukee, but won out by S. B. points.

Hans Berliner was third. Bobby Fischer was seventh.

There were 120 participants . . . Douglas Mulligan of Santa

Venefia won the Gambit tournament, beating out J. P. White of Terra Linda in the final tally.

Today from 10 a. m. on the final round will be played in the U. S. Junior championship. Spectators are welcome at the Spreckels-Russell Dairy Co. auditorium at 1717 Mission street, San Francisco. In a rapid transit tournament with 27 participants the four prizes were won by Bobby Fischer, Brooklyn, first; S. Sholomson, Los Angeles, second; Gill Ramirez, San Francisco, third, and Robert Dickin- son, Redwood City, fourth. Prize distribution will follow at the end of today's round.



San Francisco Chronicle



February 7, 1963

Dear Fellow Chess Player:

Here's news that should interest you and members of your club. I have arranged to play a correspondence game with Russian Grand Master Paul Keres, at present top contender for Botvinnik's title of World's Champion when the latter retires from competition.

Newspapers throughout the country will be carrying move-by-move diagrams of this Koltanowski vs. Keres tournament, along with my comments on the progress of the match, starting Tuesday, March 19, and continuing each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday until one of us wins or the match is determined a draw.

Keres and I will be playing by cable. Each diagram will show Keres' latest move. Then, readers can send in to their newspaper a post-card listing the counter-move they would make. At the end of the match, these postcards will be rated: four points for an excellent move, three for a good one, two for a possible move and one point for any other. The top scorers in each area will receive prizes of chess books and magnetic chessboards, plus, of course, the thrill of having competed with one of the world's greatest players.

If you would like to see this feature appear in your area, please get in touch with the editor of your local paper and let him know how much interest you and the members of your club have in this match. Enclosed is a sample letter which may prove satisfactory. If you write, be sure to get as many chess players' signatures as you can. The more names that appear on your letter, the better your chances.

Sincerely,


George Koltanowski

P.S. The person to contact in your city is: Mr. Dick Thornburg
Editor
Cincinnati Post-Times-Star

Ever the showman, Kolty came up with the idea to play an Exhibition Game with one of the world's top GMs, to increase San Francisco Chronicle readership. (Grandmaster Keres was his second choice. The World Champion Botvinnik turned him down.)



AN HISTORIC CHESS MATCH



Here's your chance to follow or take part in a chess game between

PAUL KERES of the U.S.S.R.

VS.

GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI of the U. S. A.

On March 19, The Chronicle's chess expert and World Blind-fold Champion, George Koltanowski, will start a game of chess by cable with Paul Keres of Tallinn, Estonia.

Chronicle readers are invited to

PLAY ALONG WITH KOLTANOWSKI

AGAINST THE RUSSIAN GRANDMASTER

and former champion of all the Russias, ranked among the top three chess players in the world

Paul Keres' moves will be published by The Chronicle every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and Chronicle readers may then mail in suggestions for Koltanowski's next move. Mr. Koltanowski will determine which move is made.

Readers will be awarded four, three, two, or one points according to Koltanowski's appraisal of their suggested moves. At the end of the match, the reader with the most points wins the contest.

WIN ONE OF THESE PRIZES

\$100 to the first place winner

\$25 each to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th place winners

Chess books will be awarded for 5th through 50th place

March 14, 1963, SF Chronicle

San Francisco Chronicle readers sent in hundred of letters in response to the Exhibition Game!

Paul Keres
Tallinn 12
Oie 51

Tallinn, June 15th, 1963.

Dear George,

your letter from May 24 reached me only after my previous letter was sent off, so that I did not know about the possibility 11.Bd2 N8c6 12.Nf4! in our game. I must have seriously underestimated this possibility for you. I also did not analyse this way afterwards, as you chose 11.N:d4, and I was therefore convinced that you also held 11.Bd2 not as good. But, actually, this move seems to win the game. On 11...Qa6 12.Qb3 e5 White plays 13.a:b4! Q:a1 14.Nd5 with too many threats, and 11...Bh6 is refuted by 12.B:b4! N:b4 13.Q:d4 e5 14.a:b4! etc. So it looks like 9...Qa5 would be a bad innovation.

~~As I informed you in my last letter, our plan of arrival to LA on~~
June 30 at 5.15 A.M. is unchanged. So I hope to see you soon.

Regarding my planned visit to San Francisco I sincerely hope that your efforts would be successful. It would be too foolish to be for a month in California and not to visit San Francisco! On my side, I have not heard anything new in this matter.

The LA tournament will be a very hard fight, but I will try to do my best. Until now, the tournaments of 8 grandmasters, double-round, have been the most successful in my chess career!

Wishing you pleasant summer rest, I remain with kindest regards

Yours sincerely

Keres

Paul Keres and George had quite a correspondence going.

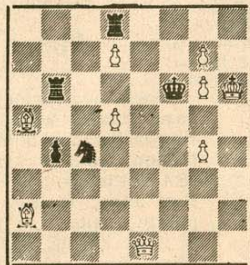
CHESS



By George Koltanowski

PROBLEM NO. 50

Black: 5



White: 9

White to play and mate in two moves. Solution on Friday. The solution to problem no. 49 of last Friday: N-N5.

KOLTANOWSKI IS COMING ON FRIDAY!



Can Anyone in Valencia Valley Beat Him?

The big event is just two days away! On Friday evening, International Master George Koltanowski will appear in The Signal's Chess Exhibition, the first of its kind in the history of this valley. Beginning at 7:30 p.m. at Cal Arts, the famous chess master will lecture on the recently-completed Fischer-Spassky match, answer all questions from the audience, play a sample blindfold game, and then perform a simultaneous chess match against 25 of the best local players. It should be an evening of excitement and entertainment for young and

old alike. And it's all free, courtesy of this newspaper.

The Contest Winners!

The solutions are in for The Signal's special chess problem contest published last week. Thirty-one correct solutions were received and, as promised, seven of the winners were picked in a random drawing to play in the simultaneous match Friday night. The lucky winners are: Keith Crasnick, Mike Foster, Robert Freeman, Robert Batista, Bill Rieser, Warren Leary, and Ross Wright. Congratulations! You seven will now join the 18 players picked from the recent chess tournament to play Koltanowski on Friday. Please bring your best chess set.

Other contestants who submitted correct solutions were Tim Colebank, Larry Rauter, Ralph Brown, Greg Bitgood, Alan D. Lane, Paul Patane, Martin Rubin, Mike Sipka, Larry Wedhoff, Dr. Orville Weaver, Henry J. Weiss, Frank Dobrovolny, Tap Canutt, Don Lund, Dave Morrow, Dave Commons, Dale Goudey, Bill Kath, Reid Olson, Sharon Lee Risk, Rodney Skinner, Dan Devor, Charles Hooper and Fred Risk. Congratulations to all of you! Two alternates have been picked from this group to play in the simultaneous, should a board become vacant, so all are advised to attend the exhibition.

The Solution

The solution to this problem was a tricky one: R-Q4ch! It's a five-fold sacrifice and black has no escape:

- If 1. . . BxR, 2. P-B4mate.
- 1. . . KxR, 2. Q-Q3 mate.
- 1. . . NxR, 2. NxP mate.
- 1. . . BPxR, 2. N-B6 mate.
- 1. . . KPxR, 2. Q-B5 mate.

R-Q4ch was the "key move" in this problem and was the only move that forced a mate in two moves. Three other solutions were submitted by a number of contestants, but they allowed possible escapes. R-QB4 could be countered with B-Q5, preventing checkmate in the following move. The key move NxPch was also not valid, as K-Q3 escapes mate. Another move, K-B5, is strong, but allows black to move N-N2ch, and white then has to get his own king out of check on the second move.

Thanks to all of the readers who entered this contest. If you like tricky problems, keep following this column in every Wednesday and Friday Signal. Big prizes are coming.

THE LINE-UP

The following is the official line-up of the Valencia Valley players scheduled to face George Koltanowski Friday night. Come and root for your friends and local champions!

Board	Player	Board	Player
1.	Don Crawford	14.	Kim Monson
2.	Tim Hood	15.	Bill Rieser
3.	Robert Freeman	16.	Keith Crasnick
4.	Monica Schmelling	17.	Monte Reed
5.	James Curtis	18.	Peter Gelfand
6.	Jon Newhall	19.	Linda Wedhoff
7.	Mike Foster	20.	Tony Martinelli
8.	Steve Phillips	21.	Murphy Bruno
9.	Julie Volkman	22.	Leonid Hambro
10.	Robert Fisher	23.	Ruth Newhall
11.	Stewart East	24.	Robert Batista
12.	Kevin Gordon	25.	Ross Wright
13.	Warren Leary		

Starting time is 7:30 p.m. in the Main Gallery at California Institute of the Arts. Cal Arts is located atop the hill at the McBean exit and the Golden State Freeway. Enter the campus from McBean Parkway; parking is available in the main lot on top of the hill to the west of the building. The main gallery is on the same level as the parking lot, immediately inside the entrance. Coffee will be available to all participants and spectators. Admission is free.

By this time, he had many dozens of chess columns all across California.



Knight's Tour Exhibition, Paul Masson, 1980



George giving a lecture in Los Angeles on May 26, 1985.



GENS UNA SUMUS

FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES ECHecs
WORLD CHESS FEDERATION
МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ШАХМАТНАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ
WELTSCHACHVERBAND
FEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE AJEDREZ

F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E. F.I.D.E.

By this diploma I confirm that

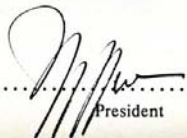
GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI

United States of America

has obtained the title of

HONORARY GRANDMASTER

in the Congress of 1988.


.....
President

Dean of American Chess and Honorary Grandmaster!