



C O L U M N I S T S

New Stories about Old Chess Players

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The Scandal of 1880, Part One

The history of chess scandals in the United States goes back at least as far as 1828, when Andrew Jackson accused President John Quincy Adams of turning the White House into a den of gambling after Adams bought a chess table for his own use (*Wall Street Journal*, Oct 20, 2004). The chess scandal of 1880 is almost unique in that it dealt with incidents which actually occurred in a chess game. The chess world regularly has scandals of a different type, involving petty thievery among organizers, perceived scandals over failed match negotiations, and allegations of fixed games. Personal scandals occur from time to time. The International Chess Federation FIDE is a surprisingly scandal-ridden organization, with serious accusations involving thievery, corruption, thuggery, and even murder.

By contrast, I cannot recall a true scandal over actual game-play since I became interested in chess over 20 years ago. Some people might make a case for the touch-move violation in a game between Kasparov and Judit Polgar, but to me this is more like a controversial referee decision than a true scandal. The John von Neumann incident, in which a competitor played moves relayed by a friend with a computer, was more like a scandal, but it didn't work and was not the work of any professional chess players.

The American Chess Congress of 1880, held at New York January 6-26, ended in an exciting struggle. Going into the last round (in this case a round was two games played between opponents), the score stood Grundy 12½, Mackenzie and Mohle 11½, Judd and Sellman 10½, Delmar 9½, Ryan 5½, Ware 4½, Congdon 3½, and Cohnfeld ½. Pairings matched Sellman and Ryan, Mackenzie and Delmar, Cohnfeld and Congdon, Judd and Mohle, Ware and Grundy. Theoretically, five people were still in contention for the \$500 first prize, but the odds seemed heavily in favor of Grundy. Ware was famous in this tournament for his use of eccentric openings, but they had not scored much success, giving him only 1½ points excepting his games against the two tail-enders.

Grundy was the surprise of the tournament. In a handicap tournament several weeks earlier, he had been given pawn and move by Mackenzie, and lost two games; he finished fourth in the tournament according to the *Brooklyn Eagle* of Jan 25, 1880. However, after scoring a win and a draw against both tournament favorite Mackenzie in the second round, and against Judd (viewed as perhaps Mackenzie's most dangerous rival) in the first round, Grundy scored two wins over Delmar in the third round and took a lead which he kept

up to the last round. However, the pressure seemed to be getting to Grundy towards the end of the tournament. In the middle of the seventh round, Grundy had seemed to be in complete control. He had not lost any games, and was two points ahead of Mackenzie and Judd with only one tough game left (against Sellman) and his remaining four games against the much weaker Ryan and Ware. Mackenzie and Judd closed the gap to one point when Grundy lost to Sellman. Apparently there was a claim that Grundy had thrown this game to aid some pool-room gamblers, according to a *Brooklyn Eagle* article of January 25. Grundy then played inexplicably weakly in his second game against Ryan; in an easily won game Grundy played “very much below his usual strength” to draw the game. The extra half-point might have made an enormous difference to the tournament, and to the reputation of American chess.



George Mackenzie

Unfortunately for Grundy, he lost the first game against Ware as White, even though his opponent responded to 1.e4 with 1...a5?!. Other winners were Sellman, Mackenzie, Mohle, and Cohnfeld, the latter racking up his first win (he also won the second game against Congdon). A lot was riding on the final games, with Grundy, Mackenzie, and Mohle in a 3-way tie for the \$500 first prize (a lot of money in those days!). Sellman still had a theoretical shot at one point back, but this seemed very unlikely. The room was packed with spectators, who stood on their chairs to see the games, and for once the press was out in full force to cover the event.

Mackenzie won his game, against Delmar, relatively quickly, while the two other crucial games were adjourned for an evening session. Mohle managed a draw in his game with Judd, which looked like it would be a loss. Ware failed to spot at least two clear chances to win against Grundy, and lost in a sharp flurry of tactics. Thus, rules called for a playoff between Mackenzie and Grundy.

At this juncture, a simple story of an exciting tournament took a strange turn. Fundamentally, this is because of an extraordinary statement from an unusual chess player, Preston Ware, Jr.

I know nothing about Ware’s life outside of the chess world. I suspect that he is the Preston Ware, Jr. of Massachusetts who had patents related to boot manufacturing (*Scientific American*, May 7, 1864 and Jan 25, 1868), and was involved in some minor lawsuits when a supplier of boot-making material went bankrupt (*New York Times* October 13, 1866). I have no real evidence of this, however, except for compatibility of names, dates, and locations of these

Preston Wares. Nevertheless, from what I know of Ware's behavior in regard to chess, I feel that he is one of those interesting people who add color to the game and its history.

Ware was a fixture on the American chess scene. Born in 1821, he seems to have first become active in chess in the late 1850s. The book of the [1st American Chess Congress](#) shows him losing a match against Hammond in 1858; Ware won 5-0-1 when being given a rook, was 2-3 when given a knight, 1-4 at P+2, 2-3 at P+1, and 2-3 at even strength for a total score of 12-13-1. The same source lists Ware as treasurer of the Boston Chess Club in 1859. Ware, as one of a 5-man consultation team, lost a game to Morphy, during Morphy's brief visit there in 1859, and also two games at knight odds in New York that year.

Ware took part in the 2nd American Chess Congress, held in Cleveland in 1871. He finished tied for 5th out of 9 contestants with a 9-7 score; two draws were replayed and did not count in the results. Three of his wins were by forfeit, including one against the player he tied overall, so his performance is a bit overstated by these totals. Nevertheless, Ware had a large effect on the tournament result, in that he won his two games against second place finisher Hosmer while losing 2 against tournament winner Mackenzie; these 2 games were the difference between first and second place in the tournament. Ware was elected president of the newly formed American Chess Association. Gilberg summarizes the activities of this association as follows, in an early example of a common problem in chess politics: "the following gentlemen were elected as officers, who soon thereafter dispersed to their respective homes and probably forgot, amid the complications of their business duties, the important trust which had been confided to their keeping, for no subsequent action seems to have been taken to secure a second Convention of the Association."

Ware competed again in the 4th American Chess Congress, a centennial event held in Philadelphia in 1876. He did poorly, finishing with four wins and 10 losses, 7th of the 8 competitors who finished the tournament (one withdrew after playing four games). In the book of the tournament, Ware is praised both for his efforts to raise funds for the tournament, and for his pleasant manners and warm personality. His fund-raising efforts included letters to all the state governors, which resulted in a silver cup donated by Governor Garland of Arkansas that went to tournament champion Mackenzie.

Ware is most famous for his eccentric attitude towards openings. He may be responsible for more opening names than any other player of his rather modest talent, thanks to his tendency to champion openings which others preferred to stay well clear of.

In the 1880 tournament, Ware specialized in two or three unusual systems. By far the most standard was a Stonewall setup (pawns at c3, d4, e3, and f4 for White, or c6, d5, e6, and f5 for Black). His frequent use of the Stonewall

causes occasional confusion, since it is not related to the Stone-Ware defense, named after Ware and fellow Boston player Henry Nathan Stone. The Stone-Ware defense is an unusual retreat of the bishop (to d6) in the Evans gambit, a move which had been played earlier but was advocated strongly by the Bostonians.

Ware's other system, or perhaps systems, involving advancing his a-pawn two squares on his first move, as White or Black. 1.a4 is sometimes called the Ware opening; in 1880 they liked to use the name Meadow Hay Opening for this bizarre initial move of Ware's. Although it is never stated explicitly in the tournament book, I believe that 1...a5, which Ware also used, was called the Cornstalk Opening.

Ware did not just play odd openings, he also gave elaborate justifications for them which still resonate today, even if the language seems a bit odd. Responding to a toast — “To Wary Openings for the Unwary - Meadow Hay, the Stonewall Gambit, and the Cornstalk Opening” — at the Congress dinner, Ware

“discoursed eloquently in defense of his pet openings, to which so much waggish sport had been directed, and referred his hearers to the obtuseness of the early rustics of our country who persistently adhered to the use of their primitive wooden plows, with four Negroes to hold and four mules to drag them, despite the exertions of an enterprising Yankee who undertook to convince them as much work could be accomplished with one Negro and one mule by the aid of one of his newly invented cast iron plows. Such, he said, is the deplorable state of chess as practiced to-day. The books are too earnestly devoured. Everywhere you are confronted with the French Opening, the Sicilian Defense, and the Ruy Lopez - all admirable in their way, to be sure; but they afford no conclusive proofs of independent strategic skill in the players who hold so tenaciously to them - nothing, in fact, but the mere grasp of retentive memory. A man might as well undertake to study the Farmer's Almanac in order to learn to till the soil. He admonished the young men of the rising generation to throw away their books and trammels, and become original and reliant upon their own intelligence and inventive faculties.”

Ware's speech was cheered enthusiastically by the crowd. Unfortunately, his independent thinking on the subject of ethics was much less popular, and led to quite a scandal. Before the playoff between Mackenzie and Grundy, Ware issued a curious complaint to the tournament committee, which we repeat from the tournament book:

“I was walking down the Bowery with Mr. Grundy on Sunday, January 25th; he remarked to me that he was poor, and really needed the second prize; that I had, in beating him, knocked him out of the first prize; that Mohle and Judd were well off, and it would not make any difference to me if I played easily in our next game, so as to give

him the second prize; and that he would be willing to give a consideration for it. I said: 'I suppose you mean for me to play for a draw.' He said 'Yes,' and I agreed to do it, and \$20 was agreed on as the consideration. We agreed to play on very slowly until the other games were terminated, and to move back and forth to prolong the game. At the adjournment I evidently had the best of the game, and he said, at our lunch, that he would delay coming in until about 8 o'clock, but that I should start up his clock, as he had plenty of time to spare. But, instead, he came in soon after 7 o'clock, and when we began to play I moved back and forth as agreed, and after I had done so, perhaps three or four times, I observed that he was making desperate efforts to win, and finally did so, perpetrating an infamous fraud upon me."

An interesting accusation by Ware, who seemed to be unaware of just how badly his own conduct in the matter would be viewed. Ware seems to have been quite open about the practice of selling chess games. As the *Brooklyn Eagle* notes in an article of March 8, 1880, "Ware's avowal of his right to sell a game in a tourney was a novelty in chess ethics ... Ware's veracity has not been questioned, only his obliquity of moral vision as shown in his letters to the *Boston Globe* and *Herald*." I would love to see Ware's defense of his actions in these letters, if anyone has access to these papers. The game which is at the center of the controversy will be examined at the close of this article.

It is worthwhile to pause and consider the level of guilt of Grundy and Ware. Many people feel at this point that the two players are equally guilty, that paying to arrange the result of a tournament game goes well over a moral red line, and other considerations are incidental. Some people feel that Grundy is more guilty, either because of the extra insult of going back on his deal with Ware, or because he was its initiator, or because Ware's confession (though without remorse) partially excuses his collusion. I was surprised to find some contrarian sympathy for Grundy over Ware, in part because of his financial need, but also based on the novel viewpoint that Grundy played his best at all times, so only Ware is guilty of manipulating results!

All is not necessarily as it seems, however. I am quite a fan of the book and movie *8 Men Out*, in which an apparently simple moral issue, the fixing of the 1919 World Series which led to eight Chicago White Sox players being thrown out of baseball, is shown to be much more complex than is usually presented. There is not a simple yes/no answer as to who is guilty; the eight players include one who turned down the bribe but did not tell authorities, one who took the money but did not throw the games, one who took only as much money as he was cheated out of by his team (and who confessed, breaking the story) on up to players who felt no guilt and players who actively helped set up the fix. Similarly, by the time this chess scandal is fully exposed, there will be plenty of players who may or may not be viewed as tainted.

Our next twist comes from the *Brooklyn Eagle*, Feb 8, 1880, in an article titled "False Moves: Crooked Knights at the Tourney." The article raises

questions of cheating on a much broader scale than I would have imagined. The writer contends that the European chess world, and particularly the clubs of London, Paris, and Vienna, have for years been subject to “ways that are peculiar,” resulting from the fact that professional players let monetary considerations override all others. This can lead to them, for example, selling a game to a lesser player, who values the honor (even purchased honor!) of victory more than the pro.

But apparently crookedness, both in American chess and even in this tourney, went well beyond Grundy and Ware. Quoting from the same *Eagle* article:

“The reader will plainly perceive that there is not a toss up between

THE MORAL GUILT

of either of the two, Grundy and Ware. One, being in need, offered what he thought a harmless bribe; the other, being well off, accepted the offer in the interest of his friend Mackenzie, whom he did not wish to see lose the first prize. The question is relevant as to whether Ware, in the same interest, did not purposely lose his games to Mackenzie. There was one other contestant who was not very anxious to win against the captain, he having nothing to lose at any rate in not winning. What Ware could do when he chose to exert himself was shown in his games with Sellman and Grundy, both of whom he defeated, and yet Mackenzie did not win a game with either in the tourney proper. Now, to the revelations of Secretary Allen. This gentleman feels bound to have

A FULL INVESTIGATION

of the whole business of the alleged crooked work of the tourney. Mr. Allen informed the writer that bribes had been tendered to both Delmar and Mr. Ryan, to refrain from winning games in the tourney. He also stated that in the Manhattan Club tourney, one of the prominent contestants - who also took part in the Congress tourney - gave up his chance for a prize for money considerations. The fact is, this bargaining for chances is nothing new with professional chess players. It now seems to be a part of their business.

“It was done in the Philadelphia tourney of 1876, so Mr. Allen stated, and Mason and Ware were the parties involved. It was done in the Paris tourney of 1878 when two of the contestants being equal for one of the minor prizes, divided the prize money, while one of them gave it out that he had won the prize in question. Now there is only one thing to be done in this matter, and that is punish them who have been concerned in the

DISREPUTABLE BUSINESS

of bribing and receiving bribes to lose games in tourneys; and there is but one course to pursue for those who occupy official positions in the newly organized National Chess Association, and that is to call a special meeting of the association and to have every member expelled who is found to have been concerned in the crooked play. There is one fact connected with the matter which tells its own tale, and that is of Colonel Fellows, the worthy President of the National Association, who has refused to back Captain Mackenzie in any of the matches which had been proposed should follow the Congress tourney. He seems to have lost faith in professional chess players, as have others of the chess public.

“It is but justice to state that the names of Messrs Mohle, Sellman, Judd, Ryan, Cohnfeld and General Congdon stand clear in bright words of any of the tarnishing which has attached itself to the other four to a greater or lesser extent. The *Turf, Field and Farm* deserves credit for bringing the matter so prominently before the American chess world, with a view to its having the ulcerous sore eradicated by the knife of a public exposure.

“It is due to Grundy to state that he says the whole matter was a conspiracy to prevent him from winning the first prize. Let him show this by facts. His statement is as worthy of credence apparently as the others.”

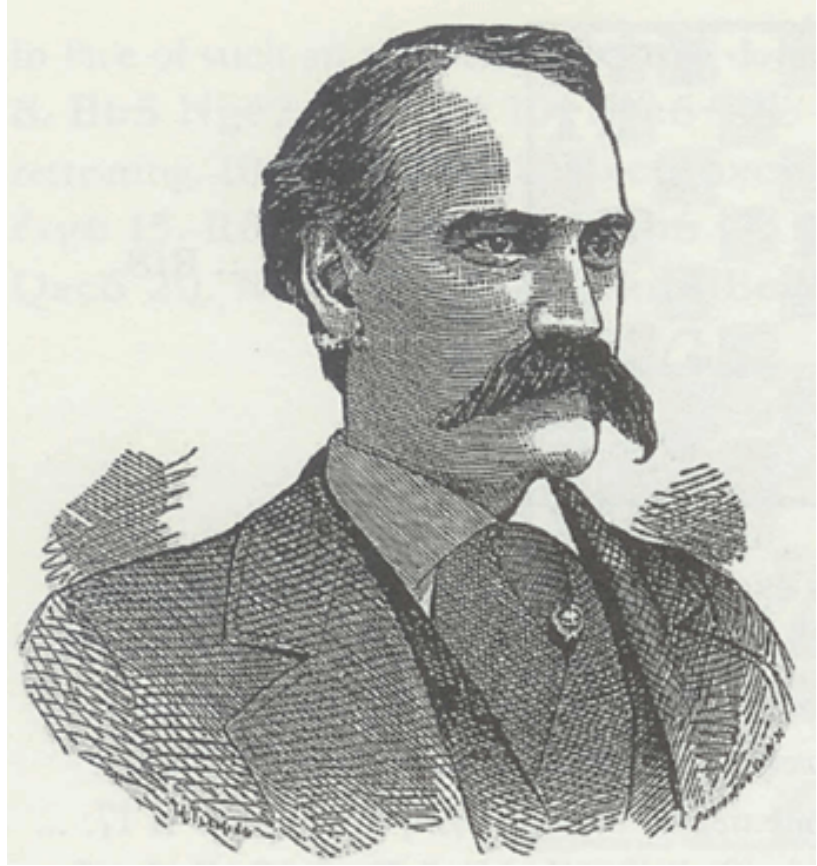
Let us look a bit more closely at some of the allegations in the article. Besides the Ware-Grundy affair, six other charges are made:

- Against Mason and Ware in connection with the Centennial Congress, Philadelphia, August 1876.
- Unfairness in the Clipper Tournament, New York, September-October 1876: “it is well known in the Metropolitan clubs how little of fair play marked the Clipper tournament of the same year.”
- Collusion at Paris 1878.
- Bribery in an unspecified “Manhattan Club tourney.”
- Actual or attempted bribery by Mackenzie, of Delmar, at New York 1880.
- Attempted bribery by Grundy of another player, Ryan, at New York 1880.

Let us start our investigation with the new accusations regarding the 1880 tournament, and work our way backwards. By exempting six competitors from blame (though if we go by the rules used in the baseball scandal, Ryan might be tainted by “guilty knowledge”) we are left with four accused: Mackenzie, Delmar, Ware and Grundy.

One new charge is fairly straightforward; that Grundy offered a bribe to Ryan, which was refused. This can be deduced from the article stating that a bribe

had been tendered to Ryan, and the fact that the March 8 article mentions Ryan as a witness against Grundy in the hearing.



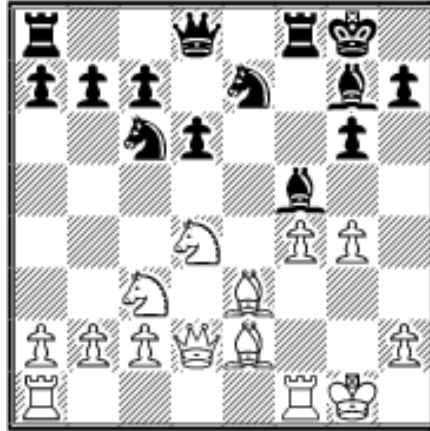
Eugene Delmar

The circumstances of the bribe offered Delmar are far less clear. First, we do not know if Delmar took it. Second, the article does not say who offered it. But on closer examination, it is clear that Delmar was offered money by Mackenzie. Note that Grundy did not offer his bribe to Ware until the last round of the tournament. It seems extremely unlikely, then, that he would have offered Delmar a bribe in the third round, when Grundy's prospects of winning the event were by no means clear. For those who want to argue the point, a bribe seems especially unlikely in the first game, where Grundy is ahead most of the time. In the second Grundy-Delmar game, Delmar does botch his chances for a draw in the endgame, but I doubt that Grundy would spend good money for a half-point so early in the tournament. Since the article accuses four players of ethical violations, and Ware certainly would not have offered a bribe to Delmar, we must look at the possibility of Mackenzie offering a bribe to Delmar.

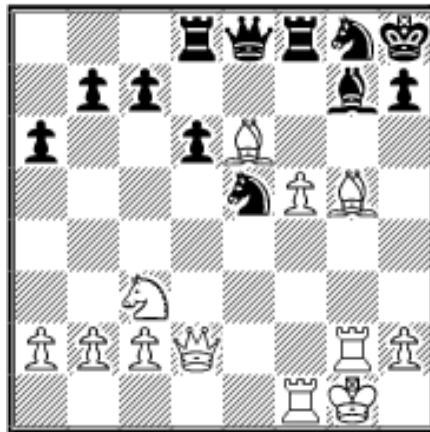
Certainly, this scenario works within the context of the tournament: Mackenzie vs. Delmar occurs in the last round, with plenty of money on the line. The first game is an easy win for Mackenzie, played very quickly (2 hours 30 minutes). I would not have immediately singled out for consideration (as I would with one later game); it just looks like one of the many oversights of a simple combination that appear in this tournament. However, it is certainly consistent with the possibility that this weak play

was intentional.

Mackenzie-Delmar, New York 1880, notes by Mackenzie (*notes in italics by Fritz8*): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 g6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nge7 7.Bc4 d6 8.0-0 0-0 9.f4 Na5 — An odd-looking, but by no means bad, move. — 10.Be2 f5 11.exf5 Bxf5 12.Qd2 Nac6 13.g4



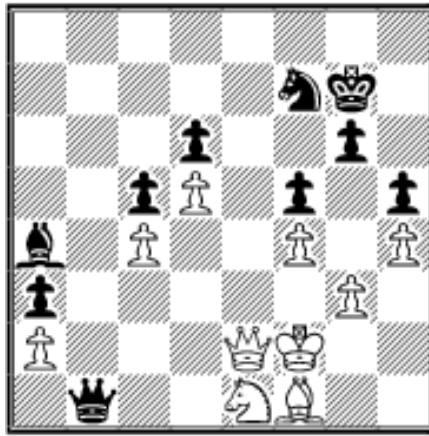
13...Bd7 — If 13...Nxd4 14.Bxd4 Bxd4+ 15.Qxd4 Bxc2 16.Rac1 and wins. (*Even stronger would be 16.Bc4+ Rf7 17.Bxf7+ Kxf7 18.Qd2 winning a rook rather than a bishop.*) — 14.Bc4+ Kh8 15.Ne6 Bxe6 16.Bxe6 a6 17.Rf2 Qe8 18.Raf1 Rd8 19.f5 gxf5 20.gxf5 Ng8 21.Rg2 — *Strong* was 21.Nd5 and 22.Nxc7. — 21...Ne5 22.Bg5



22...Bf6?? — An error which loses a piece. 22...Nf6 seems to be his best resource, though we would still prefer White's game. — 23.Bxg8 Qh5 — If 23...Bxg5, White retakes with queen, mating afterwards in two moves should Black capture bishop with rook. — 24.Bxf6+ Rxf6 25.Be6 Rdf8 26.Qg5 Qxg5 27.Rxg5 Nf7 28.Rg3 Nd8 29.Nd5 Nxe6 30.Nxf6 Nd4 31.Re1 Nxc2 32.Re7 1-0

The second game, which took 5 hours 30 minutes, is not necessarily one I would have singled out as suspicious. It is characterized by over 40 moves of rather (or even very) dull maneuvering I will not inflict on the reader, capped by a blunder in a more or less even position.

Delmar-Mackenzie, New York 1880, after Black's 42nd move:



43.Nf3? — A serious error; with 43.Kg1 or 43.Qd2 White had decent chances to hold. **43...Bd1 44.Qd2??** — Easing Black's task. Stiffer resistance lay in 44.Nd2, when after 44...Qa1 (not 44...Bxd2?? 45.Nxb1 and 46.Nxa3+-) 45.Qe1 Qd4+ Black still has to work a bit, viz. 46.Kg2 Bc2 47.Nf3 Be4 48.Qe2 Qb2 49.Kg1 Bxf3 50.Qxf3 Qxa2-+, or 46.Qe3 Qb2 47.Be2 Bc2 (not 47...Bxe2? 48.Kxe2 Qxa2 49.Qc3+ Kf8 50.Kd1 and the pawn's advance can be stopped) 48.Nf1 Qxa2-+.

— **44...Bxf3 45.Qc3+ Kf8 46.Qxa3 Be4 47.Qa8+ Kg7 48.a4 Qb2+ 49.Kg1 Qd4+ 0-1.** Time pressure? Fatigue? Bribery? Hard to say.

Concerning our main concern, Ware-Grundy, the newspaper article allows a further explanation for why Ware was so upset about being “cheated” when Grundy won the game. Ware was out of the prize money, but if, as alleged, he was acting to promote Mackenzie's chances, his sense of betrayal becomes more clear.

The accusation about Paris 1878 is easy to track down: an article of March 8, 1880 titled “The Expulsion of Grundy” says that at Paris 1878 Bird and Mackenzie split the 4th-place prize money, with the agreement that Bird officially won the prize. By modern standards, this does not seem so serious a crime as the other allegations; an agreement to split the prize money but play for a trophy and the honor seems appropriate. Nevertheless, it certainly offended the writer, and may have involved the throwing of a game with the knowledge of both players.

More charges are brought up in the March 8 article, which says that in addition to the Centennial tournament of 1876 in which Mason and Ware were involved, “it is well known in the Metropolitan clubs how little of fair play marked the Clipper tournament of the same year”. That article again mentions crookedness in a recent Manhattan club tourney, and says that other old offenders besides Grundy and Ware are well known.

I cannot track down the reference to “the Manhattan Club tourney” in which “one of the prominent contestants who also took part in the Congress” is said to have taken a bribe. A Manhattan Club handicap tournament (in which Grundy lost to Mackenzie when given P+1 odds) is mentioned above, but I am not at all certain that this is what the *Eagle* writer is referring to. I am guessing that the writer is speaking of Mackenzie here, but it could also be Delmar, or Grundy, or even Ware.

I was much more successful in tracking down the allegations of cheating in the Clipper Tournament of 1876. This involved in part quite a different type of unfair practice, designed to allow one player to win the tournament through trickery rather than fair play.



James Mason

Mason, who was approximately 25 years old at the time, won the Clipper Tournament, held in New York 20 September to 18 October 1876. The standings, as I read them from a 19 October report in the *Brooklyn Eagle* are: Mason 16-3, Delmar 15-2-1, Bird 15-2, Ensor 11-4, Dill 8-4-3, Wernich 9-8-1, Limbeck 8-4-1, Clarke 8-5-1, Becker 6-2, Roser 5-1, McCutcheon 5-3, Lissner 5-5, with all other players below even score.

It is important to note that though ideally this would have been an all-play-all round-robin event, nowhere near all possible games were played. Except for the starting and ending dates, there was no fixed schedule. The 21 entrants made their own arrangements, and were not required to play all (or any) of their opponents. Mason, with 19 games, came closest to playing a full schedule, missing only a Francis M. Roser, but Bird played only 17, and while Delmar played 18, scoring $+15 -2 =1$, he still tied with Bird for 2nd-3rd place, because draws did not count and were not replayed (making a draw in effect a loss for both players!). All other contestants played less, the aforementioned Roser playing only six games. All that mattered in the final standings were total wins; thus Isaac E. Orchard, who scored $+6 -9 =1$, finished ahead of Roser, who scored $+5 -1$.

In games between the top seven players, Bird scored 5-1, losing only to S.R. Dill. Mason, Delmar and Dill each scored 4-2 among this top group. Bird's other loss, incidentally, was to a B.H. Williams, who won only 2 of the 13 games he played!

The report of October 18, 1876, explains the allegations of unfair play. The writer complains that the tournament, due to close that day, ought to be extended until November 1, since some of the main competitors have had the

chance to play weaker opponents, while others have not. In particular, the two main American hopefuls, Mason and Delmar, both defeated McCutcheon, while English competitors Bird and Ensor (another player with a sleazy history who will be the subject of a future article) could not get him to play. If Bird would beat McCutcheon, he would apparently be the odds-on favorite for first place, but McCutcheon chose to leave town, perhaps to boost the chances of an American winning. Others missing in action by then were Becker and Roser. The final report notes that the absence of Becker, Roser, and McCutcheon interfered with a satisfactory close of the tournament, apparently because of the fact that Bird got to play none of them, while Mason scored 2-0, missing only Roser.



Henry Bird

Furthermore, says the writer, “while it is desirable that the American players should win — Messrs. Mason and Delmar — it is not the thing for them to be assisted to win the prizes by any such methods as it is rumoured to have been tried in this tourney. Fair play is a jewel, and without it no mere winning of a prize is creditable.” I cannot find any games from the tournament; I would think it unlikely that any crooked games have been recorded for posterity. The *Eagle* writer merely says that some very fine play marked some of the contests, while others were scarcely up to the ordinary club standard. In his closing report, the *Eagle* writer repeats his disapproval, feeling that Bird should be viewed as the winner, adding that “Under the circumstances the victory of the American player is not calculated to rebound to his chess fame as much as his Philadelphia triumph did.” (referring to Mason’s victory in the centennial tournament, which as we will see may also be tainted.)

In summary, Mason and Delmar at least benefited from other players manipulating the tournament to favor them. I read a hint of even more serious charges against these two, both of whom are tainted by other scandals; whether this is (for example) asking players to play poorly against them or

resorting to bribery is not at all clear.

We also see that Grundy's mention of a conspiracy to deny him the prize at New York 1880 is not so far-fetched. Grundy, like Bird and Ensor, was English, and it seems from the Clipper example that some people might want to make sure the championship of the 5th American Chess Congress went to an American. It is a bit much to swallow the tactic of using bribery to level the playing field, but if it is true that Delmar and Ware tanked to Mackenzie, that would have unfairly given the tournament to Mackenzie if Grundy hadn't intervened. Indeed, I find it quite credible that Mohle might have deserved to win the event, if everyone played by the rules, and that Mackenzie's win may be as tainted as Grundy's.

To be continued ...



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