

Karlsbad series

Extended reprint from the great original **HEALTH RESORTS** by Jan van Reek (1945 - 2015), www.endgame.nl (inactive).

There were four famous Carlsbad chess tournaments, in **1907**, **1911**, **1923**, and **1929**, under the excellent supervision of **Viktor Tietz**, Senior Tax Inspector and President of the Carlsbad chess organization.



Viktor Tietz (Photo: Wikipedia)

Prior, Carlsbad already hosted a match between Albin and Marco in 1901 (full story: <http://www.chessgames.com/perl/chess.pl?tid=88083>), and another match between Janowski and Schlechter in 1902. The same year, in 1902, Viktor Tietz himself won a Triangular above 2. David Janowski, and 3. Moritz Porges, played in Carlsbad.

Karlsbad (Carlsbad), today Karlovy Vary, is a famous central-European spa and resort. It was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918, then part of Czechoslovakia, today: Czech Republic respectively, and called Karlovy Vary.

Karlovy Vary or *Carlsbad* (Czech pronunciation: [ˈkarlovi ˈvari] ⓘ[ⓘ] listen[ⓘ]); *German*: *Karlsbad*; *Yiddish*: קרלסבאד *Karlsbad*) is a *spa town* situated in western *Bohemia*, *Czech Republic*, on the approximately 130 km (81 miles) west of *Prague* (*Praha*), near the German-Czech border.

It is named after *Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor* and *King of Bohemia*, who founded the city in 1370. It is historically famous for its *hot springs* (13 main springs, about 300 smaller springs, and the warm-water *Teplá River*), and the most visited spa town in the *Czech Republic*. (Wikipedia)

Survey: The winners of the international invitation chess tournaments in **Karlsbad (**Viktor Tietz series**)**

Karlsbad 1907 **Akiba Rubinstein** (Poland), 2. Maróczy, 3. Saladin, 21 players

Karlsbad 1911 **Richard Teichmann** (Germany), 2./3. Rubinstein, Schlechter, 26 players

Karlsbad 1923 Three-way-tie, 18 players:

Alexander Alekhine (France), **Efim Bogljubov** (Germany), and **Géza Maróczy** (Hungary)

Karlsbad 1929 **Aron Nimzowitsch** (Denmark), 2./3. Capablanca, Spielmann, 22 players

I. KARLSBAD 1907

Karlsbad 1907 featured a number of younger players who would take leading roles in the chess world over the next quarter of a century facing a strong group of established Masters. **Akiba Rubinstein** won half a point ahead of Geza Maroczy, followed by surprising Paul Saladin Leonhardt as sole third in **a field of 21 strong players**.

This event featured a veritable parade of famous players. The twenty-one competitors were (in order of final placing): Rubinstein (with an amazing 15-5), Maroczy, Leonhardt, Nimzowitsch, Schlechter, Vidmar sr., Duras, Teichmann, Salwe, Wolf, Dus-Chotimirsky, Marshall, Spielmann, Tartakower, Janowski, Berger, Mieses, Chigorin (his last tournament), Dr. Olland, E.Cohn, and P. Johner from Switzerland. The only chess giants missing from this lineup were Lasker, Tarrasch, and Amos Burn.

The time control was 30 moves in two hours, followed by 15 moves per hour thereafter. A more modern provision forbade agreed draws before move 45 without the permission of the tournament director. This had an effect, with only 40 of the 210 games were drawn.



Akiba Rubinstein

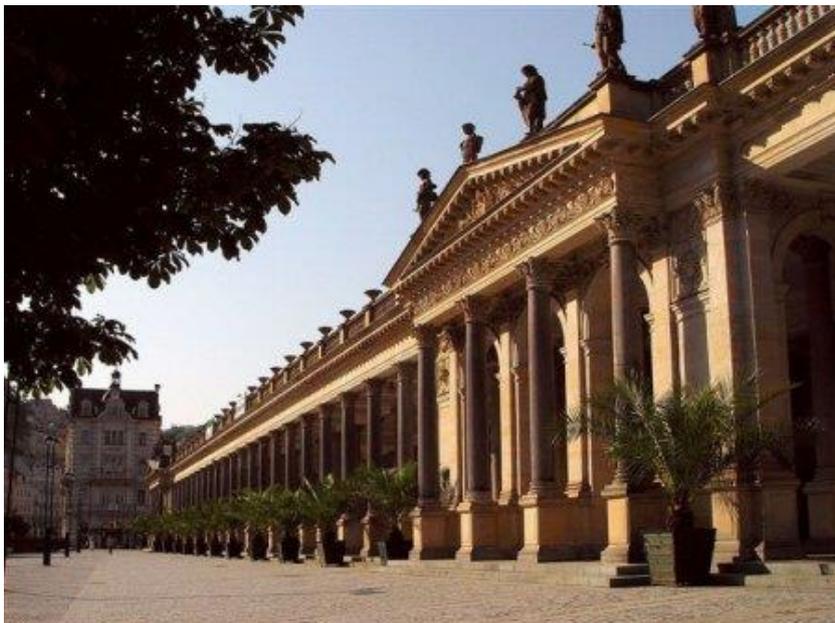
II. KARLSBAD 1911

The second Karlsbad event was opened in the Kurhaus on 20 viii 1911. Twenty-six participants played from 21 viii til 24 ix. It became a confrontation between the settled stars Teichmann, Rubinstein and Schlechter versus the young Rotlewi and Alekhine.

Richard Teichmann won the event before joint runners-up Rubinstein, Schlechter and surprising Georg Rotlewi. Usually, Richard Teichmann played many draws and became fifth in the tournaments. This time a small inheritance from his mother gave him more freedom, and he managed to keep on fighting in a lengthy event, despite a frail health. He branded his mark by defeating the numbers two until four.



A fine tournament win for Richard Teichmann

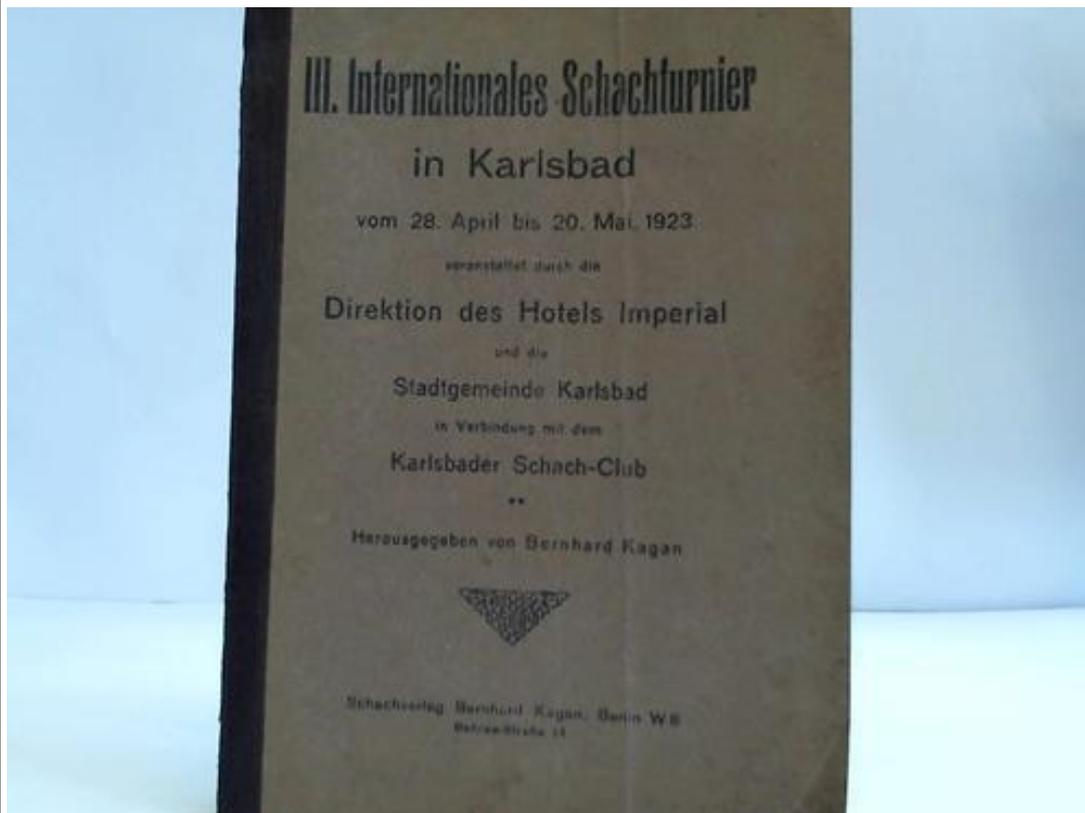


Sprudelkolonnade Karlsbad

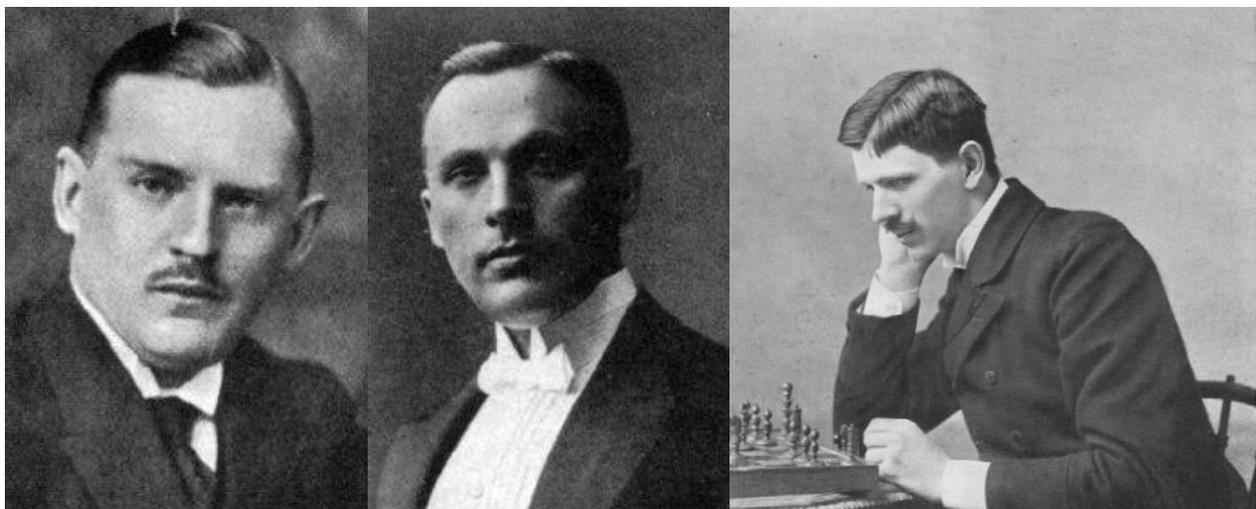
III. KARLSBAD 1923

The third Karlsbad master tournament was played in the *Helenenhof Imperial Hotel* from 27 iv until 22 v 1923. **Alexander Alekhine** showed great fighting chess and took the lead. But tailender Spielmann defeated him in the penultimate round and **Geza Maróczy** caught up. **Efim Bogoljubov** joined the lead in the last round for a three-way tie (all at $11\frac{1}{2}/17$). Réti and Grünfeld followed by one point ($10\frac{1}{2}$). Nimzowitsch and Treybal scored ten points.

The three winners earned 3,505 [Czechoslovak koruna](#) for their victory, with Alekhine earning an additional "Prize of Honor," a crystal goblet worth 1,000 Kčs, and Bogoljubov receiving a cash prize worth half Alekhine's prize.



Tournament book



The three winners: Alekhine (best on tie-break), Bogoljubov, Maróczy (Photos: Wikipedia, Chessgames)

IV. KARLSBAD 1929

The fourth international master chess tournament to be held in the spa resort of Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia in 1929 was a round robin event involving 22 of the best chess masters in the world. Of the top players, only world champion Alexander Alekhine and former world champion Emanuel Lasker were missing. The line-up of players included such names as Jose Capablanca, Efim Bogoljubov, Frank Marshall, Akiba Rubinstein, Milan Vidmar sr., Aron Nimzowitsch, and Rudolf Spielmann.

It was to be Aron Nimzowitsch's "finest hour," with a win over Savielly Tartakower propelling him to first place and the grand prize of 20,000 Kronen. Although he used this victory to campaign for his right to challenge Alekhine for the world championship, losses to the world champion at [San Remo \(1930\)](#) and [Bled \(1931\)](#) would dash his chances of competing for the world crown. Nevertheless, this victory amongst such a field of chess masters would shine as the high point in the career of **Aron Nimzowitsch**.



Nimzowitsch, the winner of the fourth and last Carlsbad tournament (Tietz series)
Photo: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/21834/aron-nimzowitsch#view-photo=69856380>

Further major chess tournaments at Carlsbad (Karlovy Vary):

At **Karlovy Vary / Marianske Lazne in 1948**, the winner was **Jan Foltys** (13 of 19) ahead of Barcza, Steiner, Pirc, Stoltz, Opocensky, Vidmar, Podgorny, Sajtar, Yanofsky, Prins, Rohacek, Tartakower, Golombek etc. (20 players round robin).

The **Czech Coal Carlsbad (100 Years Jubilee) Tournament in Karlovy Vary in 2007** was won by **Sergei Movsesian** and **Ruslan Ponomariov** (eight players round robin):

CZECH COAL CARLSBAD (100 YEARS JUBILEE) CHESS TOURNAMENT 2007 HUNDRED YEARS OF CHESS TOURNAMENTS

It has been exactly **one hundred years** since the first international chess tournament was held in the Czech countries.

In 1907, the world chess top players gathered in Karlovy Vary and chess magazines in the whole world were singing their praises for months afterwards. For this anniversary, the civic association Prague Chess Society was organizing a GM tournament called Czech Coal Carlsbad Chess Tournament 2007 in Karlovy Vary.

The participation to this classical chess tournament has been the strongest in several decades compared to other competitions held in the Czech Republic.

From Friday September 7th to Saturday September 15th 2007, eight grandmasters challenged each other in the hotel Carlsbad Plaza.

They were chosen carefully so that the tournament would host three players belonging to the current world top (rating over 2700 Elo points, GM Alexej Shirov, GM Ruslan Ponomarjov and GM Vladimir Akopjan), two players as chess legends (GM Viktor Korchnoi and GM Jan Timman) as well as the best chess player of Czech Republic (GM David Navara), the best chess player of Slovakia (GM Sergej Movsesian) and the best Czech junior chess player (GM Viktor Láznička).

The event was held under the auspices of the President of the Czech Republic, **Václav Klaus**. The society Czech Coal and its main partner, the society Eden Group operated as main sponsor.

As special guest of the tournament, the oldest living grandmaster has been invited, 96 years old **Andre Lilienthal**, and **Viktor Korchnoi**, 76, had been honored for his lifetime achievements.



Foto © Martin Chrz. Web Oficial

http://www.tabladeflandes.com/zenon2006/zenon_188.htm

Among the other guests were for example Kirsan Iljumzinov (President of the international chess federation FIDE and the President of the Kalmuck Republic of the Russian Federation), Bessel Kok (President of Managing Board of Global Chess, ex-president of grand master's association GMA and chief of Czech Telecom), Geoffrey Borg (General President of Global Chess and Vice-President of FIDE) and GM Lajos Portisch (longtime Hungarian number one chess player).

The game was commented live by the best chess player of Czechoslovakia in the second half of the twentieth century, grandmaster **Vlastimil Hort**, as co-commentator acted Michal Konopka.

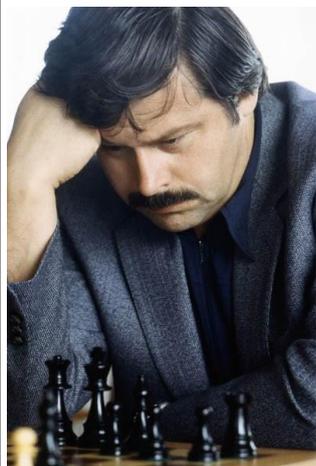


Photo: The Master Game Series 6. BBC Chess Programme
Vlastimil Hort, legend and a splendid commentator

The chess and this spa used to live in mutual symbiosis one hundred years ago. With this main tournament, the Czech chess community took up this tradition again:

Carlsbad (Karlovy Vary) is known in the whole chess world thanks to four great tournaments, held in **1907, 1911, 1923** and **1929**, known as the Viktor Tietz series.

Crosstables and Comments:

[Carlsbad \(1907\)](#) (Chessgames);

[Carlsbad 1907 chess tournament](#) (Wikipedia)

<http://dev.jeremysilman.com/shop/pc/Karlsbad-1907-p3576.htm>

(Original tournament book by Marco and Schlechter; Jeremy Silman)

[Carlsbad \(1911\)](#) (Chessgames);

[Carlsbad 1911 chess tournament](#) (Wikipedia)

[Carlsbad \(1923\)](#) (Chessgames);

[Carlsbad 1923 chess tournament](#) (Wikipedia)

[Carlsbad \(1929\)](#) (Chessgames);

[Carlsbad 1929 chess tournament](#) (Wikipedia)

<http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/extra/carlsbad.html>

(Alekhine on Carlsbad 1929; Edward Winter)

Sources:

<https://archive.is/f9IZ>, Archive page from www.endgame.nl, Jan van Reek (1945-2015), and

https://web.archive.org/web/20071217115432/http://www.nss.cz:80/web_site/carlsbad/en/index_en.php

Reprinted and extended in 2018: <http://www.chessdiagonals.ch/>