

Dr. Edward Lasker, 1885-1981

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Dr. Edward Lasker. Dr. Lasker, who was a great supporter and friend of computer chess, died in his New York apartment on March 25 at the age of 95. Dr. Lasker was a charter member of ICCA and was in correspondence and communication with Ben Mittman, David Slate, and others up to the last month of his life. He last attended a computer chess tournament at ACM in Washington in 1978, when we celebrated his 93rd birthday at the tournament site.

The following news release was prepared by the U. S. Chess Federation:

When International Master Edward Lasker recently passed away in New York City, the United States lost one of its very special chess people. Lasker was 95.

As player, writer, and raconteur, Lasker was a vivid part of the U. S. chess scene for more than sixty years. An engineer and inventor by profession, Lasker was passionately devoted to chess and to the Japanese game GO. He is credited by some with introducing the latter game to the United States.

His international chess career started in 1913 at Scheveningen (the Netherlands) where he won the first brilliancy prize in the process of finishing fifth. Lasker played in the great 1924 New York tournament and other important events during an international career that spanned more than 40 years; his last international event was a small 1954 Mexico City tournament, which he won. At home, Lasker won five Western Opens during the years that tournament was one of the outstanding U. S. events, lost a close U. S. Championship match in 1923 to Frank Marshall (9½-8½) and was a strong player even in his last years. In 1980,

he played in the Marshall Chess Club's Old Timer tournament; he finished fourth at 7-4 -- quite a result at 94. His skill at speed chess also remained with him as the years passed.

But Lasker is probably better known to U. S. chessplayers as a writer. His first book, Schachstrategie (Chess Strategy), was published in 1913; his last, the programmed learning test The Game of Chess, was published in 1972. His Chess for Fun and Chess for Blood is a genuine classic of English language chess literature.

Lasker was born in Breslau (now Wroclaw in Poland) in eastern Germany in 1885. He learned chess as a child and pursued his education in Berlin to provide himself easy access to stronger players. There he met a distant relative, World Champion Emmanuel Lasker; the two became life-long friends. Edward Lasker arrived in the United States in 1915 and became a citizen in 1921.

Lasker was an erudite and civilized man. Besides chess and GO, he loved the works of Mark Twain and fine music. Like his friends Emmanuel Lasker, painter Marcel Duchamp, and lawyer Clarence Darrow, he will not soon be forgotten.

The following offhand game against Sir George Thomas was played shortly after Lasker's arrival in England in 1912.

Edward Lasker	-	Sir George Thomas
1. P-Q4	P-K3	10. Q-R5 Q-K2
2. N-KB3	P-KB4	11. QxPch!! KxQ
3. N-B3	N-KB3	12. NxBch K-R3
4. B-N5	B-K2	13. N/5-N4ch K-N4
5. BxN	BxB	14. P-R4ch K-B5
6. P-K4	PxP	15. P-N3ch K-B6
7. NxP	P-QN3	16. B-K2ch K-N7
8. B-Q3	B-N2	17. R-R2ch K-N8
9. N-K5	O-O	18. K-Q2 mate