

2025-09-28

## **St. Sebastian 1911 – Capablanca's triumphant entry into Europe**



Frank Hoffmeister and Georges Bertola

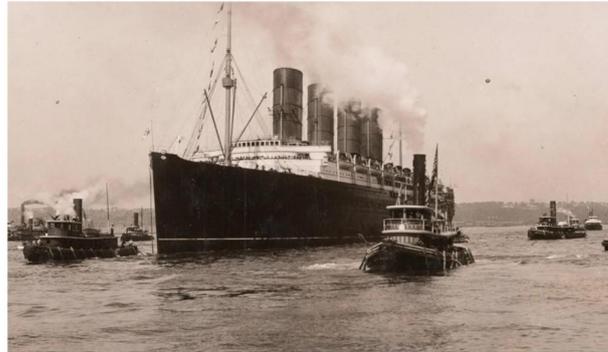
On Saturday 6 September, the first presentation was given by Georges Bertola on the 1911 San Sebastian tournament. This was Capablanca's first tournament in Europe, and he made a big impression.

Georges is a Capablanca specialist, and I also refer you to the first volume of the biography of the brilliant Cuban player:

[Capablanca, the prodigious ascent \(1888-1920\) - by Georges Bertola](#)

## **Georges Bertola: St. Sebastian 1911 – Capablanca's triumphant entry into Europe**

## Capablanca's first visit to Europe San Sebastián 1911

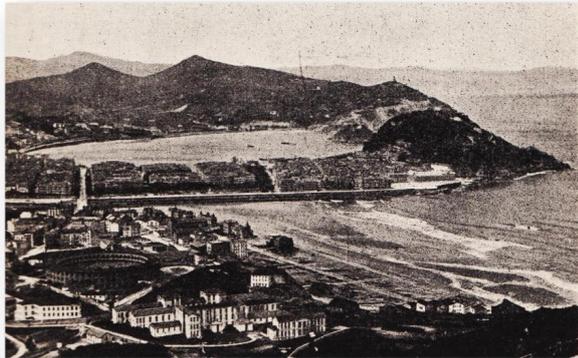


The liner Lusitania leaving  
the port of New York



Recruitment poster  
following the torpedoing of  
the Lusitania in 1915.

## San Sebastian 1911

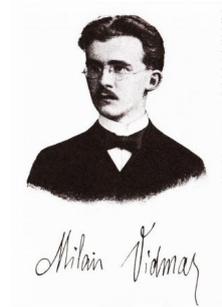
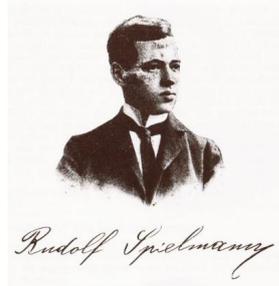


General view – photo from the magazine  
Tidskrift för schack in 1911

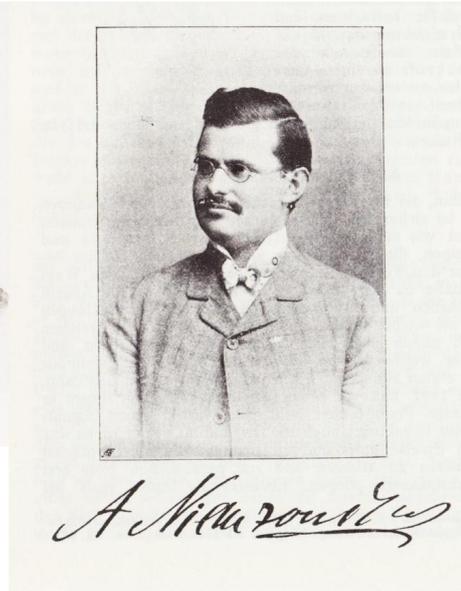


San Sebastian Casino

## The players of the Austro-Hungarian Empire



## Players of the Russian Empire



## Players of the German Reich



Paul Saladin Leonhardt



## Players from the rest of the world



## The great absentee



Lasker held in check by Schlechter in 1910



Henry Ernest Atkins, the English champion, had declined the invitation.

## Participants at San Sebastian 1911



# Tournament tables

MAITRES	Capablanca	Rubinstein	Vidmar	Marshall	Niemzowitch	Schlechter	Tarrasch	Bernstein	Spielmann	Teichmann	Janowski	Maroczy	Burn	Duras	Leonhardt	TOTALS	GAMES	POINTS	WILLS
Capablanca . . . 1	1	0	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1	9 1/2	6	1	7
Rubinstein . . . 2	0	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	9	4	0	10
Vidmar . . . 3	1/2	1/2	1	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	9	5	1	8
Marshall . . . 4	1/2	1/2	0	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	8 1/2	4	1	9
Niemzowitch . . 5	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	7 1/2	3	2	9
Schlechter . . . 6	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	7 1/2	2	1	11
Tarrasch . . . 7	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	7 1/2	3	2	9
Bernstein . . . 8	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	7	5	5	4
Spielmann . . . 9	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	7	3	3	8
Teichmann . . . 10	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	6 1/2	3	4	7
Janowski . . . 11	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	6	4	6	4
Maroczy . . . 12	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	6	1	3	10
Burn . . . 13	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	5	1	5	8
Duras . . . 14	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	5	3	7	4
Leonhardt . . . 15	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	5	2	8	4
	4 1/2	5	5 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	7	7 1/2	8	8	9	9	10	10	10	10	105	49	49	112



German Master Jacques Mieses, tournament director.

	Rodriguez	Dr. Puig	Steinweg	Gomez	Hallgarten	Conde	Rubio	Ostolaza	Castaneda	Matilla	Cortez	Juncosa	Gewinn-zähler
Rodriguez	—	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1	1	1	1	9 1/2 I. Preis
Dr. Puig	0	—	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9 II. III. Preis geteilt
Steinweg	0	0	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9 II. III. Preis geteilt
Gomez	1/2	0	0	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8 1/2 IV. Preis
Hallgarten	1/2	1	0	0	—	1	1	1/2	1	1	1	1	8 V. Preis
Conde	0	0	0	0	0	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Rubio	1/2	0	0	0	0	0	—	1	1	1	1	1	5 1/2
Ostolaza	0	0	0	0	1/2	0	0	—	1	1	1	1	4 1/2
Castaneda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0	1	1	2
Matilla	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	—	1	0	2
Cortez	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	1	1
Juncosa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	—	2

The amateur tournament was won by Luis Rodriguez Santamaria from Madrid. Eight Spaniards and two Germans took part.



Dr Esteve Puig i Puig, champion of Catalonia in 1921.

# The patrons



Golmayo facing King Alfonso XIII

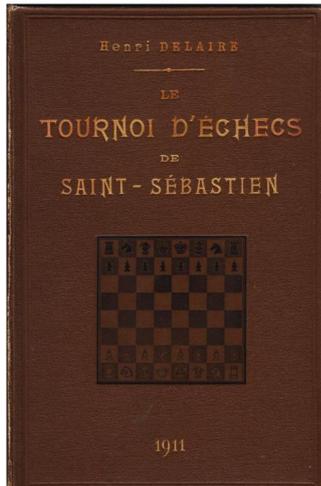


Baron Albert von Rothschild, president of the Vienna club, had offered the beauty prize.

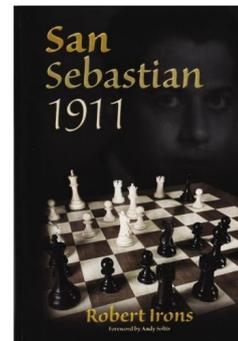
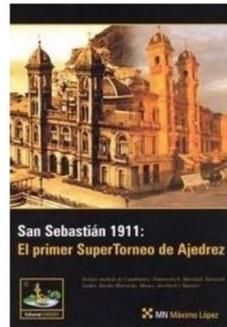
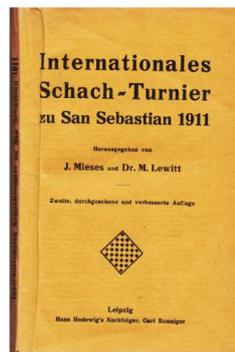


Manuel Márquez Sterling, ambassador and chess player.

## Tournament books



The tournament book published in 1911 by the editor of *La Stratégie* magazine.



Still relevant, version published in 2024

## The winner José Raúl Capablanca

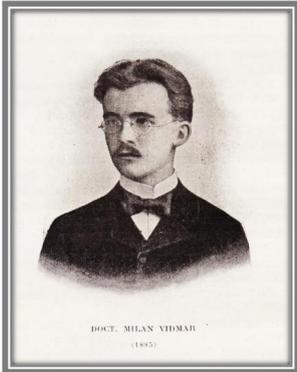


Capablanca – first prize 5,000 gold francs + 500 for the beauty prize

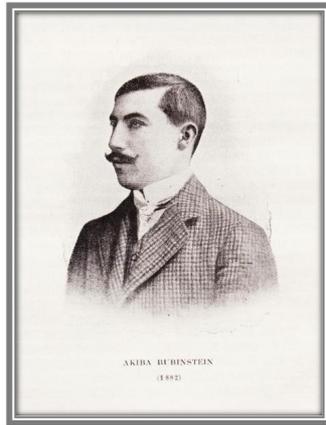


Closing ceremony

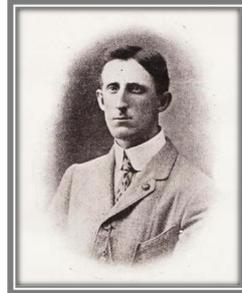
## The three other award-winning players



Vidmar 3rd  
2,500 gold francs



Rubinstein 2nd  
2,500 gold francs



Marshall 4th  
1,500 gold francs

— 164 —  
Situation respective des Vainqueurs\*

	Marshall	Rubinstein	Tarrasch	Capablanca	Schlechter	Vidmar	Nimzowitch	Portis
Marshall . . . . .	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	3 1/2	
Rubinstein . . . . .	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	3 1/2	I-II III
Tarrasch . . . . .	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1	3 1/2	
Capablanca . . . . .	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1	3	
Schlechter . . . . .	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	3	IV V
Vidmar . . . . .	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	3 1/2	VI
Nimzowitch . . . . .	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	VII

International press report – too many draws.

## In places of honor

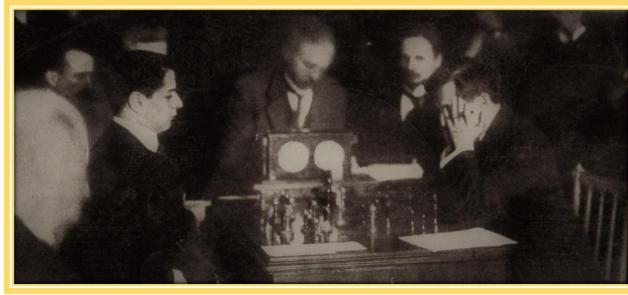


Nimzowitch



Schlechter vs Tarrasch

Players were reimbursed for their travel expenses and received 80 francs per win and 40 francs per draw.



*« In any case, another contender for the world championship has now emerged, that coveted crown for which we can expect to see a fierce battle unfold in the near future. »  
Miseses*

It would still take 10 years for this to happen!

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dummyLinks.each(function() { if (href === $(this).attr('href')) { $(this).detach(); } }); });
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[The presentation as PDF file:](#)

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[St. Sebastian 1911 – Capablanca's triumphant entry into Europe - Georges Bertola \(4.0 MiB\)](#)