

MAURICE VIGNAUX DEAD.

Famous French Billiardist Played Many Matches Here.

Maurice Vignaux, the famous French billiard player, died at Monte Carlo Thursday, according to a cable dispatch to the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Company. He was ranked as one of the foremost exponents of the game in the world and made several trips to this country to play against the masters of the United States. It was from Vignaux in Paris that Hoppe won the 18.1 championship emblem. That was one of the last championship matches in which the French master competed.

Vignaux was what might be termed a natural billiard player and strangely his first great reputation was won not in his own country, but in the United States. Starting as a clerk in a business house he displayed exceptional skill as an amateur billiardist, and François Ubassy took him as a pupil. Under this tutelage he made rapid strides, though he was still unknown to the ranks of billiard followers in Paris.

When Ubassy visited the United States in 1873 he remarked that he could bring over here a better player than himself. The next year Vignaux accompanied Ubassy to this country and in the first tournament in which he played he became a champion. This was held at Tammany Hall in November, 1874, against Garnier, Daly, J. Dion, Rudolph, Ubassy, C. Dion, and Daniels, who finished behind Vignaux in the order named. He defeated J. Dion in a subsequent tournament, and in February of the following year won the challenge cup, emblematic of the championship of the world, from H. W. Collender.

Vignaux opened a billiard room at Fourteenth Street and University Place, but in 1875, after a defeat by Garnier, returned to France, taking the championship cup with him. William Sexton journeyed to Paris to bring back the emblem, but lost to Vignaux. Slosson made three trips to Paris to play Vignaux. Twice he lost, but in 1882 he was successful.

The French master came here in 1883 to play in the first balkline tournament. His last voyage to this country was made in 1885 when he played against Schaefer and Slosson in a series of games. After two final defeats by Jacob Schaefer, Vignaux returned to Paris, where he opened an academy. In 1903 and 1904 he became the 18.1 and 18.2 champion of the world, and until 1910 was the recognized champion of Europe at balkline. The 18.2 emblem became his property, but Hoppe won the 18.1 emblem from him in 1906.