

Larry Kaufman

Kaufman's New Repertoire for Black and White

A Complete, Sound and User-friendly Chess Opening Repertoire

New In Chess 2019

Contents

Explanation of symbols.....	7
General introduction.....	9
Material values.....	13

Part I – White repertoire.....15

White Introduction – 1.e4: safe lines for a modest edge.....	17
Chapter 1 – Less common Black first moves.....	21
Chapter 2 – Caro-Kann.....	39
Chapter 3 – French Tarrasch.....	58
Chapter 4 – Petroff, Philidor, and Black gambits.....	74
Chapter 5 – Italian Game.....	90
Chapter 6 – Spanish with 6.d3.....	108
Chapter 7 – Sicilian with 2.♘c3.....	131
Chapter 8 – Sicilian with 2.♘f3.....	149
Index of variations (White).....	189
Index of names (White).....	193

Part II – Black repertoire.....195

Black Introduction – Defenses of the Superstars.....	197
Chapter 9 – Unusual opening moves.....	199
Chapter 10 – English Opening.....	207
Chapter 11 – Queen’s Indian versus Réti.....	213
Chapter 12 – Anti-Grünfeld and Symmetrical English.....	224
Chapter 13 – Queen’s Pawn Openings.....	241
Chapter 14 – Neo-Grünfeld.....	256
Chapter 15 – Grünfeld Indian – Non-Exchange lines.....	266
Chapter 16 – Grünfeld Exchange.....	289
Chapter 17 – Center Game and Ponziani.....	315
Chapter 18 – Bishop’s Opening and Vienna Game.....	321
Chapter 19 – Gambits.....	328
Chapter 20 – Scotch and Four Knights Opening.....	343

Chapter 21 – Italian Game	358
Chapter 22 – Spanish offshoots	370
Chapter 23 – Breyer Variation	389
Chapter 24 – Marshall Attack	405
Chapter 25 – Anti-Marshall	420
Chapter 26 – Møller Defense	432
Index of variations (Black).....	445
Index of names (Black)	453
Bibliography	457

General introduction

In 2013 I wrote *The Kaufman Repertoire for Black and White*. The Black half of this book is an update of the Black half of that one, mostly updated in 2018 with some further updates in 2019, with the addition of the Marshall Attack being the biggest change. The White half however is completely new; it had to be, because in KRBW I recommended 1.d4, whereas here I recommend 1.e4. Many of the games, and most of the analysis, for the White book are from 2019.

The main theme of the book, especially the White portion, is that you can obtain good positions, meaning slightly favorable ones as White and only slightly worse ones as Black, without having to play the most complex, theory-heavy lines in most cases. I was pleasantly surprised to see how little White gives up by avoiding the most critical lines. Apparently the elite GMs agree with me as they have been playing many of my White sidelines against each other in 2019. White can usually maintain a plus even in these sidelines well into the endgame. It won't be enough to win many correspondence games when your opponent is using an engine, but for over-the-board play, you will generally emerge from the opening as White with good winning chances if you are the stronger player, and with black should at least obtain positions where you won't just be fighting a one-sided battle for a draw. Although this is a repertoire book, I have made a much greater effort than in my previous books to give alternatives for the chosen side, especially in the White book, as I really don't want the book to become obsolete just because one or two variations prove to be dead draws or otherwise dubious. The price for this is less coverage of rare moves by the opposing side. Usually inferior moves by Black can be rather easily refuted with any modern engine. I can't cover everything!

Although I am the oldest active GM in the U.S. and no longer play near GM level, I do have some real advantages for writing a book like this. Computer chess is having a revolution now, based on Monte-Carlo Tree Search and Neural Networks, inspired by the success of AlphaZero. This is not a book on computers, so you'll have to look elsewhere for more information about these terms, but suffice it to say that I am very much involved with these developments as a partner in KomodoChess, which has a very strong Monte-Carlo version already, and so I know what engines to use, what hardware to buy, and how to use them effectively. In March of 2019 I purchased a computer with a very powerful GPU (RTX 2080

for the tech-minded) and 8 very fast CPU cores. My method for working on this book is to run each position on the latest Lc0 (which is a neural network designed to roughly replicate Alpha Zero, rather successfully I would say) on my GPU and 2 CPU cores while running Komodo 13 MCTS on the other 6 CPU cores. These two engines complement each other quite well. Lc0 is in general stronger due to the extremely powerful GPU (which has almost 3000 cores!!). But it has no chess knowledge except what it taught itself by playing games, whereas Komodo MCTS has ten years of refinement of its chess knowledge behind it. Also Lc0 is relatively weaker in the endgame, and rather blind to perpetual checks in many positions. Note that both of these engines can be used in 'MultiPV' mode to display the top 5 (or more) moves without any loss of quality, which is not at all true of normal (non Monte-Carlo) engines, nor do the two engines have to share resources.

The result is a quality of analysis that vastly exceeds what most people will get using normal engines on normal pcs with shared resources and MultiPV displays. Aside from using these two engines, I also keep an eye on analysis done by others using Stockfish, Houdini, and normal Komodo, as well as database statistics using two databases. One is the Hiarcs Powerbook (mostly engine vs engine games I believe), and the other is a combination of the ChessBase MegaBase and a database of correspondence games. Of course I also consult books and magazines (especially *New In Chess Yearbook*), but due to the amazing developments mentioned above I consider anything older than 2018 to be unreliable so looking at older books was not a priority. One book I did consult on several lines for White was *Keep It Simple* by Christof Sielecki, both because it is new enough (2018) and because we chose some of the same lines, since simplicity was also one of my goals in this book. But I wanted my book to be suitable even for grandmasters, so in general my choices are not as simple as his; I'm really trying to prove an edge for White, not just interesting lines with surprise value. Although the variations chosen are aimed at reasonably strong players, my explanations are at a more elementary level, so even if some of the lines are a bit difficult, I hope that less advanced players will learn how to evaluate positions from my comments.

My role in choosing which moves to give is primarily as a referee. When the two engines (plus other analysis and database stats when applicable) agree, I will very rarely argue. These engines play somewhere in the 3400 to 3600 Elo range, and only in special circumstances would I ignore them. But when they disagree, which is pretty often, I have to decide which one is right, and here my chess understanding and knowledge of chess engines both play a role. The default assumption is that Lc0 is right, but

if Komodo MCTS strongly prefers a move that is only slightly below the best according to Lc0, or if Lc0 seems to be blind to some feature of the position or to a perpetual check, I'll probably go with Komodo's choice. I also consider whether the move is easy or difficult to understand; it is common that Komodo will pick the same move that I would pick, while Lc0 prefers one that just doesn't seem as good. Lc0 may be correct, but if I can't figure out why, probably the reader will also have difficulty, so I do consider this factor.

I generally quote the evaluation shown by Komodo (example: (+0.26) – between brackets) because until recently the Lc0 evaluations +0.27 were unrealistic, and I try to put into words the factors that justify the assessment shown. I tend to use symbols showing advantages a bit more aggressively than is customary, because if both engines show around +0.15 (for example), the position is almost surely favorable for White, if only slightly, and calling it equal just seems wrong.

The book is full of novelties, which I mark with an N, although it often happens that someone plays one of these moves shortly after I wrote up the game, so don't be surprised if you see games with my 'novelty'. When I refer to material advantages, I use the scale that I have promoted (see the chapter called 'Material values', namely pawn = 1, knight or bishop = 3½ (with a slight preference for the bishop in general), rook = 5¼, queen = 10, and the bishop pair earns a half point bonus. Checkmate may be the nominal object of the game, but nowadays it seems as if the rules have been changed to say that being the sole possessor of the bishop pair wins! It's an exaggeration, but if you don't believe that winning the bishop pair for nothing is generally a serious advantage, a lot of the White book won't make much sense. All modern computers and top GMs accept this.

Writing this book has made me feel like a time traveler. It is full of the latest games and novelties, many in 2019, and features some games by players born in the 21st century. Yet I also have ties to the distant past. My first chess teacher, Harold Phillips, was Greater New York champion in 1895, and played twice against the first World Champion, Wilhelm Steinitz, in 1894!! I met Edward Lasker, whose most famous game was played in 1912, and had some instruction from Norman Whitaker, a top player around 1920. I played against Sam Reshevsky and Al Horowitz in the U.S. Championship, and won a ten game rapid match from Arnold Denker, three of the four top American players during World War II. My first big success was winning the American Open championship in 1966, but I didn't earn the Grandmaster title until I won the World Senior Championship in 2008. I was part of the team that created MacHack, the first chess computer to earn a rating in human tournaments, in 1967,

and 52 years later I'm still working on chess computers and playing in tournaments! In short, I have had a very long chess career!

I would like to thank Daniel Clancy for the correspondence database, HiarcS for their database, Mark Lefler and the late Don Dailey for their roles in KomodoChess, the late Steve Brandwein for teaching me a lot about chess so long ago, Christopher Gallardo for encouraging me to write this book, and New In Chess for publishing it.

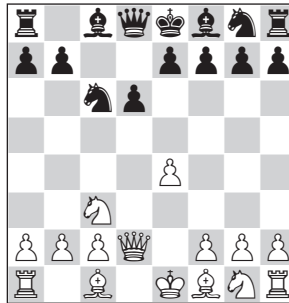
Big changes are happening in the chess world, in an effort to combat excessive draws and to minimize the role of preparation for specific games. One top event introduced 'Armageddon' playoff games after every draw, and FIDE is organizing a serious World Championship of 'Chess960' aka 'Fischerandom' with most of the elite players. I don't know where these changes will take us, but I hope to be involved in these new developments. Despite my age, I'm receptive to new ideas.

Larry Kaufman
Bethesda, USA,
October 2019

CHAPTER 7

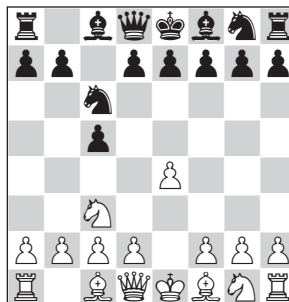
Sicilian with 2.♘c3

In this chapter White meets the Sicilian 1.e4 c5 with 2.♘c3, not with the idea of playing a closed Sicilian, but rather with the new idea of meeting 2...d6 (usually intending Najdorf or Dragon) by 3.d4 cxd4 4.♙xd4 ♘c6 5.♙d2.



White plans b2-b3, ♔b2, and castling queenside, intending an English Attack kingside pawn storm. Of course I have to include counters to the other serious options for Black on move 2, which often means playing some Open Sicilian without having to meet the two ‘best’ ones, the Najdorf and the Sveshnikov, as I’ll explain. If you don’t want to play Open Sicilians at all, just skip this chapter and go to the 2.♘f3 chapter, which I consider my main line.

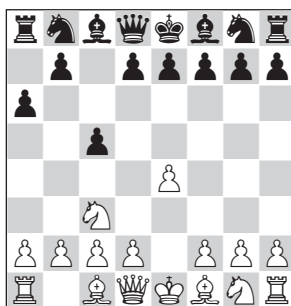
The most natural reply to 2.♘c3 is 2...♘c6, as that will be the most useful move if White plays some closed Sicilian line as suggested by 2.♘c3.



Then I recommend 3.♘f3 (3.♔b5 is a decent move here, as it is after 2.♘f3, but I couldn’t prove an edge in one main line). Now after 3...e6 play 4.d4

cx d4 5. ♖xd4 (we can reach this position also by 2...e6 3. ♖ge2 (I prefer this move here to meet 3...a6 by 4.g3) 3...♖c6 4.d4 cxd4 5. ♖xd4). Now **5... ♖f6 6. ♖xc6** (not 6. ♖db5 as it allows a transposition to the highly respected Sveshnikov Sicilian) **6... bxc6 7.e5** is Game 7.1. It is very sharp and requires memorizing, so I also include a simpler alternative, 4. ♗b5, in the notes. For **5... ♖c7**, the Taimanov Sicilian, see Game 7.2 for **6.g3**, a fairly simple path to a normal opening edge for White.

Next we come to **2... a6**, which is often the choice of a would-be Najdorf player but can also be chosen by Taimanov or Kan players, although they are more likely to choose 2...♖c6 or 2...e6.



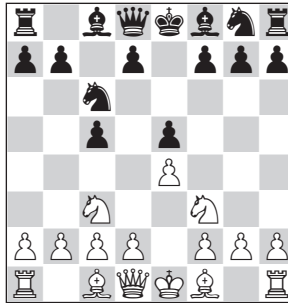
We play **3. ♖ge2** (intending 4.g3, or else 3.g3 first, transposing once ♖ge2 is played). The idea is that we will postpone deciding between d2-d3 and d2-d4 until we have played g2-g3 and ♗g2 to see what set-up Black chooses. If he plays ...e7-e6 we choose d2-d4, if he plays ...d7-d6 and ...g7-g6 we choose d2-d3, arguing that in closed Sicilian lines the move ...a7-a6 is somewhat wasted, as Black would normally prepare ...b7-b5 by ...♖b8. For lines in which Black plays ...e7-e6 or ...d7-d6 but not the other, see Game 7.3, which also covers 2...g6, which we meet by 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 planning to castle queenside with strategies similar to the Yugoslav Attack against the Dragon, but the details are different so your opponent will likely be out of book. The actual game features a pawn sacrifice on move 9 that is totally sound and quite strong.

For a Scheveningen set-up (...e7-e6 and ...d7-d6) see Game 7.4, which shows that the ♗g2 set-up has some sting when Black delays the development of his kingside too long.

Now comes **2. ♖c3 ♖c6 3. ♖f3 ♖f6 4. ♗b5**, which could just as easily have gone into the Rossolimo portion of the other Anti-Sicilian chapter, via 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3. ♗b5 ♖f6 4. ♖c3. See Game 7.5, which includes in the notes a game between the world's two highest rated players played in June 2019.

This defense is not so popular for Black in either move-order as it seems to give White an above-par edge.

In Game 7.6 we look at the very important 2. ♘c3 ♟c6 3. ♟f3 e5.



This is the usual choice of those players who intended to play the Sveshnikov, such as World Champion Magnus Carlsen, who played Black in this game. Black wins this game rather quickly, but I would credit the player, not the opening, as my notes show a normal White edge with an improvement on move 13.

Finally we come to the idea after 2...d6 described in the first paragraph, to foil the Najdorf. As explained in Game 7.7, it was an idea of a Greek FIDE Master, brought to the world's attention by Carlsen, and then later also taken up by his last challenger Caruana. Although it looks a bit silly at first glance, it carries some real venom and is a legitimate try for a white edge.

Game 7.1 Sicilian Defense –
Four Knights Variation

Wei Yi 2733
Alexandr Fier 2561

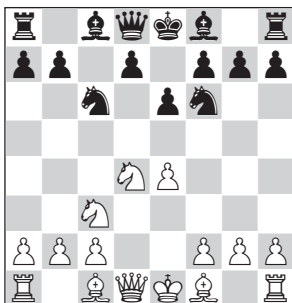
Moscow 2019 (2)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3

2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♗f3 e6 4.♙b5 would be the way to avoid the game complications: 4...♗ge7 5.0-0 a6 6.♙xc6 ♗xc6 7.d4 cxd4 8.♗xd4 ♖c7 9.♗xc6 dxc6 (9...bxc6 10.♖g4 ♙d6 11.♖xg7 ♙xh2+ 12.♙h1 ♙e5 13.♙f4 ♙xg7 14.♙xc7 d5 15.♗fe1 ♖a7 16.♙d6± (+0.17)). White's superior development more than offsets the bishop pair) 10.♖h5 b5 11.♗d1 e5 12.♙g5 ♙e7 13.♙xe7 ♖xe7 14.♗d2 0-0 15.♗ad1 g6 16.♖f3 ♙e6 17.♖g3 f6 18.♖d3± (+0.00), but Lc0 thinks Black must give two rooks for the queen for a +0.42 score. 18.♖e3 is also slightly better for White.

2...e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 ♗c6

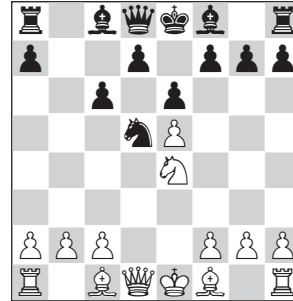
Our likely move order to reach this position is 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♗f3 e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♗xd4 ♗f6.



Now 6.♗db5 is often played, but it allows Black to reach the Sveshnikov by 6...d6 7.♙f4 e5

8.♙g5, when Black has avoided what may be the best line against the Svesh proper, namely 7.♗d5. 6.a3 is safe and not bad, but it is obviously a concession, so the forcing line in this game is really the only critical test of the variation.

6.♗xc6 bxc6 7.e5 ♗d5 8.♗e4



8...♖c7

8...♙b7 9.♙e2 c5 10.0-0 ♖c7 11.♗d6+ ♙xd6 12.exd6 ♖c6 13.f3 c4 14.♖d4 0-0 15.♙xc4 ♖xd6 16.♗d1 ♗fc8 17.b3 ♖b6 18.♖xb6± (+0.34). Whichever way Black recaptures, White will have a solid bishop pair endgame advantage.

9.f4

This is a very sharp line which you must memorize.

9...♖b6

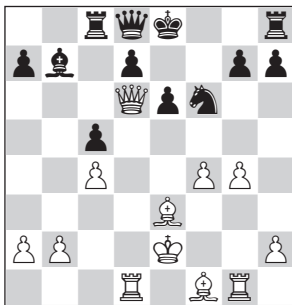
9...♖a5+ 10.♙d2 ♖b6 11.♙d3 ♗b4 12.♖e2 ♗xd3+ 13.♖xd3 ♖xb2 14.0-0 ♖a3 15.♖e2 ♖b2 16.♙e3 ♙e7 17.♗ab1 ♖a3 18.♗b3± (+0.77). White's huge lead in development and space are clearly worth more than Black's extra pawn.

10.c4 ♙b4+

10...♗e3 11.♖d3 ♙b4+ 12.♙d2 ♙a6 13.♙xb4 ♖xb4+ 14.♙f2 ♖xb2+ 15.♙e2 ♗xc4 16.♗hd1 ♖b6+ 17.♖d4

♘b2 18. ♙xa6 ♘xd1+ 19. ♖xd1 ♗xd4+ 20. ♖xd4 ♜b8 21. ♞a4 ♖e7 22. ♖e3 ♜b2 23. ♘d2 ♜hb8 24. ♙d3± (+0.25). Although rook and two pawns are a tad better than bishop and knight with queens off, the presence of the extra pair of rooks, the weak a7-pawn, the backward d7-pawn, and the great white king position give him the better chances.

11. ♖e2 f5 12. exf6 ♘xf6 13. ♙e3 ♗d8 14. ♘d6+ ♙xd6 15. ♗xd6 ♙b7 16. ♖d1
 16. ♖d1 c5 17. ♗xc5 ♙e4 18. ♙e2 ♜c8
 19. ♗xa7 0-0 20. ♗d4±.
16... ♜c8 17. ♞g1 c5 18. g4

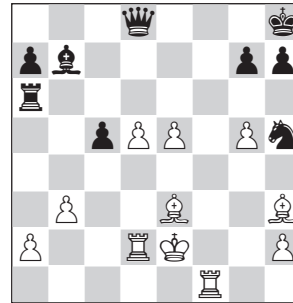


18... ♜c6

18... ♗b6 19. g5 ♗xd6 20. ♖xd6 ♘e4 21. ♖d3 d5 22. ♞a3 d4 23. ♞xa7 ♘d6 24. ♙c1 ♜c7 25. ♖e1 ♘d7 26. ♙d3 g6 27. ♞a5 ♘f5 28. h3 h6 29. gxh6 ♜xh6 30. ♙f1 ♙e4 31. b3± (+0.25). Black has considerable compensation for the pawn in this endgame, but he is also down the bishop pair.
19. ♗e5 0-0 20. g5 ♘h5 21. ♙h3 d6 22. ♗xe6+ ♖h8 23. ♞gf1 ♜b6 24. b3 ♞a6 25. ♖d2
 25. ♗d7 ♞xa2+ 26. ♖d2 ♖xd2+
 27. ♙xd2 ♗a8 28. ♗g4 ♗e8+ 29. ♖d1 ♗e4 30. ♗xh5 ♗d3 31. f5 ♗xb3+

32. ♖e1 g6 33. ♗e2 ♗xh3 34. ♗e7 ♗h4+ 35. ♖f2 ♗e4+ 36. ♗xe4 ♙xe4 37. f6± (+0.10), Lc0 +0.31. Black should hold this opposite bishops endgame despite the dangerous passed pawn.

25...d5 26. ♗e5 ♞e8 27. cxd5 ♖xe5 28. fxe5



28... ♙xd5

28...c4 29. bxc4 ♞a3 30. ♙c5 and now:

A) 30... ♜xh3 31. ♖d1 ♞h4 32. ♖f8+ ♗xf8 33. ♙xf8 ♖g8 34. ♙a3 ♙c8 35. e6 ♖xc4 36. ♞e2 ♖d4+ 37. ♖c2 ♖xd5 38. e7 ♙d7 39. e8 ♗+ ♙xe8 40. ♖xe8+ ♖f7 41. ♞e7+ ♖g6 42. ♞xa7 ♖xg5 43. ♙d6 ♖d5 44. ♙c7± (+0.55). Black might be able to draw, but not easily;

B) 30... ♙a6!? 31. ♖f8+ (Black should also hold after 31. ♖d1 with perfect play) is analyzed to a likely draw in *New In Chess Yearbook 131*, page 19. As with many lines in this book, this is a problem only for the correspondence player; as long as Black has to find many good moves in multiple lines to hold the draw, White can be satisfied with the opening for over-the-board play, even at grandmaster level.

29. ♙g2 c4?

29...♖xa2! 30.♗xd5 ♖xd2+ 31.♗xd2
 ♘f6. Now both captures allow
 perpetual check: 32.exf6 ♗xd5 33.f7
 ♗e4+ 34.♗f2 ♗f5+ 35.♗g2 ♗g4+ or
 32.gxf6 ♗xd5 33.f7 ♗e4+.
30.♗xd5 c3 31.♗b7 cxd2 32.♗xa6
♗e8 33.♗c4 g6 34.e6 1-0

Game 7.2 Sicilian Defense – Taimanov

Magnus Carlsen 2835

Richard Rapport 2731

Wijk aan Zee 2019 (8)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3

2.♗c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 e6 4.d4 cxd4
 5.♘xd4 would be the likely move
 order for us to reach the game
 (Black's second and third moves
 could be transposed).

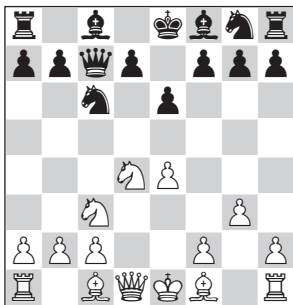
2...e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6

The Taimanov Sicilian, which I
 played often as Black in 1962!

5.♘c3 ♗c7

5...a6 6.g3 ♗c7 transposes.

6.g3



This positional line has some sting
 to it when Black has played (or will
 need to play) ...a7-a6.

6...a6

6...♗f6? was already known to be
 bad half a century ago: 7.♘db5 ♗b8

8.♗f4 ♗e5? (8...e5 9.♗g5 a6 10.♗xf6
 gxf6 11.♘a3 ♗xa3 12.bxa3 ♗e7
 13.♗d3± (+0.30). Black has more
 serious pawn weaknesses and less
 space) 9.♗e2 ♗c5 10.♗xe5 ♗xe5
 11.f4 ♗b8 12.e5 a6 13.exf6 axb5
 14.♗e4 ♗f8 15.♗d4+-.
7.♗g2 ♘f6 8.0-0



8...d6

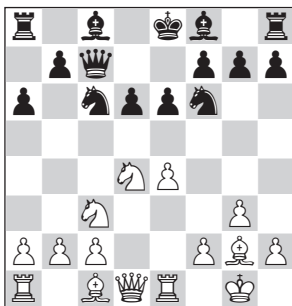
A) 8...♘xd4 9.♗xd4 ♗c5 10.♗f4
 d6 11.♗d2 h6 12.♖ad1 e5 13.♗e3
 ♗e6 14.♗xc5 dxc5 15.♘d5 ♗xd5
 16.exd5 ♗d6 17.c4 0-0 18.♗h3
 (18.♖fe1 ♘d7 19.♗h3 f5 20.f3
 b5 21.♗c2 (21.b3± (+0.16)). The
 protected passed pawn and pressure
 on f5 and e5 are White's edge) 21...
 g6 22.g4 fxc4 23.♗xc4± (+0.12).
 The protected passer and threats
 to Black's king give White a plus)
 18...♖fe8 19.♖fe1 ♖e7 20.♖e3 b6
 21.a3 ♖ae8 22.b4 (22.♗c2± (+0.32)).
 White active bishop and protected
 passed pawn are his edge) 22...♖c7
 23.♖b3 (23.♗e2±) 23...b5 24.♗f1
 bxc4 25.♗xc4 cxb4 26.♗xb4 ♗xb4
 27.♖xb4 a5 28.d6 ♖c5 29.♖a4 ♖d8
 30.♗b3 ♗e8 31.♖d5 ♖c3 32.♗c4
 ♘xd6 33.♗f1 f6 34.♖axa5 ♖c6
 35.♖a7 ♖b8 36.♖d1 ♘f5 37.♗g2 ♖c3
 38.♗d5+ ♗h8 39.♗e4 ♘d4 40.♗g6

f5 41.h4 f4 42.♔g2 ♚f8 43.h5 (43.g4±) 43...fxg3 44.fxg3 ♘f5 45.♚f7 (45.♚dd7±) 45...♘e3+ 46.♔h3 ♔g8 47.♚xf8+ ♔xf8 48.♚a1 ♘d5 49.♔g2 ♚c5 50.♚b1 ♚a5 51.♚b8+ ½-½ Adams-Spoelman, Germany Bundesliga 2017/18;

B) 8...♙e7 9.♚e1 0-0 10.♘xc6 dxc6 11.e5 ♚d8 12.♚f3 ♘d5 13.h4 ♙d7 14.♙g5 ♙xg5 15.hxg5 ♘xc3 16.♚xc3 ♙e8 17.♚ad1 a5 18.♚c5 (18.a3 ♚ab8 19.♚c5 b6 20.♚e3± 1-0 (60) Wang Hao-Andreikin, China tt 2019 (+0.22)) 18...b6 19.♚a3± ♚xd1 20.♚xd1 ♚xe5 21.♚e7 ♚b8 22.c4 (+0.50). White's total board domination is obviously worth more than Black's extra pawn, though the game still has to be won.

9. ♘xc6

This is rather rare, but may be even better than the usual 9. ♚e1:



analysis diagram

A) 9...♙d7 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.♘a4 ♚b8 12.b3 e5 13.♚d3 a5 14.♙d2 ♙e7 15.c4 0-0 16.♚ac1± (+0.62). White has space and weak pawns to target;

B) 9...♙e7 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.e5 dxe5 12.♚xe5 0-0 13.♚e1 ♙b7 14.♙f4 ♚a5 15.a3 ♚ad8 16.♚e2± (+0.41). Black has a problem bishop on b7;

C) 9...♚b8 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.e5 dxe5 12.♚xe5 ♙d6 (12...♚xe5 13.♙f4 ♚c5 14.♙xb8 ♙e7 15.♙c7 0-0 16.♘a4 ♚f5 17.♚d2± (+0.60). White has the better pawn structure and better development) 13.♚e1 0-0 14.b3 c5 15.♘a4 c4 16.♘b2 cxb3 17.axb3 ♚d8 18.♚e2 ♙d7 19.♚c4 ♙b5 20.♚xc7 ♙xc7 21.♚d1± (+0.28) is a decent alternative, with White's better pawn structure giving him a small endgame plus, but probably the game move is stronger.

9...bxc6 10. ♘a4 ♚b8 11.c4 c5 12.b3 ♙e7 13. ♙b2 0-0



14. ♚e1

14.f4 ♘d7 15.♚d2N ♙b7 16.♚ad1 transposes to move 20 of the game while cutting out the ...♘e5 option.

14...♘d7 15. ♚d1 ♙b7

15...♘e5 16.♚c3 ♙f6 17.♚d2 ♙d7 18.♘c3± (+0.40). White has space and pressure on d6.

16. ♚c3 ♙f6 17. ♚d2 ♙e7 18. ♚c3 ♙f6 19. ♚d2 ♙e7 20.f4 e5 21. ♙c3 ♙c6 22. ♙a5 ♚b7 23. ♘c3± (+0.56)

White can aim for ♘d5 or f4-f5 if Black just waits.

23...exf4 24.gxf4 ♚fe8 25.e5 ♙xg2 26. ♚xg2 dxe5 27. ♘d5 e4 28. ♙c3 f6 29. ♔h1

29. ♖fe1 ♗h8 30. ♜xe4+- was the surer way to win, regaining the pawn with a crushing positional advantage, but Carlsen's way is fine too.

29... ♗h8 30. ♖g1 ♖f8 31. ♗e3 ♖c6 32. ♜d5 ♖e6 33. ♜h5 ♖f7 34. ♖h3 g6 35. ♜h4 ♜b6 36. f5 ♗e5 37. ♗d5 ♜d6 38. fxg6 ♗xg6 39. ♖xf6+ ♜xf6 40. ♜xh7+ 1-0

Game 7.3 Sicilian Defense –
Paulsen/Kan Variation

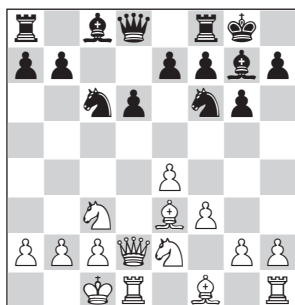
Dmitry Andreikin 2710

Denis Khismatullin 2634

Satka 2018 (1)

1.e4 c5 2. ♗c3 a6

A) 2...g6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♗f6 5. ♖e3 ♗c6 6. ♖d2 ♖g7 7.f3 0-0 8.0-0-0 d6 9. ♗ge2.



So it looks like the Yugoslav Attack vs the Dragon, but because the knight is on e2 instead of d4 all theory is out the window. 9... ♖a5 10. ♗b1 b5 11. ♖h6N (everyone has played ♗c1 or ♗f4 here, both good moves, but it makes sense to exploit the fact that ♖h6 can be played without losing a knight on d4) 11... ♖e6 12. ♖xg7 ♗xg7 13. ♗c1

♜ab8 14.g4 ♗e5 15.g5 ♗h5 16.f4 ♗c4 17. ♖d4+ f6 18.f5 ♖f7 19. ♖e2 ♖b6 20. ♖xb6 ♜xb6 21. ♖xh5 gxh5 22. ♜hg1± (+0.14). White has a better pawn structure and initiative;

B) 2...e6 3. ♗ge2 a6 transposes to the note to move 3, while 3... ♗c6 4.d4 cxd4 5. ♗xd4 transposes to the Four Knights (5... ♗f6 – Game 7.1) or the Taimanov (5... ♖c7 – Game 7.2).

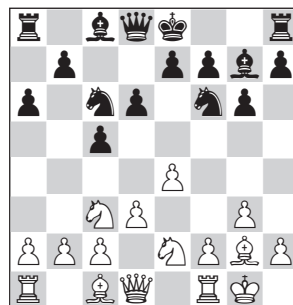
3.g3

3. ♗ge2 e6 4.g3 b5 5. ♖g2 ♖b7 transposes to the game. The 3. ♗ge2 move order allows White to refrain from g2-g3 in case of 3... ♗c6: he can switch to the Taimanov by 4.d4.

Note that we can't avoid having to learn the Taimanov since Black may choose the move order 2... ♗c6 3. ♗f3 e6. We only want to play g2-g3 after ...a7-a6 is on the board.

3...b5

3... ♗c6 4. ♖g2 g6 5. ♗ge2 ♖g7 6.d3 d6 7.0-0 ♗f6



analysis diagram

8. ♗d5N 0-0 9.c3± (+0.24). The move ...a7-a6 looks rather like a wasted move here.

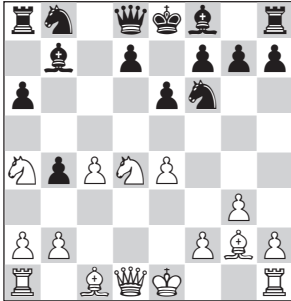
4. ♖g2 ♖b7 5. ♗ge2 e6 6.d4 cxd4 7. ♗xd4 b4

7... ♗f6 8.a3 ♖c7 9.0-0 d6 10. ♖e1 ♗bd7 11.a4 b4 12. ♗a2 ♗c5 13.c3 b3

14. ♖xb3 ♗cxe4 15. ♕f4 ♕e7 16. ♗d3 ♗b6 17. ♗c2 d5 18. a5 ♗d8 19. ♖ad1 ♗c8 20. ♗ac1 0-0 21. ♗d3± (+0.00).

Lc0 likes White due to his more active pieces, Komodo considers the center pawns adequate compensation. I prefer White.

8. ♗a4 ♗f6 9. c4!



9...d6

A) 9... ♕xe4 10. ♕xe4 ♗xe4 11. ♗f3 f5 12. g4 ♗c6 13. ♗xc6 dxc6 14. gxf5 exf5 15. ♗xf5 ♗d6 16. ♗h5+ g6 17. ♗f3 ♗e7+ 18. ♕e3 ♗e4 19. ♗xe4+ ♗xe4 20. 0-0-0 ♕e7 21. ♖he1 0-0 22. ♕d2 ♗xf2 23. ♖xe7 ♗xd1 24. ♗xd1 ♖ae8 25. ♖xe8 ♖xe8 26. ♗c5± (+0.71).

Bishop and knight vs rook and pawn with no other pieces on the board is just a slight edge, but the weak black queenside makes White's edge significant;

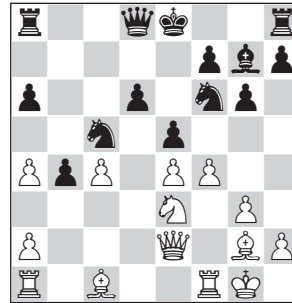
B) 9... ♗xe4 10. 0-0 ♕e7 11. ♕e3 0-0 12. ♗b3 a5 13. ♕b6 ♗c8 14. ♗xa5 f5 15. ♗xb7 ♗xb7 16. ♕e3 ♗c6 17. c5± (+0.56). White has a good bishop pair plus and also targets on d7 and e4.

10. 0-0 ♗bd7 11. ♗e2 e5 12. ♗f5 g6 13. ♗e3 ♕c6 14. b3

14. ♗c2 ♖b8 15. ♕d2 ♕e7 16. ♗d5 a5 17. ♗xe7 ♗xe7 18. f3 0-0

19. ♕e3± (+0.14). White has the bishop pair, Black has slightly better development.

14... ♕xa4 15. bxa4 ♗c5 16. f4 ♕g7



17. f5?

17. ♖b1! 0-0 18. fxe5 dxe5 19. ♗d5 ♗xd5 20. cxd5 ♗xa4 21. ♖xb4 ♗c3 22. ♗b2 ♗b5 23. ♕e3± (+0.42). Black lacks compensation for the bishop pair.

17... 0-0 18. ♗d5 ♗xa4?

18... ♗xd5 19. cxd5 ♗xa4±.

19. ♕g5 ♗c3 20. ♗xc3 bxc3 21. ♖ac1 h6 22. ♕e3 ♗a5 23. ♗d3 ♗g4

24. ♗xc3 ♗xc3 25. ♖xc3 ♗xe3

26. ♖xe3 ♕f6 27. ♗d3 ♖ad8 28. ffg6

fg6 29. ♕h3 ♗g7 30. ♕e6 ♖fe8

31. ♕d5± ♖b8 32. ♖a3 ♖b6 33. h4 h5

34. ♗g2 ♖eb8 35. ♗h3 ♖f8 36. ♖f2

♖fb8 37. ♖ff3 ♖f8 38. ♖fb3 ♕d8 39. c5

♖xb3 40. ♕xb3 dxc5 41. ♖xa6 ♖f3

42. ♖a8 ♕e7 43. ♖a7 ♗f8 44. ♖a8+

♗g7 45. ♖a7 ♗f8 46. ♕d5 g5 47. hxg5

♕xg5 48. ♗g2 ♖c3 49. ♖f7+ ♗e8

50. ♖f5 ♖c2+ 51. ♗h3 ♕e7 52. ♖xh5

c4 53. ♖xe5 c3 54. ♖e6 ♗d7 55. ♖c6

♕d6 56. a4 ♕c7 57. ♗g4 ♖c1 58. ♖c4

♗d8 59. ♗f5 ♗d7?

59... ♕xg3 60. ♗e6 ♕c7 61. ♕b7±.

60. ♕e6+ ♗d8 61. ♗f6 ♖f1+ 62. ♕f5

♖f3 63. g4 1-0

Game 7.4 Sicilian Defense –
Scheveningen Variation

Levon Aronian 2763

Vincent Keymer 2516

Karlsruhe/Baden Baden 2019 (6)

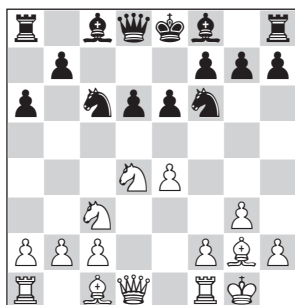
1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 a6 3.♗ge2 d6

Black has to play this way if he intends the Najdorf and wants to avoid the line 2...d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♖xd4. The move ...a7-a6 will turn out to be more useful than 2...d6 if White insists on playing this way.

4.g3

White is willing to play quietly here, hoping that ...a7-a6 will prove to be a wasted move. Normally in closed Sicilians Black prepares ...b7-b5 by ...♖b8, not by ...a7-a6.

4...♗f6 5.♙g2 ♘c6 6.0-0 e6 7.d4 cxd4 8.♗xd4



8...♙d7

If 8...♖c7 9.♗xc6 bxc6 10.♗a4 the white sequence attempts to prove ...a7-a6 to be a useless or even harmful move: 10...♙b7 11.c4 c5 12.♖e2 ♙e7 13.b3 0-0 14.♙b2 ♗d7 15.♖ad1 ♙c6 16.♗c3 ♙f6 17.♗b1± (+0.10). White has more space and Black has two weak pawns. Lc0 likes White more than Komodo does.

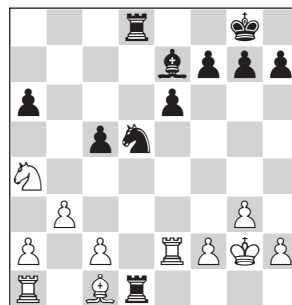
9.♞e1

9.♗xc6 ♙xc6 10.♙f4 ♙e7 11.e5 dxe5 12.♙xc6+ bxc6 13.♙xe5 0-0 14.♖xd8 ♖fxd8 15.♖fd1 ♗d5 16.♗a4 (+0.10) is very similar to the game.

9...♙e7 10.♗xc6 ♙xc6 11.e5

11.a4 ♖c7 12.a5 0-0 13.♙e3 ♗d7 14.♗a4 ♖ae8 15.♗b6 f5 16.♗xd7 ♖xd7 17.♖d3 fxe4 18.♙xe4 ♙xe4 19.♖xe4± (+0.22). White has fewer weak pawns.

11...dxe5 12.♙xc6+ bxc6 13.♖xe5 0-0 14.♖xd8 ♖fxd8 15.♞e2 c5 16.♗a4 ♖d1+ 17.♙g2 ♖ad8 18.b3 ♗d5



19.c3

19.♗b2 ♗c3 20.♖e3 ♙f6 21.♗xd1 ♗xd1 22.♖b1 ♗xe3+ 23.♙xe3 ♙e7 24.f4 h6 25.♙f3 (+0.06). White has the much better pawn structure, but it's very hard to exploit this here.

19...♖c8 20.♞e4 ♗f6 21.♞e2 ♗d5 22.♖d2 ♖xd2 23.♙xd2 c4 24.♗b2 ♙f6 25.♗xc4 ♙xc3 26.♖d1 ♙xd2 27.♖xd2 g5 28.♙f3 ♙g7 29.♗e3 ♖c3 30.♖c2?!

30.♙e4 ♗xe3 31.fxe3 (+0.02). White has the better side of a drawn rook endgame.

30...f5 31.♖xc3 ♗xc3 32.a4 g4+ 33.♙g2 ♙f6 34.♗c2 ♗e4 35.b4 ♗c3

36.b5 axb5 37.a5 ♘d5 38.a6 ♘c7
 39.a7 ♗e5 40.♙f1 ♘d5 41.♘b4+
 ♙c4 42.♘c6 ♘d3 43.♗e1 ♘a8
 44.♘d8 e5 45.♘c6 ♗e4 46.♘d2
 ♘d5 47.♘b4+ ♙c4 48.♘c6 ♘d5
 49.♘b4+ ♗e4 50.♘c6 f4 51.♙c3
 ♘d5 52.♘b4+ ♗e4 ½-½

Game 7.5 Sicilian Defense – Rossolimo

Pentala Harikrishna 2730

Jan-Krzysztof Duda 2731

Prague 2019 (3)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3

3.♙b5 ♘f6 4.♘c3 would be our
 move-order to reach the game via
 the Rossolimo, or we could reach it
 via 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3.

3...♘f6

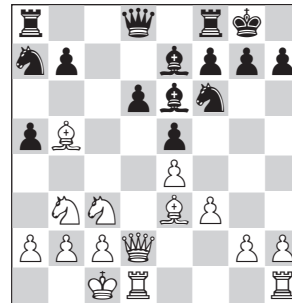
A) 3...g6 4.♙b5 ♘d4 (4...♘f6 is
 the note to move 4; 4...♙g7 5.0-0
 transposes to the Rossolimo
 Sicilian proper) 5.♘xd4 cxd4 6.♘e2
 ♙g7 7.0-0 ♘f6 8.e5 ♘g4 9.♘xd4
 ♘xe5 10.♘b3 a6 11.♙e2 d5 12.c3
 0-0 13.♙e1 ♙e8 14.d3 ♙d7 15.♙e3
 (+0.09). White's development is
 smoother, Black's pieces are a bit in
 the way of each other;

B) 3...d6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♘f6 (so
 we have transposed to the Classical
 Sicilian) 6.f3 (fortunately it seems
 that simply playing the English
 Attack works well here, no need
 for the complex Richter-Rauzer –
 6.♙g5) and now:

B1) 6...e6 7.♙e3 ♙e7 8.♙d2 0-0
 9.0-0-0 a6 (9...d5 10.♙e2!±) 10.g4
 ♘xd4 11.♙xd4 b5 12.g5 ♘d7 13.h4
 b4 14.♘a4 ♙a5 15.b3 ♘c5 16.♘xc5
 dxc5 17.♙b2 ♙d8 18.♙f4 ♙xd1+

19.♙xd1 ♙xa2 20.♙c1 ♙a5 21.♙e5
 f6 22.♙g3+- (+3.55). White has a
 decisive attack;

B2) 6...e5 7.♘b3 ♙e7 8.♙e3 0-0
 9.♙d2 a5 10.♙b5 ♙e6 11.0-0-0 ♘a7



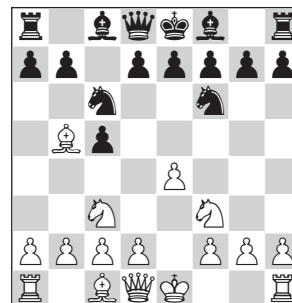
analysis diagram

12.♙xa7 was formerly overlooked
 due to the strong belief against
 trading off the better of two bishops
 for a knight, but it works well here:

12...♙xa7 13.♙b1 ♙a8 14.a4 ♙b6
 15.♙d3 ♙fd8 16.♘d5 ♘xd5 17.exd5
 ♙d7 18.♙xd7 ♙xd7 19.♘d2 ♙b4
 20.♙he1 ♙c8 21.♙e4 ♙b6 22.♘c4
 ♙a6 23.♘a3 ♙xd3 24.♙xd3± (+0.23).

This knight vs bad bishop endgame
 clearly favors White.

4.♙b5

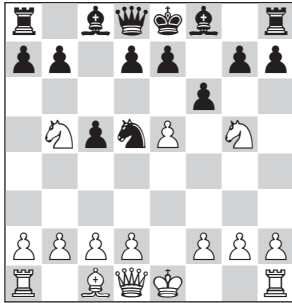


4...♙c7

A) 4...g6 5.0-0 ♙g7 6.e5 ♘g4
 7.♙xc6 dxc6 8.♙e1 0-0 9.d3 ♘h6

10. ♖e4 b6 11. a4± (+0.30). White has space and the initiative on both wings for the bishop pair;

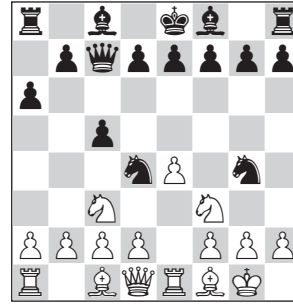
B) 4... ♖d4 5. e5 ♗xb5 6. ♗xb5 ♖d5 7. ♗g5 f6



analysis diagram

8. ♖e4 (8. ♖h5+ g6 9. ♖f3 fxe5 10. ♖xd5 a6 11. ♖c3 ♖c7 12. d3 ♖g7 13. ♖e3 ♖xe5 14. 0-0 ♖f5 15. ♗fe1± (+0.20). White will regain his pawn with a sizable lead in development. Black is unlikely to retain his bishop pair edge) 8... f5 9. ♖bc3 (9. c4! ♖c7 10. ♖xc5 ♖xb5 11. cxb5 d6 12. exd6 exd6 13. ♖a4 ♖e7+ 14. ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 15. ♖xe2 ♖e7 16. d3 ♖f6 17. ♖f4 ♖e6 18. ♗hc1 ♖d7 19. ♖e3 ♗he8 20. ♖d2 ± (+0.43). White aims to play b5-b6 strongly) 9... ♖xc3 10. ♖xc3 d6 11. 0-0 dxe5 12. ♖e2 e6 and White managed to win this balanced position. It was only a 10 to 7 minute Armageddon game, but one with a lot at stake between the world's top two ranked players: 1-0 (52) Caruana-Carlsen, Stavanger 2019.

5.0-0 ♖d4 6. ♗e1 a6 7. ♖f1 ♗g4
7... e5 8. ♖d5 ♖xd5 9. exd5 ♖d6 10. b3 0-0 11. ♖b2 b5 12. c3 ♖xf3+ 13. ♖xf3± (+0.45). White has space and better development.

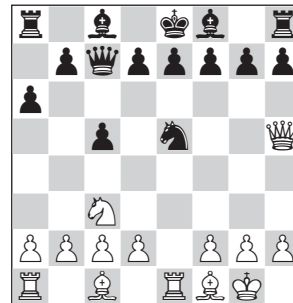


8.e5

This is a gambit, but quite a good one.

8.g3 is the normal, safe move.
8... ♖xf3+ 9. ♖xf3 ♖e5 10. ♖e2 e6 11. b3 d6 12. ♖b2 ♖e7 13. ♖g2 ♖c6 14. ♖d1 ♖d4 15. ♖d3 0-0 16. c3± (+0.38). White will have more space and better development once he gets in d2-d4.

8... ♖xf3+ 9. ♖xf3 ♖xe5 10. ♖h5

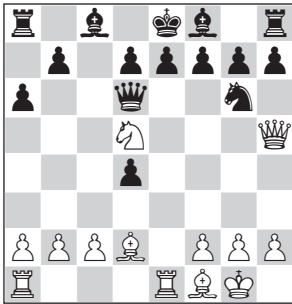


10... ♖g6?!

10... d6 11. f4 ♖c6 12. ♖d5 ♖d8 13. b3 e6 14. ♖b2 ♖d4 15. c3! ♖c2 16. c4! ♖d4 (in this position the knight would rather trade itself for the powerful bishop than for the out of play rook on a1) 17. ♖xd4 cxd4 18. f5 g6 19. fxe6 fxe6 20. ♖f3 ♖e7 21. ♖xe7 ♖xe7 22. ♖d3 ♗f8 23. ♖e4 ♗f7 24. ♖xd4± (+0.32).

White has healthier pawns, better development, and the safer king.

11. ♘d5 ♖d6 12.d4 cxd4 13. ♙d2



13...e6??

13...b6 14. ♙b4 ♖c6 15.g3N ♙b7
16. ♙g2 ♘d8 17. ♙e4 e6 18. ♘e7 ♖c7
19. ♘xg6 fxg6 20. ♖h4+ ♘e8 21. ♙xf8
♖xf8 22. ♖xh7 ♙xe4 23. ♖xe4
♖xc2 24. ♖xg6+ ♘d8 25. ♖f1 ♖xb2
26. ♖g5+ ♖f6 27. ♖ee1± (+0.65).

White will win back one of his two pawn deficit and will continue to have a strong attack on the exposed king.

14. ♙a5+- b6 15. ♙xb6 ♘f4 16. ♖h4

The mate threat on d8 wins.

16... ♙e7 17. ♘xe7 ♖xb6 18. ♘xc8

♖xc8 19. ♖xf4 ♖xc2 20.b3 0-0

21. ♖ed1 ♖a5 22. ♖xd4 ♖xa2

23. ♖xa2 ♖xa2 24. ♖a4 ♖c2

25. ♖xd7 g6 26.g3 a5 27. ♖a7 ♖b8

28. ♖xf7 1-0

Game 7.6 Sicilian Defense –
Anti-Sveshnikov

Peter Svidler 2735

Magnus Carlsen 2845

Karlsruhe/Baden Baden 2019 (8)

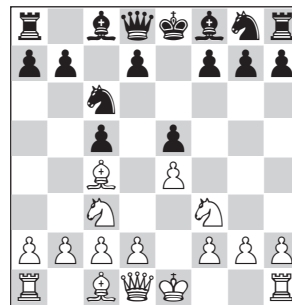
1.e4 c5 2. ♘f3 ♘c6 3. ♘c3

Note we can reach this by 2. ♘c3
♘c6 3. ♘f3 so it's important for
2. ♘c3 players.

3...e5

Black can play the Accelerated Dragon by 3...g6 or the Taimanov by 3...e6, but the text is necessary if you only intend the Sveshnikov against 3.d4. It is perfectly valid to play 3...g6 if you are willing to play the Accelerated Dragon provided White 'promises' (as here) not to play the Maroccy Bind.

4. ♙c4



In my youth, analysis stopped here since White is 'obviously' better, but later Black in effect said 'prove it!'.

4... ♙e7

4...g6 5.d3 h6 6.h4 (6.a3 d6 7.b4 ♙g7

8. ♙e3 b6 9. ♘d5 ♘ge7 10.c3 ♙d7

11.d4 cxd4 12.cxd4 exd4 13. ♘xd4

0-0 14. ♘xc6 ♙xc6 15. ♖c1± (+0.13),

Lc0 +0.32. White has a space and center advantage) 6...d6 7.h5 g5

8. ♘h2 ♙g7 9. ♘g4 ♘ge7 10. ♘e3 0-0

11. ♙d2 ♘h8 12.g4 ♖b8 13.a4 ♘d4

14. ♘cd5 ♘xd5 15. ♘xd5 (15. ♙xd5!

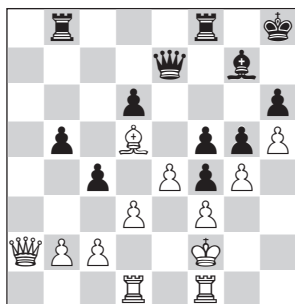
♘e6 16.b4 ♘f4 17.0-0 ♙e6 18.bxc5

dxc5 19. ♖f3 b6 20. ♙c4±) 15... ♘e6

16.f3?! ♘f4 17. ♖b1 ♙e6 18. ♖a2 ♖d7

19. ♖g1 b6 20. ♙c3 ♙xd5 21. ♙xd5 a6

22. ♖d2 ♜e7 23. ♝f1 b5 24. axb5 axb5
25. ♔f2 c4 26. ♖xf4 exf4 27. ♜ad1 f5



analysis diagram

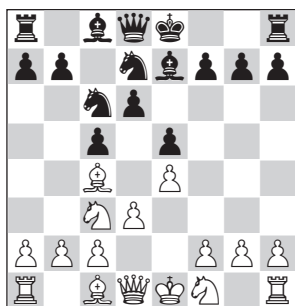
28. gxf5? (surprisingly White didn't take long to reply to Black's stunning move and faltered) 28...g4 (the white king is totally helpless in this line) 29. d4 ♜h4+ 30. ♔e2 ♜h2+ 31. ♝f2 gxf3+ 0-1 Nepomniachtchi-Carlsen, Zagreb 2019.

What both players missed after 28. exf5! ♖d4+ 29. ♔g2 ♜e2+ 30. ♔h1 ♖f2 is the miraculous escape ploy 31. b4! and there is no good way to defend against the perpetual of ♜a1+ and ♜a7+. As a matter of fact they also missed 30. ♔h3!.

5.d3 d6

5...♖f6 6. ♖d2 (6. ♖g5!?) 6...d6 transposes to the game.

6. ♖d2 ♖f6 7. ♖f1! ♖d7



The ...♖g5 option is Black's justification in playing this line. I suspect that Carlsen would rather play White here, but he is willing to take on slightly worse positions as Black in order to play for the win, and in any case what defense to 1.e4 is not slightly worse for Black?

8. ♖d5

8. ♖e3 may give a little something, but I prefer the game move: 8...♖b6 9. 0-0 0-0 10. ♖ed5 ♖xd5 11. ♖xd5 ♖g5 12. ♖xg5 ♜xg5 13. a4 ♝b8 14. ♜c1± (+0.20). The endgame is more pleasant for White.

8...♖b6 9. ♖xb6

9. ♖fe3 is again not bad but I like the game line: 9...0-0 10. 0-0 ♖g5 11. ♖xb6 axb6 12. a4 ♖xe3 13. ♖xe3 ♜e7 14. b3 ♖e6 15. ♜h5 ♝fd8 16. ♝ae1± (+0.20). Black can't eliminate the bishop pair without giving himself a weak backward pawn.

9...axb6 10. c3 0-0 11. ♖e3 ♖g5 12. 0-0

Although White lost this game badly, his position is fine at this stage.

12...♔h8

A) 12...♖xe3 13. ♖xe3 ♜e7 14. f4 exf4 15. ♖xf4 ♖e6 16. ♖b5!± (+0.20). Black has little compensation for the bishop pair;

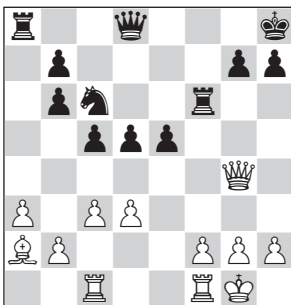
B) 12...♖e6 13. ♖xe6 fxe6 14. ♜b3 d5 15. a4 ♖a5 16. ♜a2 c4 17. dxc4 d4 18. ♖c2 ♖xc1 19. ♝axc1 dxc3 20. bxc3 ♜d2 21. ♝b1± (+0.15). White will have fewer weak pawns and a better knight after Black recoups his pawn deficit.

**13.a3**

13. ♘d5!N ♙xc1 14. ♖xc1 ♘e7 (14...f5 15.exf5 ♙xf5 16. ♖e3± (+0.33). White has the better queen, better knight, better pawns) 15. ♖d1 ♘xd5 16. ♙xd5 ♖c7 17.b4± (+0.15). White has better pawns and can play on both flanks or even in the center.

13...f5 14. ♘xf5 ♙xc1 15. ♖xc1

15. ♖xc1 ♙xf5 16.exf5 d5 17. ♙b3 ♖xf5 18.f4 ♖d6 19.fxex5 ♖xf1+ 20. ♖xf1 ♘xe5 21.d4 cxd4 22.cxd4 ♖f8 23. ♖e2 ♘c6 24. ♖e3 g6 25. ♖f1 ♖xf1+ 26. ♙xf1 (+0.01). White has the sunny side of a likely draw.

15... ♙xf5 16.exf5 d5 17. ♙a2 ♖xf5 18. ♖g4 ♖f6**19.f4?!**

19. ♖ce1 ♖d6 20. ♖d1 ♖af8 21.a4= (-0.05). Black has more activity, White has the static edge.

19...exf4 20. ♖g5 ♖f8 21. ♖xd5 ♖d8 22. ♖f3?! ♘e5 23. ♖e4 ♘g4 24. ♖ce1 ♘e3 25. ♖f2 ♖e8 26. ♖xb7?! g5 27. ♖fe2? g4 27...f3!-+. 28. ♖f2 ♖h6 29. ♖c7 ♖ef8 30.h3 gxh3 31.g3 fxg3 32. ♖xf6 h2+ 33. ♙h1 g2# 0-1

Game 7.7 Sicilian Defense –
Anti-Najdorf

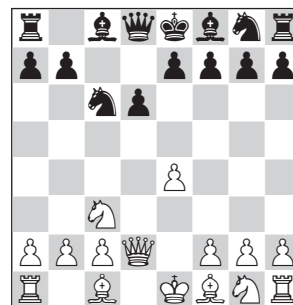
Fabiano Caruana 2819

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave 2773

Karlsruhe/Baden Baden 2019 (2)

1.e4 c5 2. ♘c3 d6

Players aiming for the Najdorf have mostly switched to 2...a6 lately, presumably out of fear of the line shown here, even though it may be a wasted tempo in some closed lines.

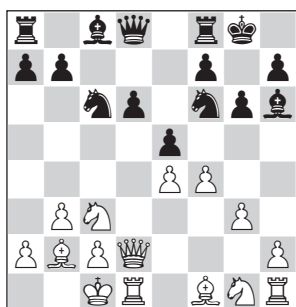
3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♘c6 5. ♖d2

This time-losing move is actually quite strong, is scoring very well at top level, and is favored by the world's top two players. The idea is simply to castle queenside with the bishop on b2 defending the king. It is credited to Greek FM Ioannis Simeonidis, and it was brought to the world's attention when Magnus

Carlsen adopted it in 2018 to defeat GM Wojtaszek. I don't see any clear equalizer for Black.

5...♟f6

5...g6 6.b3 ♖h6 7.f4 ♘f6 (7...f5 8.♖b2 ♘f6 9.♗d3 ♜a5 10.exf5 ♗xf5 11.♘ge2 0-0-0 12.a3 ♞he8 13.0-0-0 d5 14.♗xf5+ gxf5 15.♞e3 e6 16.♙b1 ♘e4 17.♞hg1 ♘xc3+ 18.♞xc3 ♞xc3 19.♗xc3± (+0.18). White's slightly better pawn structure and control of the long diagonal give him the more pleasant endgame) 8.♖b2 e5 9.g3 0-0 10.0-0-0



analysis diagram

A) 10...♘d4 11.♙b1 ♗g4 12.♗e2 ♘xe2 13.♘ge2 ♞e8 14.♞d3 (14.♞xd6 exf4 15.♞xd8 ♞exd8 16.♞xd8+ ♞xd8 17.♘xf4 ♗f3 18.♞e1 ♞e8 19.♘fd5 ♘xd5 20.♘xd5 ♗g7 21.♗xg7 ♙xg7 22.♘c3 f5 23.e5 ♗c6 24.♙c1 (0.00), Lc0 +0.10. White's extra pawn will probably not survive, but it has some nuisance value so White has the sunny side of the draw) 14...exf4 (14...♗g7 15.h3 ♗xe2 16.♞xe2 exf4 17.gxf4 ♘xe4 18.♘xe4 ♗xb2 19.♙xb2 d5 20.♞b5 ♞xe4 21.♞xb7 ♞f6+ 22.♙b1 ♞ae8 23.♞xa7 ♞c3 24.♞a3 ♞e2 25.♞b2 ♞f3 26.♞hf1 ♞xh3 27.f5

♞c8 28.fxg6 hxg6 29.♞f6 ♞e6 30.♞xe6 fxe6 31.♞c1 (+0.05), Lc0 +0.16. White has two connected passed pawns while Black's are disconnected, but this shouldn't be enough to win here) 15.gxf4 ♞c8 16.♞hf1 ♞xc3 17.♘xc3 ♗xd1 18.♘xd1 ♗g7 19.♘c3 ♞e7 20.♞e1± (+0.34). White has the better pawn structure and the center;

B) 10...♞e8 11.♙b1 ♘d4 12.♞f2 ♗g4 13.♞e1 ♗g7 14.♗d3 ♞c8 15.h3 ♗d7 16.g4 ♞a5 17.fxe5 dxe5 18.♘ge2 ♘xe2 19.♘xe2 b5 20.♞d1 ♗e6 21.♘g3±. Komodo only gives +0.08, but Lc0 gives White a larger edge. White's knight can reroute to e3; Black lacks an equivalent plan.

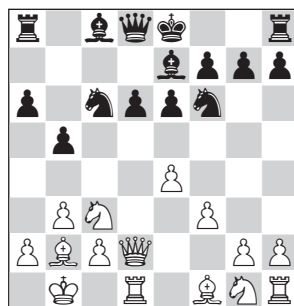
6.b3 e6

A) 6...e5 7.♖b2 ♗e7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.♙b1± (+0.28). White has the usual English Attack plan of f2-f3, g2-g4, and in some lines the option of ♘d5 is useful;

B) 6...g6 7.♖b2 ♗g7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.♙b1 ♞a5 10.f3± (+0.31). As usual the white king is safe and he has the standard g2-g4, h2-h4 attack.

7.♖b2 d5

A) 7...a6 8.0-0-0 b5 9.f3 ♗e7 10.♙b1



analysis diagram

10... ♖b7 (10...h5 (in the Carlsen game Black played this a move earlier, but the inclusion of ... ♙e7 ♗b1 slightly helps Black) 11. ♘h3 ♖b7 12. ♘g5± (+0.25). White plans f4 and ♙e2. This is better for White than normal English Attack lines in the Najdorf) 11.g4± (+0.32). White has an attack and a safe king;

B) 7... ♙e7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.f4 a6 10.g4 ♘xg4 11. ♘f3 ♘f6 12. ♖g1±. White's attack is surely worth more than the pawn.

8.exd5 exd5 9.0-0-0 ♙e6

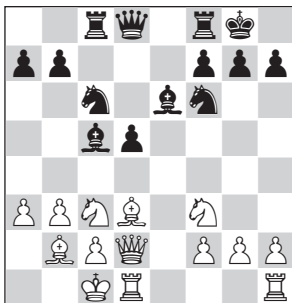


10.a3

10. ♗b1 ♖a5 11. ♘b5 ♖xd2 12. ♖xd2 ♖b4 13. ♖d3 0-0 14. ♙xf6 gxf6 15. ♘e2 ♖ad8 16. ♘bd4 (+0.21).

White is for choice, but this is less convincing than the game move.

10... ♙c5 11. ♘f3 0-0 12. ♙d3 ♖c8



13. ♖he1

13. ♗b1! is safer than the game move: 13...a6 (13... ♖e7 14. ♗a2± (+0.11).

White can attack while his own king is fairly safe) 14. ♖he1 ♖a5 15. ♘a4 ♖xd2 16. ♖xd2 ♙a7 17. ♘g5 ♖fe8 18. ♘xe6 fxe6 19. ♘c3 ♙d4 20.f3 ♗f7 21. ♘d1 ♙xb2 22. ♗xb2± (+0.10). White has fewer pawn islands and bishop vs knight with pawns on both sides.

13... ♖e8

13... ♖e7 is probably the best practical try but extremely complicated. White should probably avoid it unless he has prepared very well. I don't claim to know what should really happen: 14.b4 ♘xb4 15.axb4 ♙xb4∞ 16. ♖e3 (16. ♗b1 ♖c7 17. ♖e3 ♖xc3 18. ♙xc3 ♙xc3 19. ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 20. ♘g5+ ♗g8 21. ♖xc3 ♖d6 22. ♘xe6 fxe6 23.f3± (+0.43). White has the exchange for a pawn. But Black has alternatives before this, so this is a very risky line for both players) 16... ♙xc3 17. ♙xc3 ♖xc3 18. ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 19. ♘g5+ ♗g6 20. ♖xc3 ♗xg5 21.f4+ ♗h6 22.f5 ♘e4 23. ♖h3+ ♗g5 24. ♖f1 ♖c5 25.fxe6 fxe6 26. ♖xf8 ♖xf8 (+0.09). Queens will probably come off, leaving an endgame where Black has two pawns for the exchange with a draw likely.

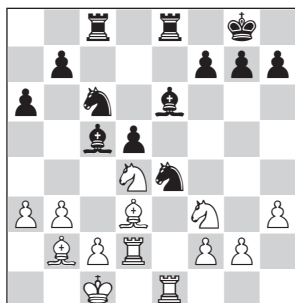
14.h3

14. ♘b5 ♖e7 15.b4 ♙b6 16. ♘h4± (+0.62). White will probably win the d5-pawn.

14... ♖a5 15. ♘b5 ♖xd2+ 16. ♖xd2 a6 17. ♘bd4

17.b4 ♖f8 18.♗bd4± (+0.23). White has a good endgame against the isolated pawn.

17... ♗e4



18. ♗de2

18. ♖xe4 dxe4 19. ♗xe4 ♗xd4
20. ♗xd4 ♖d5 21. ♗xe8+ ♗xe8 22. f3
♗e1+ 23. ♗d1 ♗xd1+ 24. ♖xd1 ♖xd4
25. ♖xd4 (+0.67), but I don't agree.
Black should draw despite being
a clear pawn down due to the
opposite-colored bishops.

18... ♖d7 19. ♖d1 f6 20. ♗xc6 ♖xc6

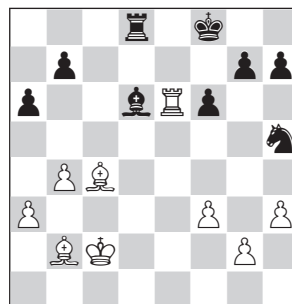
21. ♗d4 ♖d7 22. f3

22.c4± (+0.47). White is winning
the d5-pawn for inadequate
compensation.

**22... ♗g3 23. ♗xe8+ ♗xe8 24. c4 dxc4
25. ♖xc4+ ♖f8 26. b4**

26. ♗xe8+ ♖xe8 27. ♗e6 ♖xe6
28. ♖xe6± (+0.43). White has a clear
bishop pair plus, although the pawn
symmetry gives Black drawing
chances.

**26... ♖d6 27. ♗e6+ ♖xe6 28. ♗xe6
♗d8 29. ♖c2 ♗h5**



30. ♗e4

30. ♖f1 (+0.11). White's bishop pair
is not so effective here, but it's
something.

30... b5 31. ♖d3 ♗f4 32. ♖f1 ♗e8

33. ♖b3 ♗xe4 34. fxe4 ♗e6 35. a4

♗c7 36. ♖d4 ♖e7 37. ♖e2 ♖d7

38. ♖e3 ♖e5 39. h4 g6 40. h5 gxh5

41. ♖xh5 ♗e6 42. ♖g4 ♖d6 43. a5

♗d4+ 44. ♖a2 ♖c7 45. ♖f2 ♗c2

46. ♖b3 ♗d4+ 47. ♖a2 ♗c2 48. ♖b3

♗d4+ 49. ♖a2 ½-½