

Yearbook

NEW  IN CHESS 135

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CHESS OPENING NEWS

Edited by Jan Timman

From the editor



Uncertainties

We welcome GMs Gawain Jones and Kaido Külaots as new contributors to the Yearbook. It is always good to see the views of strong grandmasters on opening problems. Jones is an expert in the King's Indian and his views on a topical line in this opening are worthwhile. Külaots in fact wrote one Survey long ago, in Yearbook 68. He restarts with an interesting subject: an analysis in the FORUM section of Fabiano Caruana's amazing novelty against Ding Liren in Yekaterinburg. Caruana's loss may have cost the American the chance to become Magnus Carlsen's challenger again, but this will remain unclear for a long time to come, as nobody knows when the Candidates will be resumed.

Anish Giri has the indisputable reputation of being one of the best prepared players in the world. In my own Survey I concentrate on another interesting novelty by him from Yekaterinburg. However, Ian Nepomniachtchi reacted well and scored an important point.

The lockdown may have a negative effect on the development of young players like Alireza Firouzja and Jordan van Foreest, since it may take some time before they can start playing over the board again. Meanwhile, their progress in the field of openings is examined by two old hands, Ivan Sokolov and Michael Adams.

Glenn Flear reviews an interesting book: *Attacking with g2-g4* by Dmitry Kryakvin, who writes: 'I believe that without the g2-g4 thrust I would never have achieved success as a player and as a trainer'. A remarkable statement, but it is true: the move plays an increasingly important role in many different openings.

Jan Timman

Opening Highlights



Ian Nepomniachtchi

Will Nepo be Magnus Carlsen's next challenger, or is he too inconstant still? We're left in the dark, since after the Russian's impressive start in the first half (shared first with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave) the Candidates Tournament was broken off. In the very first round, Nepo had dealt Anish Giri a devastating blow. The Dutchman played a **deep novelty in a topical Symmetrical English line**. Nepo was not put out at all, but improvised, took over, and won. See Jan Timman's Survey on page 224.

Fabiano Caruana

The huge winner of Tata Steel 2020 is all over this issue with exploits in the Catalan, the Petroff and the Rossolimo Sicilian. At the ill-fated Candidates event in Yekaterinburg, the American did an impressive repair job in the Ruy Lopez. Against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave he got into some **trouble in the tried-and-tested Neo-Arkhangelsk** but bounced back against Alexander Grischuk with a novelty that points to a bright future for Black, as Abhijeet Gupta explains in his Survey on page 90.



Gawain Jones

Another English top GM joins the ranks of Yearbook authors! King's Indian specialist Gawain Jones is quite candid about **Black's worries in the Fianchetto Variation against the annoying combination of 9.d5 and 10.♟g5**. Being today's foremost champion of the King's Indian, Jones even tried a piece sac to get his beloved double-edged play, but found it suitable for blitz only. Undoubtedly we will see Gawain trying other ideas to revamp his pet KID. His Survey can be found on page 208.

Jorden van Foreest

The Alapin Sicilian at 2700+ level? It's getting crazier and crazier. Jorden van Foreest had prepared it specially for the Tata event in Wijk aan Zee, and scored a whopping 2½ out of 3 with it! As it turned out, **even the seemingly dull Alapin offers White chances to play for a win**. Michael Adams's Survey (page 60) features the young Dutchman's analysis of his shock victory over Dubov, added with a number of lines studied by Adams himself.





Alireza Firouzja

Just before chess went into lockdown, 16-year old Alireza Firouzja started rocking the boat in the elite circles. In Wijk, Anish Giri was one of the victims of the new Iranian star. Our author Ivan Sokolov has coached Firouzja and famously called him 'world champion material'. So who could be more suited to scrutinize Alireza's analysis of this game than the Bosnian/Dutch GM? And Sokolov discovered some amazing things. **What was it that Firouzja didn't tell us about this QGD line?** See page 121.

Kaido Külaots

Kaido Külaots was the surprising winner of the ultra-strong Aeroflot Open 2019. He is not only a seasoned GM, but also a profound chess analyst. The Estonian returns as a Yearbook author with an impressive piece of analysis of the game Ding Liren-Caruana from the Candidates Tournament. Famously, the Chinese favourite had started disastrously with 0/2 but hit back with a vengeance when Caruana tried **the audacious 9...e5!?** in the Krause Slav. See page 12.



Nikolaos Ntirlis

Like in the Fianchetto Variation (see under Gawain Jones), black players have been struggling in the Classical Main Line of the King's Indian. Greek IM and reputed opening researcher Nikolaos Ntirlis presents **an entirely different approach to the Main Line KID** for the second player in his Survey on page 194. Developments mainly take place in correspondence chess, which plays a swiftly increasing role in today's top preparation, as we have also seen several times in Erwin l'Ami's column.

Markus Ragger

Piano is no longer piano these days – certainly not after 1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♟f6. As early as Yearbook 123, Austrian GM Markus Ragger foresaw an important new development that is now becoming **a main theme against White's d2-d3 set-up: ...h7-h6 and ...g7-g5**. This is not only a tactical but also a positional scheme, as Jeroen Bosch explains in his Survey on page 95. Ragger himself got it on the board as White against Shankland in Prague 2020, and had a tough time, but survived thanks to his deep knowledge of the motifs.



Your Variations

Trends & Opinions

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HOT! = a trendy line or an important discovery

SOS = an early deviation

GAMBIT = a pawn sacrifice in the opening

Early hits and later ones

The FORUM is a platform for discussion of developments in chess opening theory in general and particularly in variations discussed in previous Yearbook issues.

Contributions to these pages should be sent to: editors@newinchess.com

A carefully considered risk

by Kaido Külaots

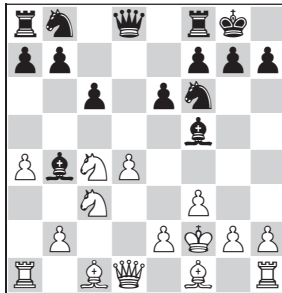
SL 4.3 (D17)

After two rounds in the Candidates tournament in Yekaterinburg, a heavily wounded Ding Liren (0 out of 2) wasn't yet ready to say goodbye to his world title aspirations. He kept his calm after a poisonous novelty by Caruana hit him early and consolidated to a full point, retaining his lifeline.

Ding Liren Fabiano Caruana

Yekaterinburg ct 2020 (3)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6
4.♘c3 dxc4 5.a4 ♙f5 6.♗e5 e6
 New for Caruana, but he had something specific in mind.
7.f3 ♙b4 8.♗xc4 0-0 9.♚f2
 Ding Liren had chosen this twice before (and never entered the Slav endgame with 8.e4), so it came as no surprise to Caruana.



9...e5!?!N

A novelty, and quite a risky one, too. But as it was only

round 3, Caruana may have thought it was a good chance to take a risk and inflict another heavy defeat on his main pre-tournament rival. In their Survey on 9.♚f2 in Yearbook 104, Lee Wang Sheng and Junior Tay wondered whether 9...♙g6 10.e4 ♖c7 11.♗b3 c5 12.♗a2 ♘c6 13.♗xb4 cxb4 14.♙e3 ♗fd8 15.♗d1 ♗d7 16.♗e5 ♗xe5 17.dxe5 ♗xd1 18.♗xd1 ♗xe5 could lead to a new tabiya, offering the best chances for equalization. 19.♗d4 was Ding's 2012 game against Paragua, and now the authors propose an immediate queen exchange with good chances to equalize.

19.b3 was played by another Candidate, Anish Giri, in his encounter against Jonny Hector in Malmö 2012, where Black held his own.

16.♙e2!?! might be a problem though. It was played in a later email game Puzone-Sardella, 2016. E.g. 16...♗ad8 17.g3!, planning ♙f4.

10.♗xe5

When even engines at great depths give this as their first choice, then how could we blame Ding for choosing it? Only after digging deeper we will see that this is actually not the best move. Which of the other two moves is stronger, is hard to say with certainty. I can only say that they both yield White chances for an opening advantage. Let's see:



Nikita Vitiugov

13...♟xe5 14.cxd4 ♟c6 15.♟e3 ♟f6

White is a pawn down for nothing.

16.♟e2 ♖b6 17.♟h1 ♟d7

18.b4 ♜ac8 19.♜ac1 ♟e7+

20.♜c5 ♜xc5 21.dxc5 ♖c6!

22.♟d4 ♖a4 23.♜a1?! ♟e8

Nitpicking computers point toward 23...g6!—+ when 24...f4 and possibly the fork 25...e5 gains more material.

24.♖h3 ♟g6 25.♟c2 ♖a6

26.♜b1 ♟f7 27.f4 ♖c4 28.♟b3

♖c3 29.♜d1 ♟xf4

Gobbling up pawn number 2.

30.♟xf4 ♟xd4 31.♖xc3 ♜xc3

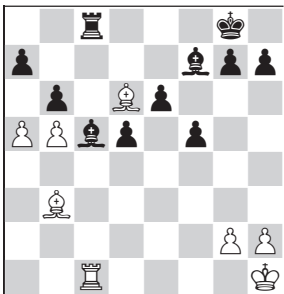
32.♟d6 ♜c8 33.b5 ♟b2 34.a4

♟a3 35.a5 ♟xc5

35...♟e8 36.b6 axb6 37.axb6

♟b5—+.

36.♜c1 b6



37.g4

The immediate 37.♜xc5 bxc5 38.b6 axb6 39.axb6 allows 39...♜a8 when the rook can stop the passed pawn: 40.h3 ♜a1+ 41.♟h2 ♜b1 42.b7 ♜xb3 43.b8 ♖+ ♜xb8 44.♟xb8—+.

37...fxg4?

Throwing caution to the wind, but fortunately the consequences are limited for Black.

38.♜xc5!

Oops. The game has to be won all over again.

38...bxc5 39.b6 axb6 40.axb6

♜c6! 41.♟c7 ♜xb6 42.♟xb6 c4

43.♟d1 ♟g6 44.♟xg4 ♟f5—+

The pawn armada is decisive after all.

45.♟f3 c3 46.♟g1 ♟f7 47.♟d4

c2 48.♟b2 d4 49.♟f2 e5

50.♟d5+ ♟f6 51.h4 g6 52.♟g3

♟d3 53.♟c1 e4 54.♟b2 ♟f5

55.♟g8 h6 56.♟c1 e3 57.♟b2

♟e4 58.♟c1 g5 59.h5 g4

60.♟h7+ ♟e5 61.♟g8 e2

62.♟f2 d3 0-1

The burning question regarding Vitiugov's move 12 novelty would be: did he miss something in his preparation or was he caught unawares? And keeping in mind the broader picture: why on earth did he go for this line in the first place? Beats me!

A surprising thrust

a letter by Rafal Ogiewka

QO 16.8 (D30)

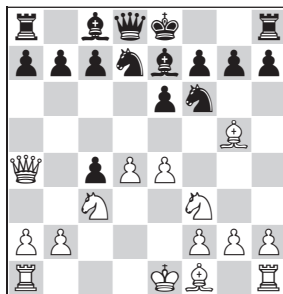
YB 132, 133

In his QGD Survey in Yearbook 132, Luis Rodi discussed the line with 4.♟g5 and 5.♖a4+. I propose a novelty for Black on move 7.

1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♟f3 d5

4.♟g5 dxc4!? 5.♖a4+ ♟bd7

6.e4 ♟e7 7.♟c3



7...b5!N

Variation A

8.♟xb5 0-0!

With a comfortable position for Black, for instance 9.♖xc4 (9.e5 ♟b6! 10.exf6? gxf6!)

9...♟xe4 10.♟xe7 ♖xe7 11.♟e2 ♟d6 12.♖c3 ♟b7 13.0-0 a6.

Variation B

8.♖xb5 ♜b8 9.♖xc4 ♜b2

10.♟a4 ♟b6 11.♟xb6 ♜xb6

12.♟d3 ♟a6! 13.♖c2

13.♖a4+ ♖d7 14.♖xd7+

♟xd7 15.♟e5+ ♟c8! with the

idea 16.♟xf7 ♟xd3 17.♟xh8

♜b2!.

13...♟xd3 14.♖xd3 c5! 15.e5

♟d5 16.dxc5 ♜b2!

and Black is OK!

Rafal Ogiewka

Nysa, Poland

Where should the king go?

by A.C. van der Tak

KP 12.9 (C58)

After finding in Ntirlis' book *Playing 1.e4 e5* what I was looking for for my Survey elsewhere in this issue, I continued leafing through the book and in the chapter on 8.♖f3 came across a correspondence game Butov-Sychov (2012), in which White's castled position on the kingside was totally demolished. The game stuck in my memory – a nice by-catch.

Then another special thing happened: a few weeks later, in No. 1/2020 of the Finnish magazine *Kirjeshakki* my eye got caught by a game in which, in the same variation, the white king sought refuge on the queenside, where it was safe behind a wall of (plus) pawns. Black certainly had counterplay for his

It's never that simple

by Erwin I'Ami



In this column, Dutch grandmaster and top chess coach Erwin I'Ami scours the thousands of new correspondence games that are played every month for important novelties that may start new waves in OTB chess also. Every three months it's your chance to check out the best discoveries from this rich chess source that tends to be underexposed.

We start off this 10th column with the Queen's Indian.

The wrong move-order?

QI 16.9 (E15)

An interesting pawn sacrifice, also recently employed by Alexander Grischuk, makes me think that Black should avoid this particular move-order. Dominating play by White, and this is one of those games where it's hard to pinpoint where exactly Black went wrong.

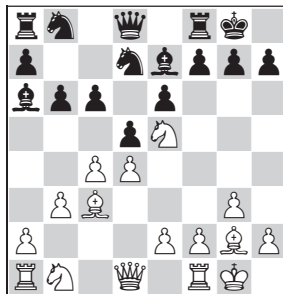
Mikhail Kagansky

Theo Schmidt

WS/SIM/A/4 ICCF 2019

1.d4 2.c4 e6 3.f3 b6 4.g3 5.a6 5.b3 6.b4+ 6.f2 7.e7 7.g2 0-0

I would refer you to Yearbook 131, where I gave an overview of earlier alternatives for White and Black. The present game makes me doubt the move-order with 7...0-0 for Black. **8.f5 c6 9.c3 d5 10.0-0 f7**



Putting doubt on 7...0-0

11.f3!

And this is the reason why! 11.f3! 12.f2 would merely be a transposition to the main lines, but this pawn sacrifice is very promising. Note that 10.f2 f7

11.f3! is also very strong, but here Black can improve with 10...e7 11.0-0 f7 with a reasonable game.

11...dxc4 12.f4

The point, and placing Black at a crossroads. The immediate threat is 13.fxa6 followed by 14.bxc4 and so Black has to act.

12...c8

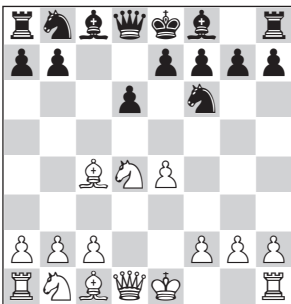
Black giving back the pawn with 12...e7 13.bxc4 is all White could hope for. He can now erect a big centre. The recent game Grischuk-Duda, Hamburg 2019 (hugely important for Grischuk on his way to qualifying for the Candidates), continued 12...cxb3 13.fxa6 fxa6 14.fxc6 f8 15.axb3 f4 16.fxb4 fxb4 17.fxa7 and White had a huge advantage and went on to win. 'Improving' with 14...c8 15.e7 fxc3 16.fxc3 b2 17.f1 c7 18.fxa6

(18.f5!?) 18...cxc3 19.fxb3 fxb3 20.axb3 a3 21.b4! f4 22.e7, threatening f1-d1-d3, should be winning. Perhaps the best way of bailing out for Black is 12...fxb4 13.fxb4 f8 14.f2 cxb3 15.axb3 f6 16.f4 d5 17.f2 (not 17.a3 b5 18.f6 b4! 19.fxe8 bxa3 and the e8-knight is trapped) 17...e7 when White obviously has great play for the pawn but Black still has a pawn. While

Chess Openings for Heroes... Part 3

by René Olthof

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 1. | e4 | c5 |
| 2. | ♘f3 | d6 |
| 3. | d4 | cxd4 |
| 4. | ♗xd4 | ♗f6 |
| 5. | ♙c4 | |



On April 24, during the live broadcast of Round 4 of the Carlsen Invitational, I get a message from a close IM friend of mine telling me to turn on my computer. ‘Magnus Carlsen is currently playing the Koning-Westermann Gambit’. I knew what he was referring to, although I am quite sure that only a handful of people have ever heard of this obscure opening line. In certain circles here in the Netherlands the pawn sacrifice 5. ♙c4 is named after Edward Koning and Frans Westermann. They played it all the time at their local chess club and kept track of their exploits in an old school notebook.

Declining the gambit

My friend added that Carlsen’s opponent Vachier-Lagrave had not accepted the gift and Carlsen had emerged from a complicated middlegame with a winning position. In Game 1 you can see that in the end Carlsen failed to coast home due to an error on move 29 and had

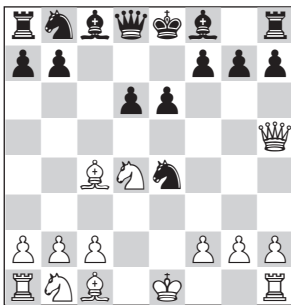
to acquiesce to a draw. Declining the sacrifice is obviously very sensible when running into such a mega-surprise, and there are several ways to do so. In the Dragon, the Classical and the Najdorf Black will be quite familiar with the placement of the white king’s bishop on c4 and transpositions to regular lines abound. In the notes I pointed out a few old and idiosyncratic deviations. Against MVL’s Scheveningen system Carlsen dropped back his bishop to d3 and got the clamp with c2-c4 in, exploiting the absence of a knight on c3. It didn’t yield him an opening advantage but it served its purpose of obtaining a playable middlegame position and an advantage on the clock to boot.

In a subsequent telephone call later that day, my source informed me that he remembered where he had first seen this move mentioned in print. In a Utrecht store, ‘in a big white folio-sized book. Or magazine.’ ‘You mean *Players Chess News*?’ I replied. ‘I have it stored upstairs, somewhere in my attic. Let me have a quick look and call you back.’ I looked further into the matter and prepared a small file mapping out the future course of events.

Accepting the gambit

The real test of any gambit is of course accepting it. And 5... ♗xe4 is exactly what Ian Nepomniachtchi did two rounds later, when Magnus had the audacity to repeat the experiment. The commentators on Chess24.com were frantically trying to envision what Magnus had up his sleeve.

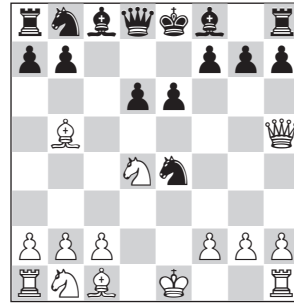
Clearly it was not the trick 6. ♖xf7+?! ♔xf7 7. ♖h5+ g6 8. ♖d5+ and 9. ♖xe4, which the Dutch amateurs used to play, and with them several other aficionados all over the world. John Donaldson listed Lisa Lane and Seattle USCF Expert Mike Schemm (‘drawing with Viktors Pupols and Jonathan Berry, I believe’). No, no, Carlsen went for the Scholar’s Mate with 6. ♖h5, the only justification of the pawn sacrifice. Ian didn’t bat an eyelid and went 6...e6.



And then it happened: Carlsen sacrificed a piece on e6, two moves later one on f7, and was totally busted on move 11 (Game 2). What was Carlsen thinking? ‘I just completely blanked there, I didn’t remember what to do,’ he said afterwards. The stunned Peter Svidler observed: ‘This is probably the most confusing game of chess I have seen in some time involving strong players’. On February 20, 1964, in Waltham, Massachusetts, Richard Lunenfeld (mind you: as white!) had done exactly the same to Bobby Fischer on his famous US Simul Tour. The only difference was that he sacked a bishop on e6 instead of a knight (Game 3). However, unlike Nepomniachtchi, Fischer didn’t follow up with his usual accuracy. The Fischer game is very characteristic (bishop vs knight!) but also marred by strangely passive play on Bobby’s part.

Sheer poetry

So far, you have been reading solely on how this Sicilian insanity has failed to deliver. Is there any light at the end of the tunnel? Game 4 is a showcase of 7. ♖b5+!, the silver lining at the horizon.

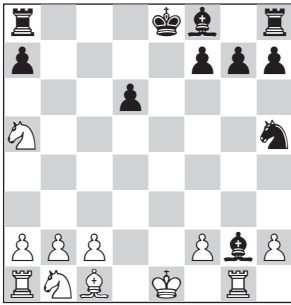


This is what Carlsen had completely forgotten about. American IM Mark Ginsburg drew attention to it in Part 2 of his column ‘Chess Openings for Heroes’ published in the defunct *Players Chess News*, the true treasure trove of interesting material from the 1980s I was talking about earlier. How to stop the check?

At 2326, Ginsburg, one of the US top junior players in the late 1970s, is currently still active in the tournament arena. In 1988, he beat a very young Judit Polgar at the New York Open, who was already rated 2335 at the time. Ginsburg recalls ‘she had a teddy bear at the board’.

In his column he focussed on 7... ♖d7 8. ♖xe6!, which he called sheer poetry. After 8... ♖e7 9. ♖c7+ ♖d8 White failed to find the way to defuse Black’s lethal discovered battery in Game 4.

In the live commentary Peter Svidler was quite enthusiastic about Black’s chances after 7... ♖d7 8. ♖xe6! ♖ef6 9. ♖xd8 ♖xh5 10. ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 11. ♖xb7 ♖c6 12. ♖a5 ♖xg2 13. ♖g1.



Mark Ginsburg

All this was found instantly without the aid of electronic devices. I guess this position offers equal prospects to both players. A fair outcome for a gambit line.

Conclusion

Many questions remain. Was Richard Lunenfeld really the first hero of 5.♙c4? Will Magnus Carlsen ever venture on another outing with 5.♙c4? Probably not, but what were the odds of

him going on a second outing? I cannot wait to see unpublished material both old and new to come to the surface soon. In the post-mortem comments, Daniil Dubov alluded to having 'looked at' the line prior to this event and that in itself already holds much promise for the future of this hazy pawn sacrifice.

Declining the gambit

5.♙c4

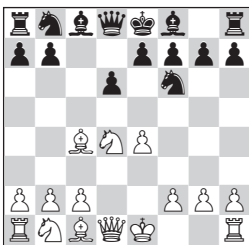
Magnus Carlsen Maxime Vachier-Lagrave

Carlsen Invitational Online 2020 (4.1)

1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4

4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♙c4

1



5...e6 A) With the bishop on c4 it's very hard for White to profit from the delay of putting the knight on c3 after 5...g6. If 6.0-0 ♙g7 (6...♗xe4?! 7.♞e1 d5 is asking for trouble: 8.♙b5+ ♙d7 9.c4 ♙g7 10.cxd5 ♗d6 11.♙f1 0-0 12.♗c3 with some pressure) 7.♗c3 0-0 with a regular Dragon position;

B) 5...♗c6 6.0-0 (6.♗c3 transposed to the Classical

Variation as early as Eisinger-Kranki, Bad Oeynhausen ch-GER 1938) 6...♗xe4!?! (6...e6; 6...g6) 7.♞e1 (7.♖h5 ♗e5!; 7.♙d5 ♗xd4 8.♙xe4 ♗c6 and the bishop is ineffectively placed on e4) 7...♗f6 (7...d5 looks slightly suspect in view of 8.♗xc6 bxc6 9.♞xe4 dxc4±) 8.♗c3 and White's compensation is not so obvious;

C) 5...a6 6.0-0 (6.♗c3 transposes to the Sozin Variation) 6...e6 7.♞e1 ♙e7 8.♙b3 0-0 9.♗d2 Wade-Ragozin, Marianske Lazne/Prague 1956. **6.0-0** 6.♗c3 transposed from 3.♙c4 e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♗xd4 ♗f6 6.♗c3 as early as in Eisinger-Zollner, Heilbronn 1938; 6.♙g5 ♖a5+ (6...h6!?!; 6...♙e7) 7.♖d2 (7.♙d2?! ♖c5!N 8.♙b5+ ♙d7 9.♙xd7+ ♗bxd7) 7...♗c6 8.♖xa5 ♗xa5 9.♙b5+ ♙d7=. **6...♙e7**

There was nothing wrong with taking up the gauntlet: 6...♗xe4!?.

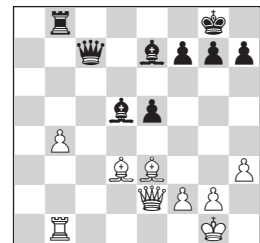
7.♗d3 7.♖e2 0-0; 7.♖f3 0-0 0-1 (65) Lukey-Feldman, Gold Coast zt 2001. **7...♗c6** 7...0-0; 7...a6.

8.♗xc6 8.c3 ♗e5 (8...0-0) 9.♙c2 ♗g6 10.f4 e5 11.f5!? exd4 (11...♗f8)

12.fxg6 fxg6?! (Vertiachikh-Gurov, Zelenograd 1997) when 13.♙b3!± would have been really unpleasant; ≥ 12...hxg6 13.cxd4=. **8...bxc6**

9.c4N An early example (by transposition) of 9.b3 0-0 10.♙b2 e5 11.♗d2 is S.Szabo-Herrmann, Sopot 1951. **9...0-0 10.♗c3 e5 11.♙e3 ♙e6 12.♖e2 ♗d7 13.♞fd1 ♖c7 14.b4 14.♗d5!±. 14...a5 15.a3 axb4 16.axb4 ♞xa1 17.♞xa1 ♞b8 18.♞b1 ♗f6 19.h3 d5?**

'Freeing' the position is a terrible plan. Staying put with something like 19...g6 was absolutely fine for Black. **20.cxd5 cxd5 21.exd5 ♗xd5 22.♗xd5 ♙xd5**



23.b5!± Highlighting the big drawback of Black's exchange

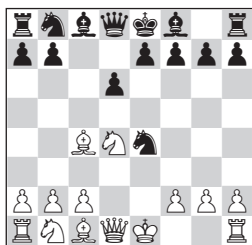
operation initiated on move 19. **23...e4 24. ♖h5 exd3 25. ♜xd5 ♜d8 26. ♜e4 ♖f8 27. b6 ♜c2 28. ♜c1 ♜b3?** 28... ♜b2±. **29. ♜f3?** 29.b7! leaves Black helpless in view of the impending 30. ♜c8. If 29... ♜b8 still 30. ♜c8 ♜xb7 31. ♜xb7 ♜xb7 32. ♖c5. **29...d2!**⇒ MVL seizes the momentum! **30. ♜d1 h6 31. b7 ♜b8 32. ♜xd2 ♜xb7= 33. g4 ♜b8 34. ♖g2 ♜e8 35. ♜d7 ♜e6 36. ♜d5 ♜xd5+ 37. ♜xd5 g6 38. h4 ♖g7 39. h5 g5 40. ♖f3 ♖f6 41. ♖e2 ♖g7 42. ♖d3 ♜a8 43. f4 gxf4 44. ♖xf4 ♜a3+ 45. ♖e4 ♜a6 46. ♖f5 ♖b2 47. ♜b5 ♜f6+ 48. ♖e4 ♜e6+ 49. ♖f5 ♜f6+ 50. ♖e4 ♜e6+ 51. ♖f5 ♜f6+ ½-½**

Accepting the gambit
5... ♖xe4

Magnus Carlsen 2
Ian Nepomniachtchi

Carlsen Invitational Online 2020 (6.1)

1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♖f6 5. ♖c4 ♖xe4



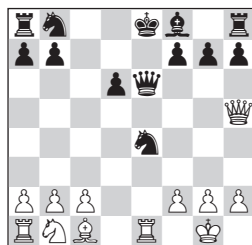
Clearly the real test of the pudding is in the eating. **6. ♜h5!** This is the way to go. 6. ♖xf7+?! ♖xf7 7. ♜h5+ g6 8. ♜d5+ △ 9. ♜xe4 is somewhat comparable to 1.e4 ♖f6 2. ♖c4?! ♖xe4! 3. ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 4. ♜h5+ g6 5. ♜d5+ e6 6. ♜xe4 Loewy-Shermetsky, Antwerp 1932. Black's pawn centre is more important than the mild inconvenience caused by the positioning of his king. **6...e6** 6...g6? 7. ♜d5 forks; 6...d5 7. ♖xd5 g6 8. ♜e5 ♖f6 9. ♖b5 ♖a6 10. ♖f3 ♖g7 11.0-0 0-0 12. ♜e2±. **7. ♖xe6?** This is totally misguided. 7.0-0! is also ineffective due to 7... ♖f6!± Gloistein-Ker, Canterbury ch-NZL

II 1980. **7... ♖xe6! 8. ♖xe6 ♜e7 9. ♖xf7+ 9.0-0** ♜xe6 transposes to the next game. **9... ♜xf7 10. ♜e2 ♜e7 11.0-0 ♖f6!** Black is a piece up for absolutely nothing. **12. ♖e3 12. ♜d1 ♜f7 13. ♜e1+ ♖e7 14. ♜xd6 ♖c6** is completely winning; castles next move – Svidler. **12... ♖c6 13. ♖c3 d5 14. ♜f3 0-0-0 15. ♜fe1 ♜d7 16. ♖b5 a6 17. a4 ♜g4** The queens will come off. **18. ♜xg4+ ♖xg4 19. ♖b6 axb5 20. axb5 ♖b8 21. ♖xd8 ♖xd8 22. h3 ♖f6 23. ♜a7 ♖c7 24. ♜e6 ♖c5 25. b6+ ♖xb6 26. ♜e7+ ♖d6 27. ♜axb7 ♖bd7 28. ♜xg7 ♖c6 0-1**

Richard Lunenfeld 3
Robert James Fischer

Waltham simul 1964

1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♖f6 5. ♖c4 ♖xe4 6. ♜h5 e6 7. ♖xe6? ♖xe6 8. ♖xe6 ♜e7 9.0-0 ♜xe6 Black just took a knight on e6 instead of a bishop, as Nepomniachtchi would have done had Carlsen played 9.0-0 in Game 2. **10. ♜e1**



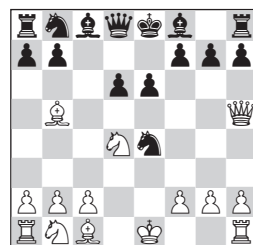
10... ♖e7? Uncharacteristically meek play by Fischer! The powerful 10...d5! releases the dark-squared bishop; 11. ♖c3 (11.f3 ♖c5+ 12. ♖f1 g6 13. ♜h3 ♜a6+ 14. ♜e2 ♖c6 and White gets run over – Welling) and there is no real compensation after 11... ♖a6!, e.g. 12. ♖xe4 dxe4 13. ♜b5+ ♜d7 14. ♜e5+ ♖e7 15. ♜xg7 0-0-0 16. ♜xf7 ♜hf8 17. ♜c4+ ♖c5 18. ♖e3 ♜d5 or 12. ♖xd5 ♖c5 13. ♖e3 0-0-0. **11. ♜b5+ ♜d7 12. ♜xd7+ ♖xd7 13. ♜xe4 ♖f6 13...d5!?. 14. ♜e2±** White has a small but persistent structural advantage. **14... ♖d7 15. ♖c3 ♜hc8 16. ♖g5 16. ♖e3 △ 17. ♖d4, 18. ♜d1±. 16... ♖g8 17. ♖f4**

♜c4 18. ♖g3 ♜ac8 19. ♜d1 ♜8c6 20. ♜ed2 ♖f6?! Such 'routine' moves are typical of simultaneous play. 20... ♜b4 (probing the queenside) 21. ♖d5 ♜xb2 22. ♖xe7 ♖xe7 23. ♖xd6+ ♖f6=; 20... ♖h6 21. ♜d5 g6. **21. ♜d4 21. ♖e5!±. 21... ♖h5 21... ♜xd4 22. ♜xd4 ♖h5 23. ♜d2 ♖xg3 24. hxg3. 22. ♜xc4 ♜xc4 23. ♜d2 > 23. ♖e5!. 23... ♖xg3 24. hxg3 ♖g5 25. f4 ♖f6** Fischer has reached his beloved bishop vs knight ending! **26. ♖d1 b5 27. ♖f2 b4 28. ♖e3 a5 29. ♖d3 ♜c5 30. ♖e4 h5 31. c3? bxc3 32. bxc3 ♖xc3 33. ♜c2 ♖b4 33...f5+! 34. ♖d3 ♖e1-+. 34. ♜xc5 dxc5 35. ♖d5 ♖e1 36. ♖xc5 36.g4 hxg4 37. ♖e3±. 36... ♖e6 37. ♖b5? 37. ♖d4 ♖xg3 38. ♖e4±. 37... ♖xg3 38. ♖xa5 ♖xf4-+ 39. ♖b6 g5 40. a4 h4 41. a5 ♖h2 42. a6 ♖g1+ 43. ♖b7 g4 44. a7 ♖xa7 45. ♖xa7 f5 46. ♖b6 ♖e5 47. ♖b5 ♖d4 48. ♖c6 f4 49. ♖f2 h3 50. gxf3 g3 0-1**

Ferni Viau 4
Chris Kuczaj

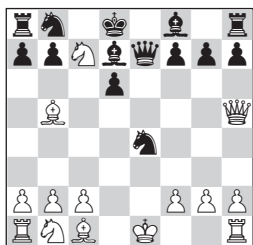
Lethbridge 2009 (4)

1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♖f6 5. ♖c4 ♖xe4 6. ♜h5 e6 7. ♖b5+!



The critical continuation. How to stop the check? **7... ♖d7 7... ♖e7? 8.0-0±** (Van Goethem-Boulahfa, Brasschaat 2009) is too outlandish; 7... ♖d7 8. ♖xe6! ♖ef6 (8...g6 9. ♜e2 fxe6 10. ♜xe4 ♜e7 11.0-0) 9. ♖xd8 ♖xh5 10. ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 11. ♖xb7 ♖c6 12. ♖a5 ♖xg2 13. ♜g1 ♖e4= (13... ♖f3!?) (Svidler) 14. ♖e3 ♜c8 15. ♖d2) 14.c4 (14. ♖c3 ♖xc2 15. ♖e3) 14... ♜c8 (14...g6 15. ♖c3 ♖f3 16. ♖b5 ♜c8±) 15. ♖c3 ♖f3 16. ♖e3 ♖e7 17. ♖b3 a6 18. ♖d4 ♖b7 19. b3 g6 20. ♜d1 ♖f6 21. ♖de2

0-0 22. ♖f4 ½-½ J.Jordan-W. Müller, cr 1995. **8. ♜xe6** Ginsburg called this 'sheer poetry'. **8... ♖e7** Ginsburg discarded 8... ♖a5+? with the wonderfully stoic 9. ♕d2 1-0. While he is worse, Black might still continue a bit further: 9... ♖b6 10. ♕e3 ♖a5+ 11. ♕d2 ♕xb5 12. b4! (12.0-0-0 ♜xd2 13. ♕xd2 ♖xa2 14. ♖xb5+ ♜d7 15. ♜c7+ ♜d8 and White still has decisions to make: 16. ♖a5 or 16. ♕a5 ?) 12... ♜f6 (12... ♖xb4 13. ♖b1 ♜f6 14. ♜c7+ ♜d8±) 13. ♖xa5 ♜xh5 14. ♜c7+ ♜d7 15. ♜xb5± e.g. 15... ♜c6 16. ♜c4 ♜f6 17.0-0-0 d5 18. ♕g5 ♜c8 19. ♜bd6+ ♕xd6 20. ♜xd6+ ♜d7 21. ♜xb7 ♜c7 22. ♜c5 and White's advantage is undeniable but not yet winning; 8... ♖f6 (double attack!) 9. ♜f4 g5 (9... ♖e5 10. ♕xd7+ ♜xd7 11.0-0 d5±) 10. ♕xd7+ (10. ♕d3) 10... ♜xd7 11. ♜d3 (11. ♖e2 gxf4 12. ♖xe4+ ♖e5 13. ♜c3 ♜c5=) 11... ♕g7 12. ♜d2 d5 13.0-0 0-0±. **9. ♜c7+** Inserting 9. ♕xd7+ ♜xd7 may also be considered, e.g. 10. ♜c7+ ♜d8 11. ♜d5 ♖e5 12. ♖xe5 dxe5 13. f3±. **9... ♜d8**

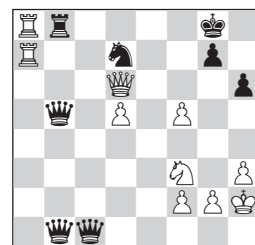


10.0-0?? White (rated 1410) doesn't understand the point of his own play, which is attacking the rear part of the battery with 10. ♜d5! in order to defuse the lethal discovered check. After 10... ♜g3+ 11. ♜xe7 ♜xh5 12. ♕xd7 White has the better endgame. This was given by Mark Ginsburg in Part 2 of his column 'Chess Openings for Heroes' in 'Players Chess News' 1981. Maybe 10... ♖e5 11. ♖xe5 dxe5 is preferable but this still looks better for White. **10... ♜xc7-+ 11. ♜c3 ♜xc3 12. bxc3 ♕xb5 13. ♖xb5 ♜c6 14. ♕f4 ♖f6 15. ♖ab1 b6 16. ♕e3 ♖b8 17. ♖fe1 ♖xc3 18. ♖d5 ♜e5 19. ♖b3 ♖xe1# 0-1**

A tribute

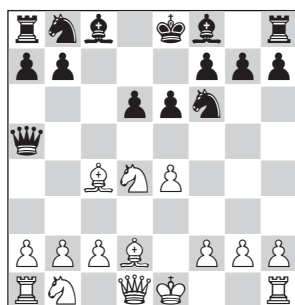
Alan P Williams 5
Mark Ginsburg
New York 1982
1.e4 c5 2. ♜f3 d6 3. ♕b5+ ♜c6 4.0-0 ♕g4 4... ♜d7. 5.c3 a6 5... ♜f6. 6. ♕e2 6. ♕xc6+ bxc6 7.d4 (7.h3) 7...cxd4 8.cxd4. 6... ♜f6 7.d3 e5 8. ♜bd2 h6 9. ♜c4 ♕e7 10. ♜e3 ♕e6 11. ♖c2 0-0 12. ♕d2 ♖e8 13.c4 b5 14.b3 b4 15.a4 bxa3 16. ♖xa3 ♜b4 17. ♕xb4? cxb4 18. ♖a2 ♖b6 19. ♖fa1 ♜d7 20. ♖d2 ♜c5 21. ♕d1 a5 22. ♖e2 ♖eb8 23. ♜d5 ♕xd5 24.cxd5 ♖b5

25. ♕c2 f5?! 25...a4!±. 26.exf5?
26. ♜d2=; 26. ♖d1=, **26... ♕f6!**
27. ♖e3 27. ♖d1 e4 28.dxe4 ♕xa1
29. ♖xa1 a4 30.bxa4 ♖c4±. **27...a4!**
28.d4 axb3? 28...exd4! 29. ♜xd4 ♖e8-+. **29. ♖xa8 bxc2 30.dxe5! b3 31.exf6 b2 32.f7+?** 32. ♜e1!! bxa1 ♖ (32...b1 ♖ 33. ♖a7! c1 ♖ 34. ♖xg7+ ♜h8 35. ♖h7+! ♜g8 36. ♖g7+; 32... c1 ♖? 33. ♖xb8+ ♖xb8 34. ♖xc1 bxc1 ♖ 35. ♖xc1+-) 33. ♖xa1 ♖b1 (33... ♖b2! 34. ♖c1 ♖xf6 35.g4 h5 36. ♜xc2 hxg4 37. ♜d4 ♜h7) 34. ♖e7! (34. ♖a7? ♖xe1+! 35. ♖xe1 ♖b1 36. ♖a1 ♖xe1+ 37. ♖xe1 ♜d3 38. ♖a1 gxf6 39.f3 c1 ♖+ 40. ♖xc1 ♜xc1+-) 34...gxf6 35. ♖a7 ♖xe1+ 36. ♖xe1 ♖b1 37. ♖a8+=. **32... ♜xf7 33. ♖a7+ ♜d7 34. ♖e6+ ♜f8 35. ♖xd6+ ♜g8 36.h3 c1 ♖+ 37. ♜h2 b1 ♖**



Ever seen a game position with three queens of the same colour?
38. ♖xd7 ♖xd7 38... ♖xa8 39. ♖xg7+ ♜xg7 40. ♖g6+ ♜f8 41. ♖f6+ ♜e8 42. ♖e6+ ♜d8 escapes from the checks. 39. ♖xb8+ ♖xb8 40. ♖b8+ ♖cc8 0-1

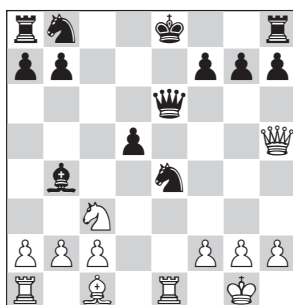
Exercise 1



position after 7. ♕g5-d2

Black to play.
(solutions on page 243)

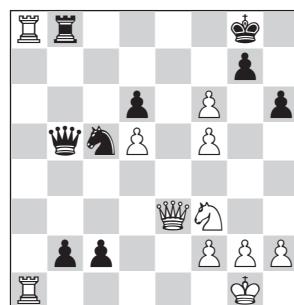
Exercise 2



position after 11... ♕f8-b4

How effective is the black pin?

Exercise 3



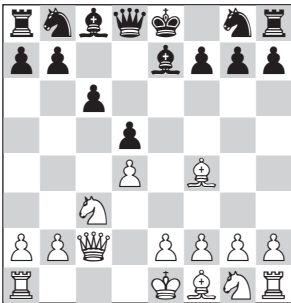
position after 31...b3-b2

Two pawns on the second rank! Can White save himself?

What Alireza didn't tell us

by Ivan Sokolov (special contribution by Alireza Firouzja)

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 1. | d4 | d5 |
| 2. | c4 | e6 |
| 3. | ♘c3 | ♙e7 |
| 4. | cxd5 | exd5 |
| 5. | ♙f4 | c6 |
| 6. | ♚c2 | |



Alireza Firouzja

6. ♚c2 first saw the light of the day at top level in the Kortchnoi-Spassky match in 1968, however Viktor had a rather aggressive idea in mind as after 6...g6 he responded with 7.0-0-0. The modern treatment of 6. ♚c2 we have seen in the 1980s, and the move quickly became the main alternative to Botvinnik's traditional 6.e3.

Stopping 6... ♙f5

The main idea behind 6. ♚c2 is to stop Black's development with ... ♙f5 and 'invite' Black to play 6...g6 followed by 7... ♙f5. In the early stages of 6. ♚c2, Black's 6...g6 was considered the main line (tried by both Kasparov and Karpov), however practice showed that 6...g6 weakens Black's position, while 7... ♙f5 is not really a tempo gain as bishop will later be targeted by White's g2-g4 pawn push. Slowly the move became a sideline and the opinion was

formed that 'White has an opening advantage' (an opinion which I support). For 6...g6, see Kasparov-Short (Game 1). A solid continuation for Black is 6... ♙d6. Carlsen scored an easy win against Jakovenko, but Black's play can be improved on (Game 2).

Alireza Firouzja

The modern main line for Black is 6... ♙f6, the move that is featured in the main game of our Survey, where the young Iranian superstar Alireza Firouzja comments on his win versus Dutch World Championship candidate Anish Giri. I met Alireza in 2016 (when he was just above 2400 Elo) and worked with him from 2016-2019 as part of my employment as the coach of the Iranian men's team.

It was clear to me from the very start that Alireza was exceptionally gifted and that he had all the qualities that make a player World Champion material: an enormous love for the game, an ability to understand/learn very fast, talent

versatility (the ability to play any kind of position), bravery, the ability to work on his own, as well as huge working energy and a very strong desire to win. I tipped him as a potential World Champion two years ago and the developments so far have proved me right.

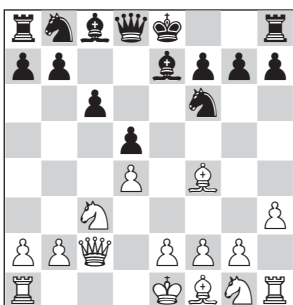
Now let's get back to the 6...♘f6 continuation. As you will find out, my opinion differs from Alireza's here.



White is at a crossroads as to whether to play 7.h3, preserving his dark-squared bishop, or 7.e3 (like in our main game) and be ready for massive complications.

Preserving the dark-squared bishop

Let's start with 7.h3.

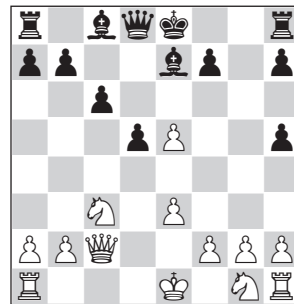


I disagree with Alireza here, as in the case of his advised move, 7...g6, we end up in the game Carlsen-Aronian where Magnus got an opening advantage, while it is not clear (not to me anyhow) what Aronian did wrong. See my analysis in Game 3.

Critical for the assessment should be two moves which were sidestepped by Alireza in his comments: either 7...♙a5 (played by Giri, amongst others) or the little-played pawn sacrifice 7...♞e4!?. For those two moves see my analysis of Ponomariov-Meier (Game 4).

Massive complications

7.e3, the move featured in Game 5, is currently considered to be the main line. Black now plays 7...♞h5!, depriving White of his bishop pair. The critical position arises after 8.♙e5 ♞d7 9.♙e2 ♞xe5 10.dxe5 g6 11.♙xh5 gxh5, where White is at a crossroads.



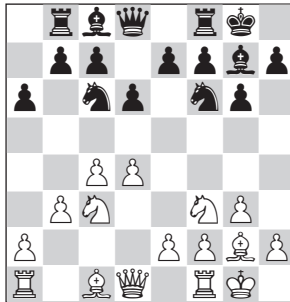
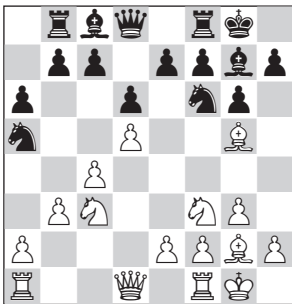
Nobody will believe that Alireza 'did not remember any further theory', or that he hadn't analysed this position and was 'on his own' here.

White has a choice between 12.♞ge2 (played by Alireza) and castling kingside or (more often played) 12.0-0-0. 12.♞ge2 does not bring White an opening advantage, but there is a catch (which Alireza does not tell us!). On move 15 Giri came up with 15...♞h8!, a novelty, improving on the previously played 15...♙e8. In case of 15...♙e8 White can improve on Aleksandrov's play and gain an opening advantage (see my comments; I won't exclude that Alireza had this improvement up his sleeve, but Anish was the first to surprise!). Despite the fact

An annoying combination

by Gawain Jones

- | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. | d4 | ♘f6 |
| 2. | c4 | g6 |
| 3. | g3 | ♙g7 |
| 4. | ♙g2 | 0-0 |
| 5. | ♘c3 | d6 |
| 6. | ♘f3 | ♘c6 |
| 7. | 0-0 | ♖b8 |
| 8. | b3 | a6 |
| 9. | d5 | ♘a5 |
| 10. | ♙g5 | |



9.d5 didn't used to have a very dangerous reputation. In my games, Mihail Marin used it to transpose to an old main line with 9...♘a5 10.♙c2 c5 11.♘d2. Both David Baramidze and Robert Ruck tried 10.♘d4 but Black can still play 10...c5. White is solid but Black doesn't have any problems.

White moved onto 10.♙d2, defending his own knight but more importantly eyeing the offside knight on a5. However, 10...c5 is how Black wants to play anyway. After 11.dxc6 ♘xc6 12.♖c1 ♙f5 Black proved to be fine in various games, including Shankland-Nakamura in the Baku World Cup 2015.

This brings me onto the subject of this Survey – 10.♙g5! After going through the alternatives, especially 10.♙d2, this move makes perfect sense. Black struggles with his errant knight on a5, and so generally plays 10...c5. White will always take en passant, when Black faces a conundrum. Taking with the knight is more logical, but then he faces problems fighting against White's control over the d5-square. The e7-pawn is also vulnerable and so the bishop is obviously much better placed on g5 than on d2. The position resembles the older

To a lot of King's Indian players, the Fianchetto Variation is the most annoying to face. It becomes much harder for Black to get the double-edged types of position he wants. I thought I came up with a good solution in the Panno Variation (...♘c6, ...a7-a6, ...♖b8). Black accepts a slightly more cramped position but keeps all the pieces on the board and is very flexible. He can play on the queenside with a ...b7-b5 break, or switch back to the centre and the kingside.

The variation served me well for many years, but at the 2016 Olympiad Benjamin Bok played an unpleasant idea against me. I heard afterwards it was the brainchild of Robin van Kampen, who was resting that day.



Robin van Kampen

Symmetrical English lines – Black is solid but very passive, and struggles to come up with counterplay.

The alternative is to recapture with the pawn. Black's position is now more dynamic, and he keeps control of the d5-square, but the knight is really misplaced on a5.

I start the Survey with 10...c5 11.dxc6 ♖xc6. In my game with Benjamin I played an early ...h7-h6 to force back the bishop, but the resulting chronic weakness of Black's kingside is highly unpleasant. In game two I look at what happens if Black tries to play around the g5-bishop.

11...bxc6 is probably more critical. There White has generally tried to punish Black immediately with 12.c5!?, crippling

Black's structure, and preventing the knight from easily returning to the action. I didn't think matters were so clear here though, and opted to defend the black side in a recent match against David Howell.

In Bates-Hebden, I examine White's alternatives to the pawn sacrifice. Black manages to keep his structure and reroute the knight, but he still struggles to come up with a plan.

I finish the Survey looking at Black's alternatives to the immediate 10...c5. Igor Kovalenko tried 10...♗d7!?, attempting to play without moving the c-pawn. I then take a look at the visually pleasant 10...b5 11.cxb5 axb5 12.b4 c5!?. I don't think the piece sacrifice is fully sound, but decided it was worth a punt at faster time controls.

Conclusion

The combination of 9.d5 and 10.♗g5 is proving very annoying for Black and is becoming the main line of the Panno Variation. Boris Avrukh even switched to recommending this approach in his revamped 1.d4 repertoire series. Black players haven't been able to solve the problems and have been switching to earlier alternatives, most notably 7...e5.

10...c5 11.dxc6 ♖xc6

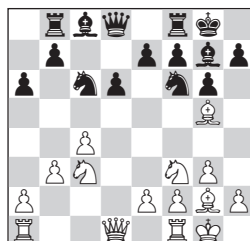
Benjamin Bok
Gawain Jones

Baku ol 2016 (4)

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7 4.♗g2
0-0 5.♗c3 d6 6.♖f3 ♖c6 7.0-0 ♖b8

It doesn't make any difference whether Black starts with this or 7...a6. 8.b3 a6 9.d5 ♖a5 9...♗xd5 is the forcing defence, but leaves Black with a pretty bleak position after 10.cxd5 ♗xc3 11.♗h6 ♖e5 12.♗xf8 ♗xa1 13.♗xe7 ♖xe7

14.♖xa1±. Possibly Black can hold, but it's hardly the reason to play the King's Indian. 10.♗g5 An unpleasant surprise. 10...c5 11.dxc6 ♖xc6



12.♖c1± White prevents Black's ...b7-b5 break, and leaves Black devoid of counterplay. 12...h6 A difficult decision. This lessens the pressure on the e7-pawn, but creates another weakness on the kingside. White gets a better version of the 10.♗d2 lines. In his book Avrukh went as far as to label this as dubious. 13.♗e3 ♗f5

A) 13...♗e6 was what I wanted to play originally but 14.♗d5! ♗xd5 15.cxd5 ♖b4 16.♖d2 ♖bxd5 17.♗xh6± is extremely pleasant for White, even if Black held a much

1.d2-d4 in all shapes and sizes

by Glenn Flear



Englishman Glenn Flear lives in the south of France. For every Yearbook he reviews a selection of new chess opening books. A grandmaster and a prolific chess author himself, Flear's judgment is severe but sincere, and always constructive.

Each of the five books this time deals largely with queen's pawn openings. The *Modernized Delayed Benoni* by Ivan Ivanisevic deals with a subject that has rarely been covered before in the chess media. Black's Benoni set-up involves the typical ...e7-e6, but he then likes to delay ...exd5 to keep White guessing. The *Complete Bogo-Indian* by Maxim Chetverik would perhaps represent what one would expect from a standard opening monograph, but even here there are some surprises. The most original of this selection is the work by Dmitry Kryakvin where he outlines the inclusion of the fear-inducing g2-g4 as part of White's plans. Major repertoire projects are begun by Efstratios Grivas and Ivan Cheparinov, with a series of further volumes being promised in each case. I can't remember either of Thinkers Publishing or Chess Evolution previously dealing

with other subjects over so many volumes (four and six respectively, are planned), so it's curious to see them independently decide on this approach. It's rewarding to see such a variety of new interpretations, the only problem is which one (or ones) to choose...

Dmitry Kryakvin
Attacking with g2-g4
New In Chess 2019

You might find the title to be intriguing or, there again, off-putting. I suppose it depends on your mood, or perhaps the way that you like to study chess. In the opening phase, the attacking motif g2-g4 at first evokes certain 1.e4 openings, such as various forms of the Open Sicilian or even the Closed Italian. Here, however, Dmitry Kryakvin is looking at a series of opening systems arising from 1.d4 (plus the occasional flank opening) where White dares to include this advance in his plans. As this occurs in a variety of contexts, it's not always with a direct attack in mind, but on occasion with space-gaining, square-controlling and piece harassment aims. Although the sub-title 'The modern way to get the upper hand in chess' could cynically be interpreted as marketing hype, the choice of the word 'modern' made me chuckle slightly as this daring thrust

