

QUICK CHESS KNOCKOUTS



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CADOGAN BOOKS DISTRIBUTION

Distributed in North America by The Globe Pequot Press, PO Box 833, Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475 Tel: 800-2430495 Fax: 800-820-2329

All other sales enquiries should be directed to Everyman Publishers plc, Gloucester Mansions, 140 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, WC28 8HD.

First published 1996 by Cadogan Books plc, now Everyman Publishers plc, Gloucester Mansions, 140 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, WC28 8HD

Reprinted 1996, 1999

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 1 85744 045 5

To Ronan, my godson

Cover design by Mark Levitt

Typeset by B.B. Enterprises

Printed in Great Britain by The Cromwell Press Ltd.

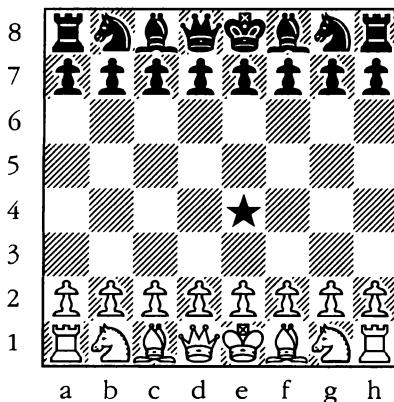
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Symbols

+	Check	$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$	Draw agreed
!	Good move	♚	King
!!	Excellent move	♛	Queen
?	Bad move	♝	Bishop
??	Blunder	♞	Knight
!?	Interesting move	♜	Rook
?!?	Dubious move	♟	Pawn
1-0	White wins		
0-1	Black wins		

Algebraic Notation



Using algebraic notation is just like reading a street map. In the above example, the * is on the e4 square.

Introduction

Quick Chess Knockouts is intended for the beginner to club player. I have tried to make the book educational, enjoyable and entertaining.

In the introduction to each chapter I have commented on the openings from which the knockouts arise rather than the traps themselves. This will give you, the reader, some idea as to what type of opening would suit you and will also help you to avoid some of the early pitfalls that are hidden in all openings.

Many of the opening traps in this book are based on similar ideas but in slightly different settings. For example, one of the most famous combinations is the ‘Greek gift’, which involves a bishop sacrifice on either h7 or h2. This sacrifice can be played in literally thousands of similar but far from identical settings. Thus it is important to realise that you should be able to obtain more than one victory out of one particular trap.

Most of the knockouts in this book are reasonably self-explanatory, but I would like to add just a word of warning. It is normally not a good idea just to play for cheap tricks. The traps that you set your opponent should arise from playing good moves rather than hoping that your opponent will make a stupid mistake. But you should be ever alert to exploit any opportunity that may arise.

So have fun, win loads of games and buy me a drink if you successfully manage to use one of these knockouts!

1 1 e4 e5 Openings

When we first start playing chess, most of our games commence in time-honoured fashion with 1 e4 e5. There are countless traps that can arise from this position, of which I have selected some of the more interesting.

In this short introduction I would just like to make a few general comments about the different openings that are mentioned in this chapter. The first two of these traps are elementary and are included purely for the sake of completeness. The third and fourth traps arise from the King's Gambit, a truly wonderful opening. It is very sharp and can lead to incredibly complicated positions. If you are well booked up in it you will obtain many quick victories with perhaps the odd reverse result thrown in.

The next four traps arise from the Petroff's Defence, an opening with the reputation of being perhaps Black's most solid way of playing against 1 e4. However, do not be fooled by this as the opening can also lead to very interesting middlegame positions. I have often noticed that many white players do not have a clue as to how to play against it.

The next five traps arise from Philidor's Defence. This is another solid if slightly passive opening which is named after André Philidor, who was perhaps the world's first truly great player. His best known contribution to chess apart from the above opening is the following quotation: 'Pawns are the soul of chess'. As my own chess strength has improved I have gradually realised the wisdom of these words.

The final game in this chapter is in the Three Knights Opening, which strangely enough involves the early development of three knights. It might not be the trendiest opening in the world but I think it contains one of the most beautiful knockouts going!

Scholar's Mate

1 e4 e5
 2 ♜h5?! ...

It is not wise to develop the queen so early, as Black may later gain time by attacking it with his minor pieces.

2 ... ♜c6!

Black sensibly develops a piece and at the same time defends the e5 pawn.

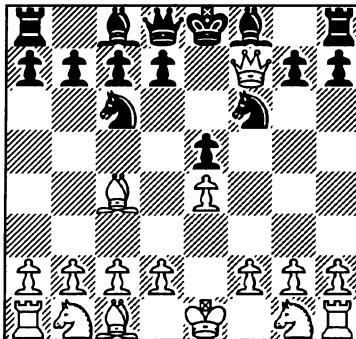
3 ♜c4! ...

White develops a piece and at the same time threatens checkmate!

3 ... ♜f6??

Nine times out of ten this would be a good move as it not only develops a piece but also attacks the white queen. This however, is the tenth time!!

4 ♜xf7!! mate



This is one of the oldest traps in the book.

Who said chess was a long game?

King's Pawn Opening

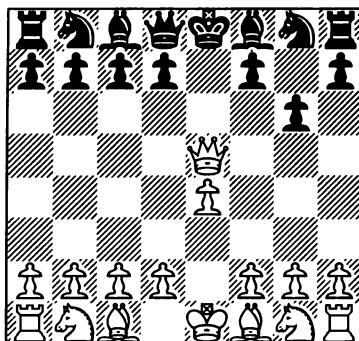
1 e4 e5 2 ♜h5

This is not a particularly good move but it sets a nasty trap.

2 ... g6??

An error that many beginners make - indeed it was the first trap I was ever shown! 2 ... ♜c6 is the best move - Black calmly ignores the white queen and makes a sensible developing move, while at the same time defending the e-pawn.

3 ♜xe5+ ...



This is what Black has missed. Normally winning just a pawn is enough for top players to win the game, but White has won a rook as well! There is a double attack to the king and rook - in chess this is known as a fork.

3 ... ♜e7

4 ♜xh8 ...

In effect the game is now over. Black can win a pawn back with...

4 ... ♜xe4+

But he is still a whole rook down. The lesson for Black to learn from this is...

*Defend your pieces
however small they might be!*

King's Gambit Declined**1 e4 e5****2 f4!?** ...

This opening is known as the King's Gambit. It is renowned for being very sharp. Beginners beware! Many a person has become unstuck. White is prepared to sacrifice a pawn for speedy development and a rapid assault on Black's king. There is however, one serious drawback of advancing the f-pawn; it also exposes White's king. In this trap Black exploits this factor.

2 ... ♖c5

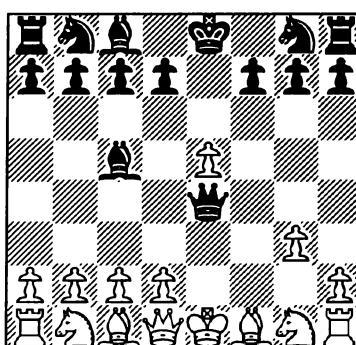
Black ignores the enticing f-pawn while at the same time seemingly offering his own e-pawn.

3 fxe5?? ♜h4+

This is the refutation of White's last move.

4 g3 ...

Or 4 ♔e2 ♜xe4+ checkmate!

4 ... ♜xe4+**5 ♜e2 ♜xh1**

Black wins a rook and the game.

Beware of Greek gifts!

King's Gambit Accepted**1 e4 e5 2 f4**

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 2 | ... | exf4 |
| 3 | ♘f3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | e5 | ♗h5 |
| 5 | ♘c3 | d6 |
| 6 | ♗c4 | dxe5 |
| 7 | ♘xe5 | ... |

The game has really livened up. White is now threatening the knight on h5 and the pawn on f7. Black needs a good move.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 7 | ... | ♔h4+! |
| 8 | ♔f1 | ♕e6! |

This move not only develops a piece but also defends the f-pawn.

- | | | |
|---|------|--------|
| 9 | ♕xe6 | ♗g3+!! |
|---|------|--------|

This is a crusher: 10 hxg3 loses the exchange after 10 ... ♔xh1+ 11 ♕e2 ♕xd1+ 12 ♕xd1 fxe6 when Black is winning.

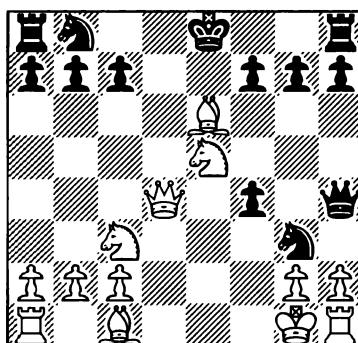
- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 10 | ♔g1 | ... |
|----|-----|-----|

10 ♔e1 and 10 ♔f2 both allow 10 ... ♔xh1 discovered check.

- | | | |
|----|-----|---------|
| 10 | ... | ♕c5+ |
| 11 | d4 | ♕xd4+!! |

This looks like madness! Can Black really give up this bishop?

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 12 | ♕xd4 | ... |
|----|------|-----|



- | | | |
|----|-----|--------|
| 12 | ... | ♗e2+!! |
|----|-----|--------|

Yes, he can! This is the hidden point.

- | | | |
|----|------|----------|
| 13 | ♗xe2 | ♔e1 mate |
|----|------|----------|

13 ♔f1 would have allowed 13 ... ♗xd4 winning easily. White is three pieces up after only thirteen moves, yet he has been checkmated!

Petroff's Defence**1 e4 e5****2 ♜f3 ♜f6**

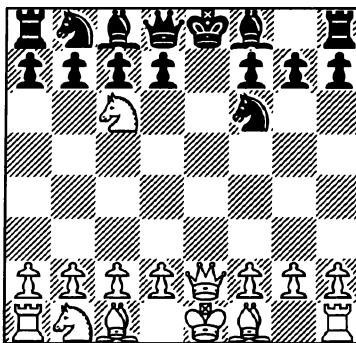
This move marks the start of the Petroff Defence, which has a very solid reputation.

3 ♜xe5 ♜xe4

This natural looking capture is a blunder. Black must first play 3 ... d6.

4 ♜e2! ♜f6

It is the same result wherever the knight moves. However, Black could continue to fight with 4 ... ♜e7! It might seem as if White now simply wins a piece with 5 ♜xe4 but Black can now win back the knight on e5 with 5 ... d6. White's best move is 6 d4 when after 6 ... dxe5 7 dxe5 White emerges a pawn up, but Black can still struggle on. The game continuation, however, leads to instant disaster!

5 ♜c6+! ...

With this move, White delivers a discovered check, i.e. a move where it is not the piece moving, but a piece behind it that delivers the check. This is a useful idea to remember as this type of move is often dangerous.

5 ... ♜e7**6 ♜xd8 ...**

White has won a queen for a knight, which should suffice to win the game!

Petroff's Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜f6 3 ♜xe5

3 ... d6

A big improvement on 3 ... ♜xe4.

4 ♜xf7!? ...

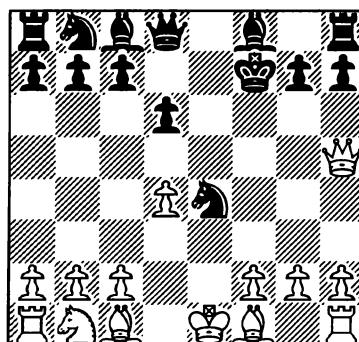
At first glance, this move looks like a blunder, as it seems to lose a piece. However, White gets two pawns and forces Black's king out into the open.

4 ... ♜xf7

5 d4 ♜xe4??

Black becomes over-confident and falls into the trap! He should probably continue with a simple developing move such as 5 ... ♜e7.

6 ♜h5+! ...



6 ... ♜e7

Black has four other moves but White can deal with them all as follows:

- 6 ... ♜g8 7 ♜d5+ ♜e6 8 ♜xe6 mate;
- 6 ... g6 7 ♜d5+ ♜e6 8 ♜xe4 and White is now a pawn up with a good position;
- 6 ... ♜f6 7 ♜h4+! g5 (any king move allows 8 ♜xd8) 8 ♜xe4 and White now has a very good position;
- 6 ... ♜e6 7 d5+ ♜f6 8 ♜h4+ g5 9 ♜xe4 and again White emerges a pawn up with a very good position.

7 ♜e2! ...

Any move to defend the knight such as 7 ... ♜f5 or 7 ... d5 loses the queen to 8 ♜g5+. Black must therefore return the piece, leaving him a pawn down with a very bad position.

Petroff's Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜f6 3 ♜xe5 d6

4 ♜f3 ♜xe4

5 ♜c3 ...

The point is that Black can now answer 5 ♜e2 with 5 ... ♜e7, defending the knight and at the same time releasing the pin to the king.

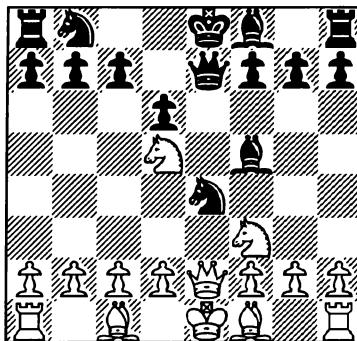
5 ... ♜f5??

This blunder was actually perpetrated in a real game by the young and very talented Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand. Even great players can make terminal mistakes so early in the opening! 5 ... ♜xc3 is the move that Black should play, when he has a perfectly reasonable position.

6 ♜e2! ♜e7

Or 6 ... d5 7 d3! winning a piece for nothing as the knight cannot move.

7 ♜d5! ...



A crushing riposte!

7 ... ♜e6

7... ♜d7 or 7... ♜d8 both lose a piece to 8 d3.

8 ♜xc7+! ...

This is the so called deadly family fork; here White wins the black queen. So after 6 ♜e2 Black must lose at least a piece.

Petroff's Defence**1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜f6 3 ♜xe5**

3 ... ♜c6??

Objectively, this is not the best move - 3 ... d6 is better. However, if an unsuspecting opponent is facing it for the first time, he could easily fall into the following trap.

4 ♜xc6 dxc6

5 e5? ...

5 d3 is much more prudent.

5 ... ♜e4!

6 d3 ♜c5!!

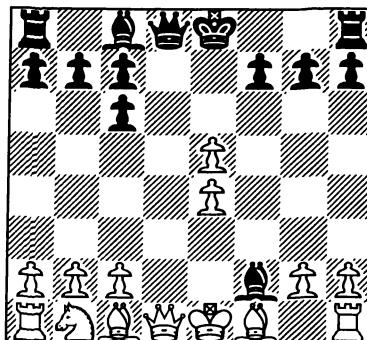
A brilliant move which completely turns the tables. It looks as if Black has simply lost the knight on e4. Can you spot why this is not the case?

7 dxе4 ...

Or 7 ♜e3 ♜xe3 8 fxe3 ♜h4+! 9 g3 (or 9 ♜e2 ♜f2 mate) 9... ♜xg3! and Black will win at least the exchange as 10 ♜g1 runs into 10 ... ♜e4+ 11 ♜e2 ♜f2 mate, so White must play 10 hxg3 which allows 10 ... ♜xh1.

7 ... ♜xf2+!!

It is now obvious in this position that the bishop cannot be taken without White losing the queen. However, did you manage to spot this combination after 6 d3?



8 ♜xf2 ...

Or 8 ♜e2 ♜g4+ and again White loses the queen.

8 ... ♜xd1

Winning!!!!

Philidor's Defence**1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3****2 ... d6**

This is the move that characterises Philidor's Defence.

3 d4 ♜d7?!

An inaccuracy; 3 ... ♜f6 is better.

4 ♜c4 ...

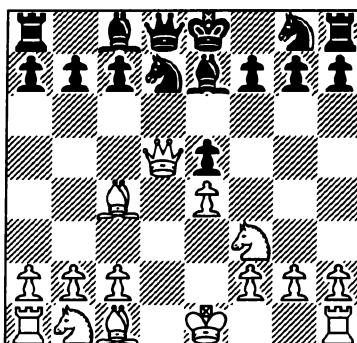
Now Black must be very careful.

4 ... ♜e7?

Black should in fact play 4 ... exd4 here, when White is a little better but there is still all to play for (see the next game).

5 dx5 dx5?

This move actually loses immediately! But after 5 ... ♜xe5 6 ♜xe5 dx5 7 ♜h5! g6 8 ♜xe5 White is a clear pawn up.

6 ♜d5! ...

This surprising move threatens 7 ♜xf7 mate and forces immediate resignation. For example 6 ... ♜h6 loses a piece to 7 ♜xh6. Black's only other move is 6 ... ♜b4+, but after 7 c3 White again wins a piece.

Watch out!

Early queen thrusts can be deadly!

Philidor's Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 ♜d7?! 4 ♜c4

4 ... exd4

Black tries to improve on the previous game.

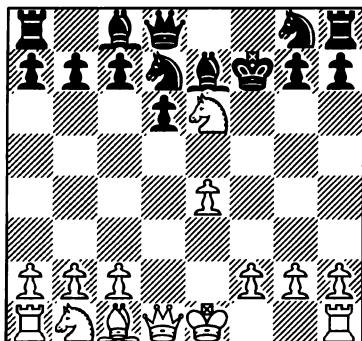
5 ♘xd4 ♕e7?

5 ... ♔gf6 must be played.

6 ♕xf7+!! ♔xf7

Or 6 ... ♜f8 7 ♜e6+ ♜xf7 8 ♜xd8+ with a decisive material advantage.

7  e6!! ...



This is the real point: the knight is immune from capture due to 8 ♜d5+ followed by 9 ♜f5 mate.

7 ... ♔e8

Black can of course play 7 ... ♕gf6 but after 8 ♖xd8+ ♜xd8 9 ♔c3 White has a decisive material advantage.

8 ♖xc7! ♔d8

Or 8 ... ♜f8 9 ♜h5+! g6 (after 9 ... ♛f6 White plays 10 ♜f5 mate) 10 ♜d5+ ♛g7 (or 10 ... ♛f6 11 ♜g5+! ♛g7 12 ♜e6+ winning the black queen) 11 ♜e6+ winning the black queen.

9 ♜d5+! ...

Why win the measly rook on a8 when Black's king is up for grabs?

9 ... ♕f8

10 ♔e6+ ♕e8

And now White has the pleasant choice between 11 ♜xd8 or 11 ♜xg7+! ♕f8 12 ♜e6+ ♕e8 (or 12 ... ♕f7 13 ♜h5+! ♕xe6 14 ♜f5 mate) 13 ♜h5 mate!

Philidor's Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 ♜d7?!

4	♜c3	c6
5	♝c4	♝e7
6	dxe5	dxe5

6 ... ♜xe5 is bad on account of 7 ♜xe5 dxe5 8 ♜h5! winning at least a pawn.

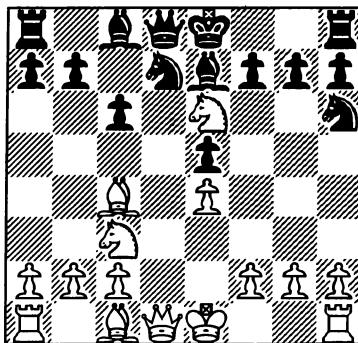
7 ♜g5! ...

Many players would not think that this move was possible, as the knight is attacked twice but only defended once.

7 ... ♜h6

This move is a mistake. 7 ... ♜xg5 is stronger but after 8 ♜h5! White wins his piece back as Black cannot defend the bishop on g5 and mate on f7 simultaneously. But after 8 ... g6 9 ♜xg5 the two bishops give White an edge.

8 ♜e6!! ...



This unexpected blow wreaks havoc! This position actually occurred as recently as 1993 in a game between the two grandmasters, Akopian and Radulov!

8 ... fxe6

9 ♜xh6 gxh6?

Black should play 9 ... 0-0! when after 10 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 11 ♜e3 White is a pawn up but Black can still struggle on. But not 9 ... ♜f6 10 ♜xe6! gxh6 11 ♜h5+ ♜e7 12 ♜f7+ ♜d6 13 0-0-0+ ♜c7 14 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 15 ♜d1 with a crushing attack!

10 ♜h5+ ♜f8

11 ♜xe6 ...

This move forces immediate mate as Black cannot answer the double threat of 12 $\mathbb{W}f7$ mate and 12 $\mathbb{W}xh6$ mate.

Philidor's Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 3 | ... | exd4 |
| 4 | ♝xd4 | ♝f6 |
| 5 | ♞c3 | g6 |

Black now elects to fianchetto the king's bishop from where it can exert tremendous pressure on White's position. This idea is well worth remembering.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | ♝c4 | ♝g7 |
| 7 | f3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | ♝e3 | a6 |
| 9 | ♛d2 | b5 |

So far White has pretended that he is playing against a Sicilian Dragon. The only difference is that in a Dragon the pawn would be on e7 instead of c7. This one slight alteration has a big effect on the position!

10 ♜b3? ...

This move loses, but already White's stereotyped handling of the opening has left him in a lot of trouble. 10 ♜e2 is better, but after 10 ... b4 and 11 ... c5 White is forced onto the defensive.

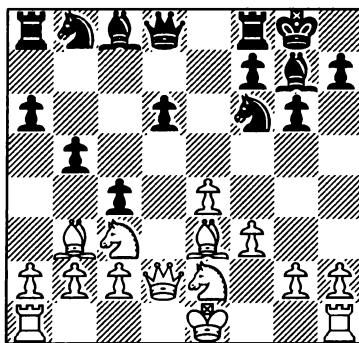
10 ... c5!

White must now lose a piece.

11 ♜de2 ...

Or 11 ♜dx b5 axb5 12 ♜xb5 ♛a6! when Black is a piece for two pawns up.

11 ... c4!



This move traps the bishop on b3, which should be enough for Black to win the game.

Philidor's Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 d6

3 ♜c3 ...

White develops his other knight.

3 ... ♜g4

4 ♜c4 ...

White develops his third piece and prepares to castle. Black should now also develop a piece and ought probably to play either 4 ... ♜c6 or 4 ... ♜d7. But let's see what happens if he slips up...

4 ... h6?

This unnecessary pawn move wastes valuable time. It neither develops a piece, nor, more importantly, does it meet White's threat.

5 ♜xe5!! ...

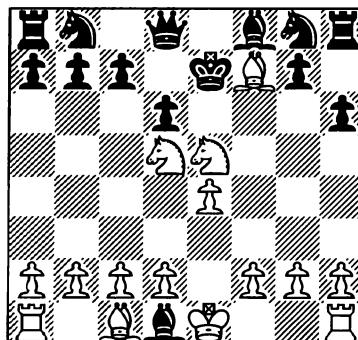
A brilliant move! It looks as if White has just lost his queen. Can you see why this is not the case?

5 ... ♜xd1

It is important to note that after the other capture, 5 ... dxe5 6 ♜xg4, White is a pawn up with an excellent position.

6 ♜xf7+ ♔e7

7 ♜d5 mate



This truly beautiful construction is known as Legall's mate. It is not often that the king is mated in the centre of the board by only three minor pieces.

*Three Knights Opening***1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3**

2	...	♞c6
3	♝c3	...

The characteristic position of the Three Knights Opening.

3	...	g6
4	d4	exd4
5	♞d5	♝g7
6	♝g5	♞ge7?

This natural developing move is somewhat surprisingly a mistake as it seriously weakens the black squares around the king. The paradoxical 6 ... ♞ce7! is necessary, when after 7 ♜xd4 c6 8 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 Black's position is tenable.

7	♜xd4!!	...
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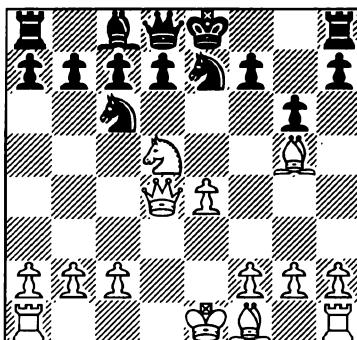
The natural 7 ♜f6+ is not so good as after 7 ... ♜f8 White will have to waste time worrying about 8 ... h6 and 9 ... g5 winning the f6 knight.

7	...	♜xd4
---	-----	------

Or 7 ... ♜xd4 8 ♜xe7! and White wins the black queen.

8	♛xd4!!	...
---	--------	-----

A tremendous move that would be extremely easy for an unsuspecting opponent to miss.



8	...	♞xd4
---	-----	------

8 ... 0-0 would lose in attractive fashion to 9 ♜f6+! ♜h8 10 ♜g4+!! ♜xd4 11 ♜f6+ ♜g8 12 ♜h6 mate. What a truly beautiful variation!

9	♞f6+	♞f8
---	------	-----

10	♞h6	mate
----	-----	------

And White has needed only two minor pieces to deliver mate!

2 Giuoco Piano

This chapter is dedicated solely to one opening, the Giuoco Piano (also known as the Italian Game). In this opening there are a whole host of ways for both sides to suffer an early knockout, of which I have just touched upon a few. The opening's starting point occurs after 1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}c4$. I remember that many of my earliest games as a junior would invariably start from this position with both White and Black.

The Giuoco Piano is an excellent opening, especially for beginners, as both sides must strive for rapid development. It is often a case of one thrust being parried by another, as both sides fight for control of the centre. All in all this is the opening in which to hone your tactical skills.

In this chapter you will see Legall's mate in one of its many settings. Also I can highly recommend playing 3 ... $\mathbb{Q}d4!?$ if you are Black, as in the second game, which is a move that will almost certainly chalk you up many easy points.

Finally the third game is worth playing over several times as White's play does not seem at all bad at first glance, but Black is allowed to charge up his kingside pawns with deadly effect.

Giuoco Piano

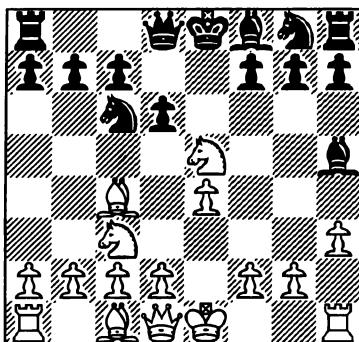
- 1 e4 e5
 2 ♜f3 ♜c6
 3 ♜c4 ...

This move distinguishes the Giuoco Piano (or Italian Game). 3 ♜c4 is a very natural and logical move: it develops a piece; prepares to castle; and at the same time eyes the most vulnerable point in Black's position, f7.

- 3 ... d6
 4 ♜c3 ♜g4?!

This move is a little dubious. It is more important for Black to concentrate on developing his kingside pieces to prepare castling. 4 ... ♜e7 would be more prudent.

- 5 h3 ♜h5?
 6 ♜xe5!! ...



This is the brilliant refutation of Black's last move.

- 6 ... ♜xd1

If 6 ... dx5 7 ♜xh5 leaves White a pawn up with an overwhelming position; or if 6 ... ♜xe5 7 ♜xh5 ♜xc4 8 ♜b5+! c6 9 ♜xc4 White has won his piece back and remains a pawn to the good.

- 7 ♜xf7+ ♜e7
 8 ♜d5! mate

Incredibly, Black is checkmated in only eight moves!

Giuoco Piano

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4

3 ... ♜d4!?

It is generally not a good idea to unnecessarily move the same piece twice so early on in the opening. However, White must not get complacent!

4 ♜xe5?! ...

The simple 4 ♜xd4 is much safer.

4 ... ♕g5!

This is the nasty little idea behind Black's last move! The queen attacks both the knight on e5 and the pawn on g2.

5 ♜xf7 ...

If 5 ♜xf7+ ♔d8 6 ♜xg8 (or 6 ♜f3 ♕xg2 7 ♜xd4 ♕xh1+ 8 ♔e2 ♕xe4+ 9 ♔f1 ♕xd4 and Black has won a rook) 6 ... ♕xg2 7 ♜f1 ♕xe4+ with mate next move.

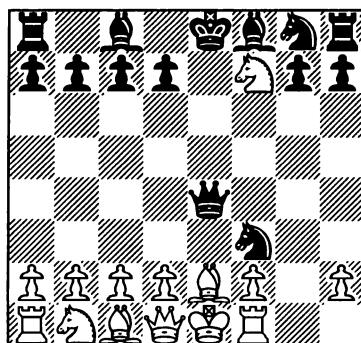
5 ... ♕xg2

6 ♜f1 ...

After 6 ♜xh8 ♕xh1+ 7 ♜f1 ♕xe4+ 8 ♔e2 ♜xc2+ 9 ♔f1 ♕h1+ is mate.

6 ... ♕xe4+

7 ♔e2 ♜f3 mate



White has been very neatly 'smothered' mated. 7 ... ♜xf7 would also have been very good.

Giuoco Piano

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4

3 ... ♜c5

When I first started playing chess this was a position I would often reach. It contains many traps for the unwary.

4 d3 ♜f6

5 0-0 d6

6 ♜g5 ...

This move is already a slight inaccuracy; 6 c3 is preferable, controlling the d4 square.

6 ... h6

7 ♜h4? ...

This bishop now runs into all sorts of trouble. Either 7 ♜xf6 or 7 ♜e3 would be preferable.

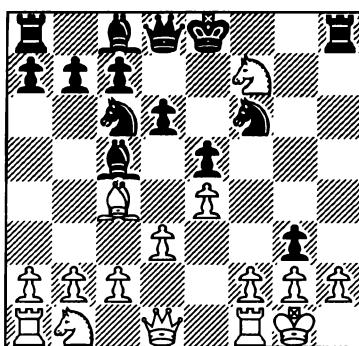
7 ... g5!

8 ♜g3 h5!

Crude but effective! Black relentlessly hounds the bishop.

9 ♜xg5 h4!

10 ♜xf7 hxg3!!

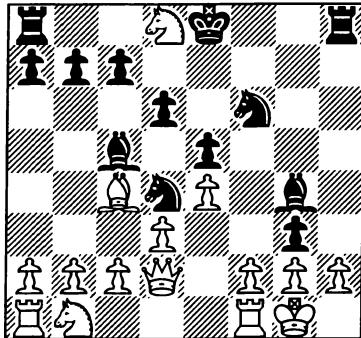


A brilliant move. Black calmly ignores the threat to his queen as he has seen that he will soon develop a vicious mating attack.

11 ♜xd8 ♜g4!!

Black ignores White's knight on d8 and heads for bigger game!

12 ♜d2 ♜d4!!

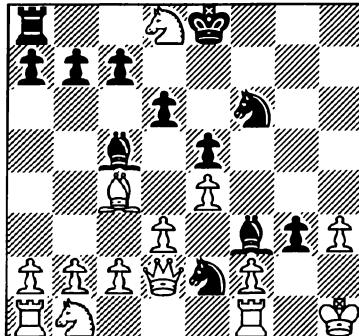


13 h3 ...

This move loses but so do the alternatives, e.g.

- a) 13 ♜c3 ♜f3+!! 14 gxf3 ♜xf3 15 hxg3 ♜h1 mate;
- b) 13 fxg3 ♜f3+ 14 ♜h1 ♜xh2 mate;
- c) 13 hxg3 ♜f3+ 14 gxf3 ♜xf3 with an unstoppable mate on h1.

13 ... ♜e2+
14 ♜h1 ♜xh3!!
15 gxh3 ♜f3 mate



Two Knights Defence**1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4****3 ... ♜f6**

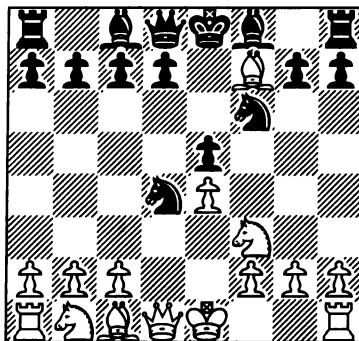
This is the Two Knights Defence, which is considered to be Black's most respected way of meeting the Giuoco Piano.

4 d4!?

Black must now be very careful how he reacts to this sharp thrust in the centre.

4 ... ♜xd4?

Immediately Black errs. 4 ... exd4 is better with wild complications (see the next game).

5 ♜xf7+! ...

No doubt Black had only counted on 5 ♜xe5, when 5 ... ♜e6 is an adequate response.

5 ... ♜xf7

5 ... ♜e7 is no better as 6 ♜xe5 still leaves White a pawn up and Black with an exposed king.

6 ♜xe5+ ♜e8**7 ♜xd4 ...**

The net result of White's little combination has left him with an extra pawn and Black unable to castle.

*Always be on the lookout for intermediate checks.
They can often prove fatal!*

Two Knights Defence

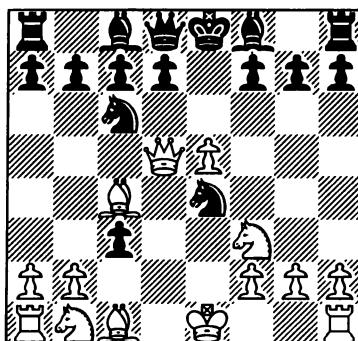
1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4 ♜f6 4 d4
 4 ... exd4
 5 c3 dxc3
 6 e5 ...

In this difficult position, Black must be very careful! One false move could lose the game.

6 ... ♜e4?

It was essential to play 6 ... d5! - rather than moving the attacked knight, Black must go on the offensive and attack White's bishop.

7 ♜d5! ...



This move wins a piece, as there is no way to stop 8 ♜xf7 mate and also save the knight on e4.

*Watch out for that f7 square
 It's the most
 vulnerable point in the black position!*

Two Knights Defence, Max Lange

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4 ♜f6 4 d4 exd4

5 0-0 ♜c5

6 e5 d5!

Black goes on the counter-attack.

7 exf6 dxc4

This is the Max Lange Defence (or Attack - it is hard to tell which!).

8 ♜e1 ♜e6

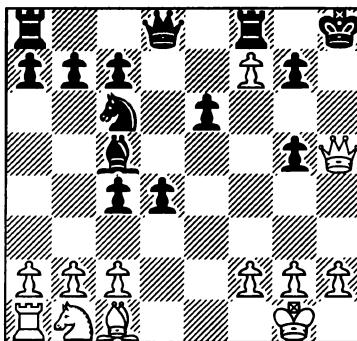
9 ♜g5 ...

Believe it or not this is a theoretical position! White should now not play the greedy 9 fxg7 when after 9 ... ♜g8 10 ♜g5 ♜e7 11 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 12 ♜bd2 ♜d5! it is Black who develops an extremely dangerous initiative. However, Black must now continue with 9 ... ♜d5 when White would play 10 ♜c3 ♜f5, etc.

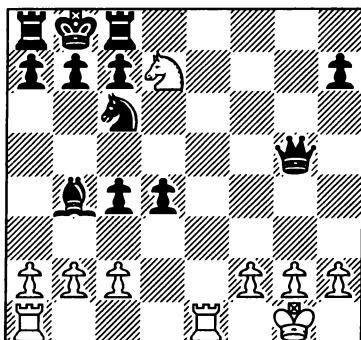
9 ... ♜xf6?

This is a very common move in this position, which unfortunately (that is if you happen to be Black) loses a piece for nothing. Black also has a couple of other traps to avoid in this position:

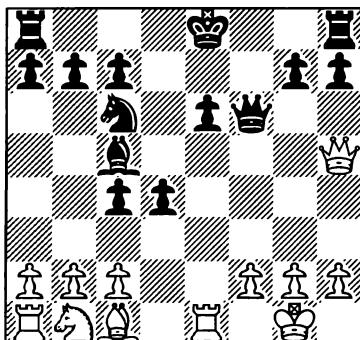
a) 9 ... 0-0? would lose to 10 ♜xe6! fxe6 11 f7+ ♜h8 (or 11 ... ♜xf7 12 ♜xf7 ♜f7 13 ♜h5+ ♜g8 14 ♜xc5 winning a piece) 12 ♜h5 h6 13 ♜g6!! hxg5 14 ♜h5 mate;



b) 9 ... ♜d6 would also be bad due to 10 ♜xe6 fxe6 11 fxg7 ♜g8 12 ♜h5+ ♜d7 13 ♜d2! ♜e7 14 ♜e4 ♜b4 15 ♜g5 when White has a dangerous initiative. One possible continuation might be as follows 15 ... ♜xg7 16 ♜f6+ ♜c8 17 ♜h3 ♜xg5 18 ♜xe6+ ♜b8 (or 18 ... ♜d8 19 ♜d7 mate) 19 ♜d7+ ♜c8 20 ♜b6+ ♜b8 21 ♜c8+!! ♜xc8 22 ♜d7 mate.



10 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ fx e 6
11 $\mathbb{W}h5+!$...



Any reply allows 12 $\mathbb{W}xc5$ winning a piece.

Two Knights Defence

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4 ♜f6 4 d4 exd4

5 ♜g5!? ...

White immediately goes for the vulnerable f7 square.

5 ... ♜xe5!

An excellent move that combines both the defence of the f7 square with an attack on the bishop on c4.

6 ♜b3 h6

7 f4! ...

Rather than meekly retreat the knight, White launches a powerful counter-attack.

7 ... hxg5

8 fxe5 ♜xe4

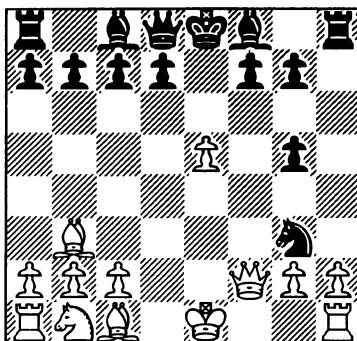
9 ♜xd4 ...

So far the game has proceeded in a reasonably logical fashion. The battle has revolved around f7. One more careful move from Black such as 9 ... ♜c5 and he would have a very satisfactory position.

9 ... ♜g3?

Instead Black gets carried away! Black has seen that 10 hxg3 is not possible because of 10 ... ♜xh1+ and that 10 ♜g1 ♜h4 gives good attacking chances, but it is not compulsory for White to move the rook.

10 ♜f2! ...



This comes as a shock! White threatens mate on f7 (it's that dreaded square again!) and also the g3 knight. There is no defence to both threats, so Black will lose a piece.

Two Knights Defence

1 e4 e5 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$
 4 0-0 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$
 5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$
 6 $dxc3$...

White has sacrificed a pawn for the initiative. So Black must be careful.

6 ... **f6!**

This odd-looking move is actually rather good; it serves two main functions: it bolsters the e-pawn and it stops the dangerous infiltration of the white knight to g5.

7 $\mathbb{Q}h4$...

With this move White is trying to exploit the weakening of the white squares around the black king. White is now also threatening 8 $\mathbb{W}h5+$.

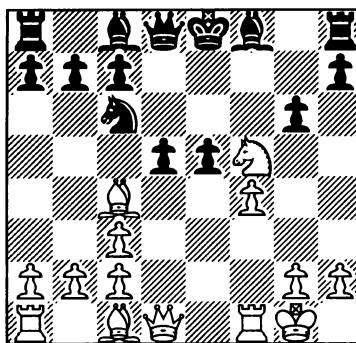
7 ... **g6**
 8 **f4** **f5**

This pawn moves for a second time, which (one would surely think) cannot be good! It does, however have the point of opening the d8-h4 diagonal so that now the black queen is hitting White's knight on h4.

9 $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$...

At first sight, this move looks very strong. For if Black captures the pesky knight, then the following sequence would occur 9 ... $gxf5$ 10 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 11 $\mathbb{W}f7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d1+$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 13 $\mathbb{W}d5+$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 14 $\mathbb{W}b5$ mate!

9 ... **d5!!**



This is the idea - Black simultaneously attacks the bishop on c4 with a pawn, and the knight on f5 with the bishop on c8. White now loses a piece!

10 ♘d3 e4!

Black must still be a little careful, as the immediate capture on f5 would allow White to obtain some compensation for the piece. For example, 10 ... ♘xf5 11 ♘xf5 exf5 12 ♜h5+ with an attack. After 10 ... e4 White loses a piece for nothing.

③ Ruy Lopez

This chapter contains traps in the Ruy Lopez (or Spanish) Opening, one of the most frequently played openings in chess. Virtually every world champion (past and present) has played it or against it at some stage in their careers. It is a very rich opening with many possibilities for both sides. Indeed, it has been said that when you have mastered the Ruy Lopez you have mastered chess. It was mainly the superb handling of this particular opening by Garry Kasparov that led to his convincing victory over Nigel Short in their 1993 world championship match in London.

The main strategic battleground revolves around Black's e5 pawn, which 3 ♕b5 indirectly pressurises. If Black can hold this point he will normally have a defensible position, but if not he could be in for a long hard struggle.

Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation

- 1 e4 e5
 2 ♜f3 ♜c6
 3 ♜b5 ...

We have now arrived at the Ruy Lopez (or Spanish) Opening.

- 3 ... a6

This is the most frequently played move in this position. I remember when I first started to play chess, I wondered why no one ever took on c6 and then on e5....

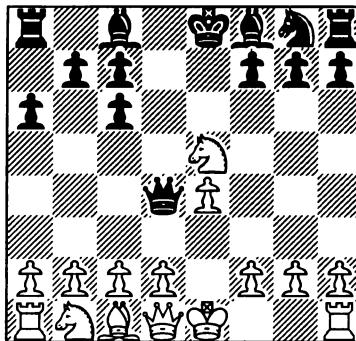
- 4 ♜xc6 ...

This move is in itself by no means bad. Indeed one of the greatest (if not *the* greatest) player of all time, Bobby Fischer, used it to great effect on many occasions. White hopes that his superior pawn structure and lead in development will compensate for the two bishops. For obvious reasons it is known as the Exchange Variation.

- 6 ... dxc6
 5 ♜xe5?! ...

But this is not the correct follow up, White should play either 5 0-0 or 5 d4. White thinks he has won a pawn, but has he?

- 5 ... ♜d4!



This queen move, which is easy to overlook, is the reason why White cannot win a pawn.

- 6 ♜f3 ♜xe4+

Black has won his pawn back, and although he is still a long way from victory, the two bishops will confer on him a clear advantage in the oncoming endgame after 7 ♜e2 ♜xe2+ 8 ♜xe2.

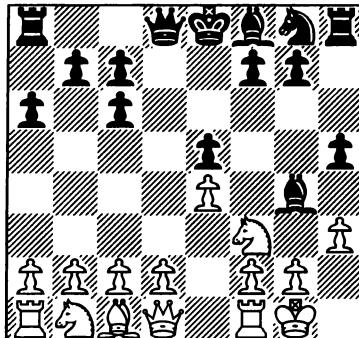
Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜xc6 dxc6

5 0-0 ♜g4

Black develops a piece and at the same time pins the knight on f3 to the queen, to prevent 6 ♜xe5.

6 h3 h5!?



This pawn move looks ridiculous as it seems to ignore the threat to the bishop. But...

7 hxg4 hxg4

Now we see Black's idea; the h-file is opened for Black's rook on h8 and White's knight on f3 is attacked. Suddenly White's king is in *danger!*

8 ♜xe5 ...

White ploughs on bravely, but he should play 8 g3, returning the piece with a bad but possibly defensible position.

8 ... ♜h4!

After this move it's all over! There is no way for White to prevent both 9 ... ♜h2 mate and 9 ... ♜h1 mate.

9 f3 ...

White tries to create a flight square for his king, but it is to no avail.

9 ... g3!

It is fitting that this pawn, which started out on h7, should be the final nail in White's coffin. There is nowhere for the white king to run!

10 ♜g4 ♜h1 mate

Ruy Lopez, Exchange Variation

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜xc6

4 ... bxc6

The normal move is 4 ... dxc6 but this move is also playable.

5 0-0 ...

5 ♜xe5 would be bad on account of 5 ... ♜g5, hitting both e5 and g2.

5 ... ♜f6!?

It is not usually a good idea to bring the queen out so early in the game, when Black still has all his minor pieces to develop. 5 ... d6 would be more normal, but Black has a devilish plan in mind!

6 d4 exd4

7 e5 ♜g6

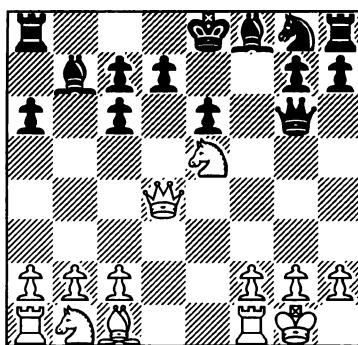
8 ♜xd4 ♜b7

9 e6 ...

This looks crushing; for example 9 ... ♜xe6 10 ♜e1! wins the queen or 9 ... 0-0-0 10 exd7+ ♜xd7 11 ♜xd7! ♜xd7 12 ♜e5+ followed by 13 ♜xg6 when White emerges the exchange up.

9 ... fxe6

10 ♜e5 ...



This is the position that White had envisaged after 9 e6. He is threatening both 11 ♜xd7 mate and 11 ♜xg6 - it seems as if the game is all over but looks can be deceptive!

10 ... ♜xg2+!!

A fantastic concept.

11 ♜xg2 c5+

Black wins back the queen and reaches a totally won endgame two pawns up.

Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Variation

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6

4 ♜a4

This time White preserves the bishop.

4 ... d6

This is known as the Steinitz Defence, named after the first ever world champion Wilhelm Steinitz.

5 d4 b5

6 ♜b3 ♜xd4

7 ♜xd4 exd4

White now has to be careful. 8 c3 is the normal move here; after 8 ... dxc3 White can either gambit a pawn with 9 ♜xc3 or force a draw with 9 ♜d5 ♜e6 10 ♜c6+ ♜d7 (10 ... ♜e7 is not recommended!) 11 ♜d5 when Black must repeat with 11 ... ♜e6.

8 ♜xd4?? ...

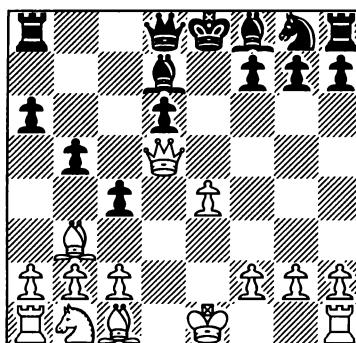
This move, however, is a blunder that loses a piece.

8 ... c5

9 ♜d5 ♜e6

10 ♜c6+ ♜d7

11 ♜d5 c4



12 ♜xc4 bxc4

13 ♜xc4 ...

White has two pawns for a piece but his position is very bad.

As a slight aside, I fell into this trap (known as Noah's Ark) when I was about 11 at the Folkestone weekend congress! It was a bad weekend all round as my parent's house was burgled while we were away!

Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Variation

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 d6 5 d4

5 ... ♜g4?!

This is not the best move (both 5 ... ♜d7 and 5 ... exd4 are better) but the strongest move objectively is not always the most effective move!

6 dxе5 ...

If 6 d5 b5 7 dxc6 bxa4 when Black is fine after 8 ... ♜e7 followed by capturing on c6.

6 ... dxе5

7 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8

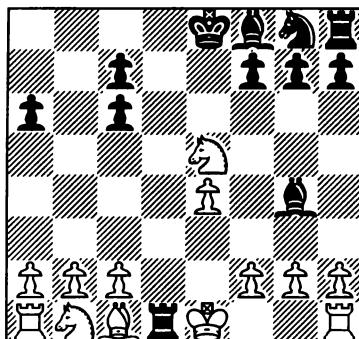
8 ♜xc6+ bxc6

White has reached a very favourable endgame; Black's queenside pawns are isolated and weak but one bad move can spoil any position!

9 ♜xe5?? ...

This is a blunder of immense proportions - White has won a pawn but at what a cost!

9 ... ♜d1 mate



Black, with only two pieces developed, has actually managed to deliver mate.

Ruy Lopez, Worrall Attack

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4

4	...	♜f6
5	0-0	♝e7
6	♝e2	

More normal is 6 ♜e1 but this move is by no means bad.

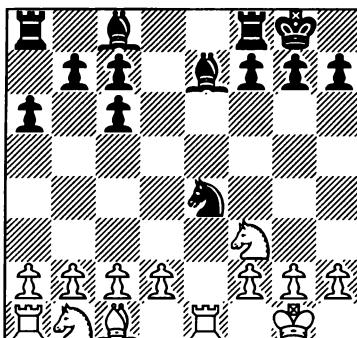
6	...	0-0?
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6 ... b5 is preferable followed by 7 ... 0-0. The exact move order can be, and usually is, exceedingly important, especially in the opening.

7	♜xc6	dxc6
8	♞xe5	...

White has won a pawn, but Black now mistakenly thinks that he can win it back.

8	...	♝d4?
9	♞f3	♝xe4
10	♝xe4	♞xe4
11	♜e1!	...



This is the point of White's preceding play, and shows that he has seen rather further into the position than Black.

11	...	♜f5
12	d3	...

Finally, all is revealed! After the knight has moved, White will capture the bishop on e7 with the rook and finish up with an extra piece.

12	...	♜b4
13	c3	...

Black has been wriggling valiantly, but with two pieces en prise, one is certain to be lost.

Ruy Lopez, Main Line

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 ♜f6 5 0-0 ♜e7

6 ♜e1 b5

7 ♜b3 d6

8 c3 0-0

So far we have been following a ‘main line’ Ruy Lopez. This position has been seen literally thousands of times in all levels of chess.

9 d4 ...

More normal is 9 h3 to stop Black’s next move, but White’s occupation of the centre cannot be bad.

9 ... ♜g4

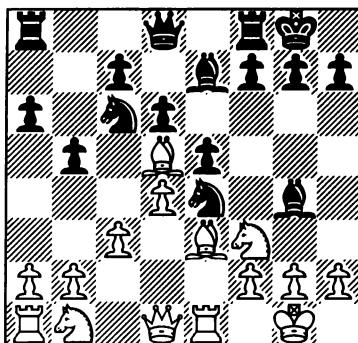
10 ♜e3 ...

White develops another piece and at the same time gives the d-pawn more support.

10 ... ♜xe4?

This is a bad mistake. Black thinks that White has blundered his e-pawn, but has missed White’s reply.

11 ♜d5! ...



This is a very easy move to overlook. When the knight was on f6 it was controlling d5, but now only one move later it is not. This is a kind of blind spot that many chess players have problems with.

11 ... ♜d7

12 ♜xe4 ...

White has won a piece but somewhat incredibly Black can win it back with 12 ... d5! White should reply with 13 ♜xh7+! (13 ♜c2 is not as good due to 13 ... e4!) 13... ♜xh7 14 dx5 when White is only a pawn up but that is still enough to give him a large advantage.

Ruy Lopez, Bird's Variation

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5

3 ... ♜d4

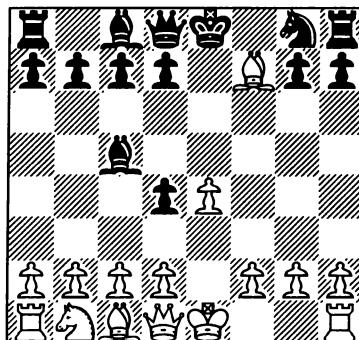
This is Bird's Defence.

4 ♜xd4 exd4

5 ♜c4 ♜c5?

Black has not seen White's idea.

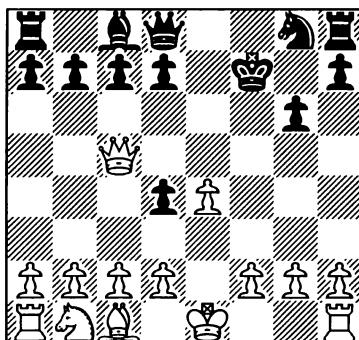
6 ♜xf7+! ...



6 ... ♜xf7

7 ♜h5+ g6

8 ♜xc5 ...



White's little combination has won a pawn and left the black king position seriously weakened.

Ruy Lopez, Classical Variation**1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜b5**

3	...	♜c5
4	c3	f5

This leads to sharp play.

5	d4	...
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5 exf5? is not good as after 5 ... e4 6 ♜e2 ♜e7 White has no good knight move.

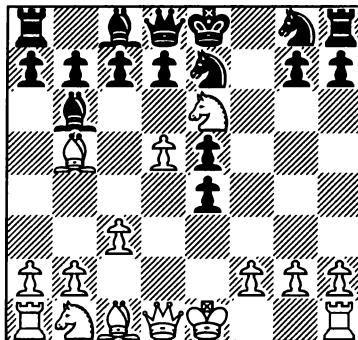
5	...	fxe4
6	♝g5	...

6 ♜fd2 is also possible as after 6 ... exd4 7 ♜h5+ g6 8 ♜xc5 White wins a piece. However, Black can try 6 ... ♜b6 which leads to a very complicated position.

6	...	♜b6
7	d5	...

The best move now is probably 7 ... e3 sacrificing a piece after 8 dxс6 exf2 9 ♜f1 bxc6, but receiving three excellent pawns in return. In the game an accident happens!

7	...	♝ce7??
8	♝e6!!	...



5.

What a lovely move! White wins the black queen as it has nowhere to move - it is like a smothered mate to the queen.

4 Sicilian Defence

Like the Ruy Lopez, the Sicilian Defence is a very complex opening that is popular at all levels of play. This chapter focuses on knockouts in the main line Sicilian

The first six traps occur in the Dragon and Accelerated Dragon respectively. The Dragon is one of the first openings that I started to play as a junior. It is a great opening that I can highly recommend. Black has to constantly watch out for a white knight hopping in on d5, while at the same time having to worry about being checkmated along the h-file. White on the other hand has to be extremely wary of the dark-squared bishop on g7 and has to always be on the look out for a devastating exchange sacrifice on c3. The traps that you see in this section have had literally thousands of victims in the past and will no doubt claim many more in the future.

The Najdorf Variation is the subject of the next three traps. It is perhaps Black's most challenging response to 1 e4. Indeed three of the world's greatest ever players, the ex-world champions Mikhail Tal and Bobby Fischer together with the current world champion Garry Kasparov, have all used it as their main defence to 1 e4. It is another opening well worth further investigation.

The rest of this chapter contains more knockouts from some of the other variations of the Sicilian, such as the Taimanov, the Classical, the Sveshnikov and the Richter-Rauzer. The Sicilian is definitely an opening that you need to do your homework on. Here I have given the very tip of an extremely large iceberg when it comes to traps in this particular opening.

Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

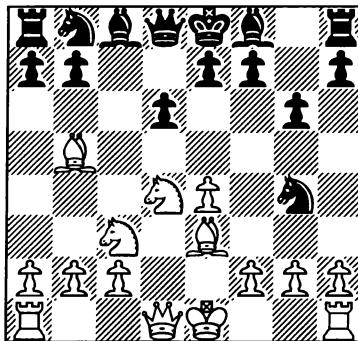
1	e4	c5
2	♘f3	d6
3	d4	cx d4
4	♘xd4	♘f6
5	♗c3	g6
6	♕e3	...

This move is the beginning of the main line Dragon, known as the Yugoslav Attack.

6	...	♗g4?
---	-----	------

A serious mistake; Black should simply continue with 6 ... ♕g7.

7	...	♕b5+!
---	-----	-------



7	...	♕d7
---	-----	-----

Or 7 ... ♘c6 8 ♘xc6 bxc6 9 ♕xc6+ ♔d7 10 ♕xa8 ♜xa8 and White emerges the exchange and a pawn up.

8	...	♜xg4!
---	-----	-------

White wins a piece owing to the fact the bishop on d7 is pinned to the king.

This idea is well worth remembering!

Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 g6 6 ♜e3

So having learnt from the previous trap we avoid 6 ... ♜g4.

6	...	♜g7
7	f3	...

This is a good move as it supports White's centre, prevents Black from playing ... ♜g4 and prepares an eventual kingside pawn-storm.

7	...	0-0
8	♝d2	♞c6
9	♜c4	♜d7
10	0-0-0	♜c8

When both sides have castled on opposite wings, play can become very complicated. White will advance his kingside pawns to open up Black's king, while Black will attack along the semi-open c-file.

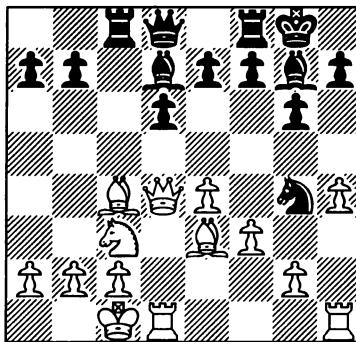
11	h4??	...
----	------	-----

This impulsive move is a serious error. White had to play 11 ♜b3 first.

11'	...	♜xd4!
-----	-----	-------

Now the drawback of White's previous move becomes apparent. The bishop on c4 is now exposed to Black's rook on c8.

12	♝xd4	♞g4!
----	------	------



White had to recapture with the queen as 12 ♜xd4 would have lost a piece to 12 ... ♜xc4. White's queen now comes under attack, so there is no time for White to capture the knight on g4.

13	♛d3	♞xe3
----	-----	------

14	♛xe3	♜xc4
----	------	------

And Black wins a piece.

Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♕f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♕xd4 ♕f6 5 ♕c3 g6
6 f4 ...

This is known as the Levenfish variation of the Dragon. It is rarely played in master chess but is worth a try for surprise value. I remember losing to it in one of the first junior tournaments in which I played.

6 ... $\ddot{\text{Q}}\text{g7}$
 7 e5 $\text{dxe5?}!$

This obvious capture is a mistake. Black should play 7 ... ♜h5. Now it seems that White can win a piece with 8 g4 but Black has a hidden resource in 8 ... ♜xf4! 9 ♜xf4 dxe5 regaining the piece with a good position.

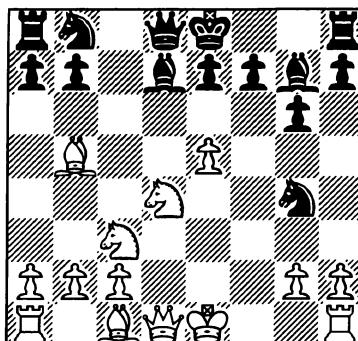
8 fxe5 ♖g4?

This move loses a piece. Black had to play 8 ... ♔fd7 when after 9 e6! White is clearly better.

9 ♠b5+! ...

This is the point behind White's previous couple of moves. Black has no satisfactory way to deal with this check. Note the resemblance with the earlier trap!

9 ... d7



This move loses a piece but other moves are no better, e.g. 9 ... ♔d7 10 ♕xg4; or 9 ... ♔c6 10 ♔xc6 bxc6 11 ♔xc6+ ♔d7 12 ♔xa8 ♕xa8; or 9 ... ♔f8 (I once saw this position in a junior tournament, when the white player failed to spot the brilliant ...) 10 ♔e6+!! ♔xe6 11 ♕xd8 mate.

10 ♕xg4 ...

As before White has won the knight on g4 due to the deadly check on b5.

Sicilian Defence, Accelerated Dragon Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 2 | ... | ♜c6 |
| 3 | d4 | cx d4 |
| 4 | ♝xd4 | g6 |

The reason this is known as the Accelerated Dragon is that Black fianchettoes immediately and delays playing ... ♜f6 and ... d6.

5 ♜c3

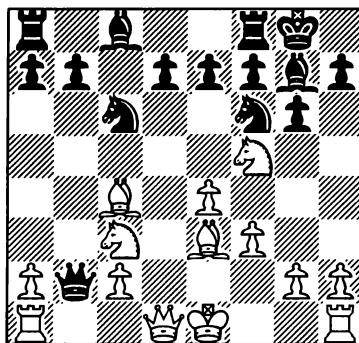
Probably White's best move in this position is 5 c4, heading for a Moczy Bind, but that is another story.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 5 | ... | ♝g7 |
| 6 | ♝e3 | ♝f6 |
| 7 | ♝c4 | ... |

This is considered to be the best move by theory.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 7 | ... | 0-0 |
| 8 | ♛b3 | ... |

8 f3?! is not so good in this position due to 8 ... ♛b6!, which looks a little risky as the queen is on the same diagonal as the bishop, but is playable because the bishop on e3 is no longer defended. 9 ♜f5? is the most aggressive reply but it loses a piece to 9 ... ♛xb2.



10 ♜a4 ♛b4+! However, after 9 0-0 ♜g4! 10 fxg4 ♜xd4 11 ♜xd4 ♛xd4+ 12 ♛xd4 ♜xd4 13 ♜d5 ♜c6! Black has a slight but clear advantage due to his better pawn structure.

8 ... ♜a5?!

This move is somewhat surprisingly an inaccuracy. It was brilliantly refuted by the great Bobby Fischer in a tournament game.

9 e5! ♜e8?

Black overlooks White's brilliant follow up. Instead 9 ... ♔xb3 10 exf6 ♕xa1 11 fxe7 ♕xc2+ 12 ♜xc2 ♔xg7 is a better defence, though White still stands well because he can quickly build up a dangerous attack in the absence of Black's valuable dark-squared bishop.

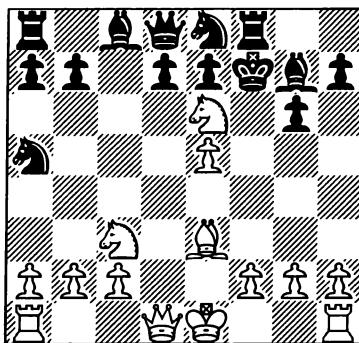
10 ♔xf7+!! ...

A bolt from the blue!

10 ... ♔xf7

Or 10 ... ♜xf7 11 ♔e6! dxe6 (there is no good alternative) 12 ♜xd8 winning a queen for two minor pieces.

11 ♔e6!



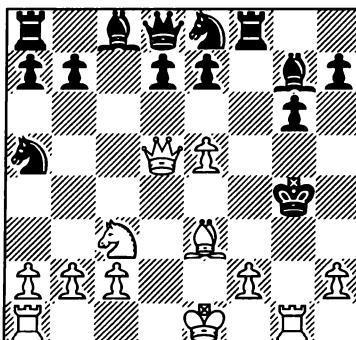
11 ... ♔xe6

Black is now two pieces up, but his king has been caught in a mating net! 11 ... dxe6 loses the queen to 12 ♜xd8.

12 ♜d5+ ♔f5

13 g4+ ♔xg4

14 ♜g1+ ...



White has a forced mate against all king moves.

14 ♔h5

I leave it to you the reader to work out how to check mate against other king moves.

15 ♕d1+ ♔h4

16 ♕g4 mate

Sicilian Defence, Accelerated Dragon Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 g6 5 ♜c3 ♜g7 6 ♜e3 ♜f6

7 h3 ...

White plays this move to rule out any chance of Black playing ... ♜g4.

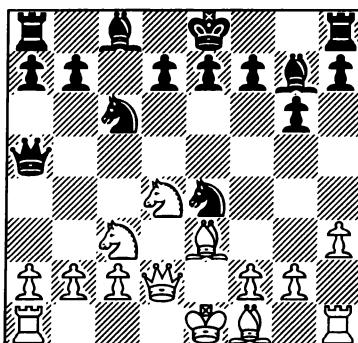
7 ... ♜a5

With this move Black threatens ... ♜xe4.

8 ♜d2? ...

This move is not good. White should settle for the simple 8 ♜b3.

8 ... ♜xe4!!



I must confess that when I first looked at this position I thought that 8 ... ♜xe4 was a terrible blunder, losing a piece, but Black has a brilliant resource which is very difficult to see.

9 ♜xc6 ...

9 ♜xe4 loses a valuable central pawn to 9 ... ♜xd2+ 10 ♜xd2 ♜xd4.

9 ... ♜xc3!!

This is the hidden move. Clearly after either 9 ... ♜xd2 10 ♜xa5! or 9 ... dxc6 10 ♜xe4 White wins a piece, but after the text move Black actually wins a pawn! White can now either play 10 ♜xc3 ♜xc3+ 11 bxc3 bxc6 or 10 bxc3 ♜xd2 11 ♜xd2 bxc6 but in either case he ends up a pawn down.

Sicilian Defence, Accelerated Dragon Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4

4 ... ♜f6

5 ♜c3 g6?!

Black aims to transpose back into an Accelerated Dragon, but this move order allows White a dangerous alternative to the normal 6 ♜e3.

6 ♜xc6! ...

This move is normally not a good idea as it strengthens Black's pawn control over the centre, but in this particular position it is quite dangerous.

6 ... bxc6

7 e5 ...

This is the point. Black's knight is forced to an uncomfortable square.

7 ... ♜d5

With this move Black sacrifices a pawn for open lines, but the passive 7 ... ♜g8 although unpleasant, is preferable.

8 ♜xd5 cxd5

9 ♜xh5 ♜b8

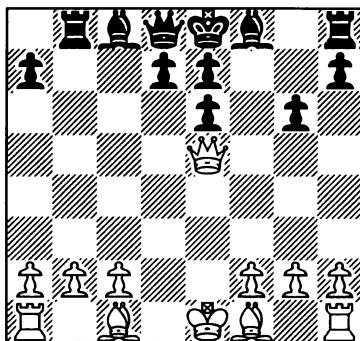
10 e6!? ...

This sets a nasty trap, but objectively 10 ♜c4 is stronger.

10 ... fxe6

Losing immediately, as does 10 ... dxе6 for the same reason. Black should play 10 ... f6 with some counterplay for the pawn.

11 ♜e5! ...



This pretty move forks the two black rooks; there is no way that Black can save both of them.

Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3

5 ... a6

This is the Najdorf variation of the Sicilian. It is one of the most popular ways for Black to meet 1 e4, and is Garry Kasparov's favourite defence to 1 e4.

6 f4 ...

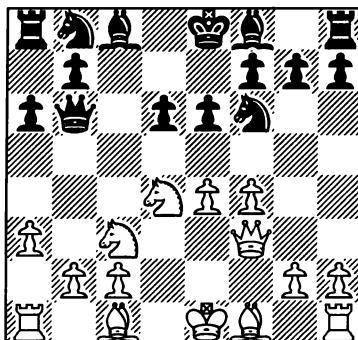
A very direct way of playing against the Najdorf, aiming to open lines on the kingside and in the centre.

6 ... e6

7 ♜f3 ♜b6

With this move Black aims to exploit the fact that White's queen is no longer defending the knight on d4. Note that White's most logical move now, 8 ♜e3?, would be a mistake due to 8 ... ♜xb2!

8 a3!? ...



At first sight this move looks like a terrible blunder! Has White really overlooked that Black is attacking the knight on d4?

8 ... ♜xd4??

The answer is of course no! White has now 'blundered' a piece but Black has lost his queen!

9 ♜e3! ...

Suddenly the black queen is trapped! Note that if White's pawn were still on a2 Black would have an escape square for the queen on b4.

Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation

**1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 a6
6 ♜e3 ...**

This move has recently been popularised by the English grandmasters Nigel Short, John Nunn and Michael Adams.

6 ... ♜g4

A relatively new move that has often been used by Grandmaster Joe Gallagher. It is important to note that White does not have ♜b5+ at his disposal.

7 ♜g5 ...

White does not wish to part with his valuable dark-squared bishop. 7 ♜f4! would be, however, a serious error as Black could then play 7 ... e5! forking the bishop on f4 and the knight on d4, thereby winning a piece.

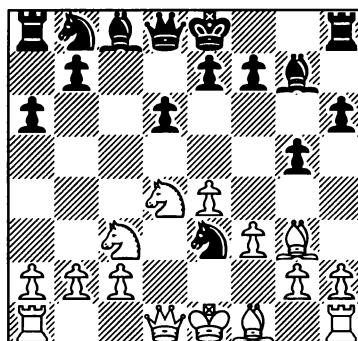
**7 ... h6
8 ♜h4 g5?!**

A very double-edged move. Black gains time for his kingside development by attacking White's bishop on h4, at the price of weakening his kingside pawn structure.

**9 ♜g3 ♜g7
10 f3?? ...**

White wants to make the knight on g4 retreat, but this is not the way!

10 ... ♜e3!



Black's knight does not retreat but boldly goes forward!

11 ♜d2 ♜xd4!

This is the killing blow. Normally it would be wrong to give up this bishop for a knight but this is an exception.

12 ♕xd4 ♔xc2+!

The dreaded family fork strikes again and White loses his queen.

Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation

**1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 a6
6 ♜g5 ...**

This bishop move is the most aggressive way for White to play against the Najdorf.

6 ... b6?!

Black has to be accurate in his move order; 6 ... e6 is the recommended move.

7 ♜xf6! ...

White wastes no time in doubling Black's pawns in order to weaken the black pawn structure.

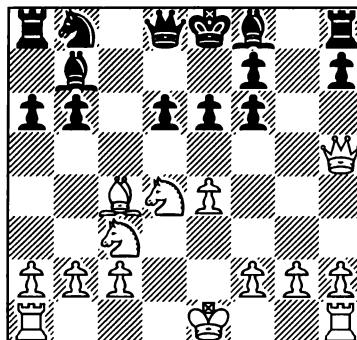
**7 ... gxf6
8 ♜c4 ♜b7?**

Black continues his development, oblivious to how dangerous White's initiative has become. Instead 8 ... e6 would have been stronger but even then 9 ♜h5! would give White the advantage. This is a good example of how one inaccuracy can set off a whole string of problems.

9 ♜h5! ...

This move wins a pawn by force as there is no satisfactory way to defend against the threat of 10 ♜xf7+. Only quite recently I myself fell into this trap, which is the reason I can now warn you about it!

9 ... e6



10 ♜xe6! ...

The bishop is taboo as the pawn on f7 is pinned. 10 ♜xe6! would have been equally good. Black now loses a vital pawn with the result he will no longer be able to prevent White's knights from hopping into f5 or d5, or even both, from where they will dominate the board.

Sicilian Defence, Taimanov Variation**1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3**

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 2 | ... | e6 |
| 3 | d4 | cxsd4 |
| 4 | ♘xd4 | ♗c6 |
| 5 | ♘c3 | a6 |

This set-up is known as the Taimanov variation and can arise from various move-orders.

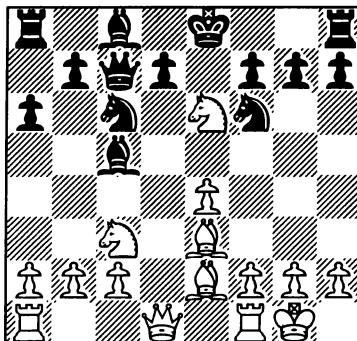
- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | ♔e2 | ♕c7 |
| 7 | 0-0 | ♗f6 |
| 8 | ♔e3 | ... |

Up to this point both players have been making sensible developing moves but Black's next move is a serious inaccuracy...

- | | | |
|---|-----|------|
| 8 | ... | ♗c5? |
|---|-----|------|

Black should have played either 8 ... b5, 8 ... d6, 8 ... ♔e7 or 8 ... ♔b4. The last of these is probably the strongest as it puts pressure on the white e-pawn.

- | | | |
|---|-------|-----|
| 9 | ♘xe6! | ... |
|---|-------|-----|



59

This move wins a pawn. 9 ♘db5! would also be very strong after 9 ... axb5 10 ♔xc5.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 9 | ... | fxe6 |
| 10 | ♔xc5 | ... |

Not only has Black lost a pawn, but he has also lost his dark-squared bishop which leaves him weak on the dark squares. It is also worth pointing out that Black will have great difficulty castling kingside with White's bishop on c5.

Sicilian Defence, Taimanov Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜c6 5 ♜c3 a6

6 ♜e3 ♜c7

7 ♜e2 d6

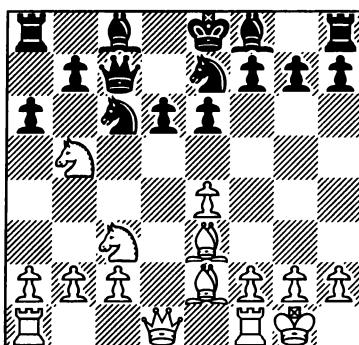
8 0-0 ...

Black should now play 8 ... ♜f6 when we have transposed into a Scheveningen variation. However, in our example Black confuses his systems (which is very easy to do).

8 ... ♜ge7?

In principle this is a slightly risky move to play as the knight on e7 blocks the bishop's defence of the d6 pawn. White now exploits this very factor.

9 ♜db5! ...



This move wins immediately. This type of sacrifice is a very common theme in the Sicilian Defence. It is however, very easy for Black to miss as it seems that Black's pawn on a6 should make this move impossible.

9 ... axb5

10 ♜xb5 ...

This is the point, White's second knight drives into the heart of Black's position.

10 ... ♜d7

Black has several other queen moves but they all lose as follows:

a) 10 ... ♜a5 11 ♜xd6+ ♜d7 12 ♜xb7+ followed by 13 ♜xa5;

b) 10 ... ♜d8 11 ♜xd6+ ♜d7 12 ♜xf7+ and 13 ♜xd8; or

c) 10 ... ♜b8 (the best move) 11 ♜xd6+ ♜d7 12 ♜xf7+ ♜e8 13 ♜xh8 winning.

11 ♗xd6+ ♔d8

12 ♕b6+

White could also win with 12 ♗xf7+ followed by 13 ♗xh8 but the text move is simpler.

Sicilian Defence, Taimanov Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4

4	...	a6
5	♜c3	♝c7

This system is a favourite of the young Hungarian grandmaster Judit Polgar.

6	♝d3	b5
7	0-0	♜c6
8	♞f3	...

A somewhat passive choice. White should either play 8 ♜xc6, 8 ♜e3 or 8 ♜b3.

8	...	♝f6
9	♛e2	...

With this move White plans to advance his pawn to e5 so Black prevents it.

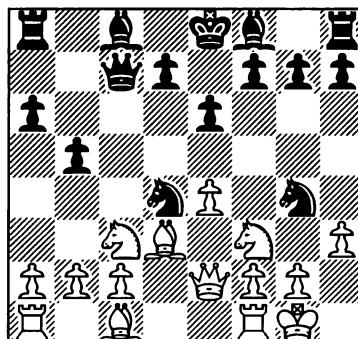
9	...	♝g4
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This move not only stops e5 but also sets a trap.

10	h3?	...
----	-----	-----

White blindly falls into the trap! After his planless play in the opening, White is already struggling for good moves. However, 10 ♜d5!? is a move that is worthy of consideration.

10	...	♝d4!
----	-----	------



This wins White's queen!

11	♛d1	...
----	-----	-----

11 ♜xd4 ♛h2 mate or 11 hxg4 ♜xe2+ winning.

11	...	♜xf3+
12	♝xf3	♛h2 mate

The most remarkable feature of this trap is that Black has mated White with five of his eight pieces still on their original squares!

Sicilian Defence, Sveshnikov Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3

5 ... e5

This is the Sveshnikov variation, named after the Russian grandmaster Evgeny Sveshnikov. It is very sharp, so be careful when playing it with either colour.

6 ♜db5 ...

White must play this move to try and get an advantage. 6 ♜b3 would be met by 6 ... ♜b4! with easy equality.

6 ... d6

Black does not want to allow White the chance to play ♜d6+.

7 ♜d5 ...

This is not the normal move (7 ♜g5 is the main line) but it does threaten 8 ♜c7+.

7 ... ♜xd5

8 exd5 ♜e7

9 c4 a6?

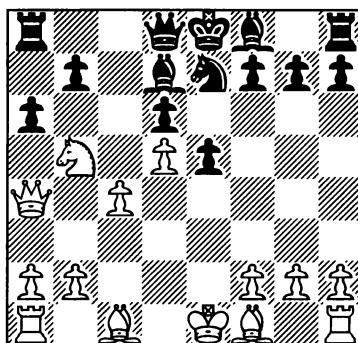
It is understandable that Black should want to force this knight to retreat, but he should first play either 9 ... ♜f5 or 9 ... ♜g6.

10 ♜a4! ...

This move puts a spanner in the works!

10 ... ♜d7

Black should play 10 ... axb5 11 ♜xa8 when White only wins the exchange. Note that 10 ... ♜d7 allows 11 ♜xd6+! ♜d8 12 ♜xf7+ ♜c7 13 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 14 ♜xh8 winning.



11 ♜xd6 mate!

Sicilian Defence, Sozin Attack

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 ♜c6

This very natural system of development for Black is known as the Classical variation.

6 ♜c4 ...

This move introduces the Sozin variation.

6 ... a6?!

The right move but played in the wrong order! (Black should first play 6 ... e6. Note that 6 ... g6 is also bad for the same reason.)

7 ♜xc6 bxc6

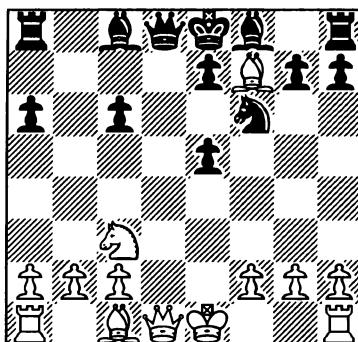
8 e5! ...

A very strong move.

8 ... dxе5?

Black misses White's idea. When your opponent offers a pawn (or any other material for that matter) think a little before capturing it. Try to work out if there is a hidden motive behind it! Black should play 8 ... ♜d7 when his position is bad but not hopeless.

9 ♜xf7+! ...



This is the hidden point! Black had been hoping for the vastly inferior 9 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 10 ♜xf7 when after 10 ... e6! the bishop on f7 is trapped.

9 ... ♜xf7

10 ♜xd8 ...

And White has won a queen for a piece. This is an idea which crops up quite often in the opening, and is therefore worth watching out for.

Sicilian Defence, Richter-Rauzer Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 ♜c6 6 ♜g5

The Richter-Rauzer variation, which is considered to be one of White's best ways of playing against the Classical Sicilian.

6 ... ♜d7

This is a relatively new idea in which Black strives for rapid queenside development. 6 ... e6 is the more normal move.

7 ♜e2 ♜a5

8 ♜xf6 ...

Not 8 0-0?? which would lose a piece to 8 ... ♜xg5. 8 f4? would also be bad as Black could win a pawn with 8 ... ♜xe4.

8 ... gxf6

9 0-0 ♜c8

10 ♜f5 ...

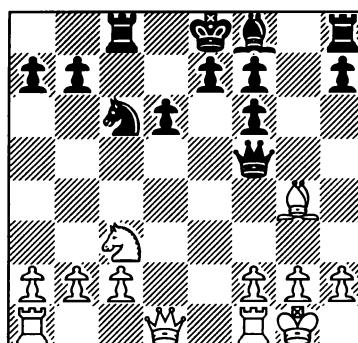
Black now thinks he can win a pawn with 10 ♜xf5 Is this really the case?

10 ... ♜xf5

11 exf5 ♜xf5??

Black cannot resist the lure of the f-pawn...

12 ♜g4! ...



This bishop move skewers the black queen. Wherever it moves the rook on c8 is doomed! As a slight digression a friend of mine IM Byron Jacobs has reached this position twice as White, both times against the same opponent. Some people just never learn!!

12 ... ♜g5

13 ♜xc8 ...

Picking up a whole rook.

5 Anti-Sicilians

As the main line Sicilian becomes increasingly more complicated, many white players are switching to more off-beat ways of handling the opening. It is often a good idea to try to master your own pet line against a particular opening so that you will be much more familiar with all the little opening subtleties.

The first three games see the f4 Sicilian in action. This opening became very popular in the early 1980s due to the efforts of some of England's leading players. It is an excellent system to learn against the Sicilian as White's plan is reasonably straightforward and easy to understand.

The next three knockouts feature the 2 c3 variation, which is another excellent choice to play against the Sicilian. It is an extremely solid opening which can often have the effect of demoralising your opponent. 2 c3 takes a lot of the sting out of Black's first move.

The last couple of knockouts involve systems in which White gambits a pawn. The Smith-Morra Gambit is an extremely dangerous weapon against an unprepared opponent. I have given only one of the many traps that are hidden in this opening. The Wing Gambit, however, is perhaps a little over-optimistic. I would only recommend it in its delayed form: 1 e4 c5 2 \mathbb{Q} f3 d6 and only then 3 b4!?

Sicilian Defence, 2 f4 Variation

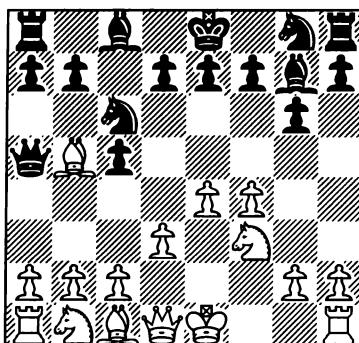
1	e4	c5
2	f4	...

This is known as the f4 Sicilian or more recently as the Grand Prix Attack, after David Rumens and Mark Hebden's success with it on the weekend tournament circuit.

2	...	♘c6
3	♗f3	g6
4	♕b5	♕g7

Up to here both sides have developed their pieces sensibly. White should now play the simple 5 ♕xc6 but I once played the following appalling move...

5	d3??	♘a5+!
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Ouch!

6	♘c3	♕xc3+
7	bxc3	♘xb5

Black wins a piece. For me the moral of this sad little episode is...

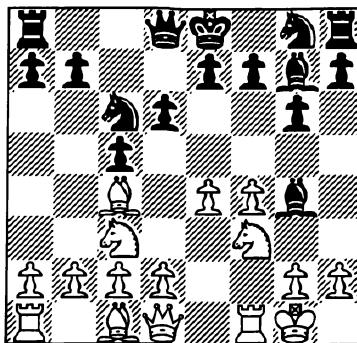
*Don't move too quickly in the opening,
even if you think you know it backwards,
as one mistake could be your last*

Sicilian Defence, 2 f4 Variation**1 e4 c5 2 f4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ g6**

4	$\mathbb{Q}c3$	$\mathbb{Q}g7$
5	$\mathbb{Q}c4$...

This very aggressive move means that both sides have to be on their guard.

5	...	d6
6	0-0	$\mathbb{Q}g4?$



Black develops his bishop on its most aggressive square, while at the same time pinning the knight on f3. However, this move has a serious flaw...

7	$\mathbb{Q}xf7+!$...
---	-------------------	-----

As is so often the case it is the f7 square that can cause Black serious problems.

7	...	$\mathbb{Q}xf7$
---	-----	-----------------

As a slight digression I once saw a tournament game of David Rummens, a very strong player of IM strength, which reached precisely this position. His opponent played 7 ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ when it was clear that after 8 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ David thought that he would win the game in a few more moves. But this is what happened: 8 ... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ and now White quickly played the terrible blunder 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd4??$ only considering 9 ... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e6+$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 11 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$, but he had forgotten that after 9 ... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ it is *check* and thus White loses his queen. The moral of this little story is: Even when your opponent falls into a trap don't lose your concentration, as accidents like this can and do so easily happen!

8	$\mathbb{Q}g5+$	$\mathbb{Q}e8$
9	$\mathbb{Q}xg4$...

White's little combination has not only won a pawn but has also seriously weakened Black's kingside. It is important to note that Black can no longer castle as his king has already moved.

Sicilian Defence, 2 f4 Variation

1 e4 c5 2 f4 g6 3 ♜f3 ♜g7 4 ♜c3 ♜c6 5 ♜c4 d6 6 0-0

You are probably becoming quite familiar with this position. Let's now see what Black should play in this position.

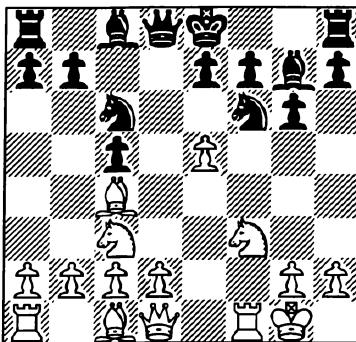
6 ... ♜f6

7 e5? ...

White plays this seemingly attractive move without fully thinking through the consequences. The simple 7 d3 is preferable.

7 ... dxе5

8 fxе5 ...



8 ... ♜xe5!

If Black had been forced to move the f6 knight then White would be doing well, but this move saves the day.

9 ♜xe5 ♜d4+!

This is the point of Black's last move. With this check he regains his piece and remains a pawn up. The game is of course not over, but an extra pawn is still a useful advantage.

10 ♜h1 ♜xe5

5

Sicilian Defence, 2 c3 Variation**1 e4 c5****2 c3 ...**

The characteristic move of the c3 Sicilian. The idea is to build up a big centre with 3 d4, but a drawback of the move is that White loses the option of playing the knight to c3.

2 ... d5

This is one of Black's best moves in this situation.

3 exd5 ♜xd5

Now we see Black's idea. White cannot play ♔c3 to gain time on the black queen.

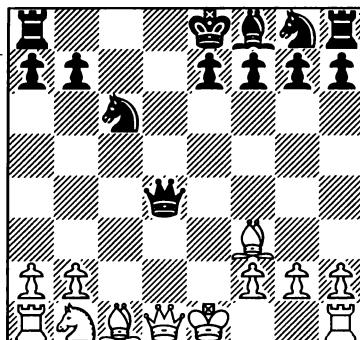
4	d4	♕c6
5	♘f3	♗g4

Black builds up the pressure on White's centre. The natural 5 ... ♘f6 is a very sensible alternative.

6 ♜e2 cxd4?!

This is the beginning of a misguided plan. Black thinks he has seen a way to win a pawn but he has not seen far enough ahead!

7	cxd4	♕xf3
8	♘xf3	♗xd4??



Black has won a pawn or *has he?*

9 ♜xc6+! ...

No, *he hasn't!* With this move White takes away the solitary defender of the black queen. Black has no time to save the queen as he is in check.

9	...	bxcc6
10	♗xd4	...

Sicilian Defence, 2 c3 Variation**1 e4 c5 2 c3****2 ... d6**

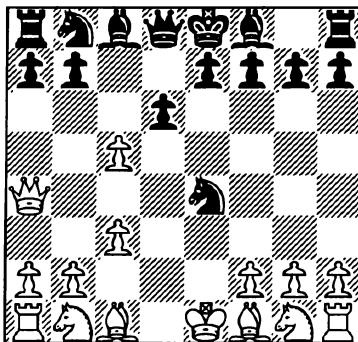
Black calmly allows White to build up his centre. This is a move that I have played, but I don't recommend it!

**3 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$
4 dx c 5!?**

This is probably not the best move but it does have the advantage of giving Black the chance to go wrong. 4 $\mathbb{Q}d3$, which both develops a piece and defends the e4 pawn, is a good alternative.

4 ... $\mathbb{Q}xe4??$

This move loses a piece. Black should play 4 ... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ with good compensation for the pawn.

5 $\mathbb{W}a4+!$...


This simple check picks up the knight on e4.

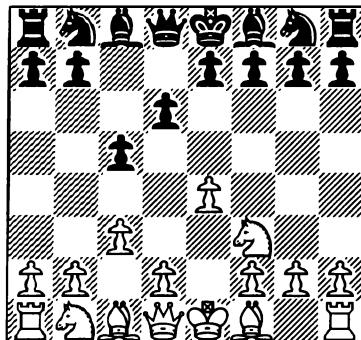
**5 ... $\mathbb{Q}c6$
6 $\mathbb{W}xe4$...**

White wins a piece.

*Keep an eye out for early queen checks;
they can so often win material*

*Sicilian Defence, 3 c3 Variation***1 e4 c5**

2	$\mathbb{Q}f3$	d6
3	c3	...

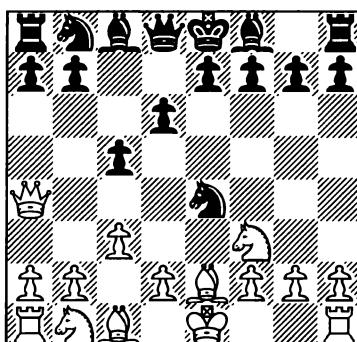


This is similar to the c3 Sicilian with the moves 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ d6 thrown in.

3	...	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
4	$\mathbb{Q}e2$...

White offers a pawn...

4	...	$\mathbb{Q}xe4??$
5	$\mathbb{W}a4+$...



And the knight goes again!

5	...	$\mathbb{N}c6$
6	$\mathbb{W}xe4$...

This combination has netted White a piece for a pawn.

Sicilian Defence, Smith-Morra Gambit**1 e4 c5**

2	d4	cxd4
3	c3	...

This is known as the Smith-Morra Gambit. White sacrifices a pawn for speedy development.

3	...	dxc3
4	♘xc3	d6
5	♗c4	♕f6?

This natural developing move is a mistake, and is one of the many pitfalls that Black has to avoid when facing this opening.

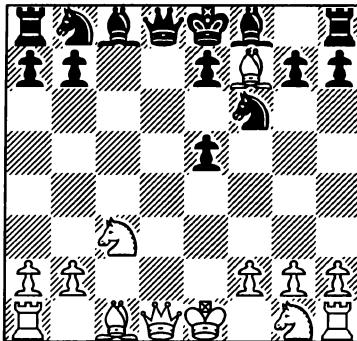
6	e5!	...
---	-----	-----

At first glance it might seem as if White has blundered a pawn...

6	...	dx5?
---	-----	------

Black takes the bait! He had to try 6 ... ♗g4 7 e6! ♗e5 8 exf7+ ♗xf7 when White has good compensation for the pawn after the simple 9 ♗f3.

7	♗xf7+!	...
---	--------	-----



This moves forces the win of the black queen. This trap has chalked up many, many points.

7	...	♔xf7
8	♕xd8	...

And White has won Black's queen.

Sicilian Defence, Wing Gambit**1 e4 c5****2 b4 ...**

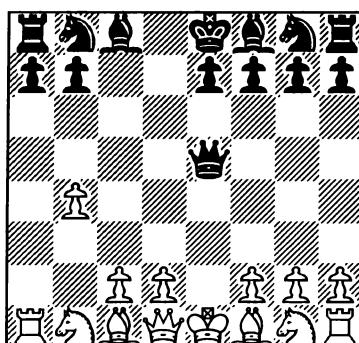
The Wing Gambit is rarely played at master level, as it is not considered to be completely sound.

2 ... cxb4**3 a3 d5!**

This is the recommended antidote to the Wing Gambit. Black counter-attacks in the centre.

4 exd5 ♜xd5**5 axb4?? ...**

White, in his eagerness to regain the sacrificed pawn, commits a horrible blunder. 5 ♜f3 should be played.

5 ... ♜e5+!

This check forks the king on e1 and the rook on a1. White therefore loses a whole rook. I remember this position very well as I managed to reach it in a simultaneous game when I was only twelve years old. My opponent was the great David Bronstein, who reached a world championship final in the 1950s.

A couple of days later Bronstein came to my school to give another simultaneous display - and crushed me!

6 ♜e2 ♜xa1

6 Pirc/Modern Defence

The Pirc/Modern Defence is a very underrated defence. I remember when I was a junior I would often score very badly against it as White since optically my position always looked a lot better than it really was.

It seems as if White's imposing central pawns should give him a large advantage but this is not really the case, as White's centre can often become over-extended and vulnerable to attack. The point is that pawns cannot go backwards and if they are advanced recklessly they can leave all sorts of weaknesses in their wake.

The key to the opening is Black's fianchettoed bishop on g7 which can often become a monster of a piece, wreaking all sorts of destruction on the long black diagonal.

I would recommend this opening for all those of you who like to let your opponents come forward and then strike at them on the counter-attack.

Modern Defence, Austrian Attack

1 e4 d6
2 d4 g6

The Modern Defence is very similar to the Pirc Defence (2 ... ♕f6), except that here Black delays the development of his king's knight.

3 ♜c3 ♛g7
4 f4 ...

This pawn push signifies the beginning of the Austrian Attack, which is one of White's most respected ways of playing against the Pirc/Modern.

4 ... c6
5 ♜e3 ♜b6

Black is playing in provocative fashion. This early queen sortie is not so bad, however, as the b2 pawn is awkward to defend.

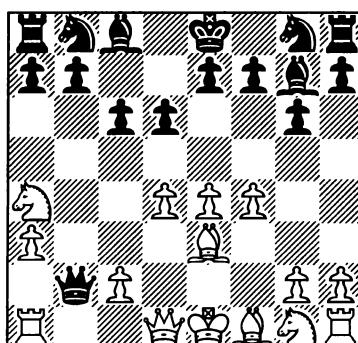
6 a3!?

This sets a very nasty trap - 6 ♜b1 is more normal. An interesting possibility for Black now would be 6 ... e5, exploiting the pin on the d4 pawn.

6 ... ♜xb2??

Black thinks that White's last move is a waste of time and can see no reason why not to take the 'poisoned pawn' ... He is in for a big shock!

7 ♜a4! ...



This is the point: the queen is trapped. Note that if the white pawn were still on a2 then Black would have two moves at his disposal 7 ... ♜a3 or 7 ... ♜b4+.

Pirc Defence, Austrian Attack**1 e4 d6 2 d4**

- | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| 2 | ... | $\mathbb{Q}f6$ |
| 3 | $\mathbb{Q}c3$ | g6 |
| 4 | f4 | $\mathbb{Q}g7$ |
| 5 | $\mathbb{Q}f3$ | c5 |

This is a key position in the Pirc Defence. Black wastes no time in striking at White's pawn centre.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| 6 | $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ | $\mathbb{Q}d7$ |
| 7 | e5 | $\mathbb{Q}g4$ |

Not 7 ... $\mathbb{Q}xb5??$ as 8 exf6 wins a piece.

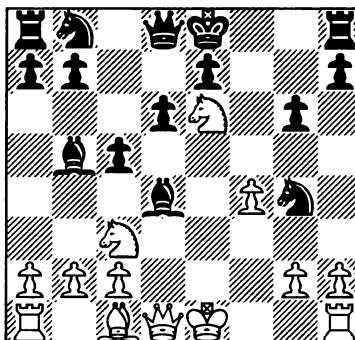
- | | | |
|---|----|-----|
| 8 | e6 | ... |
|---|----|-----|

This position had been reached countless times in master chess. It had always been thought that Black had to play 8 ... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ 9 exf7+ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ (not 9 ... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ due to 10 $\mathbb{Q}g5+$ and 11 $\mathbb{W}xg4$) 10 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ with a very complicated position, but a fascinating new idea was discovered a few years ago by the American grandmaster Yasser Seirawan ...

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 8 | ... | fxe6 |
| 9 | $\mathbb{Q}g5$ | $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ |
| 10 | $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ | ... |

This position after 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ was the reason that 8 ... fxe6 was considered to be unplayable: Black's queen on d8, both bishops, and the knight on g4 are all under attack. What can Black possibly do?
Paniccc....

- | | | |
|----|-----|-------------------|
| 10 | ... | $\mathbb{Q}xd4!!$ |
|----|-----|-------------------|



This is Seirawan's discovery.

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|-----|
| 11 | $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ | ... |
|----|-----------------|-----|

White has other moves such as 11 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ or 11 $\mathbb{W}xg4$ but the text is clearly the most critical.

12 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e3+$
13 $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}f2+$

And it is a draw by perpetual check.

Pirc Defence, Austrian Attack

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♜f6 3 ♜c3 g6 4 f4 ♜g7 5 ♜f3 c5

Again we see Black wasting no time in striking at White's pawn centre.

6 dxc5 ♜a5

7 ♜d3 ...

Note that 7 cxd6 is not good because of 7 ... ♜xe4!

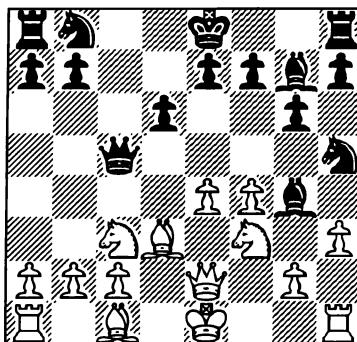
7 ... ♜xc5

8 ♜e2 ♜g4

9 h3? ...

This automatic move is a serious, although far from obvious, mistake. White should play 9 ♜e3.

9 ... ♜h5!!



A fantastic move - White's rash last move weakened the g3 square and now he is punished for it.

10 hxg4 ...

If 10 ♜f2 ♜xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♜xc3+ 12 ♜d1 ♜xf3+ 13 ♜xf3 ♜xa1 and Black is a rook up for nothing or 10 ♜e3 ♜xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♜xc3+ 12 ♜f2 ♜xf3 13 ♜xf3 ♜c6 and White's position is a shambles.

10 ... ♜g3

11 ♜f2 ♜xc3+

12 bxc3 ♜xc3+

13 ♜d1 ♜xh1

14 ♜d4 ♜xd4

15 ♜xd4 ♜f2+

And Black comes out the exchange and a pawn to the good.

Modern Defence

1 e4 d6 2 d4 g6

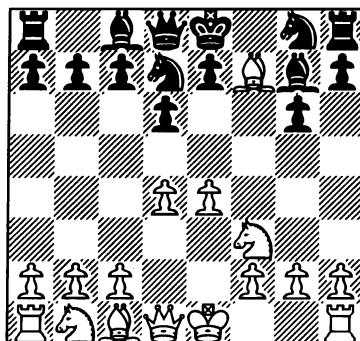
3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$
 4 $\mathbb{Q}c4$...

This is an aggressive move that eyes up the weakest point in Black's position, which as you should all be aware of by now is the f7 pawn.

4 ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Although this a developing move, it has the fatal flaw of blocking the white bishop on c8 which allows the following combination.

5 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+!$...



When Black plays the Pirc, the sacrifice on f7 is something that he must be constantly aware of.

5 ... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

5 ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ leaves White a pawn up with a totally crushing position, as Black's king is helplessly trapped in the centre of the board.

6 $\mathbb{Q}g5+$...

Black now has an unenviable choice: 6 ... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ and 6 ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ both allow 7 $\mathbb{Q}e6$ winning the black queen; and 6 ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ allows 7 $\mathbb{W}f3$ mate!

Pirc Defence

1 e4 d6 2 ♜c3 ♜f6 3 ♜f3 g6 4 ♜c4

White refrains from playing d4 in order to complete his development quickly. If Black were now to play the normal 4 ... ♜g7 he would be fine but instead there comes...

4 ... ♜g4

On positional grounds this is a sensible move as an exchange of the f3 knight for the bishop would increase Black's control over the important e5 and d4 central squares, but there is an important tactical flaw.

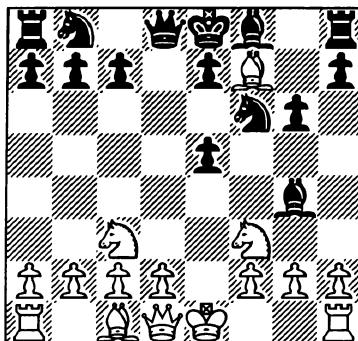
5 e5! ...

An excellent riposte which exploits Black's over-ambitious last move.

5 ... dx5

Another bad move in a difficult position - 5 ... ♜xf3 would have been best but after 6 ♜xf3 dx5 7 ♜xb7 ♜bd7 8 ♜b5! Black is still in a lot of difficulties.

6 ♜xf7+! ...



6 ♜xe5 is also a very tempting alternative as 6 ... ♜xd1 7 ♜xf7 is mate! However, Black can just about fight on with 6 ... ♜e6 although his position is nothing to write home about!

6 ... ♜xf7

7 ♜xe5+ ♜e8

8 ♜xg4 ...

The net result of his little combination is that White has won a pawn and Black cannot castle so the black king will be in constant danger.

Modern Defence

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 ♔c3

3 ... c5

This thematic move is somewhat premature.

4 dxcc5! ..

Here this capture is a good move as it is difficult for Black to win back the pawn on c5.

4 ... ♜a5

5 ♠d2! ...

5 ♕e3 would not be good on account of 5 ... ♜c3+ 6 bxc3 ♜xc3+ 7 ♔d2 ♜xc5 when Black is a pawn up.

5 ... ♕xc5

6 ♔d5

Now we see the point of White's previous moves. Black's queen is now very short of squares.

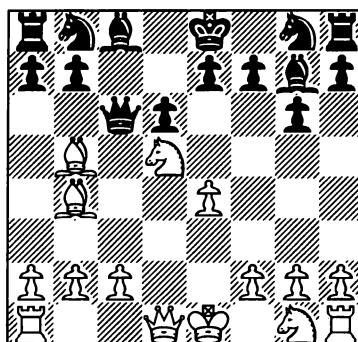
6 ... d6?

This move loses but it is already hard to see an improvement for Black.

7 ♕b4! ♔c6

Black's only other queen move, 7 ... ♕d4, would lose the rook on a8 after 8 ♜xd4 ♔xd4 9 ♖c7+.

8 ♜b5!!



This stunning move, pinning the queen to the king, wins on the spot.

8 ... ♜xb5

9 ♗c7+ ♔d8

10 xb5 ...

And Black can resign with a clear conscience!

Pribyl Defence

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♜f6 3 ♜c3

3 ... c6

Strictly speaking this is not the Pirc Defence but the Pribyl Defence, though it can often transpose.

4 f4 ♜a5

5 ♜d2 ...

By unpinning the c3 knight White thwarts Black's idea of capturing the e4 pawn.

5 ... ♜b6

6 ♜f3 ♜g4

For Black to capture on b2 would be extremely foolhardy when he is so underdeveloped; 6 ... ♜g4 increases the pressure on d4 and is a safer option.

7 ♜a4 ...

This looks odd but there is a hidden point!

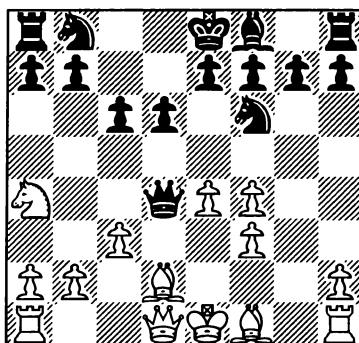
7 ... ♜xf3

8 gxf3 ...

If 8 ♜xb6 ♜xd1 9 ♜xa8 ♜xc2 White is the exchange for a pawn up but the knight on a8 has an exceedingly bleak future, so Black would be doing well.

8 ... ♜xd4??

9 c3 ...



Incredibly the black queen is actually trapped on d4. 9 c3 not only attacks the queen but also allows White's own queen defend the previously undefended knight on a4.

7 French Defence

The French Defence is quite unlike any of the openings mentioned so far, as Black seeks to close the centre at once and accepts a solid but cramped position. It is not an opening I would suggest that you play at first as it might seem a little dull. You should aim to give free reign to your pieces rather than go for a slow manoeuvering game.

Nevertheless the French is a good opening, and if as White you are someone who loves to attack at all costs you will find that it is extremely hard to breakdown. It is also a good choice against your computer as they have problems accurately assessing these types of positions.

The Advance variation, as seen in the first two games of this chapter, is how I would initially recommend you to tackle the French Defence. For the more adventurous amongst you I would then suggest you move on to the Winawer, while if you prefer a quieter game the Tarrasch is just what the doctor ordered.

French Defence, Advance Variation

1 e4 e6

This is the move that characterises the French Defence - one of the most respected ways of meeting 1 e4.

2 d4 d5

3 e5 ...

This is the start of the Advance Variation. White gains space and creates a bulwark in Black's camp.

3 ... c5

Black immediately hits at the base of the pawn chain.

4 c3 ♜c6

5 ♜f3 ♜b6

6 ♜d3 ...

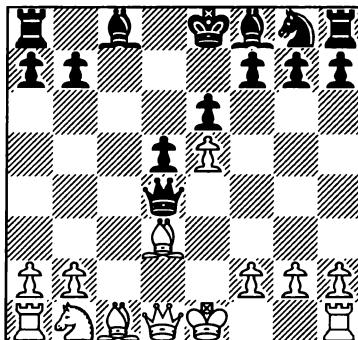
So far the battle is being waged over the d4 pawn. It might look as if White's last move blunders it away. But let's wait and see what happens next.

6 ... cxd4

7 cxd4 ♜xd4?

Black takes the bait, calculating that 8 ♜a4+ does not win the knight on d4 because of the reply 8 ... ♜c6. But....

8 ♜xd4 ♜xd4



When I was about ten years old, Michael Stean (one of England's first grandmasters) analysed this position with me and asked me why it was not good to take the pawn. As hard as I tried, I could not find the move!

9 ♜b5+! ...

This is the move that I failed to see - I saw the check but I did not see

that after Black gets out of check, he will lose his queen to 10 ♕xd4. I was so annoyed with myself!

*French Defence, Advance Variation***1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5**

3 ... b6

Black's plan is to play 4 ... ♕a6 in order to exchange the so-called 'bad bishop' on c8 - bad because the pawns on e6 and d5 limit its scope - for White's good bishop on f1.

4 c3 ...

White is trying to give the impression that he is merely supporting the centre but there is a nasty sting to this move!

I first reached this position as White when I was about 11 years old. I was very surprised by my opponent's next move, 4 ... ♔d7. After the game had finished he showed me the reason for the seemingly pointless queen move. It was played to avert the following disaster.

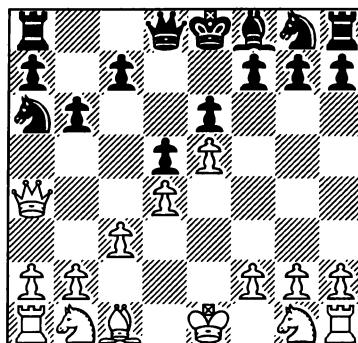
4 ... ♔a6??

5 ♕xa6 ...

Note that the immediate 5 ♔a4+ would not be so effective, as then Black could play 5 ... b5 and only lose a pawn.

5 ... ♕xa6

6 ♔a4+ ...



6 ... ♔d7

7 ♕xa6 ...

And White has emerged a whole piece up.

*French Defence, Winawer Variation***1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5**

3 ♜c3 ♜b4
 4 e5 ...

This is the start of the main line of the Winawer variation. It tends to lead to very complex positions.

4 ... c5

Once again Black tries to undermine the white centre by hitting at the base of the white pawn chain.

5 a3 ...

White is quite rightly prepared to spend a whole move to gain the ‘two bishops’.

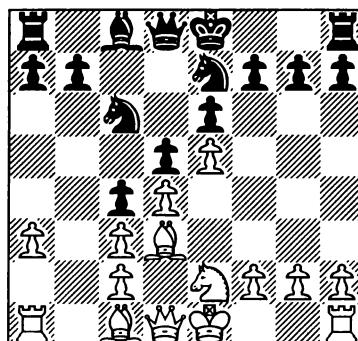
5 ... ♜xc3+
 6 bxc3 ♜e7
 7 ♜d3 ♜bc6

Up to this point the play has been faultless. White now has to do something about the defence of the d-pawn - 8 dxc5 would not be good here as after 8 ... ♜xe5 his queenside pawns would be too exposed, so 8 ♜e2 or 8 ♜f3?

8 ♜e2? ...

White chooses the wrong one! He wants to leave the path of the f-pawn unblocked so that it can quickly advance, but there is a massive defect to the move.

8 ... c4!



Black does not miss the opportunity to trap the bishop - I have, however, seen people castle quickly here and miss their chance!

French Defence, Winawer Variation

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♛b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♛xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♜e7 7 ♛d3 ♜bc6

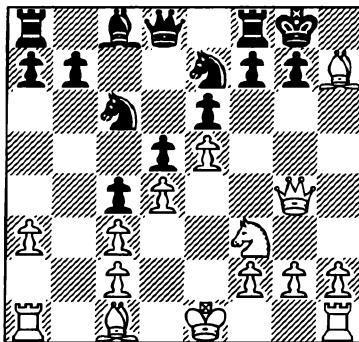
8 ♜g4 0-0

It is very risky to castle in such a position, as White is already well placed to launch a dangerous attack. However, it is also understandable that Black would not want to weaken his dark squares with 8 ... g6.

9 ♜f3 c4?

Black decides that he does not like the look of the bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal and so tries to force it to retreat, but White has a much stronger move up his sleeve!

10 ♛xh7+!! ...

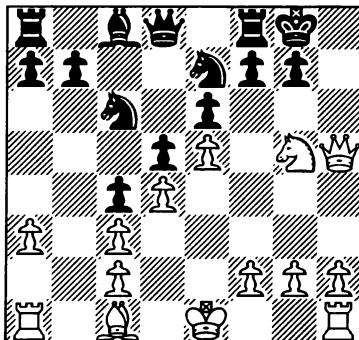


10 ... ♔xh7

11 ... ♛h8 is no better as after 12 ♛h5 Black's position is still hopeless.

11 ♛h5+ ♔g8

12 ♜g5 ...



It is well known that a queen and knight working together like this can be a deadly combination.

12 ... ♕e8

The only move to prevent immediate mate.

13 ♔h7+ ...

13 ♔xf7+ is not bad either but this move is clearer.

13 ... ♔f8

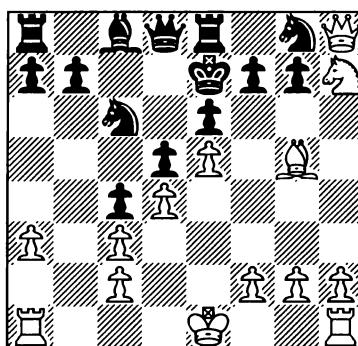
14 ♔h8+ ♔g8

15 ♔h7+ ...

At first sight it seems strange to put one's pieces right in the corner of the board but White's last move makes way for the bishop to enter the game with decisive effect.

15 ... ♔e7

16 ♕g5+ ...



16 ... ♔f6

Other moves are no better, for example: 16 ... ♔d7 loses the queen while 16 ... f6 allows 17 ♕g7 mate.

17 ♕xg7 ...

This is the simplest road to Rome; White will regain his piece and still be two pawns up with a totally crushing position.

The key to this combination was the bishop sacrifice on h7, which has been christened ‘the Greek gift’.

French Defence, Winawer Variation

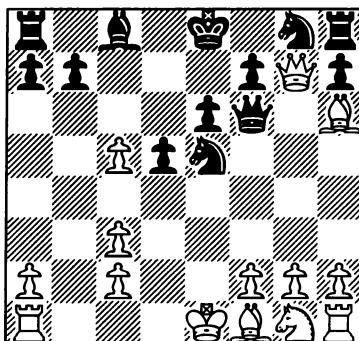
1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♜b4 4 e5 c5
5 dxc5 ♜d7
6 ♜g4 ...

This move attacks both b4 and g7. It would be very easy now for Black to forget about the bishop on b4!

6 ... ♜xc3+
7 bxc3 ♜xe5
8 ♜xg7 ♜f6?

This very natural move to defend the knight on e5 and the rook on h8 is actually a losing move - 8 ... ♜g6 is the only move but even then White has a good position as Black has weak dark squares.

9 ♜h6!! ...



A lovely move. White now threatens both 10 ♜f8+ ♜d7 11 ♜b5+ ♜c7 12 ♜d6 mate and 10 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 11 ♜g7 and there is no adequate answer to both of these threats.

9 ... ♜d7

Alternatively, 9 ... ♜xg7 10 ♜xg7 and White wins at least the exchange after 10 ... ♜g6; or 9 ... ♜xh6 10 ♜xf6 winning; or 9 ... ♜xh6 10 ♜xh8 ♜g5 11 h4! winning at least a piece.

10 ♜b5! ...

Threatening 11 ♜f8 mate.

10 ... ♜xh6
11 ♜xh8 ...

And White is the exchange and a pawn up with a winning position. The running theme of this trap is the series of double attacks by the white queen.

French Defence, Winawer Variation

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♜b4

4 ♜g4 ...

As we have seen White normally plays 4 e5 first. The disadvantage of 4 ♜g4 is that White is embarking on a flank attack with the situation in the centre still fluid.

4 ... ♜f6!

5 ♜xg7 ♜g8

6 ♜h6 dxе4

The dust has cleared somewhat: Black has won a more valuable centre pawn for a flank pawn, and White has also already moved his queen three times - not normally a good idea so early in the opening.

7 ♜d2 ♜g6

8 ♜h4 ♜xd4

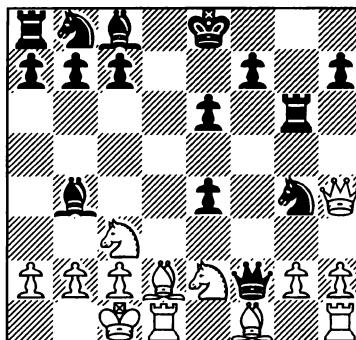
9 0-0-0 ...

Black must be careful now; 9 ... ♜c6 would be more prudent.

9 ... ♜g4??

This move looks very tempting at first, trying to win the f2 pawn, but Black is neglecting his queenside development.

10 ♜ge2 ♜xf2??



The second and final blunder but Black is already in a lot of trouble due to his poor ninth move.

11 ♜d8+!! ♜xd8

12 ♜g5+ ...

This is the point a lethal double discovered check.

12 ... ♜e8

13 ♜d8 mate

*French Defence, Tarrasch Variation***1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5****3 ♜d2 ...**

This is the starting position of the Tarrasch variation, which has an excellent reputation, Anatoly Karpov being one of its main protagonists.

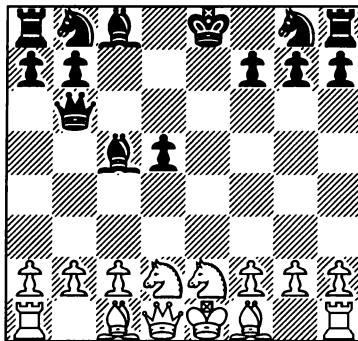
3	...	c5
4	exd5	exd5
5	dxc5	♝xc5

After any sensible move here, such as 6 ♜gf3 or 6 ♜b5+ or 6 ♜b3, White would have absolutely no problems. His next move, however, loses instantly - there cannot too many moves that do that!

6 ♜e2?? ...

White deserves to lose after this move.

6	...	♚b6
----------	------------	------------



The game is now over; White only has the choice of being mated on e2 or d2!

7 ♜b3 ...

Or 7 ♜g3 ♜xf2+ 8 ♜e2 ♚e3 mate.

7	...	♜xf2+
8	♜d2	♚e3 mate

French Defence, Tarrasch Variation**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜d2**

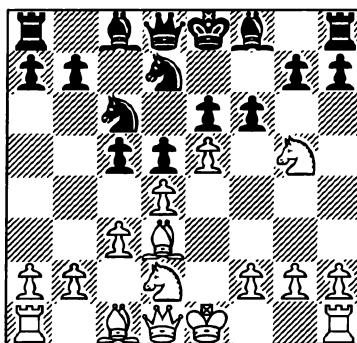
- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 3 | ... | ♞f6 |
| 4 | e5 | ♝fd7 |
| 5 | c3 | c5 |
| 6 | ♝d3 | ♝c6 |
| 7 | ♝gf3 | ... |

This is a reasonably standard position that can arise out of the French Tarrasch. At the moment Black is hitting at the base of the white pawn chain at d4; his next move hits at the head of the chain.

7	...	f6
---	-----	----

This move is somewhat risky as the black king can become exposed, especially on the h5-e8 diagonal.

8	♝g5!	...
---	------	-----



If White had continued normally with 8 exf6 then after 8 ... ♕xf6, White's centre could easily start to crumble. The move played sets Black a lot of problems.

8	...	fxg5?
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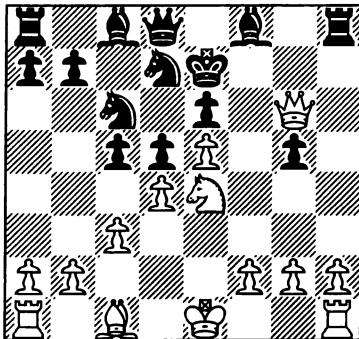
Better is 8 ... ♜dxe5 (it is often said that the best form of defence is to counter-attack, and this is one such example) 9 dxe5 fxg5 (9 ... ♜xe5 looks tempting, but after 10 ♜b5+ White would stay a piece up) 10 ♜h5+ ♜d7. After this continuation Black has the d7 square for his king; although he still stands worse, at least Black is not losing.

- | | | |
|----|--------|------|
| 9 | ♜h5+ | g6 |
| 10 | ♜xg6+ | hxg6 |
| 11 | ♜xg6+! | ... |

11 ♜xh8 would not be so good as after 11 ... ♜e7 Black could defend

and still have two pieces for a rook.

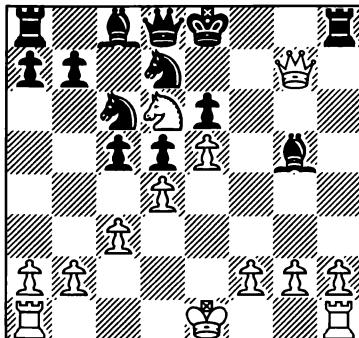
11 ... ♔e7
 12 ♕e4!! ...



This is the star move and the real point behind White's preceding play.

12 ... ♔h6
 12 ... dx e4 loses to 13 ♔xg5+.

13 ♔xg5+ ♔xg5
 14 ♕g7+ ♔e8
 15 ♕d6 mate



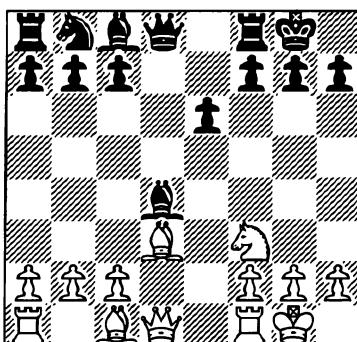
So Black is mated three pieces up! Yet again the disadvantages of under-development are shown.

French Defence, Rubinstein Variation**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜d2****3 ... dxe4**

This is the starting position of the Rubinstein variation, in which Black has a somewhat cramped but very solid position.

4 ♜xe4 ♜e7**5 ♜f3 ♜f6****6 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6****7 ♜d3 0-0**

Black sees that 7 ... ♜xd4 is not good after 8 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 9 ♜b5+ winning the queen.

8 0-0 ♜xd4??

A terrible blunder! Black fails to see the other check.

9 ♜xd4 ♜xd4**10 ♜xh7+! ♚xh7****11 ♜xd4 ...**

Black did well to spot the trap the previous move but then became careless and lost his queen as a result.

5

*Never lower your guard in the opening;
or in any other part of the game for that matter!*

French Defence, Rubinstein Variation

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 dxe4 4 ♜xe4

- | | | |
|---|-------|------|
| 4 | ... | ♜d7 |
| 5 | ♞f3 | ♝gf6 |
| 6 | ♝xf6+ | ♝xf6 |
| 7 | ♝d3 | ♝e7 |
| 8 | ♝g5 | 0-0 |
| 9 | ♛e2 | ... |

Up to this point, the play has been easy enough to comprehend: both sides have brought out their pieces in preparation for the middlegame. Now Black goes astray.

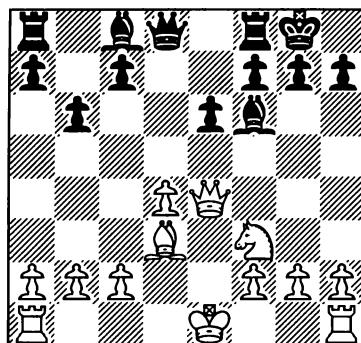
9 ... b6??

In his eagerness to develop his remaining minor piece, Black overlooks an important point tactical point. It is, however, not so easy to find a good move for Black as his position is very restricted.

10 ♜xf6 ...

White is alert to the possibility which opens up for him.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 10 | ... | ♜xf6 |
| 11 | ♛e4 | ... |



The double attack (or fork) works again. Black must prevent the mate on h7, but he will then lose the rook in the other corner on a8.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 11 | ... | g6 |
| 12 | ♛xa8 | ... |

8 Caro-Kann Defence

The Caro-Kann Defence is another extremely solid opening. It is an opening that can be quite hard to win with but which also makes life extremely hard for your opponent. Black cedes White a slight space advantage but in compensation for this he has no obvious targets in his position. Nowadays it is used almost exclusively by former world champion Anatoly Karpov as his main defence to 1 e4.

The main line of the Caro-Kann runs as follows: 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ dx e 4 4 $\mathbb{Q}xe$ 4. Now Black can choose between the equally solid 4 ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ or 4 ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$, neither of which leads to very exciting chess. I would therefore suggest that if you are faced with Caro-Kann Defence (nicknamed the cockroach for its durability), you could try either 3 e5 or the little known 3 f3. I will give one of my games in the introduction to whet your appetite. This went as follows: 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 f3 dx e 4 4 fx e 4 e5 5 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ (not 5 dx e 5? on account of 5 ... $\mathbb{Q}h4+!$) 5...exd4 6 $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ $\mathbb{Q}b4+$ 7 c3 dx c 3 8 $\mathbb{Q}xf7+!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ cx b 2+ 10 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ bx a 1= \mathbb{Q} 11 $\mathbb{Q}g5+$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}e8+$ $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}e6+$ g5 14 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ mate. I hope that this inspires you.

Caro-Kann Defence, Classical Variation

1 e4 c6

The starting position of the Caro-Kann.

2 d4 d5

3 ♜c3 dxe4

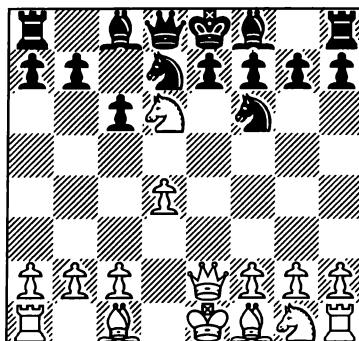
4 ♜xe4 ♜d7

So far we are following one of the main lines. White now plays an unusual looking move which has a deadly idea hidden in it.

5 ♜e2 ♜gf6??

Black must play either 5 ... e6 or even 5 ... ♜df6, both of which leave Black with a perfectly reasonable position.

6 ♜d6 mate!!



In only six moves! I've seen countless people fall into this trap!

Short but very sweet!

Caro-Kann Defence, Classical Variation

**1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 dxe4 4 ♜xe4 ♜d7
5 ♜d3 ♜df6**

At first glance this looks very ugly. However, when one has less space (as is often the case in the opening with Black) it is a good idea to try to exchange pieces. Here Black wants to swap knights, while also attacking d4.

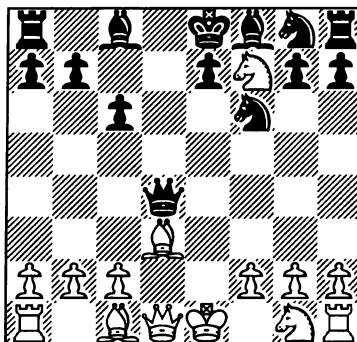
6 ♜g5 ...

One might ask what is happening? White is moving his queen's knight for the third(!) time. However White has a hidden tactic which will soon be revealed.

6 ... ♜xd4??

Black takes the bait, completely missing White's next move.

7 ♜xf7!! ...



This move is devastating. The knight is taboo, but if it is not taken White will capture the rook on h8.

7 ... ♜xf7

One nice point to White's last move is that a possible bail out with 7 ... ♜e5+ was not playable while 7 ... ♜b4+ could be met by 8 c3.

8 ♜g6+! ...

The final blow!

8 ... hxg6

9 ♜xd4 ...

White is a queen for two pieces up, which should be quite sufficient to win!

Caro-Kann Defence, Classical Variation

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 dxe4 4 ♜xe4 ♜d7

5 ♜g5 h6?!

6 ♜e6! ...

This knight is immune as 6 ... fxe6 would allow 7 ♜h5.

6 ... ♜a5+

This move is not accurate, 6 ... ♜b6 is more sensible as Black is developing White's pieces with tempo.

7 ♜d2 ♜b6

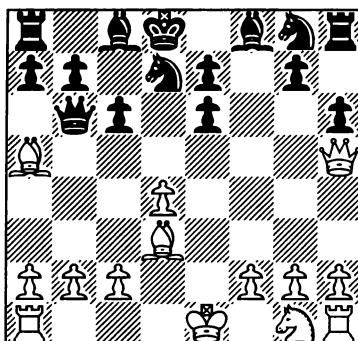
8 ♜d3 fxe6??

This is the final mistake, which was perpetrated by Grandmaster Kiril Georgiev (Bulgaria's top player) against the famous English grandmaster John Nunn.

9 ♜h5+! ♜d8

9 ... g6 would make no difference as White would calmly reply 10 ♜xg6+.

10 ♜a5! ...



This move skewers the black queen and was overlooked by Georgiev. As a slight digression, when I was 18 I lost a game by also overlooking that one of my opponent's pieces could move to the a5 square:

Teichmann-Hodgson, London 1981

1 g4 (the dreaded Grob!) 1...d5 2 ♜g2 c6 3 g5 e5 4 d3 ♜e7 5 ♜f3 ♜d7 6 e4 h6 7 h4 f6? 8 ♜e2 ♜f8 9 gxf6 gxf6 10 ♜xe5 fxe5 11 ♜h5+ ♜d7 12 ♜xe5 ♜f6 13 exd5 ♜e8?? 14 dxc6+ bxc6 15 ♜h3+ ♜d8 and now can you spot the killing move? (It came as a total surprise to me.) 16 ♜a5 mate.

Caro-Kann Defence, Classical Variation

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 dxе4 4 ♜xe4 ♜d7

5 ♜c4 ...

This is the sharpest line of the ‘4... ♜d7 Caro’.

5 ... ♜gf6

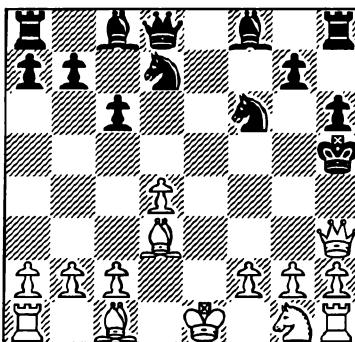
6 ♜g5 ...

Already threatening mate!

6 ... e6

7 ♜e2 ♜b6

If 7 ... h6? 8 ♜xf7! ♜xf7 9 ♜xe6+ ♜g6 10 ♜d3+ ♜h5 11 ♜h3 mate.
(That is the end of the black king’s wanderings!)



8 ♜d3 h6

If 8 ... ♜xd4? 9 ♜f3 ♜d8 10 ♜e5 and there is no way for Black to save the all-important f7 pawn.

9 ♜f3 c5

10 dxc5 ♜bd7

10 ... ♜xc5 looks more natural.

11 c6!? ...

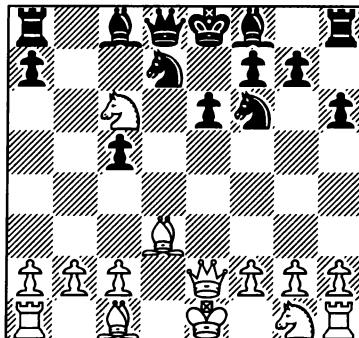
White gives the c-pawn back in order to split Black’s queenside pawns; 11 b4 is also possible to try and hang on to the extra pawn.

11 ... bxе6

12 ♜d4 c5??

Completely missing White’s idea.

13 ♜c6! ...



13 ... ♜c7

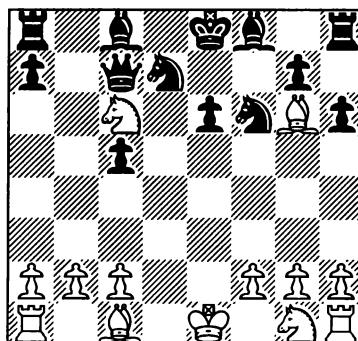
Many players would now be wondering exactly what White is doing; it looks as if he has almost managed to get his knight trapped, but Black is about to experience a very nasty shock!!

14 ♜xe6+!! ...

Even Mike Tyson would be proud of this blow!!

14 ... fxе6

15 ♜g6 mate



I'm still secretly hoping to play this in one of my games!

Caro-Kann Defence, Classical Variation

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 dxe4 4 ♜xe4

**4 ... ♜f6
5 ♜d3 e5?**

This is very risky and indeed loses quite spectacularly. 5 ... ♜bd7 is the safest move.

6 dxe5 ♜a5+

This is the move that Black was banking on to regain his pawn.

7 ♜d2! ♜xe5

Many players with Black in this position, would be feeling quite happy with themselves. The reason why is easy to see, as it seems as if White will be reduced to the feeble 8 f3 to save the knight, however...

8 0-0-0!! ...

What a move! White just ignores Black's threat and calmly continues with simple development.

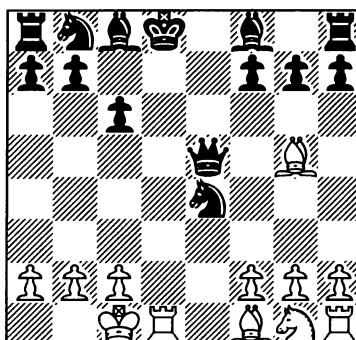
8 ... ♜xe4

Black sees that 8 ... ♜xe4 loses the queen to 9 ♜e1, but imagines that now he is a whole piece up for nothing. Unfortunately, he is in for a very nasty shock!

9 ♜d8+!! ...

A bolt from the blue!

**9 ... ♜xd8
10 ♜g5+ ...**



This is the point - White delivers a deadly double discovered check.

10 ... ♜c7

After 10 ... ♜e8 11 ♜d8 mate Black is a queen and a piece up, but a king down!

11 ♘d8 mate

And Black is unexpectedly but very prettily mated.

Caro-Kann Defence, Classical Variation

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 dxe4 4 ♜xe4 ♜f6

5 ♜xf6+ exf6

This move does not have a very good reputation as it seems that Black is doubling his kingside pawns for no particular purpose. In return Black does, however, get relatively free and easy development for all his pieces.

6 ♜c4 ...

By no means a bad move, but 6 c3 followed by 7 ♜d3 gives Black more problems.

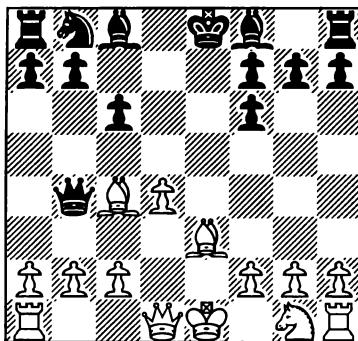
6 ... ♕e7+

At first sight, this move seems to break all the rules of opening development. Black moves his queen before his other pieces and even hinders the development of his own black bishop.

7 ♜e3?? ...

White continues his development, unsuspecting of the oncoming catastrophe! 7 ♜e2 is White's best move.

7 ... ♕b4+!



The point! An easy move to miss - there is no way for White to save the c4 bishop.

Caro-Kann Defence, Advance Variation**1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5****3 e5 ...**

Just as in the French, this move characterises the Advance variation.

3 ... ♦f5

This move is invariably played since Black, after the inevitable ...e7-e6 happens, wants the bishop outside the pawn chain so that it has more mobility.

4 h4 ...

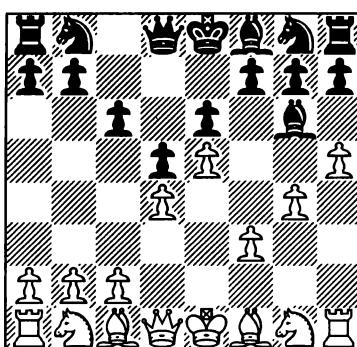
White begins to expand on the kingside.

4 ... e6??

Nine times out of ten this would be the best move. This, however, is the tenth time! Either 4 ... h5 or 4 ... h6 should be played.

5 g4! ...

After this move the bishop is trapped.

5 ... ♦e4**6 f3 ♦g6****7 h5 ...**

And the bishop has no more squares to go to!

Caro-Kann Defence**1 e4 c6****2 c4 ...**

White tries to deter Black from 2 ... d5.

2 ... d5

He plays it anyway!

3 exd5 ♜f6!?

Black can also just recapture on d5, but this move is also good.

4 dxc6 ...

Most people decline to take the pawn with either 4 d4 or 4 ♜c3.

4 ... ♜xc6

Although White is a pawn up, his position is not particularly appetising; he is behind in development and also cramped for space as Black has a very strong grip over the d4 square.

5 ♜c3 e5**6 d3 ♜c5****7 ♜g5 0-0****8 ♜e4? ...**

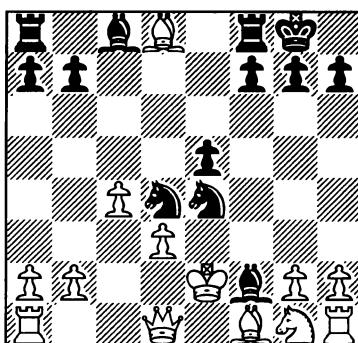
It was essential for White to start the development of his kingside with a move such as 8 ♜f3. The move played is much too ambitious.

8 ... ♜xe4!!

Lethal. White had no doubt missed this move.

9 ♜xd8 ...

Or 9 dxe4 ♜xg5 and White is a clear piece down.

9 ... ♜xf2+**10 ♜e2 ♜d4+**

This is Legall's mate in reverse!

9 Modern Black Defences to 1 d4

The first eight chapters have all dealt with 1 e4. Nowadays, however, 1 d4 is played almost as often and you need to be well prepared to meet it. There are plenty of traps in the queen's pawn openings, but they tend to occur rather later in the opening.

The King's Indian Defence is Garry Kasparov's main defence to 1 d4. It is an extremely complex and difficult opening to master. As a very general rule White tends to attack on the queenside while Black aims to checkmate the white monarch on the kingside - but obviously it is not always quite as simple as that!

The Grünfeld Defence is another of Garry Kasparov's favourite defences to 1 d4, but he has not had quite the same amount of success with it. Black allows White to build up a big centre and then hopes to strike at it later with the aid of the g7 bishop. However, the pawn on d4 tends to be a source of strength rather than a weakness.

The Benoni arises when Black plays an early ...c5. It was popularised by Mikhail Tal in the 1960s but has recently gone out of fashion. However, I still think that it is an excellent choice at club level as it is exceedingly tricky.

The Benko Gambit only really became popular in the mid-1970s. Unlike most gambits, I believe it is relatively sound. It is a great opening to learn as it only takes a short time to obtain a reasonable feeling for it. Black usually obtains very active positions for all his pieces - the sacrificed pawn is often of little significance.

King's Indian Defence, Classical Variation

1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2 c4 g6 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 4 e4 d6

This is the standard starting position of the King's Indian Defence.

5 $\text{d}f3$ 0-0
6 $\text{e}e2$ e5
7 0-0

White adopts the ‘Classical’ system of development, developing his kingside pieces and castling.

7 ... exd4!?

7 ... ♗c6 is the normal move but the text is far from bad.

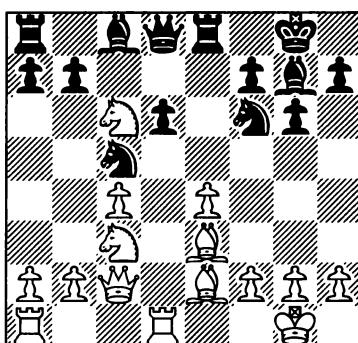
8	$\mathbb{Q}xd4$	c6
9	$\mathbb{W}c2$	$\mathbb{Q}bd7$
10	$\mathbb{H}d1$	$\mathbb{H}e8$
11	$\mathbb{Q}e3$...

Up until now both sides have developed their pieces sensibly but Black's next move is a serious error.

11 ... ♔c5?

I have played this move many times in five-minute chess and suffered as a result. It looks optically good as it improves the position of the knight, attacks White's e4 pawn and prepares to develop the c8 bishop. But...

12 xc6!



This move puts a spanner in the works.

12 ... bxc6
13 ♕xc5 ...

White has won a pawn due to the d6 pawn being pinned to the queen. Maybe you can learn from my mistakes!

King's Indian Defence, Classical Variation

**1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2 c4 g6 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 4 e4 d6 5 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0-0 6 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e5
7 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7!?$**

This move was first played by Garry Kasparov in 1990, in his world championship match with Karpov.

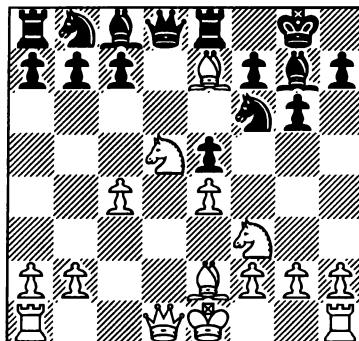
**8 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$
9 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$
10 $\mathbb{Q}c5!?$...**

We are still following the world championship game. Note that 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ would lose a piece to 10 ... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$.

10 ... $\mathbb{Q}e8??$

Moving the rook off the same diagonal as the bishop on c5 may seem sensible but it is in fact a blunder.

11 $\mathbb{Q}e7!!$...



This excellent move wins Black's queen.

11 ... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

Or 11 ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ winning a piece.

12 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+!$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

13 $\mathbb{Q}xd8+$...

Of course, Garry Kasparov did not fall into this trap and actually played the much stronger 10 ... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$

King's Indian/Modern Defence

- 1 d4 d6
 2 c4 g6
 3 ♜c3 ♜g7
 4 e4 e5

Black is playing a King's Indian with one important difference: he has not yet played ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$.

- 5 ♜f3 ...

Although this move is not bad, White actually has a better move in 5 dxe5 dxe5 6 $\mathbb{W}xd8+$ $\mathbb{Q}xd8$ 7 f4! with a slight advantage to White.

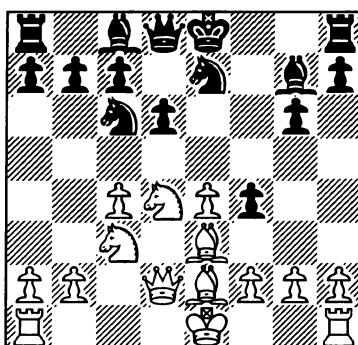
- 5 ... exd4
 6 ♜xd4 ♜c6
 7 ♜e3 ♜ge7
 8 ♜e2 f5!?

Black strikes at White's centre.

- 9 $\mathbb{W}d2??$...

A careless move that loses a piece.

- 9 ... f4!



5,

This little pawn push is easy to overlook, but it is not the first time that a piece has been lost in this fashion.

- 10 ♜xf4 ...

If 10 ♜xc6 fxe3 11 ♜xd8 exd2+ (for a little pawn it has caused a lot of damage!) 12 ♛xd2 ♜xd8.

- 11 ... ♜xd4

And Black is a piece for a pawn up.

Grünfeld Defence**1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2 c4 g6 3 $\mathbb{Q}c3$** 3 ... **d5**

This is the characteristic move of the Grünfeld Defence. The Grünfeld is a counter-attacking opening in which Black allows White to occupy the centre with pawns and then tries to undermine them. Garry Kasparov often used it (with mixed results) in his world championship matches with Karpov.

4 **$\mathbb{Q}f3$** ...

Developing a piece in this fashion cannot be bad although the real test of the opening is 4 cxd5 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 5 e4 $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 6 bxc3.

4 ... **$\mathbb{Q}g7$** 5 **$\mathbb{Q}g5$** ...

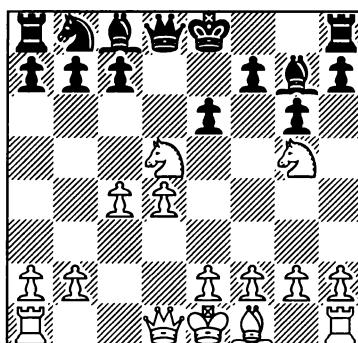
White develops a piece and at the same time threatens to win a pawn with 6 $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ followed by capturing on d5.

5 ... **$\mathbb{Q}e4!$**

Normally it is not a good idea to move the same piece twice in the opening, but here it is justified, as the knight attacks the bishop on g5.

6 **$\mathbb{Q}xd5??$** ...

This tempting move is in fact a terrible blunder. Note also that 6 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ would not be good after 6 ... dxe4 7 $\mathbb{Q}e5$ (any other knight move loses the d4 pawn for nothing) 7...f6! winning a piece with a fork. 6 cxd5 and 6 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ are both stronger.

6 ... **$\mathbb{Q}xg5$** 7 **$\mathbb{Q}xg5$** **e6!**

This little pawn move surprisingly wins a piece; it not only attacks the knight on d5 but also opens the diagonal for the black queen to attack

the knight on g5.

8 ♞c3 ♜xg5

Benoni Defence

1 d4 c5
 2 dxc5 ...

White grabs the unprotected c5 pawn, but this move is misguided as there is no way that White will be able to hang on to it. 2 d5 is much stronger.

2 ... e6
 3 b4? ...

White stubbornly tries to hang on to the pawn. He should simply play 3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$.

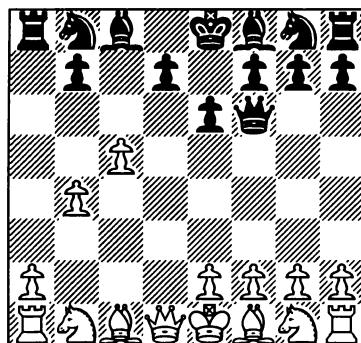
3 ... a5!

Black strikes at the base of White's pawn chain.

4 c3? ...

Normally this would be a good move, but in this position it has a serious defect.

4 ... axb4
 5 cxb4 $\mathbb{W}f6!$



Hitting the rook and winning a piece.

6 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{W}xc3+$

*Benoni Defence***1 d4 c5**

2	d5	Qf6
3	Qc3	e6

Black attempts to undermine White's pawn centre but 3 ... d6 would have been more prudent.

4	e4	exd5?!
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A natural move, but one that overlooks White's reply; 4... d6 is preferable.

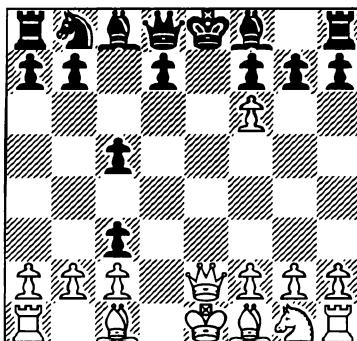
5	e5!	...
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This is much stronger than simply recapturing on d5.

5	...	d4?
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This move loses instantly, but after 5 ... Qe4 (or 5 ... We7 6 We2!) 6 Qxd5 White has a good position.

6	exf6	dxc3
7	We2+!	...



This check is rather hard to meet. It wins a whole piece!

7	...	Qe7
8	fxe7	...

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*Benoni Defence***1 d4 c5 2 d5 ♜f6 3 ♜c3**

3	...	g6
4	e4	d6

This is necessary as after 4 ... ♜g7 5 e5! would force Black onto the defensive.

5	f4	♜g7
6	♜b5+!	...

This check is difficult for Black to answer. Black should now play 6...♜fd7 when his pieces become a little tangled up. However, let's see what happens if he plays a seemingly more logical move.

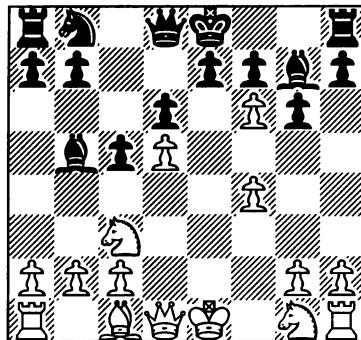
6	...	♞d7
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Or 6 ... ♜bd7 7 e5! ♜h5 8 e6 when White wins the knight on d7.

7	e5!	♜xb5
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If 7 ... ♜g4 8 ♜xg4! or 7 ... ♜h5 8 ♜xd7+ ♜xd7 9 g4! winning the knight on h5. The only move to avoid losing a piece is 7 ... ♜g8, but after the simple 8 ♜f3 Black's position is a shambles.

8	exf6!	...
---	-------	-----



This wins a piece as White is attacking both of Black's bishops.

8	...	♜xf6
9	♜xb5	♛a5+
10	♞c3	♜xc3+
11	bx _c 3	♛xc3+
12	♞d2	...

This is the only move to avoid losing the rook on a1, but it is good enough to leave White a piece for two pawns up with an objectively winning position.

Benoni Defence**1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$** 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5

3 c3 ...

This is an ultra-solid alternative to 3 d5.

3 ... b6

4 dx c 5!?

Normally in such a position I would advise against playing such a move but here White has a specific idea in mind.

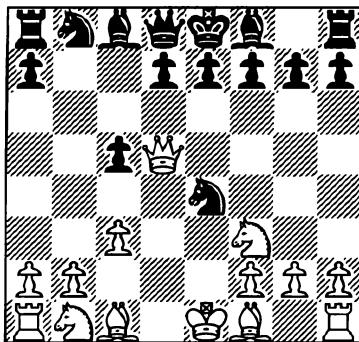
4 ... bx c 5

5 e4!?

This is White's idea...

5 ... $\mathbb{Q}xe4??$

The capture of the e4 pawn looks irresistible but White's next move shows that it is a blunder.

6 $\mathbb{W}d5!$...

The point is revealed! Black cannot save both the knight on e4 and the rook on a8 from being captured.

*Benoni Defence***1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$** **2 c4 c5****3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$...**3 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ is a safe move but I would recommend the more ambitious 3 d5.**3 ... $\mathbb{cxd4}$** **4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ e5!?**

With this move Black immediately challenges the knight on d4. Instead 4 ... g6, 4 ... e6 and 4 ... b6 are all reasonable alternatives.

5 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ d5!?

This move is a pawn sacrifice which leads to an interesting game.

6 $\mathbb{cxd5}$ $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ Not 6 ... $\mathbb{Q}xd5??$ because of 7 $\mathbb{W}xd5!$ $\mathbb{W}xd5$ 8 $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 9 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$... winning a piece.**7 d6?! ...**This move is too optimistic. The best move here is 7 $\mathbb{Q}5c3$ to defend the d5 pawn**7 ... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$**

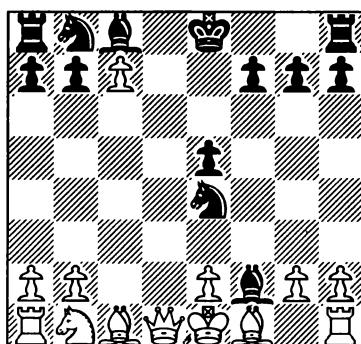
This sets a devious trap, calmly ignoring White's threat.

8 $\mathbb{Q}c7+??$...

I actually reached this position in a tournament game in 1987. Can you see what I played now?

8 ... $\mathbb{W}xc7!!$ After this move my opponent resigned as 9 $\mathbb{W}a4+$ is met by 9 ... $\mathbb{W}c6!$ remaining a piece up. While**9 $\mathbb{dxc7}$ $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ mate**

This was one of my shorter tournament victories.



Benoni Defence**1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5**

- | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| 3 | d5 | g6 |
| 4 | $\mathbb{Q}c3$ | $\mathbb{Q}g7$ |
| 5 | e4 | 0-0 |
| 6 | $\mathbb{Q}c4$ | |

This natural move is a positional mistake which does not lose any material but allows Black to reach a comfortable position.

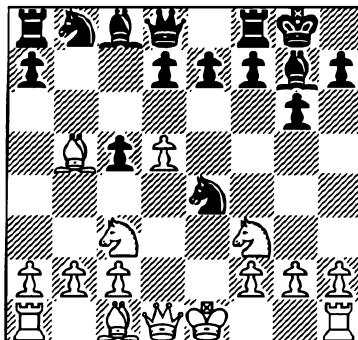
- | | | |
|---|-----|------------|
| 6 | ... | b5! |
|---|-----|------------|

At first sight this move seems impossible as it is attacked twice and not defended.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----|
| 7 | $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ | ... |
|---|-----------------|-----|

After 7 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ Black has a slight but perceptible advantage, as he has won a central pawn for a wing pawn.

- | | | |
|---|-----|------------------------------------|
| 7 | ... | $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ |
|---|-----|------------------------------------|



- | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| 8 | $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ | $\mathbb{W}a5+$ |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|

Black regains the sacrificed piece.

- | | | |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| 9 | $\mathbb{Q}c3$ | $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$ |
|---|----------------|------------------|

- | | | |
|----|--------|-----------------|
| 10 | $bxc3$ | $\mathbb{W}xb5$ |
|----|--------|-----------------|

Although Black is no material up he is clearly better for a couple of reasons. Firstly he has much the superior pawn structure and secondly White's king is in serious trouble as it cannot castle kingside.

Benko Gambit**1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2 c4 c5 3 d5**

3 ... b5

This is the start position of the Benko Gambit. Black sacrifices a pawn to open up lines on the queenside. White must be careful as it is easy for him to allow Black an overwhelming initiative.

4 cxb5 a6

5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ axb5

6 e4 ...

Rather than capture the pawn on b5, White aims for rapid piece development.

6 ... b4

7 $\mathbb{Q}b5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$

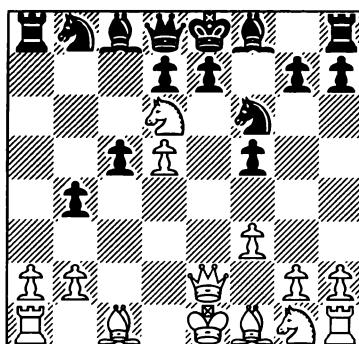
Many players would make this capture, as its refutation is far from obvious. Can you see what White can play? (Note that Black should play 7 ... d6.)

8 $\mathbb{W}e2!$...

And so we see White's idea...

8 ... f5

Or 8 ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d6+$ mate.

9 f3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ mate

10 Classical Black Defences to 1 d4

The Queen's Gambit Declined is one of Black's soundest ways of meeting 1 d4 and is a very tough nut crack. Black's main problem in this opening is how to develop the c8 bishop, but for those of you who do not mind defending a solid fortress, this an ideal answer to 1 d4. Indeed England's number one player, Nigel Short, has scored many fine wins with it over the past few years.

The Slav Defence is another highly respected opening which is favoured by many of the top ex-Soviet players. Black supports the d5 pawn with a companion at c6, retaining the option of developing the c8 bishop outside the pawn chain. I have recently decided to add it to my own repertoire to give my Black openings a little more stability. The main drawback of the opening is that White can play 3 cxd5, leading to a rather dull position.

The Queen's Gambit Accepted is a slightly more risky way for Black to play, but one that is by no means bad. Black cannot really hold onto the c4 pawn but hopes to use the time it takes White to capture it for rapid development. It is one of Matthew Sadler's (the current British champion) main defences to 1 d4.

The Dutch Defence is an opening that I would only recommend after a reasonable amount of study. Although it is certainly playable, 1 ... f5 is a little risky as it weakens Black's kingside. If you can avoid all the early pitfalls then it an opening well worth playing as it is extremely provocative, and many white players seem to get completely carried away when facing it.

Queen's Gambit Declined, Orthodox Variation

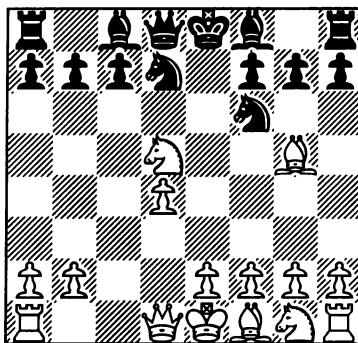
- 1 d4 d5
 2 c4 e6

This marks the beginning of the Queen's Gambit Declined (QGD).

- 3 ♜c3 ♜f6
 4 ♜g5 ♜bd7

Here 4 ... ♜e7 is more common but the text is also perfectly respectable.

- 5 cxd5 exd5
 6 ♜xd5?? ...



As a boy this was one of the very first traps that I was shown. It might look as though White has won a pawn, but he has in fact lost a piece...

- 6 ... ♜xd5!
 7 ♜xd8 ♜b4+

White has to block this check with his queen.

- 8 ♚d2 ♜xd2+
 9 ♚xd2 ♜xd8

And Black wins a piece for a pawn. This trap has claimed hundreds of victims in its time.

Queen's Gambit Declined, Cambridge Springs Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜g5 ♜bd7

5 ♜f3 c6

6 e3 ♜a5

This move characterises the Cambridge Springs. White now has to be somewhat careful in his next few moves.

7 ♜d3?? ...

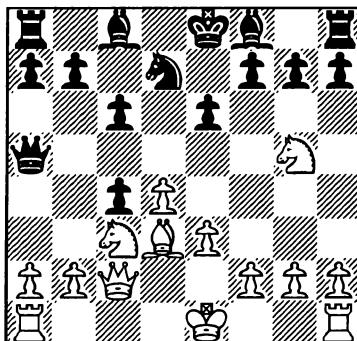
This natural move is actually a mistake; either 7 ♜c1 or 7 ♜d2 would have been preferable.

7 ... ♜e4!

This move is very hard for White to meet. He should probably now sacrifice a pawn with 8 cxd5 ♜xc3 9 bxc3 ♜xc3+ 10 ♔e2 exd5, when Black is doing well. The text move meets with an even worse fate...

8 ♜c2 ♜xg5!

9 ♜xg5 dxc4



This is the point. Black wins a piece due to the double attack on the bishop on d3 and knight on g5.

10 ♜xc4 ♜xg5

And Black is a piece up.

Queen's Gambit Declined, Exchange Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6

4	cx d5	ex d5
5	♞f3	♝e7
6	♝f4	0-0
7	e3	...

This type of position is fairly standard in the QGD.

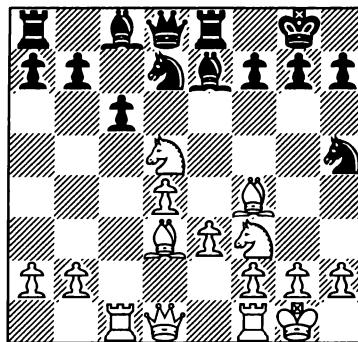
7	...	c6
8	♞d3	♝bd7
9	0-0	♛e8
10	♝c1	...

Up to here both sides have developed their pieces sensibly. Black should now probably play 10 ... ♜f8. Instead he mistakenly tries to exchange his f6 knight for White's f4 bishop.

10 ... ♜h5?

If White were now to play an automatic move such as 11 ♜g3 then Black's last move would have some justification. But there is something much stronger.

11 ♜xd5! ...



11 ♜xh7+ might also seem tempting but after 11 ... ♜xh7 12 ♜g5+ ♜xg5 13 ♜xh5+ ♜h6 14 ♜xh6 gxh6 15 ♜xf7+ ♜h8 White does not have enough compensation for the sacrificed piece.

11 ... cx d5

Black should play 11 ... ♜xf4 when after 12 ♜xf4 White is a pawn up with a much better position.

12 ♜c7! ...

This move wins the black queen in rather attractive fashion.

Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Tarrasch Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6

4	♜f3	c5
5	cx d 5	♝xd5

This recapture is the Semi-Tarrasch.

6	e4	♝xc3
7	bx c 3	...

White has an extra central pawn which gives him a slight advantage.

7	...	cx d 4
8	cx d 4	♝c6
9	♝d3	...

This is a reasonably standard position. Black should now play either 8 ... ♜b4+ or 8 ... ♜e7.

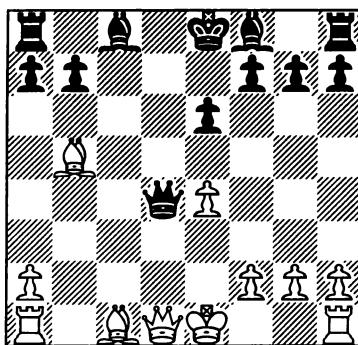
9	...	♝xd4??
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Black sees a pawn and takes it.

10	♝xd4	...
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Note that 10 ♜a4+ would let Black off the hook with 10 ... ♜c6.

10	...	♜xd4
11	♚b5+	...



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This standard trap nets the black queen.

11	...	♚d7
12	♜xd4	...

*Queen's Gambit Declined, Catalan Variation***1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6**

- 3 ♜f3 ♜f6
 4 g3 ♜e7
 5 ♜g2 ...

This is the start of the Catalan. White aims to exert pressure along the h1-a8 diagonal. Black has to watch out for his b7 square as this can become vulnerable in this system.

- 5 ... 0-0
 6 0-0 b6

Note that after 6 ... dxc4 White can regain the pawn with 7 ♜c2 followed by 8 ♜xc4.

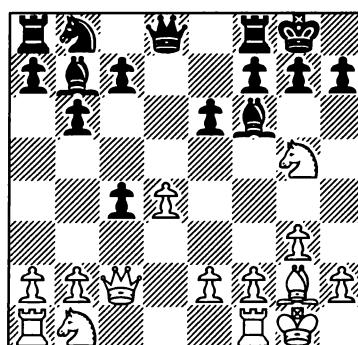
- 7 ♜c2 ...

With this move White not only defends the c4 pawn but also puts pressure along the c-file.

- 7 ... ♜b7
 8 ♜g5 dxc4?

This natural move opening up the diagonal for the bishop on b7 only helps White. Black should play 8 ... ♜bd7.

- 9 ♜xf6! ♜xf6
 10 ♜g5! ...



And so yet another point of ♜c2 is revealed. There is a threat of mate on h7.

- 10 ... ♜xg5
 11 ♜xb7 ♜d7
 12 ♜xa8 ♜xa8
 13 ♜xc4 ...

After the fireworks are over White is up a clear exchange. This trick is well worth watching out for!

*Queen's Gambit Accepted***1 d4 d5 2 c4****2 ... dxc4**

This capture is the Queen's Gambit Accepted, which was used successfully by Nigel Short in his match with Anatoly Karpov in 1992.

3 ♜f3 ♜f6**4 e3 e6****5 ♜xc4 a6**

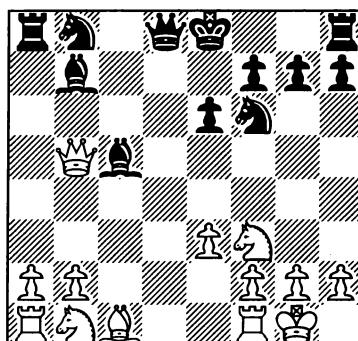
This is a typical position that can arise in this opening. White now has a difficult decision: whether to play 6 a4 to prevent ... b7-b5 or simply to castle.

6 0-0 b5**7 ♜d3 c5****8 ♜e2 ♜b7?**

It seems hard to believe that this move is a mistake, but there was a hidden point to White's eighth move.

9 dxc5! ♜xc5**10 ♜xb5+! ...**

A bolt from the blue! Black should now accept that he has blundered a pawn and play 10 ... ♜bd7, but let's see what happens if he captures on b5...

10 ... axb5**11 ♜xb5+ ...**

Whatever Black does now he is certain to lose one of his two bishops. He can either play 11 ... ♜bd7, allowing 12 ♜xb7, or 11 ... ♜c6, allowing 12 ♜xc5. Either way he will remain two pawns down with a poor position.

Queen's Gambit Declined, Slav Defence**1 d4 d5 2 c4****2 ... c6**

This is the characteristic move of the Slav.

3 ♜f3 ♜f6**4 e3 ...**

This move does not really test Black's opening set up. 4 ♜c3 is the main line, which can lead to great complications. The text move is much safer.

4 ... ♜f5

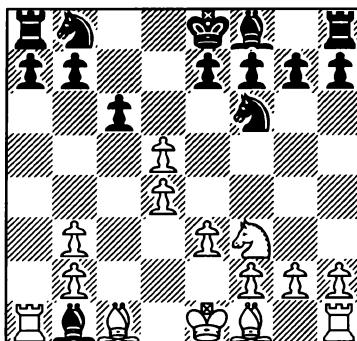
Black naturally takes the opportunity to place this bishop outside the pawn chain.

5 ♜b3 ...

White tries to take advantage of the fact that Black's b7 pawn is now without protection.

5 ... ♜b6**6 cxd5 ♜xb3****7 axb3 ...**

Black should now simply recapture on d5 with either pawn or knight. The move played meets with a remarkable refutation.

7 ... ♜xb1?**8 dxc6 ...**

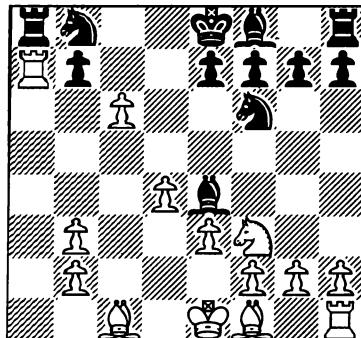
A brilliant move which was actually played in a tournament game by Jaan Ehlvest against Miguel Illescas (Spain's No.1 player).

8 ... ♜e4?

But Illescas had seen his opponent's idea and instead of 8 ... ♜e4 played 8 ... ♜xc6, when after 9 ♜xb1 he was simply a pawn down, and

eventually lost the game. Can you see the refutation?

9 $\mathbb{E}xa7!!$...

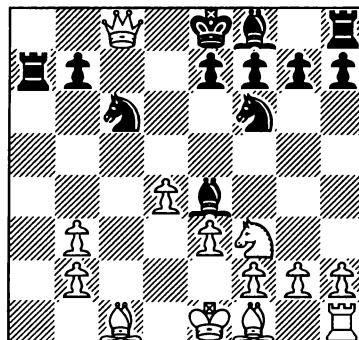


Don't be too hard on yourself if you missed this move, so would many other players.

9 ... $\mathbb{E}xa7$
10 c7 ...

There is no way to prevent this pawn from becoming a queen. Not a bad achievement in only 11 moves!

10 ... $\mathfrak{Q}c6$
11 c8=Q+ ...



11 ... $\mathfrak{Q}d8$
12 $\mathbb{E}b5+$

With a winning position.

Dutch Defence**1 d4****1 ... f5**

The key move of the Dutch.

2 ♜g5 ...

This move looks a little unusual, but its idea is to meet 2 ... ♜f6 with 3 ♜xf6, doubling up Black's pawns on the kingside. Black should probably play 2 ... g6, but let's see what happens if he tries to trap the g5 bishop.

2 ... h6?!

Although this move gains time, it seriously weakens the h5-e8 diagonal.

3 ♜h4 g5**4 ♜g3 f4?**

This is consistent with Black's previous moves but it contains a serious flaw!

5 e3! ...

White calmly ignores the threat to his bishop as after 5 ... fxg3 6 ♜h5+ is mate.

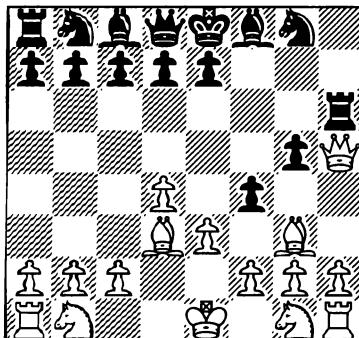
5 ... h5**6 ♜d3! ...**

White threatens mate on g6!

6 ... ♜h6??

Black thinks he has prevented the mate, but he hasn't! He should create a flight square for his king with 6 ... e6 7 ♜g6+ ♔e7 8 exf4 h4 (trapping the bishop) 9 fxg5 hxg3 10 ♜f3! when White has a huge attack.

7 ♜xh5+!! ...



7 ... $\mathbb{N}xh5$
8 $\mathbb{Q}g6$ mate

Black is well and truly punished for failing to develop any of his minor pieces.

Dutch Defence, Staunton Gambit**1 d4 f5****2 e4 ...**

The Staunton Gambit. In days gone by this was virtually considered to be a refutation of 1 ... f5 but modern theory now shows that Black's position is defensible.

2 ... fxe4
3 ♜c3 ♜f6

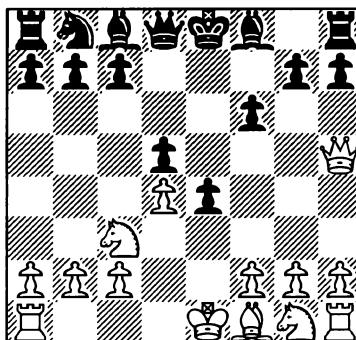
Note that the tempting 3 ... d5 would be a serious error on account of 4 ♜h5+ g6 5 ♜xd5 with a clear advantage to White.

4 ♜g5 ...

This is the idea of the Gambit; there is no way that Black can safely hang on to the e4 pawn. Black should now simply continue his development with either 4 ... ♜c6 or 4 ... g6, but let's see what happens if Black foolishly tries to save the e4 pawn.

4 ... d5?
5 ♜xf6! ...

It is rarely a good idea to exchange a bishop for a knight but here it seriously weakens Black's d5 pawn.

5 ... exf6
6 ♜h5+ ...


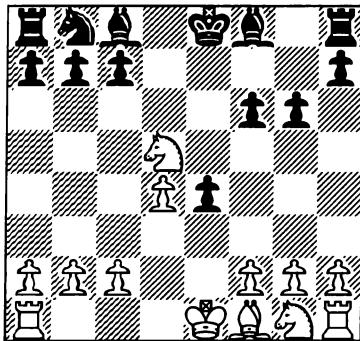
This is the point! One of the main drawbacks of 1 ... f5 is revealed; Black always has to be on the look out for a check on the h5-e8 diagonal.

6 ... g6
7 ♜xd5 ...

Black would now like to play 7 ... f5, but here it would lose a rook to 8

$\mathbb{W}e5+$.

- 7 ... $\mathbb{W}xd5$
 8 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$...

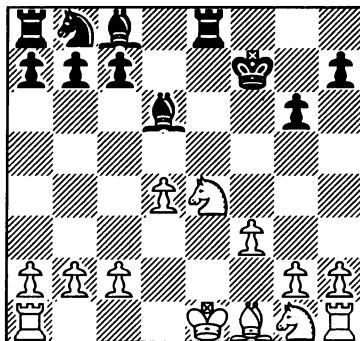


So Black has already lost one pawn and he is about to lose another as c7 and f6 cannot both be defended.

- 8 ... $\mathbb{Q}d6$
 9 $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ $\mathbb{K}f7$
 10 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{K}e8$

A last desperate attempt by Black to win a piece! But, alas, after White's next move he is simply two pawns down for nothing.

- 11 f3



Queen's Pawn, Irregular Defence**1 d4**

1	...	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
2	c4	e6
3	$\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}e4!?$

This is hardly ever played in this position as it moves the same piece twice for apparently no good reason.

4	$\mathbb{Q}fd2?!$...
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A strange move, 4 e3 or 4 g3 would be more normal.

4	...	$\mathbb{Q}b4!$
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Black develops another piece and at the same time prevents $\mathbb{Q}xe4$.

5	a3??	...
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This natural attempt to break the pin is in fact a gross blunder. Can you see why?

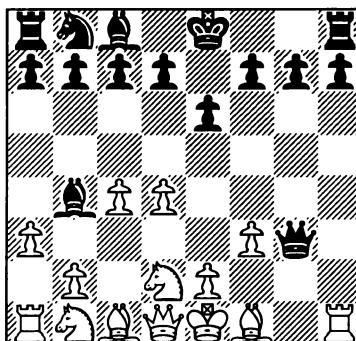
5	...	$\mathbb{W}f6$
----------	-----	----------------

Threatening mate on f2, so there is no time for White to collect the bishop.

6	f3	$\mathbb{W}h4+$
7	g3	...

White must play this to prevent mate.

7	...	$\mathbb{Q}xg3!$
8	hxg3	$\mathbb{W}xg3+$



This position really deserves a diagram.

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2 c4 e6

3 ♖c3 ♜b4

The Nimzo-Indian Defence, one of Anatoly Karpov's main defences to 1 d4, begins with this move, which has three good points: it develops a piece, prevents e4, and prepares to double White's pawns.

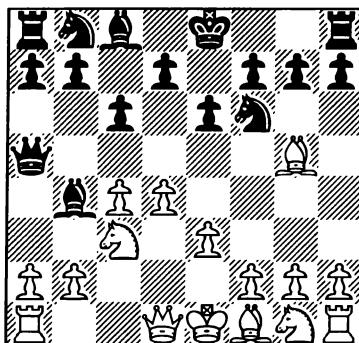
4 ♠g5 c6!?

A strange looking move with a nasty sting in its tail! 4 ... c5 would be more normal.

5 e3?

A casual move, which results in a casualty!

5 a5



6 ♕xf6 ...

Also bad is 6 ♜f3 ♜e4 7 ♛f4 ♜xc3 8 bxc3 ♛xc3+ 9 ♛e2 ♛xa1 10 ♜xa1

6 ... xc3+

7 bxc3 ♕xc3+

8 ♕e2 gxf6

And Black wins a pawn. Note, however, that the tempting 8 ... $\mathbb{W}xc4+$ would be a mistake after 9 $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ $\mathbb{W}d5+$ (not 9 ... $gxf6??$ 10 $\mathbb{Q}xc4)$ 11 e4 $\mathbb{W}h5+$ 11 g4! and when Black's queen moves, White's bishop on f6 can also escape from capture.

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QUICK CHESS KNOCKOUTS

JULIAN HODGSON

Grandmaster and twice British Champion, Julian Hodgson, with easy to understand move by move commentary, explains to less skilled players how they can finish off their opponents in the very early stages of the game. By setting the cunning traps presented here the reader will be given the opportunity—and satisfaction!—of scoring chess knockouts in double-quick time against friends and rivals alike.

ISBN 1-85744-045-5



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