The Italian Gambit System
Including the New Miami Variation
A Guiding Repertoire for White-1.e4
A Chess Masters Guide to the 1.e4 Player’s Repertoire

by Jude Acers & George S. Laven
The Italian Gambit

and

A Guiding Repertoire for White - E4!

Jude Acers

George S. Laven
As a teen-aged product of the Fischer era in the Midwest United States during the 1970s, the regular source of chess information was Chess Life and Review magazine. Grandmaster Larry Evans’s column was my favorite, and it was a particular treat when Chess Master Jude Acers would grace the column’s pages. Acers would invariably discuss some telling point in a recent or past Grandmaster game or, alternatively, pose a question about an evaluation from opening theory. Regardless, the questions were always interesting and exuded the energetic love (and prowess) that Acers possessed for the game. They made me exercise my chess brain in ways that made me a better player.

Earlier this year, co-author George Laven contacted me about having a small part in a book that he and others were preparing. While I was ambivalent at first, when George revealed that Acers was his co-author, I enthusiastically agreed to assist.

The resulting book is, in my opinion, a remarkable achievement. As far as I know, this is the first time that Acers has committed much of his formidable repertoire to print. For a player of his caliber and tenure, it is high time that his ideas and analysis reach a wider audience.

The primary subject matter is worthy of study. The history of the Italian Game is as rich and storied as that of any opening variation. World Champions, including Morphy, Steinitz and Lasker were its pioneers, and it remains a viable option to this day. Just as important, the practical player can benefit from the fact that opening theory has mostly moved on to discussions of 3 Bb5 rather than 3 Bc4. Indeed, this book is replete with the examples of “practical” players like Koltanowski, Marshall and Sveshnikov, who have profited from a thorough understanding of the lines arising from the Italian Game.

This book does a great job asking the fundamental question, “Why not 3 Bc4?” The lines that arise are full of play, and even those that have been dismissed by theory carry their share of venom for the unprepared player. The book provides a useful repertoire for White players of any strength and with any expected result.

As a tournament player, my focus is generally on the opportunity to win the next point in the next battle. One of this book’s strengths is that it satisfies our yearning to “score quick” while also allowing us to learn a bit about ideas that have dominated chess thought through the centuries. For those who are willing to follow the history, the text will take you on a wonderful journey. I am confident that close examination of this material will properly arm the reader for the battles of today, and for those in years to come.

National Master Randy Bauer
INTRODUCTION

The Italian Gambit System (Vol. I) and A Guiding Repertoire for White, 1 e4! (Vol. II) are here bound into one, not only containing an astonishing new “pure gambit” named the Miami Variation, but a very delightful, interesting and insightful adventure through a unique perspective of historical chess. Quotes, adages, personal stories and more, from both old and new Masters, are woven into the text. They will entertain, amuse and educate the reader.

New ideas, technical novelties and more, abound within the pages of Volume I, the age-old Italian game materials -- with 4 d4!? as our focus, allowing the sharp and forcing Italian Gambit to emerge. This move, a surprising one to many, transforms the classic “Giuoco Piano” or, literally translated, the “quiet game”, into anything but its revered and somewhat sedate namesake. Black’s third move, 3....Bc5 seems safe and allows the second player plenty of time to develop (quietly) for positional play. This will indeed occur if White plays almost any reasonable move, except for the center assaulting, initiative gaining 4 d4!? Black must now react! Whatever unfolds from this point, White will have central control, a lead in development, and a strong initiative. It is White, not Black who will get the first emerging tactical opportunities. Accurate play by Black is necessary to hold and neutralize these initial gains, and it will be difficult if not impossible to demonstrate anything better than hard-fought equality. White can consistently demonstrate compensation for the gambit pawn. This book is the result of no less than three (3) years of study and Master analysis, including complete computer verification of all the important variations.

In the material following the Italian Gambit System, (The Uncooperative Opponent, etc.) There are recommendations which complement and bridge the way to Volume II, in keeping with its philosophy and spirit. This companion volume, A Guiding Repertoire for White, 1 e4! is short, yet concise and to the point, guiding the 1 e4 player in handling and management of all of Black's classic opening responses.

1. .....e6 - French 1. .....c6 - Caro Kann 1. .....d6 - Pirc
1. .....g6 - Robatsch/Flank 1. ...Nf6 - Alekhine’s 1. .....d5 - Scandinavian
1. ...Nc6 - Nimzowitsch 1. .....c5 - Sicilian

These lines have been studied and developed over many years by the venerable Chess Master and teacher Jude Acers. They are the essential and recommended lines for all play that commences 1 e4, but are especially effective for the new “limited” time controls in present and future tournament play. Consider them carefully for both attack and defense. As White, once you embrace (and you will) these “to the point” openings, this book will take you via clear reference to the sources of future study. As Black, you must be prepared. The reader will not be overwhelmed by masses of theory or endless analytical variations, but shall discover how and where to find such material.
Chess Master Jude Acers, author of *A Guiding Repertoire for White -1 e4*! and co-author, analyst, and main annotator for the *Italian Gambit* can be found, as he has for the last quarter of a century, at his World Chess Table ("Gazebo" sidewalk terrace), 1018 Decatur Street (the French Quarter) in New Orleans. Millions of motorists and passersby have seen the “Man in the Red Beret” play ALL challengers daily - giving Chess lessons to all levels of players, analyzing your favorite games and ever promoting the King of Games.

“Fabulously lucky - Always in the right place at the right time” - Acers.

This world famous New Orleans resident has the unique distinction, in his long and venerable career, of being the only match player to face both Bobby Fischer (Baton Rouge, 1964) and Walter Browne, six time U. S. Champion (Baton Rouge 1967 & Berkeley 1970). He was published World Record holder in the Guinness Book of World Records -- having played 117 opponents simultaneously (Lloyds Centre, Portland Oregon) and 179 opponents, again in simultaneous play (Mid Isle Plaza [Broadway Plaza] Long Island, New York) on July 2-3, 1976. He has been featured in *The London Times*, *Associated Press*, *Oxford American Magazine*, *The New York Times* and others. Acers has made more than a thousand appearances in 46 states. His Elo during his competitive days of World Class tournament play was 2554, a “rating” by the World Chess Federation (FIDE). Winner of the Stamer Memorial, San Francisco, the winner take all, Paul Morphy Memorial, FIDE Match Challenge Cup, New Orleans. His career highlight (and most memorable game) was his drawn match with Browne (1970). A first round Acers win was selected by a panel of six Grandmasters, published in the World Class Chess publication *Chess Informant* (Informator/Belgrade), garnering a "Top Ten" theory game award for that year.

“It changed my life forever” - Acers.

By his own account, “Riding the Bobby Fischer chess craze years of 1970-1978, like the Lone Ranger riding Silver,” it was during these wonder years that Jude met the great Chelan, Washington Chess promoter, Russell Miller. Known worldwide for his promotional work at commercial malls, colleges, and prison exhibitions (more than 100 appearances in all), Acers developed a rapid fire 10 minute lecture known as the Four Must-do Chess Tips plus introducing chess fans to two “classic” must-read chess books. Then down to business, giving 20-40 opponent “simultaneous” exhibitions in 46 States, 5 countries. Imagine playing this type of chess at the Alaska State Fair, Lenox Mall in Atlanta, GA., and the Broadway Plaza in New York - all in ONE week! Five National T.V. appearances including an eight (8) board simultaneous “Blindfold” exhibition on July 21, 1981-seen by millions on “P.M. Magazine”. The program won a National Media Award for the top rated T.V. Newsmen Eric Paulsen (WWL Channel 4), and brought worldwide attention to David Compton, an imaginative Chess promoter who made the moves as Acers called them out. Recently, New Orleans media cameraman Steve Alfortisch (Channel 8 “Fox”) won national

George S. Laven, co-author of the Italian Gambit, is simply, and unapologetically, an amateur player, who is also a true enthusiast. A latecomer to the game, he learned the formal aspects, rules, terminology and more, at the age of 47. This, a lucky result of his children’s association with their school chess club, having been introduced to US-Federation-ranked Expert Robert Snow, who years later took on the role of chief editor of this work. An eye-opening look into the real world of chess thus began.

Having never played the game as a child, and only occasionally around the Cafes of New Orleans in the 70’s, Laven discovered a driving interest in opening analysis through his lessons with Snow. As time went on, he developed into a serious student following the well-known adage, “study is the soul of Chess”. Though he did not himself compete in tournaments, Laven became more and more involved in the game’s ancient academics. It was during this time that he found a preference for romantic gambit play in certain “double King pawn” starts. In time 4. d4! emerged. Two important aspects of this move (and gambit) came to light. First, it was little played. Second, it was not easy to find comprehensive studies on the variations that followed. Solid, easy-to-follow monographs seemed nonexistent. ECO, MCO, NCO and the like helped to some extent, but were surprisingly lacking.

For a short period, he took advanced lessons with International Master Blas Lugo at the Miami Chess Academy in the “Little Havana” area off Calle Ocho. Here, IM Lugo agreed the gambit approach for certain King pawn openings was good, including 4 d4, an encouragement that went on to fuel an entire theoretical study. After some two years of “Italian Gambit” (unnamed at the time) research, both over the board and using serious computer analysis to help find “his own” variations, Laven, the amateur, decided it was high time to seek the help and guidance of another true Master, Jude Acers. With this assistance from a real “pro”, the Italian Gambit System is the happy result.

Captain Laven is a professional mariner, having sailed as ship’s officer and Ship Master for many years. Today, as a Harbor Pilot for the bustling commercial Port of Miami, he continues the chess tradition in the spirit of Captain Evans, whose 4 b4 gambit line of the 1800’s led to a new infusion of interest in the Italian Game. Evans too was a professional Ship Master and serious amateur. Amateur enthusiasts can make a difference. Kasparov himself revisited Evans’s line in 1995. Now, here 4. d4 returns, with a very deep history of its own.
EDITOR'S PREFACE

In many ways, the book you see before you is a pioneering work. Efforts have been made throughout to avoid the appearance of yet another technical chess manual, and instead to bring the game to life. Jude Acers is ideally suited for this purpose, as he is a terrific storyteller and teacher, whose playing strength has been well documented.

From the structure of the book itself, to its specific contents, choices have been made, of which the reader will become immediately aware.

Fonts

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4 - Shadowboxed moves are the main lines.

Moves in bold come from actual cited games.
Moves in plain type are suggested analysis of Jude Acers, unless otherwise indicated.

Sidebar Indexes

Originally, the First and Second Games of Volume I were written as a simple narrative, but this form is difficult for the theoretically minded to navigate. These sidebars were added to facilitate study.

```
A, 4 d4
1 e4 e5
2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Bc4 Bc5
4 d4

<table>
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<th>Analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 e4</td>
<td>e5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Nf3</td>
<td>Nc6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bc4</td>
<td>Bc5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 d4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.....</td>
<td>exd4 (59)</td>
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{ Sidebar heading

{ The top part of the bar shows the moves leading to the critical choice in question.

{ “You are Here”. This midsection notes what actually appears on the page.

{ The main alternative(s). (page #’s in parentheses).

Move Order Indexes

The remaining Italian Gambit System pages (Third through Eighth Games) are more deeply analytical and highly transpositional. Several pre-game indexes were added for easy reference, plus a final index to highlight the major path choices (Max Lange, Scotch and Italian).

Illustrative Games

The page layout of these contests was deliberately changed to indicate their importance, and that they may be studied separately from the theoretical portion of the book.

Supplemental Games

The remaining moves of twenty games in Volume II were separated from the analysis for later study by the reader, should he/she wish to explore the outcome of the recommendation.
Volume II
These lines are especially effective for the new “limited” time controls in present and future tournament play. While the presentation here is deliberately lighter than in Volume I, the reader is given a thoughtful approach at every turn, and a chance to follow the evolution of the ideas presented.

Something for Everyone
The authors Acers and Laven have rightly insisted that their work be both illuminating and entertaining, though this is at times a difficult balance to strike. Folklore, for instance, is a large part of the appeal of chess, but it is rarely seen in print, especially in today’s book publications. We have made every effort to see that these stories be told, but also that they should NOT interfere with the flow of the analysis.

As for the actual lines given here for study, the novice should not gain the impression that they require hours of preparation before you can try them out. The Sixth Game is a great example of a core line that can be learned quickly and played on the go. Players up through master will note however, that many of the lines in both Volumes will be of practical use.

Final Notes
Several years before I received the final manuscript, the co-authors had engaged in a discussion of all 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4!? lines, and their findings were compiled as an initial working monograph for this book. In the months before publication, there were ongoing debates as to which lines deserved priority, and what gaps should be filled. Back-up materials were reconsidered and incorporated where necessary, and made the job of ensuring that our coverage was comprehensive relatively easy.

We are all satisfied that all outstanding issues have been resolved.

Robert Snow
Chief Editor
**Explanation of Symbols**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>!!</td>
<td>brilliant move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
<td>good move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!?</td>
<td>interesting move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?!</td>
<td>dubious move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>bad move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>??</td>
<td>a blunder</td>
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<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>White is winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>±</td>
<td>White has a clear advantage</td>
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<tr>
<td>±</td>
<td>White has a slight advantage</td>
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<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>The position is equal/even</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‡</td>
<td>Black has a slight advantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>†</td>
<td>Black has a clear advantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−</td>
<td>Black is winning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ò</td>
<td>with compensation for the material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∞</td>
<td>the position is unclear</td>
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<td>with counterplay</td>
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<td>with the initiative</td>
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<td>→</td>
<td>with an attack</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>a better move</td>
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<td>#</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>White resigned / Black won</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>½-½</td>
<td>The game was drawn</td>
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</table>

GM International Grandmaster  
IM International Master  
FIDE World Chess Federation

**Notation**

<table>
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<td>R</td>
<td>Rook</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Knight</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

```
    a b c d e f g h
Black
a8 b8 c8 d8 e8 f8 g8 h8 8
a7 b7 c7 d7 e7 f7 g7 h7 7
a6 b6 c6 d6 e6 f6 g6 h6 6
a5 b5 c5 d5 e5 f5 g5 h5 5
a4 b4 c4 d4 e4 f4 g4 h4 4
a3 b3 c3 d3 e3 f3 g3 h3 3
a2 b2 c2 d2 e2 f2 g2 h2 2
a1 b1 c1 d1 e1 f1 g1 h1 1

White

    a b c d e f g h

```

lower case letter/number pairs signify pawn moves.  
i.e., c4 is read “pawn to c4”;  
cxd5 is read “c-pawn capture on d5.”
The Italian Gambit System

Volume I

1 e4 e5 - Open Games - Annotated by Jude Acers

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4!?  

Black captures on d4 with the Bishop: 4...Bxd4 5 Nxd4 Nxd4...

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The Italian Gambit System

~ The Perilous Journey ~

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4!? Black Captures the Center Pawn with the Bishop

4...Bxd4 5 Nxd4 Nxd4

First Game  
The Traditional Italian Gambit  
A. 6 0-0, B. 6 f4

Second Game  
Introducing The Miami Variation  
C. 6 Be3

"Let the Journey Begin!!"
Jude Acers and George Laven
First Game
A reappraisal of the older, well-trodden Italian Gambit paths.

A. 6 0-0
The Koltanowski “Pure” Gambit (Max Lange Attack)

B. 6 f4
The Fahrni Gambit

“The most instructive opening, and most instructive position, with George Laven’s Miami Variation (Line C, p. 21) a surprising second idea.” - Acers.

GM George Koltanowski (1903-2000)
From his chess teaching days in Milwaukee - this is the gambit that made “Kolty” famous. Having to play in every imaginable place to make a living - bars, schools, boats, T.V. stations, press rooms, colleges... Koltanowski wanted a “get’em quick, home before dinner” system that could unload a tactic to win right now against even master players - preferably short games, ready for his 50 year chess column in The San Francisco Chronicle. He devised the gambit while waving goodbye to the center d-pawn.
White will likely win many games against players who do not know the exact defense required. "Guessing loses." - Acers.

The White pair of Bishops, the safely castled White King, open lines coupled with direct threats (i.e., 6...Nf6 7 f4 threatens 8 fxe5, or 8 Bxf7+ Kxf7 9 fxe5 regaining the piece with a King hunt in prospect); these motifs combine to both teach and win.

A1. 6...Nf6 7 f4! (diagram)

The Koltanowski-Lange Attack*. (the threat is 8 fxe5 winning.)

Black may now find himself in a battle for survival. Castling will not be possible unless the center is neglected, a serious bind allowed. "I do not know if the pawn sacrifice is sound. I have had good results with it."


Best of all, a mechanical, direct attack just wins against anything but accurate defense by the second player. British Master Chris Baker, in *A Startling Chess Opening Repertoire* (1998), published a 20 page theory history showing clear compensation for the pawn.

Mr. Baker concluded:

"...with little material available, the Koltanowski variation offers interesting play, leaves room for analysis, and may well catch even very strong players unaware."

* During the past century, the Marshall *(Ruy Lopez)* Counterattack (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 0-0 8 c3 d5) the Koltanowski-Max Lange Attack (above), and finally, the Fischer-Sozin Sicilian (1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Be6) were paramount American chess opening pyramids. Excitement is their flavor.
True. How can Black defend?
He faces a storm warning:
7...Nc6? 8 Bxf7+! Kxf7 9 fxe5 Nxe5 10 Qd5+
"Regaining the piece with interest"
- Koltanowski, 1968.
King hunts, pins, sacrifices and checkmates run amok. This is a very common trap.
It can win countless games for the student.

Dodging the first bullet.
"However, Black has a long way to go baby!"
- K.R. Smith, Chess Digest, 1967

Black wisely holds the center while maintaining the healthy extra center pawn. If all the pieces are exchanged off the board, Black will win the pawn endgame.

White must attack pronto.

A dream position for White players who love to attack.
Bereft of counterplay, Black must defend for a long time.
Numerous wayward paths exist for Black, many lose immediately.

For example: 8...Bg4? - Strangely a blunder, often played by the Koltanowski opponents. He could never understand why, and just played the passing move 9 Qd2. Suddenly White's dual threats again emerge - to capture the advanced Knight at d4 while adding 10 f4-f5! trapping the enemy Bishop behind enemy lines. It has been sent on a fool's errand! E.g. 9...Nc6? 10 f5! intending 11 h3 Bh5 12 g4, closing the last exit (see Line "b", p. 7).
Koltanowski’s “Home Before Dinner” 6 0-0 (First Game) 7

Position after 9 Qd2 (analysis)

White now gains time and space. Black must avoid material loss. Examples from the maestro:

a) 9...Nxe4? 10 Qe3 White has a steamroller attack while Black captures a Rook in the far corner. 10...Nc2 11 Qxe4 Nxa1 12 Bxf7+! Kxf7 13 fxe5+: 
   a1) 13...Kg8? 14 Qd5+ Be6 15 Qxe6 mate. 
   a2) 13...Ke7? 14 Bg5+ wins. 
   a3) 13...Ke8 14 exd6+ Kd7 15 Qxg4+ wins. Black’s King has no sanctuary. 15...Kxd6 16 Rd1+ or 15...Kc6 16 Qc4+ Kb6 17 Be3+ Ka5 18 Qb4+ Ka6 19 Qa4 mate. Or simply 12 fxe5 ± Koltanowski-Abreu, Havana 1939.

b) After 9...Nc6? 10 f5! Black cannot take the emergency door: 10...Nxe4 11 Qd5 Ng5 12 h4 + -.

c) 9...Be6 (much better!) 10 Bd3! Naturally White avoids exchanging Black’s stranded pieces. The point: White makes an intermezzo, and Black must lose precious time to save the threatened Knight whereupon White’s initiative remains. 10...Ne6 11 f5! Bd7 12 Qg5! with an imaginative attack:
c1) 12...0-0? 13 Qh4! intending to bring the dark squared Bishop to g5, also “lift” the Rook to f3-g3-h3 for attack.

c2) 12...Qe7 13 b4! taking over the Queen’s wing, ready to open lines should Black castle queenside.

13...0-0-0 14 b5 Nb8 Baker-Spanton, Hastings 1998 Both 15 a4 (played) and 15 Be3 (Baker) will open Black’s position. Therefore...

8...Nc6 (diagram)

Black sees:
a) 8...Be6?! 9 Bd3! Nc6 10 f5! binding. 10...Bd7 11 Bg5

Black senses the danger in...
b) 8...Ne6?! 9 f5! Nc5 10 Nd2!:

b1) 10...Ncxe4 11 Nxe4 Nxe4 12 Qd5! attacking.

b2) Better was 10...0-0 11 Qf3! a5 12 Rf2! Bd7 13 b4! (Now is the moment before Black gets ...Bc6 in - Koltanowski) 13...axb4 14 cxb4 Na4 15 Nf1 Bc6 16 Bg5 ± with an assault. Koltanowski-Jan Ten Hoeve, Curacao, 1964 Dutch West Indies.

Two recent Black tries at improvements from the 1998 British Championship:
b3) 10...Bd7 11 b4 ≈ Thomas-Ledger.
b4) 10...c6 11 Qe2 Qe7 12 b4 ≈ Stephensen-Ledger.

With the possibility of a serious positional bind. White would like to take up all the key posts with Bg5, Qf3, and Nd2.
Koltanowski’s “Home Before Dinner” 6 0-0 (First Game)

9...Ne7! (diagram)
Just in the nick of time.
(9...h6 also deserves study).
This can be difficult to find at the chessboard for most players.
Black must seek breathing room immediately. Alternatives were grim.
Black aims to destroy White’s center with d6-d5.

Instead: a) 9...0-0? 10 Bg5 Na5 11 Bd3 d5 12 Bxf6 gxf6 13 Nd2 ±
b) 9...Nxe4 10 Qg4! d5 11 Qxg7 Qf6 12 Bh6!
with a good endgame (Baker).

10 Qf3!
Koltanowski’s main idea.
Holding the center permits play on the wings: > g4-g5, Bg5, etc.

10...h6 11 g4! c6 12 Bb3 Qc7 13 Nd2 (diagram)

“The position is unbalanced, but as usual, White has compensation for the pawn.”
British Master
Chris Baker

A Startling Chess Opening Repertoire.
A2. 6...d6!? - Acers Defensive System

(White can play to enter The Miami Variation through the back door now with 7 Be3.)

As early as 1959, New Orleans Chess Club players were closely following GM Koltanowski’s book, Chess in the Dark, Adventures of a Chess Master; reading his opening monograph editions of the Max Lange Attack.

<Flashback to New Orleans, 1959...>

A teenie-bopper Jude Acers, pocket set in hand... at the Cafe Du Monde (Where Paul Morphy had coffee a century earlier, where Marshall, Torre and Capablanca came right off the train...) wide-eyed at the keep-the-initiative moves from a sea of fierce attacking players... Plumber-electrician A.L. McAuley (who built all the chess clubs), Attorney William “Never-ever-Resign” Waguespack, Playboy Steve Buining, Architect Andrew Lockett III... All kept the initiative, inflicting severe defeats upon the slightest Acers error, often running the opponent off the clock as well.*

Acers saw, for example, tourney player W. Waguespack a Queen, two Rooks and a Knight down, about to be checkmated when he found a miracle draw by stalemate... All this against a durable Mississippi player Fenner Parham, who defeated Fischer in an exhibition game in 1964.

“When you set your attack, make certain that when the fire goes out... it isn’t.” - America’s first modern Champion, H. N. Pillsbury. This is the mighty question - Let’s get serious...

“How does it go in practice?”

* The Miami Variation (Line C) can do this... and too, there are “swindles” when players obtain so-called “lost positions”.
Can the 4th Edition of the historical Encyclopedia of Chess Openings (ECO) be trusted? Is Black ±, easily refuting the Kolty system? Of course not. Once Black yields the dark squared Bishop for a pawn gain, survival for even ten moves becomes paramount... and please remember - the clock is running. Therefore Black must ask, “Is it possible to be an uncooperative opponent right now?” He has one precious free move after 6 0-0. Many years of experience show a dangerous practical gambit brewing. Allow 6...Nf6 7 f4! with the attack, mapped by a renowned player... you too can finish the job!

White blunders with 7 c3? Be6! (the point):

a) 8 Bd3? Nc6 9 f4 exf4 ++ White’s attack is gone with the win.
b) 8 Qa4+ Qd7 9 Qxd7+ Kxd7 ± White is a pawn down for nothing, or 8...Bd7 9 Qd1 Ne6 + is also clearly strong for Black.

Black uses the precious extra move offered by keeping the Knight home, avoiding the “Full House” 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Be4 Bc5 4 d4 Bxd4 5 Nxd4 Nxd4 6 0-0 Nf6 7 f4...

Black now “takes White for a ride”.
Acers Defensive System 6 0-0 d6 (First Game)

8 Bxe6 (diagram)
Correct. Losing is 8 Bd3 exf4! when White has Zero on the chessboard and the scoreboard.

8...Nxe6

Avoids 8...fxe6? 9 fxe5 dxe5 10 Qh5+ when the game is already over.

Not possible now is 9 fxe5? dxe5 10 Qh5 Qd4+ 11 Kg1 Nf6 + (Honduran Chess Master S. Buining)

9 f5! Nc5 10 Qg4 (diagram)
White also has apparent play for the sacrificed pawn with 10 Ne3:

a) 10...Oe7 11 Be3 b6 12 Nd5 c6?! 13 Bxc5, or

b) 10...e6 11 Be3 Nf6 12 Qf3 + Buining-Acers, New Orleans 1961

10...Nf6

Black must beware:

a) 10...Qf6? 11 Bg5 wins the Queen at high noon.

Black is under some pressure
- his King is uncastled,
- the Ne4 cannot be maintained at its advanced outpost,
- the h7 pawn and the f6 square are likewise weak.
- White’s Bishop rules the weak dark squares.

11 Qxg7 Rg8 12 Qh6 Ncxe4 13 Nc3 (diagram)

Black may consider:
13...c6? 14 Be3 Qe7 15 Nxe4 Nxe4 16 Qxh7 0-0-0 17 f6 Nxf6 18 Qf5+ Nd7 19 Qxf7 ± Much stronger defense is possible.

14 bxc3 Qe7! 15 Qh4!
Not 15Bg5? Ng4! ⊥

15...Rg4 16 Qh6
Now 16...Rg8= repeats, but 16...d5(!) puts the burden on White:
a) 17Bg5? is insufficient: Qc5+ 18 Kh1 Ne4 19 Bf6 Qd6 → or
b) 17 Kh1 Ne4 19 Qxh7 0-0-0 ⊥ (Threat: 19...Rh4 winning).

This defensive system may well cause Kolty (if he were still with us) to be home late for dinner.
Forgotten but playable, the only variation already abandoned by George Laven’s Miami Team in the Italian Gambit System. Acers believes it can be rehabilitated by careful study of the Swiss player: Hans Fahrni (1874-1939)
“Gambit play - Expresso!”

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B. 6 f4 - Fahrni’s Gambit

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Italian Gambit
Reappraisal of Older Moves

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A. 6 0-0 p. 4
B. 6 f4

---

6...d5

“The only move I would ever even consider here.” - Acers.

This move is considered to give Black a clear advantage, the refutation of the whole 6 f4 line, and a most interesting counterstroke.

We now follow Fahrni-Spielmann, Baden, 1914, where GM Spielmann rejected 6...d6.

As Ex-World Champion, Max Euwe (1901-1981) had pointed out 6...d6 7 0-0 Be6 is a much safer defense. The finesse idea is that no transposition to the Koltanowski-Lange Attack is now possible: 8 Bd3 exf4! maintains a solid position and pawn plus. Therefore White must play 8 Bxe6 Nxe6 9 f5 with a serious gambit attack. 9...Nc5 10 Qg4 \(\not\) (Acers).

Note also that the retreat 6...Nc6 is never even mentioned, never tried here, not because of 7 f5? Qh4+ \(\not\), but 7 0-0 exf4 8 Bxf4 with a dangerous attack in prospect, as open lines for White abound.
Fahrni’s Gambit, 6 \textit{f4 (First Game)}

Position after 6...d5

\begin{position}
\begin{chessboard}
\white{\textcolor{white}{\textbf{White}}}
\black{\textcolor{black}{\textbf{Black}}}
\end{chessboard}
\end{position}

White notices 7 Bxd5? Qh4+ 8 Kf1 Bg4\textendash with an attack. Logical, but bad is 8 g3 Qh3 with the strong threats of ...Qg2 and ...Bg4, White will never make it out of the opening alive. White’s Bishop is needed to defend the white squares around his King.

The text move leads to a little explored struggle - a very good try.

\textbf{7...Qh4+ 8 g3}

Again 8 Kf1 Bg4 would provide a robust attack in Spielmann’s hands. So, White holds the center, hoping that Black’s flank attack will be ineffective. Spielmann will have to play well to get a draw.

\textbf{8...Qh3}

Learn tactics by repetition of opening themes. Threat: 8...Qg2.

\textbf{9 Bf1 Qf5 10 Bd3 e4}

Black maintains the initiative, White the Bishop pair and pawn plus. 10...Qh3 leads to a draw by repetition.

\textbf{11 Be2 Nxe2}

Simple tactics. 11...Qxd5? 12 c3 “Win by pin.”

\textbf{12 Qxe2 Nf6 13 Nc3}
13...Qh3! (diagram)

Counterattack all the way to prevent castling. 13...0-0 14 0-0 Rd8 15 Re1 Nxd5 16 Nxe4 Re8? 17 Nf6+! mates or wins the exchange.

16...Be6 17 Bd2 with equally interesting play was to be preferred.

14 Be3!

An apparently deadly trap awaited 14 Nxe4 Nxe4 15 Qxe4+ Kd8 when a Black Rook enters the center on the e-file highway. 16 Be3 Re8 17 Qf3 Bf5, or even 17...Bg4 18 Qf2 Rxe3+ 19 Qxe3 Kd7 with a mushrooming attack against a White King that is “Home Alone”.

14...0-0 15 Bd4!

Deep. Fahrni’s point - White envisions a complete blockade on the dark squares, where even the White King will help. Queenside play will follow.

15...Bg4 16 Qf1 Qh6

Naturally Black still hopes to open lines to White’s King, however Fahrni realizes that Black will have an entire army buried behind the e-pawn if the blockade occurs.

17 h3! Bf3 18 Rh2 Rad8 19 Rd2
Position after 19 Rd2

The decisive moment. An attack must be conducted on open lines. Black should have considered:

19...Nxd5 (Akers) getting down to business immediately. Black then threatens 20...e3 21 Rd3 Nb4! with the threats 22...Nxc2 mate and 22...Nxd3.

a) 20 Bc5? e3 ⊥
b) 20 Bxg7? Qxg7 21 Rxd5 Rxd5 22 Nxd5 Qxb2 →
with a decisive invasion.
c) 20 Nxd5 Rxd5 21 Be3 R8d8 ⊥

"By standing on the shoulders of giants, we all become tall, and know all." - Akers.

19...Rfe8?! 

If the attack is not successful, this Rook will be sealed out of play, behind the e-pawn along with a stranded Knight, board side Queen. It is certainly understandable that Spielmann overlooked Fahrni’s clever plan.

20 Be3

All of White’s pieces will head toward the Queen’s wing. It is official. White has a total blockade for keeps. He can play a2-a4-a5 and activate the a1 Rook. White’s Be3 (hopefully) blocks two Rooks, a Queen, a Knight and a center pawn.

20...Nh5 21 Qf2 f5
Fahrni's Gambit, 6 f4 (First Game)

22 Rd4! (diagram)

Resourceful, clearing d2 for the King.

White invites the opponent to win a pawn with 22...Qg6 23 Kd2 Qxg3 24 Qxg3 Nxg3 when White will reply 25 Nb5 with counterplay against Black’s abandoned queenside pawns.

22...Nf6

“In today’s Chess World, one adjusts. If during a game you discover your plan will not work, you don’t give up, allow embarrassment to enter your composure. If one plan doesn’t work, you try another one.” - Karpov.

The drawback is that Black’s Queen is entombed at h6.

23 Qf1 Qg6!?

Recalling International Master Hans Kmoch’s remark after a move played by Acers (versus C. Bill Jones - the former Hawaiian State Champion, Opening Theorist/Endgame Composer) seems ideal here. GM Spielmann “Rejects a draw by three time repetition (23...Nh5) as beneath dignity.”

24 Kf2

“Speaking just for myself I would play 24...Qh6 and offer a draw, praying White takes it.” - Acers.

24...Qf7

Attacking the center, but White is already there. Black has not a single piece or pawn to guard the queenside.
Fahrni's Gambit, 6 f4 (First Game)

25 Qc4 Rd7 26 d6!
(diagram)

Flashback: Greyhound Station, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, the 1944 U.S. Champion Arnold Denker declared proudly that he could judge talent, a player's whole worth by the moves of one good game by the player. "Show me a game, just one - I can tell."

This is what the oldest American GM was talking about.
26...cxd6? 27 Qxf7+ Kxf7 28 Nb5! ± when White attacks d6 and a7 with a pawn typhoon next. See a move like this - you know.

26...Qxe4 27 Rxe4 e6

Waking to the danger. Black “wins” the d-pawn.

a) 27...Rxd6? 28 Rxc7 Rd7 29 Rxd7 Nxd7 30 Bxa7 ±

b) 27...cxd6 28 Bxa7 d5 29 Rb4 ± (followed by Bd4, a4-a5, Ra3-b3 marshalling all of White's pieces on the queenside).

28 Rc5! g6 (diagram)

"Student body - Left!" - American GM Yasser Seirawan.

29 Ra5 b6 30 Ra6 Re6 31 a4! Rxd6 32 a5 c5
Position after 32...c5

"Hold on to your material, you’ll need it later.” - GM Larry Evans.

“A pawn is worth a little trouble.” - Wilhelm Steinitz, First Official World Champion.

“A pawn is worth a lot of trouble.” - L. Evans.

33 axb6 axb6 34 Ra8+ Kf7 35 R8a7 Ke6 36 Rxd7 Nxd7 36...Rxd7 37 Ra6 Rd6 38 Nb5=.

37 Ra8 (Black has a pawn, but White owns the board) Bd1 forcing a draw by blockade, or by three-time repetition.

38 Nb5 Rc6 38...Rd5? 39 Nc7+ wins.

39 Na7 Rc7 40 Nb5 Rc6 Black’s hunger for a win does not include putting the Rook in a closet with 40...Rb7? 41 c4 Bb3 42 Na3. White will eventually blockade with Ke2.

41 Na7 Rc7 42 Nb5 Draw.

A candid, interesting game, demonstrating the “Wild West” give-and-take flux of serious chess. This is reality patio. It is quite comforting that through absolutely free Internet archives (Chesslab.com - 2 million games and counting)... the old masters play on through time. Indeed, they are moving now.
This astonishing “pure gambit” found by George Laven, Miami 1999, is not even mentioned in the several million game public database at www.chesslab.com. We have found no reference to this possibility anywhere.

There is something new under the sun, and it was to be explored in

“...a remarkable challenge match, I won’t soon forget.” - Acers.

The Miami Variation Features...

- **Gain of Time** - the Nd4 is attacked immediately.
- **Delayed Center Pawn Tension** - from the f-pawn thrust of the better known Koltanowski (6 0-0) and Fahrni (6 f4!? ) lines.
- **Surprise** - ready for no-nonsense single hour time controls.
- **A Ready Made Attack** - with the simple developing moves after the Nd4 retreats: 7 Nc3, 8 Qe2, 9 0-0-0, followed by f4 and an appropriate move of the Rook on h1. Especially effective against waiting moves like ...h6? or ...b6?
- **Dynamic Play is Guaranteed** - White has the Bishop pair, Laven’s simple “House of Stone” development, and King safety with immediate queenside castling (no small advantage in such a sharp system).
- **Personality** - Here the player can find his own paths along with our recommended ones, personally developing his repertoire.
- **“Theory” Favors White in Practical Play** - since Black’s position is considered overwhelming by E.C.O. and N.C.O. (*Nunn’s Chess Openings*), it is unlikely that many players will be prepared for the difficulties they will encounter.
In trial computer contests, White normally gained a respectable advantage, with at least full compensation for the gambit pawn. White also fared well in human trials, (i.e. Laven versus Acers correspondence games, where Laven is allowed to use every possible resource known to mankind, and Acers will utilize only his decades of experience, natural cunning, and skills of a true master).

So far, 6 Be3 has been proven sound, and can in many cases win. In presenting these contests, we will refer to the White side as “Laven”, with the understanding that he is utilizing both computer and human resources. Acers as Black played without computer assistance or preparation of any kind, allowing him to experience The Miami Variation as a surprised defender. As you shall see, White must use of all the pieces and pawns together to succeed in these lines*.

To begin our examination, we start with some first steps:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
6...Qf6?!
\end{array}
\]

Black defends with a major piece, and develops her prematurely. This move was tested as one of over 200 “thesis” games* where Laven, using every possible resource burned the midnight oil, testing every nuance prior to the challenge match with Acers.

A most illustrative sample of the gambit in practice.

*Laven tried to hammer out an entire system, beginning with the principled, tension-filled 4 d4!? - including them all in a Herculean thesis: The Italian Gambit, New Ideas in the Koltanowski-Mieses Variation (2002), A theoretical study produced in preparation for this book.
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

7 Ne3 + which envisions 8 0-0, 9 f4 and finally 10 fxe5 winning. BOOM! A Knight at high noon. 7...c6
Guarding d5. Players may try 7...Ne7 or 7...Qd6? but both are met by 8 0-0, with 9 f4 (exploding the center) coming next.
“Black will never make it to move 20, alive.” - Acers

8 f4
This threatens 9 fxe5. White’s army proceeds to develop and overtake the open board. 8...Ne6 9 Bxe6 (diagram)

“Keep it simple” - Fischer.
All the defenders now have been removed, save the hapless Queen, which brings us to an instructive moment. Despite the appearance of an endgame where Black may hope to realize a pawn edge, White’s initiative is strong and sustainable, as follows:
9...dxe6 (best) 10 Qd6!
Keeping Black fully occupied. 10...exf4 11 Bxf4 Qh4+ 12 g3 Qe7
13 0-0-0 Qxd6 14 Rxd6 (preparing to double rooks) f6 15 Rh1 e5
16 Rd8+ Ke7 17 Be3, White maintains his grip. 9...fxe6 allows a more favorable Queen trade: 10 Qh5+ g6 11 Qxe5 Qxe5 12 fxe5 when White will be the first to use all the center files.

9...Qxe6 10 fxe5 Qxe5
What else? Black’s development is paralyzed by the Queen’s hopeless duties.

11 0-0 Ne7 12 Bd4!
With the army full mobilized, White needs only “petite” moves to increase board control. An inchworm attack spreads everywhere, aided by an uncastled (trapped!) Black King.

12...Qg5 13 Rf3! (Simple chess. Threat: Rg3) Rg8
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

Position after 13...Rg8

14 Qd3

"Total mobilization. White's second Rook comes into play." - Acers.

Of course, many White moves are good here, but finding the most harmonious formations is key to realizing the advantage. Without disputing the value of Qd3, further computer and human analysis indicates 14 e5(!) packs more punch. The following lines illustrate the appropriate piece placements and manoeuvres:

a) 14...f6? (A strictly human guess forced upon the team, trying to open the g-file and ...Qxg2 mate) 15 exf6 gxf6 16 Qe2 and the Ne7 will not escape the deadly crossfire, while White's Queen directs traffic.

b) 14...Nf5 (Disputing the coming grip on d6) 15 Ne4 Qh4 16 Nd6+ Nxd6 17 exd6, and while the Knight has been eliminated, Black has little mobilized to face the coming attack.

c) 14...Qg6 (ducking Ne4, and hoping to one day contest the center with the d or the f-pawn) 15 Rg3 (with tempo!) Qf5 16 Qe2 Qe6 17 Ne4 d5 18 Nd6+ Kd8 (squirming out) 19 Rf1 f6 20 Re3 Ng6 21 Nf5 fxe5 22 Bxe5 Nxe5 23 Rxe5 +- It seems that in all these tries, White can easily afford to wait with his Queen placement until Black commits, so 14 e5! forces Black's hand.

What soon follows in the game is a tactical mêlée that is attractive to the human eye, but squanders much, if not all, of White's edge. Let the reader be encouraged! Chess is a rich game, where positions, teetering on the hopeless, hold resources, especially so against the incautious, would-be victor.
14...b6 (Freeing the Bishop) 15 Rg3 Qh6 16 e5!
"Well timed. Gripping d6 and clearing e4 for the Knight. Black now defends precisely" - Acers.

16...d5!
"Correct. A bid for freedom. Black should have thought of this long before the premature development of her majesty." - Acers.

17 exd6 Bf5! (diagram)
"The only chance, complicating at all costs, with development to boot! Black hopes for 18 Ne4 Bxe4 19 Qxe4 Qxd6 20 Re1 0-0-0. White now plays a computer-driven tactic, that demonstrates its positional advantage." - Acers.

18 Bxg7 (!! - Acers)
"Combined computer and human analysis do not share Acers’s enthusiasm for this pleasing move. Instead 18 Ne4 Bxe4, and now not 19 Qxe4, but 19 d7+! (the pawn is lost, so White drives the King out into the open) Kxd7 20 Qxe4 Qe6 21 Qd3 leaves Black sorely in need of cover. 21...Nd5 fails to 22 Rf1 (the last cannon now in position) Kc7 23 c4 Nb4 24 Qc3! (The new key square from which to oversee the assault. ...Nxa2?? Qb3 seals in the Knight) c5 25 Be5 Kc8 (crossing up his Rooks) 26 Qf3 Nc6, and with all the new gains, now is the time for the g7 pawn." - Laven.

18...Rxg7 19 Qe3!
"The lovely point. White threatens mate on e7 and the Qh6. The piece sacrificed is won back, with perhaps a tiny edge." - Acers.

19...Qxe3 20 Rxe3 Be6! 21 dxe7 Kxe7 ±/ =
The storm has passed.
Thus began the education of Laven, the system’s inventor, as he cut his teeth on the emerging theory. Reams of computer analyses later, it was clear that the only real attempt at refutation was a Knight retreat for Black, but there were playable alternatives, should Black be satisfied with keeping the game level. Laven’s common sense approach (see introduction outline, p. 21) meets these alternatives:

a) 6...d6 (Returning the pawn for tension-easing exchanges)
   7 Bxd4 exd4 8 Qxd4 Qf6! 9 c3 Qxd4 10 cxd4 Be6 11 d5 Bd7
   Better was 12 f4! ± with a pawn wedge, more space in the endgame. (Acers).

b) 6...d5!? (A definitely playable counter gambit - Acers) 7 exd5
   Nf5 8 Bc5 Nd6 with mutual chances, Laven-Acers test game, or
   7 Bxd5 Nf6 8 Bxd4 exd4 9 Qxd4 c6 10 Qe5+ Qe7 11 Qxe7+
   Kxe7 12 Bb3 is also equal.

We add a certain note - when defenders understand that an Italian Gambit specialist is playing the White pieces, they will quickly “get creative” (Thank you Mr. Yermolinsky), avoiding the entire variation, playing moves that conduct defense from the side of the board, conceding the center. (See page 57 for a center discussion.)

For example, should Black try to cross White up with 4...Nxd4
(omitting the standard Bishop for Knight trade), there is 5 Nxe5,
where f7 is hit. 5...Ne6? is now a mistake: 6 Bxe6 fxe6 (6...dxe6??
7 Qxd8+ Kxd8 8 Nxf7+) 7 Qh5+
  g6 8 Nxg6, utilizing the pin to the h-pawn, and discovering an attack
on the Bishop on c5 by White’s Queen.

* Quick test games were played under the same correspondence game conditions:
Laven had a team of resources at his command, Acers only his skill and cunning.
It is no small feat in chess to “boldly go where no one has gone before.” (6 Be3) - and the sheer weight of analysis in a line like the Italian Gambit, implies that any new move will meet with swift refutation. Sometimes it is as simple as dusting off a forgotten manual. With no such material available, Acers attempts refutation on his own.

Lively was 7...fxe6 8 Qh5+ g6 9 Qxe5 Nf6 (9...Qf6? 10 Bd4 ±) 10 Nc3 d6 11 Qb5+ Bd7?! (speculative) 12 Qxb7 Rb8 13 Qxa7 Rxb2 ± Laven-Acers test game, or 11...c6 12 Qd3 Ng4 13 Bf4 e5 14 Bg3 ±, White will occupy the d-file, jeopardizing the pawn. Best appears to be 10...0-0, intending 11...Ng4 - Acers.
Position after 7...dxe6

**8 Qh5**

White preserves material/tension, and does not wish to exchange into a pawn down endgame.

Acers: One of many Laven investigations. Per his pioneer monograph and study (not formatted for publication), the move 8 Qe2 was expected.

In New Orleans, I purposely never touched a chess computer, working alone with *Taster’s Choice* instant coffee, and WTIX 94.3 FM oldie-but-goodie records all night long. The Laven-Acers games lasted eight savage months. This was one I’ll never forget. Education for a professional chess player who has made (I kid you NOT) hundreds of thousands of chess dollars, ought to begin right now. The George Laven chess school is in session.

After 8 Qe2, I was ready to play a simple, classical plan, in the style of GM Reuben Fine: 8...Qd6 9 Nc3 Bd7 10 Rd1 Qc6 (diagram). Natural play. Black anticipates the winning advantage, ending the *Italian Gambit* odyssey in the endgame.

Awaiting the novelty (8 Qh5) from Laven, the reader can imagine the shocking discovery, in the diagram, of 11 Qh5.

At high noon, regaining a pawn via a most convenient pin. Just like that, with equal prospects. Red-faced, for the first and only time, I sent a variation from my notebook to the Miami Variation data bank.
A must. Well, excellent. Something had been learned.

8...Qd6 9 Nc3 Nf6 10 Qg5 0-0 11 Rd1 Qc6! (diagram)

Returning the pawn, Black swiftly begins operations on the Queen’s wing, to say nothing of the powerful attack on the e-pawn. Laven senses no danger as Black’s queenside is sealed. It is here that the human player “feels” what is happening - an incomparable advantage that now leads to crushing victories over the best computers by prepared

(and well paid) professional players.

12 Qxe5 Ng4 13 Qc5 Nxe3 14 Qxe3 b5!

Laven: A surprise. This amateur has been around long enough to sense something was coming. Is this a “Grandmaster” move, referenced in so many game anthologies/collections of the Titans?

Acers: Invading the queenside with gain of time. The threat: ...b4, will win a pawn and open the f1-a6 diagonal for the dormant Bishop.

15 Qd4 a5 16 a3 b4!

Acers: Preparing to cut the position in two. As I played it, I tried to recall even a single game in a half-century of play, (Ed. - including three matches against Grandmasters and over 1,000 chess appearances in 46 states!) that showed off active play, talent, personality, and calculation to the end, as this one seemed to be...
The odds that such a game would happen NOW, just when needed, and in a snappy position that is a colorful “Exhibit A” for The Miami Variation to boot...

Yes, always the right place at the right time... scoring against Fischer and Browne with the Black pieces... now this marathon published all over the world. “Black is OK!” - Acers.

Hear a whisper from the past:
“I am a better player with the Black pieces than with the first move.”

17 axb4 axb4 18 Qxb4 Ba6
Cutting off the King, and possibly sealing White’s fate.

A quarter century at the World Chess Table in the New Orleans French Quarter, will convince anyone that more than 50% of the world’s chess players are never taught that the King may not cross a square attacked by an enemy piece, amidst castling. Laugh until a Grandmaster asks you what the rules are - “Just the King... not the Rook?” (Asked during a tournament game, by Top 20 player Yuri Averbach, to C.J. Purdy, an Australian World Champion. Indeed, the Rook can move across any attacked square).

Finally, lest you think it can’t happen to you, dear reader, we escort you to a tournament game, featuring the world’s most active Grandmaster (3,700+ world rated games) Viktor Korchnoi, in a marathon contest. Early on, Korchnoi’s opponent had moved his Rook to h5, and many moves later, back to h8. Soon after, Black castled with the same Rook. Neither player noticed, (the game was drawn) but the error wasn’t caught for weeks. The result stood, as did the prize moneys awarded.
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

Controlling the d-file. The Miami Team now really begins to find moves to keep White’s King above water.

For Black now, first thing’s first - to weaken c3, and to place the entire army on open lines. There is no hurry.

19...Rab8 (diagram)

Of course not 19...Rd8?? (None specified, it doesn’t matter which Rook, they are both blunders) 20 Qxd8 +-.

20 b3 f5!

Direct, allowing the superior side to open more lines.

21 Rd2!!

Only a perfect defense holds. White can only wait in the “red zone”. Here Black thought for a long time. It is a very serious matter to permit White’s chained Nc3 to stand like a hotel in the center. E.g. 21...fxe4(?) 22 Nxe4 Rbd8 23 Qc3 Rxd2 24 Kxd2 Rd8+ 25 Kc1 Rd3 Qc5! +, or 25...Bd3 26 Nc5! Qxg2 27 Rd1 +- (“Win by Pin”)

21...Rbd8 22 Qb4!

An important clue, left behind for the human on the electronic trail. The first player “sees” the great danger, spurning two powerful Rooks for the Queen. It is not the pieces off the board that matter, it is the condition of the ones left behind. White is virtually a Rook down, and his forces can not be easily linked.
Again, clever at first sight is 22 Qe5? fxe4! 23 Nxe4 Rxd2 24 Kxd2 Rd8+? 25 Kc1 Bd3 26 Nc5! Qxg2 27 Rd1 +- “Win by Pin”.
In the dead of night, however, Acers found a murderous intermezzo, 24...Rf5! forcing White to resign!

22...Rb8 23 Qd4 Rfd8

Reminiscent of Mednis-Fischer (p. 141).
O.K. No more Mr. Nice Guy. White must exchange off the marauding Rooks, leaving White to “trip the light squares lightly”.

Position after 23...Rfd8
The decisive moment.
Black awaits the “safe and sure” move to hold the pawn edge:
24 Qe3? and like an assassin in the night, a powerful combination then sweeps White off the board.
24...Rxd2 25 Kxd2 Rd8+ 26 Kc1 f4!! (a decoy sacrifice, to force White’s Queen far afield as the Knight must be protected).

The direct consequence of Black’s 19th move. 27 Qf3 Rd3!! - Acers. (Themes: Interference, Double Attack, Demolition of Pawn Structure, Checkmate) 28 cxd3 Qxc3+ 29 Kb1 Qxb3+ 30 Kc1 Bxd3.
While the mating threat is not yet fatal, 31 Kd2 Qc2+ 32 Ke1 Bxe4, a fortune teller is not required to read the distant future:

a) 33 Qxf4? Bxg2 + (White’s unmoved Rook falls at last)

b) 33 Qd1 Qxd1 34 Kxd1 Bxg2 35 Re1 Bd5 ⊥. An armada of Black pawns go sailing forth on all fronts while White’s King and Rook watch events unfold. I am often asked how far in advance a chess master sees in difficult positions. Probably no more than 10-12 moves deep - tops, as here.
Laven had completely different plans.

**24 Qxd8+! Rxd8 25 Rxd8+ Kf7 26 Kd2**

The only move! White has only to develop the unmoved Rook to the a-file to consolidate. Incredibly, there now occurs three totally different “draws-by-3-time-repetition” on both attack and defense. This has never before happened to me in a lifetime of chess.

(Ed. - Remember too that Acers sidestepped an earlier repetition when shuffling his Rooks!)

**26...Ke7!**

Mandatory. The Rooks will not be allowed near Black’s King. At this point I already knew White had a miracle draw. Stubbornly, I just could not bring myself to close the game.

Staying active at all times. 27 Rd4? Qc5 ends it, or 27 Rh8? Qc5 (threatens f2 and 28...Qd4+ winning the Knight) 28 Ra1 Qd4+ 29 Kc1 Qxc3 30 Rxa6 fxe4 with a “Queen everywhere” endgame win.

**27 Kg8**

Draw by repetition #1 offered...

**29...Qd6+**

No thank you.

**30 Ke1 Qa3+! 31 Kd2! Qd6+ 32 Kc1 Qa3+**
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

33 Kd2!

Black e-mailed “Draw”, nothing else, as 33...Qd6+ repeats a third time. Repetition series #2.

Quite a start, but could Black have gotten more? Was a draw the right measure of Black’s initiative? Was something missed, or perhaps underestimated?

In the post-mortem analysis, there was one last try to recollect: 33...Qd6+ 34 Kc1 Qa3+ 35 Kb1. Here Black now plays the “sham” combination 35...Bd3!! - an Acers find, seen a month in advance. (analysis diagram). White does not capture the Bishop, losing the entire queenside, but protects b3. There would follow 36 Rb8! Qa7 37 Rg8! (37 Rb4 risks ...Qc5 ⊥) Qa3! 38 Rb8 Qa7. The third (Ed. 4th!) repetition encountered in but forty moves.

This initial encounter had raged on for months. Offshoot variations were played out in correspondence, always looking to test the lines - to prove and improve the theory. One hundred hours of analysis. So much had happened. The defense I devised, the tactics, the great effort involved led me to a memorable game indeed. On display was the clear computer skill, with that subtle nuance of humanity, in holding bleak positions. Wondering... “Why not 6 Be3?” Laven got this hurricane game for openers. Memories flood in...

(Ed. - For a continued discussion of the theory of 6 Be3, see p. 37. Now, time out for another Flashback Scene from New Orleans...)
Hard fought draws not only make great stories, they make history. Looking back some eighty years, time now to recall an encounter with New Orleans architect/chess problemist Andrew Lockett for a firsthand account of what was, perhaps, the most famous draw in history (Mr. Lockett authored *Chess Players of New Orleans*, which can be found in the New Orleans Public Library, and in the White Collection - the largest chess collection in the world, stored at the Cleveland Public Library. There one can find a litany of score tables, long gone clubs and chess personalities):

1958... Mr. Lockett at the *Cafe Du Monde* is now speaking. Be quiet. He has just rescued you from the Trailways bus station, penniless. Eat those *beignets* with *mucho gusto*, you won’t be able to eat anything at all when you hear...

Jude, I was a Western Union telegraph delivery boy while an architecture student at Columbia University, during the New York 1924 International. Messages for Lasker, Capablanca and Alekhine were in my hands daily. That led to my being witness to what is, to this day, *the greatest game I ever saw*. It lasted three days.

As you know Edward Lasker*, a distant relative of 27-year World Champion Emanuel Lasker, astutely got to play his namesake because of a challenge big stakes match versus Frank Marshall, then U.S. Champion. Edward Lasker darn near won that match. Hospitalized during its progress, Edward Lasker nearly died. Rushed from the hospital with frock still on, he had to play a forced adjourned game and quickly lost. That proved to be the margin of victory, though no one dreamed it at the time.

“At New York 1924 Emanuel Lasker was cutting the chess world to pieces, two or three games ahead of the man who took his title - Capablanca. They couldn’t catch him, but the critical 6th round foretold doom, with Dr. Lasker facing the outsider opponent. I saw every move. Pressed to the glass panel of the press room, watching, were Alekhine, Capablanca, Bogolyubov and Reti, all talking like mad men at once in several languages. Jude, I actually heard that famous Capablanca remark at the 1st adjournment:

What’s this, you make combinations against the doctor, ha ha ha!

*Edward Lasker (1885-1981) - Civil Engineer, Inventor (the Medical Breast Pump), one of the most notable, best-selling chess authors ever: *Chess for Fun, Chess for Blood, The Adventure of Chess*, and the all-time classic, *Chess Secrets I Learned from the Masters.*
Edward Lasker

It went 103 moves. A war. March 23-25, 1924. Lockett reached for his pocket set, showing the “hopeless” position being played out right in front of all Grandmaster eyes and the press room. By move 92, facing a forced endgame with only a Knight left against a Rook and pawn edge... (White to move)

Dr. Emanuel Lasker - went on to find a miracle “one in a million” draw (see below)

< subpoence>

New York, 1924, via New Orleans 1958... Draw!

I don’t know, it’s awfully difficult. (Ed Lasker answering Capablanca)

GM spectators were on top of their typewriters, the press room people listening closely to Capablanca and Alekhine. No one ever dreamed it was a draw. Dr. Lasker was playing like a god, and the other players knew it. I distinctly remember Ed Lasker running to a reporter:

Jake, don’t send out the story... He’s found a draw, I don’t know how!

Capablanca and Alekhine were visibly astonished, pressing their faces up against the glass panel looking out at the chess table. During the game, Dr. Lasker sent out for cigars a dozen times. I bought one for him myself."

Lunch is over, 98 degrees. Time for Mr. Lockett to walk down Pere Antoine Alley, aside the St. Louis Cathedral, and climb in the creaky third floor elevator. Lockett was creating an exact replica of the Gone With the Wind mansion, Tara. The money was just pouring in. Good for him! Silent, I walked slowly to Chartres Avenue, into the old book store. There was just one chess book on the front shelf, having a most convenient bookmark.

Just open...

“The game was in its 14th hour. I had to concede a draw... I don’t think that in my whole chess career, I have played another game on which I worked with comparable intensity. Although I did not win it, I have always treasured it as one of those games which make one glad to know chess.”

- Edward Lasker, Chess Secrets I Learned from the Masters.

Conclusion: 87 Kd4! Rc8 88 g7! (Not 88 f5? Ke7 - Khalifman) Ke6 89 g8(Q)+ Rxc8 90 Kc4 Rg3 91 Na4!! Kf5 92 Kb4 Kxf4 93 Nb2 Ke4 94 Na4 Kd4 95 Nb2 Rf3 96 Na4 Re3 97 Nb2 Ke4 98 Na4 Kf3 99 Ka3! Ke4 100 Kb4 Kd4 101 Nb2 Rh3 102 Na4 Kc3 103 Kxb3 Kd4+ Draw Agreed. ½-½.
With the Acers 6...Ne6 defense well represented, the search for refutation, if any, continues down another path.

From overhead, we scan the board. What is it that White has for the pawn? What formation can we expect? How will play develop should Black simply return his Knight to c6?

- The Outlook: “The House of Stone” (diagram).

- **White’s pawn offer** is for attack, coordination and space. The attack prevents the transition to an endgame where Black’s extra pawn carries decisive weight.

- **The advance of the f, g and h pawns** is available with or without Rook support. In every case, open game play is tense, dangerous for Black.

- We call the reader’s attention to factors almost never seen in classical 1 e4 e5 play. **Queenside “castling long”** is the main variation of play, and the castled pawn structure is rarely disturbed by the opponent. White can win in the center, kingside and/or queenside.

- **The formation crushes defenders** awaiting developments, who risk losing before move 20 if they wait too long. Imagine a tractor through one’s living room. White is developed NOW.

- **The attack works best without threats** - development alone awaits errors by Black, and reacts immediately to them. Black has no obvious sign posts, and can easily drift towards a loss.
C2. 6...Nc6 - The Gibraltar Defense (diagram)

7 Nc3

a) **The Drifters**: 7...Nf6 8 Nd5! h6?! Black fails to plan a concrete defense.

b) **The Keepers**: 7...Nf6 8 Nd5! Nxd5, Black plays to win with the pawn advantage.

c) **Waterloo**: 7...d6?!
Black delays development to solidify the center pawn.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>C2. 6...Nc6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 e4 e5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Nf3 Nc6</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Bc4 Nc5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 d4 Bxd4</td>
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<td>5 Nxd4 Nxd4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Be3 Nc6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Ne3 Nf6</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7...d6?! (51))</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Bg5? .....</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 0-0?! .....</td>
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<td>8 Nd5 h6?! (39)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 ... Nxd5 (40)</td>
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<td>8 ... d6 (45)</td>
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**7...Nf6**

The best and most principled move, after which an unprepared White player may slip badly. Another idea is 7...Nge7 followed by ...f5 immediately.

**8 Nd5!**

Absolutely essential. The only move to preserve the initiative and provide play for the pawn.

- Mechanical and bad is 8 Bg5? h6 9 Bxf6 Qxf6 10 Nd5 Qd8. White is a pawn down with only pipe dreams for an attack.

- 8 0-0!? d6 9 f4(?) Ng4! when both 10 Bd2 and 10 Bc1 exf4 11 Bxf4 Nge5 allow Black to defend with vigor.

- In early studies, 8 f3? was also tried, with no visible compensation. White must play with energy, now.
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

(a) Drifter: 8...h6?!

Black has conceded the Bishop pair and development, in return for the valuable center pawn. His plan may be 9...d6 and 10...Be6.

9 Qf3! (diagram)

White hits on the down side of 8...h6. The attacker puts more pressure on f6 and f7, while also eyeing c7.

Should Black carelessly trade here without plan, i.e. 9...Nxd5 10 exd5 Ne7? 11 d6 is lethal. Alternatively, 10...Nd4 11 Bxd4 exd4 12 d6 0-0 gives White a free hand, and 13 0-0 is good here. 10...Qh4!? hitting the Bc4 can be crossed up with 11 g4!?

Creative play to answer a creative move, which deserves further exploration. Note that White varies from the “House-of-Stone” formation (Qe2, 0-0-0, etc.) because Black’s slow development allows him to step it up a notch.

9...d6 10 0-0-0 Nxd5

Far too late, branding 8...h6 as a weakening waste of time.

11 exd5

11 Bxd5?! leaves Black a pawn ahead after 11...Qe7 or 11...Qf6. Not 11...Qd7? 12 h3 ± and Black must untangle again - Acers.

11...Ne7

Many players will try 11...Na5? 12 Bd3 ± c6?? 13 b4 +- or 12...b6 13 Rg1! (g4 is coming).
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

12 Rhg1!

A high class waiting move. Black is running horribly late in developing play. White can prepare noncommittal replies while Black commits his pieces to catch up. Examples:

12...Qd7 13 Qe2! (setting up the battery) a6 14 f4 followed by the steady advance of the pawns.

12...f5? 13 Qh5+ g6 14 Qe2 with f4 to follow. The pawn on h6 must be defended, and the Bishops give the middlegame initiative to White. 15...f4 16 Bd2 Bf5 17 g3 ± opening the Black position with a can opener. “The two spears” (Fischer) play a large role here as the expanding lines become open.

It is therefore critical for Black to begin his studies/analyses by improving upon 8...h6 (diagram)

8...Nxe4? (Black sticks with his original “take first” method)
9 Qg4 +- ends all resistance.
White attacks the wayward steed and threatens invasion at g7.

A Miami Variation miniature.

(b1) Keeper: 8...Nxd5 9 exd5

This exchange, with a proper follow-up, is the primary focus of the Gibraltar Defense. Laven explains that the 8...d6 alternative is played to prepare this trade and stop the pawn thrust now possible: 8...Nxd5 9 exd5 Nd4? 10 d6. (The critical test of 8...d6?! is 9 Bg5)
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

With the nature of the position undergoing a radical change, play now becomes more violent.

Black gains a foothold in the center, while returning a pawn to remove White’s Bishop pair. Devising this defense was no small matter in New Orleans.

With the nature of the position undergoing a radical change, play now becomes more violent.

9...Qh4! 10 Qe2 Nd4

(diagram)

Black gains a foothold in the center, while returning a pawn to remove White’s Bishop pair. Devising this defense was no small matter in New Orleans.

With the nature of the position undergoing a radical change, play now becomes more violent.

11 Bxd4 Qxd4 12 c3 Qf4

I also analyzed 12...Qh4 and 12...Qc5, inviting 13 Qxe5+ Qe7 14 Qxe7 Kxe7 15 d6+ when I intended cxd6 16 0-0-0 Re8, holding in the safest manner. All of this was of course, subject to intense review as White displayed a plan. - Acers.

13 d6

An enterprising 2-pawn sack which I was totally ready for. - Acers

13...cxd6

13...c5? (typically suggested by computers) creates horrible weaknesses throughout the Black position.

14 0-0

Black had expected White to sacrifice time for material with 14 Rd1? b5! 15 Bxb5 Bb7! 16 Rxd6?! (16 0-0 is better) Bxg2 + . Instead White plays in true gambit style, staying active and awaiting chances, although with no apparent plan. Black has one...

14...b5! 15 Bxb5 Bb7
The extra d-pawn is most useful. Meanwhile, White watches and waits for a clear shot at Bxd7+, gauging the effects of Black’s pawn moves, which present obstacles for both attack and defense. 16 Bxd7+ Kxd7 17 Qb5+ was possible, but not recommended. The compact d6-e5 pawn formation, plus the ...Qf6 defensive possibility was not encouraging for White.

Correct, unexpected. White completes development but now shores up Black’s center, and forces Black’s pieces to comfortable shelter.

By this point, I had noticed:

- 18 Bxd7+ to isolate Black’s King in the center of the board. Black defends 18...Kxd7 19 Qb5+ Kc7 20 Qc5+ with great complications. E.g. after 20...Kb8 21 Rxd5 Bxd5 22 Qxd5 Black answers 22...Qa4, or 20...Be6 21 Rxd5 Rhd8? 22 Qa5+ would actually lose for Black. In many variations Black’s King goes for a walk with an extra piece.

- “Expected was 18 g3 Qf5 19 c4 0-0 20 cxd5 d6 21 Be6 Rab8.”

- Acers
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

Position after 18...Qf5
White counts on piece activity everywhere to handle all seasons. Black, however, is delighted to remove the Queen to safe quarters, and expected none of this “help” from the opponent. Black maintains the mighty pawn phalanx with an extra pawn.

19 Bd3 Qe6

Again forced, and most welcome. Chess is quite an easy board game when your opponent places your pieces ideally to defend the position. Here comes another one... - Acers.

20 Qh5+ Qf7

Certainly not 20...g6? 21 Bxg6+ crushing Black’s position.

21 Qh3 Kf8

“Show me” - Acers. White’s position may be cut in two if White prematurely places the Rook on the King’s wing: 22 Rh4 g6 23 Bxg6? Qxg6 24 Rg4 Qf7 25 Qh6+ Ke8 26 Rg7 Qe6. Black may also play ...e5-e4, forcing White to lose time to remove Black’s center, throughout the game. White keeps options handy.

22 Ra4! Be6 23 Ra5

During play, I thought 23 Ra6 was much better, preventing ...d6 and also leaving Black with an unprotected Bishop. On 23...Bb7 24 Ra5, the Bb7 interferes with Black’s seventh rank protection. Later, merits of the text surfaced. - Acers

23...g6 (diagram)

Black threatens 24...Kg7 consolidating the advantage, but...
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

24 Qh6+ Qg7

To be seriously considered was 24...Kg8 with the plan ...Qf8! when Black’s King will no longer be denied g7.

Black naturally wishes to sacrifice the a-pawn for initiative, exchanges above all, to maintain a mighty three pawn center.

25 Qe3 Qe7 26 Qh6+ Qg7 27 Qe3 Qe7 28 f4!

Rejecting the draw on 28 Qh6+ and granting the Black King g7.

28...e4 29 Bc2 ±

A noteworthy example of point-counterpoint play at its best. The position is full of interest. White now has vigorous play, the direct attack against Black’s pawn center as real compensation for a pawn. Black has several plans to consider:

29...Kg7 30 Bb3 Qd6 31 Bxd5 Bxd5 32 Rd1?! Qb6 33 Qxb6 axb6 34 R5xd5 Rxa2 with sufficient counterplay, but 32 Qd4! ± improves.

29...d6 30 b4! (30 Bb3? Qc7) where the idea is simply 31 Bb3 32 Rd1 33 Bxd5 ± or piling up on d5 with Qd4, Rd1 etc.

A clear step forward by the Team in the evolution of the gambit, worth careful study. White achieved The Miami Variation full board press on both flanks versus a powerful, reinforced center

- hardly expected from the gambit.
A very serious decision indeed, permitting weak pawns around Black’s King.

Black reasons that the center pawn plus is such a powerful barrier to White’s attack, that he may allow an otherwise unthinkable pin upon the Nf6.

Only alert defense (and a great deal of middlegame experience) permit Black to maintain the balance. - Acers.

White now has a choice:

b2.1: 10 Bxf6 (favorably resolving the pin)
b2.2: 10 f4 (increasing the pressure)

Variation b2.1. This may be White’s best. 9 Bg5 poured it on, when either breaking in by capturing on f6, or pressure everywhere with c3/Qf3/Rd1 are good. 10 0-0, and 10 c3 are also strong.

Setting into motion a serious problem for Black to solve. 12 Qf3 with a bind is on the horizon. Next will come a strong White Bishop at d5, castling queenside, and a Rook lift to d3 where White can dictate play, anywhere. Only the fact that 11 c3 (losing a precious move) was necessary (11 Qf3? Nd4! 12 Nxf6+?? Kf8 →) permits Acers a counter defense, worked out in great detail.
11...Bxd5 12 Bxd5 Ne7 (! - Acers)

Leading to a rare position on the open board, where the Bishop is quite useless. A pawn down, White does not consider 13 Bb3 c6 14 Qf3 f5 with counterplay right now. Black may also offer 13...Qd7 14 Qf3 f5 15 exf5 0-0-0 16 Bxf7 Nxf5 =.

Grim reality, the jaws tighten. White can not coordinate pieces, following the variation now appearing for keeps, on the computer "horizon" - 14 Qa4+? Qd7 15 Qxa7 0-0 with the powerful threat ...c7-c6. All lines would then become open, while Black's Rooks penetrate on the b-file. One line noticed was 16 Bd5 Nxd5 17 exd5 Qb5! preventing castling on both wings.

14...Nxd5 15 exd5 Rxb2

"Ending the prepared variation with a Rook on the 7th rank, and a pawn surplus to boot. There is of course zero chance that White would now follow with 14 Qa4+ with a post-mortem in progress, surrounding White's King in the center." - Acers.

16 0-0 Ke7 =

A well considered surprise - and the final point. Black's five-pawn net about his King permit total coordination of all the major pieces. Protecting h7 will never be a consideration, as Black just takes over the entire center board. White's solid but passive pieces plus better pawn structure barely hold.
"In 1969-70, I played more than four hundred tournament and match games. *Eight matches were once going on at the same time at the Mechanics Institute* (San Francisco). Not once did I ever permit an opening defense in my repertoire, with my Black King at e7 or f8. It was truly amazing to find my King marching to both squares in the bewildering final games with the sly Laven tricksters." - Acers.

(*Ed. - The Miami Variation* gains strength in unfamiliar waters. Laven’s gambit offers no apparent compensation, but gives an extra pawn’s worth of play.)

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

17 \( \text{Rb1} \) (diagram)

Laven tried 17 \( \text{Qc1} \) \( \text{Qb8} \) 18 \( \text{Qh6} \) \( \text{Qf8} \) 19 \( \text{Qe3} \) \( \text{Qb8} \) 20 \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qb6} \) in an early game. Now the Team gets down to business.

17...\( \text{Qb8} \) 18 \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qb6} \)

19 a4 \( \text{Rhb8} \) 20 \( \text{Rxb2} \)

White neutralizes only some of the pressure down the b-file, while Black removes the central pawns and moves the Queen to d5-a8.

20...\( \text{Qxb2} \) 21 \( \text{f4!} \)

21 \( \text{Qc4} \) \( \text{Qb6} \) (Threat: \( ...\text{Qe5!} \mp \)) 22 \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qb2} \) \( \frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2} \) was also weeded out in the match. Only open lines around Black’s King will offer real counterplay.

21...\( \text{Rb3} \) 22 \( \text{fxe5} \) \( \text{Qxc3} \)

“I now expected 23 \( \text{exd6+} \) \( \text{exd6} \) leaving Black with five (!) lonely pawn islands and an exposed King at d7, while also removing the dangerous passed pawn duo in the center.” - Acers.
23 exf6+

The first player had other ideas.

23...Kd8 24 Qxh7 Qd4+ 25 Kh1 Qxd5 (diagram)

26 Qg8+ Kd7 27 Rg1

White’s dilemma is clearly illustrated by 27 Re1 Qe6! ♦ The back rank is unprotected.

27...a5

Black rules the board. White is virtually an entire Rook down.

However, Black can not protect his King at d7 while advancing the mighty united center pawns, freely handed to him.

28 Qg4+

Simply silly was 28 h4? Rh3 mate.

28...Qe6 29 Qg5 c5 30 Qg8 Qe8 31 Qg4+ Qe6

31...Kc7?! 32 Qc4 Rb4 33 Qa6 Qxa4 34 Re1! ± (Acers). The will to win does have its limits, as the King has no clothes.

32 Qg8 Qe8

Never permitting 33 Qa8: 32...Qxf6 33 Qa8 Qd8 34 Qd5! ± - Acers

33 Qg4+ Draw ½-½

Laven saved the best for last - the final match game, and an encore!
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

The move was actually a great surprise to Acers.

Here we go... Laven’s Specialty. Notice again that direct center play puts Black under the most pressure. “Vacation” moves like 10 f3? or 10 0-0!? permit Black greater freedom.

The move was actually a great surprise to Acers.

11 f5 with a serious initiative is unexpectedly menacing.

10...exf4?

Had I dreamed of the extraordinary positional trap awaiting me (Black will now lose three moves out of hand) I would have chosen 10...Bxd5 11 exd5 Nb8 - blockading, with a pawn edge. The over-the-board problems the Miami Variation are well illustrated here. Understandably, Black takes time to establish a Knight at e5, offering the superior chances for Black, if maintained. However, this error fatally opens the floodgates for White’s forces.

11 0-0 +


11...Ne5

Losing another move. Capturing the Bishop on c4 is never possible.

12 Rxf4 Bxd5

“No Knight, no problem.” - Acers

Aside from 12...Nxc4? 13 Nxf6+ there is little hope in 12...Bxd5 13 exd5 Nxc4 14 Bxf6 gxf6 15 Rxc4 when White already has a
winning advantage - a massive tripling on the e-file or f-file. Pressure occurs on 15...Qe7 16 Qg4 when Black is history. - Acers

13 exd5 Qd7 14 Bxf6 gxf6

Akers now expected 15 Qd4 c5 with a Knight to remember. But...

15 Bd3!! (diagram)

Threat: 16 Bf5 +—

Many observe that a retreating move is the most difficult to find. Acers never analyzed play on the newly opened b1-h7 diagonal, (in particular the weakness on f5) which means that Black’s towering Knight, the only compensation for the dreadful doubled f-pawns and stranded King, must be exchanged.

15...Nxd3 16 Qxd3 0-0-0 17 Rxf6 Rdg8

Hoping for some counterplay to compensate for the coming seige.

18 Raf1 Rg7 19 Qd4

+ Decisive centralization, with dual threats: 20 Qxa7 and 20 Rxd6!

19...R8g8 20 Qxa7! Rxd2+ 21 Kh1 c5 22 Qa8+ Kc7

Entering a Rook ending with an extra pawn. Bad was 22 dxc6? Rg1+! with sudden counterplay versus White’s ventilated King.

23 Qxg8 Rxg8 24 Rxf7 Rg7 25 Rxd7+ Kxd7

+ Creative play in the opening has met with success for White, an extra pawn in the endgame.
Very simple, but simply very dangerous.

By neglecting to play 7...Nf6, Black allows a “quick strike”, which ultimately weakens the kingside and adds potency to the well mobilized White forces.

"This came out of the blue. I had expected 8 Qe2, but now face the mortal blow, 9 Qxf7. White provokes premature weakness rather than immediate development of the pieces, however awkward.”
- Acers. It is a matter of chess arrogance to even consider...

Again recall the danger for the defense - the desire to “get creative” (- A. Yermolinsky, The Road to Chess Improvement.)

- 8...Qe7? 9 Nd5 +- 8...Qf6? 9 Nd5 +- (idea: 9...Qd8? 9 Nb6!)
- 8...Be6?! 9 Bxe6 g6 10 Bxf7+ Kxf7 11 Qe2 ± leaving Black’s King in shaky quarters following 11...Qd7 12 Nd5 Kg7 13 f4! N8e7 14 0-0-0 Rhe8 (Laven-Acers, test game 2002)
- 8...Qd7 (best under the circumstances) 9 Nd5 N8e7 (9...Nf6 10 Qg5 is hard to meet) 10 Nf6+ gxf6 11 Qxf7+ Kd8 12 Qxf6 Re8 13 Bf7 with advantage.

“A chess player must learn to suffer.” - GM Paul Keres.
Indefensible weakening of the King’s wing. A pawn plus with a solid defense in prospect was not enough for Black. He must now live with danger, creating good positional compensation for White,
already justifying the Queen sortie, filling the board with weak squares where there were none - h6 and f6 are now huge holes.

It is never too late to prepare for the future...

Most people do not like to lose games and take defeat badly. People who want to improve should take their defeats as lessons, and endeavor to learn what to avoid in the future. *Nothing is so healthy as a thrashing at the proper time*, and from few won games have I learned as much from most of my defeats. Of course, I would not like to be beaten at a critical moment, but otherwise, I hope that I may at odd times in the future lose a few more games, if thereby, I derive as much benefit as I have obtained from defeats in the past... There have been times in my life when I came very near thinking that I could not lose even a single game. Then I would be beaten, and the lost game would bring me back from dreamland, to earth. - J.R. Capablanca, Havana, Cuba, *My Chess Career*, 1920.

Black recognized 10...Bxc4 11 Qxc4 Nge7 12 Bg5 Qd7 was a difficult defense. However I should have considered playing it.

- Acers

Again second best. 11...Nce7 12 Bg5 Bxd5 attempts to hold both position and pawn. Not 12...c6? 13 Nxe7 Nxe7 14 Bf6 Rg8 15 Bxe5 ± Blockade is the idea.
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

12 Bb5!? (diagram)

"Attempting to destroy Black’s unbroken wall of pawns, but instead 12 Bd3 (!) + leaves the Knight dangling" - Laven.
The alert reader will note that White is playing the “House-of-Stone” formation.

12...c6?!

“There comes a time in every chess player’s life when one must eat a little crow.” - GM Yasser Seirawan.
Here 12...Nc6 (sitting tight) was the better alternative, whether Black liked it or not. 13 Bh6?! Bxd5 14 Bg7 Be6 (the idea overlooked) 15 Bxh8 f6 leaves the Bishop on h8 forever, with counterplay for Black.

13 Bd2 Bxd5

Naturally White’s mighty connected pieces “do not care” how the position is opened - 13...b6 14 Bxa5 bxa5 15 Ba4 ⊕ or 14...cxb5 15 Bb4 +−

14 exd5 cxb5 15 Bxa5

White’s advantage sweeps the board. King safety, superior pawn structure, lead in development, strong Bishop versus dormant Knight. There is much more to come.

15...f6 16 f4 b6 17 Bc3 Ne7 18 g4! h6

The alternative was 18...0-0-0 19 g5

19 Rhf1 0-0-0 20 h4 Rdf8 21 fxe5 fxe5
The Miami Variation, 6 Be3 (Second Game)

22 Rxf8+ Rxf8 23 Bd2!
(diagram)
To establish a distant outside passed pawn on the King's wing after 23...Nxd5 24 Bxh6 Rh8 25 Bg5 with h5 to follow if needed. Also strong is 24 Qe4 - centralization with penetration by the Queen.

23...Ng8
On 23...Rh8 24 Qe4! with the general plan of 25 Rf1, 26 Rf6, 27 Bb4 and so on. Best play appears to be 24...Qc7 (Laven) 25 Qf3! winning for White as the threats of 26 Bxh6! 26 Bb4! and 26 Qf6 promise pronto invasion - Acers

24 Rg1 a6 25 Qd3 Qf7 26 a4! Qf3
"Black stays very active. It was impossible to foresee the remarkable continuation that keeps the attack burning, especially from a "hit-and-miss" opponent that had never shown such ability in key games before. It was fabulous to watch unfold." - Acers.

27 Qxg6 Qxd5 28 Be3! Qf3 29 Bxb6
Even 29 Re1 ± can be played.

29...Qf4+ 30 Kb1 Qc4
Black counters and will exchange Rooks with a draw, or mate after 31 Qxd6? Rf1+. Here 31 axb5 was expected. Both Laven and I likewise noticed 31...axb5 32 Qxd6? Rf1+ 33 Rxf1+ Qxf1
34 Ka2 Qc4+ draw. Real progress for White after 31 g5 hxg5 32 hxg5 Ne7 or 32...e4 was an all-consuming analysis. Certainly no unforgettable moment was expected from the Laven entourage. It was THE moment in the entire Italian Gambit System project.

31 Rd1!! (diagram)

“Pure computer analysis recommended 31 axb5, and all but insisted on playing it. 31 Rd1 was recommended somewhere down the pecking order. Laven liked it. This amateur was sticking with the basics - Rooks belong on open files, and it was clear. The d-file was soon to be a wide-open highway. A full day of test runs to prove the point, and 31 Rd1!! was delivered at the “speed of light” through cyberspace to the awaiting chess master.” - Laven

In another world, deep in the night, Jude Acers frowned, reached for a postcard, penned 31...Rf1 as planned in all events, returned to reviewing Pirc Defense games for recommendations as White (Volume II), with Kasparov’s nineteen pages of remarks on his desk. Acers looked at the diagram: “Game of the Millennium”, Wijk Aan Zee, Holland 1999.

The World #1 played 33 c3+ Kxc3 34 Qa1+ Kd2 35 Qb2+ Kd1 36 Bf1!! ++. (Look at the key variation for practice) Turn off the light, good night.

3 a.m. Blindfold chess....

Suddenly I realize that Laven can force Black’s King to b4. Can White just move Kb2 with Kasparov’s mating threats? Seized with fear...

My God, White’s team is actually trying to mate me right now!
How dare they! The lights go ablaze as the line is checked by chess set. (diagram)

Ah. Black plays 1...Qc3+ winning.
False alarm. Good night.

Then Acers saw it! What if White does not cooperate, not driving Black’s King to b4, but leaving it on a4? Back on went the lights.

White to move, (diagram) wins. 38 Kb2!! suddenly Black must protect his Rook while facing the instant threat 39 Qxa6+ Kxb4 40 Qa3 mate. Unbelievably, there is only 38...a5 39 Rxf1 Qxf1 40 Qc7!! Faced with checkmate (41 Qxa5) Black sees at last 40...Kxb4 41 Qc3+ Ka4 42 Qa3 mate. This is not good. Acers now carefully examined the postcard to be mailed at dawn’s early light. 31...Rf1 32 Qe8+ Kb7 33 Qd7+ Kxb6 Tragic but forced. 33...Kb8 permits the exchange of Queens, losing the Rf1 after 34 Qc7+! or mate. 34 a5+! only now revealing precisely why Laven adamantly refused to ever play axb5 - the Pawn is an extra Bishop or Queen in the attack. Never give it away. 34...Kxa5 (34...Kc5 35 Qxd6 mate) 35 Qd8+! Kb4 36 Qxd6+ Ka5 37 b4+ winning in all variations 37...Ka4 (diagram!) And then it hits - even White’s last move is not required. 37 Qd8+ Kb4 38 Qd2+ mates immediately or removes Black’s Queen. Computer revenge extraordinaire. Ten sprightly moves deep.
“Speechless, I could not even reply for five days.” - Acers

31...Nf6 32 Rxd6 Qf1+ 33 Ka2

The end is near.

33...Qf4 34 b3 e4 35 Bc5 Qc1 36 Rc6+ Resigns 1-0.
Crossing Over, 4...Bxd4 5 Nxd4 exd4?!

A quick review of the critical Italian Gambit lines thus far examined will reveal a stubborn Black defender repeatedly holding a stake in the center. The absence of the c5 Bishop demands this approach, as yielding the center and the Bishop pair is disastrous.

Here is a prime example of Yermolinsky’s “Getting Creative” theory, which lands Black in a jungle of unfavorable complications.

Here is a prime example of Yermolinsky’s “Getting Creative” theory, which lands Black in a jungle of unfavorable complications.

6 0-0 d6

Alternatives are messy at best for the defender. Examples:

a) 6...Nge7 7 Bg5 h6 8 Bh4 0-0 9 f4 (+ - Acers)
   a1) 9...Na5(!) 10 Bd3 d6 11 f5→ points the way to attack: 11...Re8
   12 Qg4 g5 13 Bxg5 hxg5 14 Qxg5+ Ng6 15 Qg3! ±
   a2) 9...d6!? 10 f5 Ne5 (an outpost useful after the attack) 11 f6!:
   11...gx6? 12 Qh5! Nf5 (12...Nxc4? 13 Qxh6 + -) 13 exf5
   Nxc4 14 Qxh6 Qe7 15 Rf3 Bxf5 16 Rg3+ Bg6 17 Rh3 + -;
   (Threat: 18 Qh8++! and 19 Bxf6++ Kg8 20 Rh8 mate)
   11...N7c6! is a good practical try: 12 fxg7 Qxh4 13 gx8(Q)+
   Kxf8 ±/± with wild play.

b) 6...Qf6 7 c3! Nge7 (7...dxc3 8 Nxc3 Nge7 9 Nb5 Qe5 10 Qf3
   0-0 11 Bf4 Qc5 12 Rac1+ - McAuley-E. Greenleaf, Lee Circle
   Tournament, 1959 is not the way to defend) 8 f4 0-0 sets up a
   tricky position, best suited for those who have a “sixth sense” in
   the art of maneuvering:

   b1) 9 f5 d6 10 g4 dxc3 (10...Ne5?? 11 g5) 11 Nxc3 Bd7
   (11...Qd4+ 12 Qxd4 Nxd4 13 g5 N7c6 14 Nd5 ± where
   White has all the play) 12 Bf4 Rae8 13 Nb5 Na5 (all seems
   well, but there is an ambush coming) 14 g5 Qxb2 15 Rb1 ±
Crossing Over, 4...Bxd4 5 Nxd4 exd4?!

b2) 9 e5 (diagram) Qg6 10 f5!? (White aims for a pure gambit position where his Bishops will have full sweep of the board)

10...Nx5 11 Bd3 d5 12 exd6
(Yes, you might try the attractive 12 g4 if you dare, but if Black has “eagle eyes”, he will catch
12...Nxe5! 13 Bxf5 Bxf5 14 Rxf5
dxc3! (the key move) 15 Nxc3
[15 Rxe5? c2!; 15 Rg5? cxb2 —]
15...Nxg4 16 Rg5 Qb6+ ⊕) 12...dxc3 13 dxc7 Nce7 (Or first
13...cxb2 14 Bxb2 Nce7 - play might continue 15 Qc2 Qb6+ 16 Kh1
Ne3 17 Qc3 f6 18 Re1 N7d5 19 Qd2 Ng4 20 Bc4 Nf2+ 21 Kg1
Nh3+ repeating.) 14 Nxc3 Qb6+ 15 Kh1 Qxc7 16 Qh5
with good attacking chances for the pawn.

b3) 9 g4 with kingside play: 10 g5, or 10 e5 Qh4 11 cxd4 d5
12 Be2! with f5 to follow is worthy of investigation. - Acers.

7 c3!

7...Nf6 now holds no joy for Black. Among many possible treatments, there is simply 8 Bg5 h6 9 Bh4 g5 10 Bg3 Nxe4 11 Re1
d5 12 Bb5 with all kinds of repair work ahead for the defender.

7...dxc3 8 Nxc3

White heads for a Göring Gambit position (see Fifth Game, p. 86), where Black’s Bishop is noticeably missing.

8...Be6 9 Bxe6 fxe6 10 Qb3 Qc8 11 f4 Nge7 12 f5 ±

After 12...exf5, White may try 13 Bg5 or 13 exf5 Nxf5 14 g4.

Certainly, 5...exd4?! demands strong survival techniques to defend.
The Italian Gambit, The Pawn Capture, 4...exd4

~ Let the Journey Continue!! ~

Black Captures the Center Pawn with the Pawn

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4!? exd4

Third Game (5 0-0 Nf6)
6 e5  The Max Lange Attack, 6 c3 The “Last Exit Gambit”

Fourth Game (...d6 Defender’s Choice)

Fifth and Sixth Games (5 c3 Alternate Lines)
5... dxc3 6 Nxc3 Scotch-Göring (5th)
5...Nf6 6 e5 Steinitz-Sveshnikov (6th)

Seventh and Eighth Games (5 c3 Nf6 6 exd4 Bb4+)
7 Bd2 Rossolimo System (7th)
7 Nc3 Steinitz-Möller Attack (8th)

With this standard answer to the unconventional 4 d4!? - we stand at a major crossroads. Note well: This move order allows one option (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 d6, see p. 80) but prevents another (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Qe7, see p. 129). There is also, should you choose, another line transposition:
5 0-0 (5 c3 is the easiest move to navigate) Nf6 6 e5 d5 7 Bb5!? Nxe4 8 Nxd4 (See The Two Knights Defense, p. 206)
...but 7 exf6 is the most testing line.
You will find critical material on all these lines here, and the alert reader should follow the transpositions according to both his own style and tastes, and his opponent’s mastery of the intricacies of all the theory. Rest assured, The Perilous Journey will remain true to its name no matter which path is chosen.

**Third Game**

5 0-0 Nf6

For the tricky 5...d6(!), see p. 80. After 5...Nf6 White may choose:

A. 6 e5 - The Max Lange, or B. 6 c3 - The “Last Exit Gambit”

**A. 6 e5 - The Classical Max Lange Attack**

“The opening is named after the German analyst Max Lange (1865) who developed its ideas in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Max Lange leads immediately to sharp, tactical play. With open lines, diagonals and commonly castling on opposite sides, both players have to be constantly aware of weaknesses in both their opponent’s and their own position. A single slip can easily prove fatal. In this kind of variation the better prepared player usually wins - and quickly! Some of the tactics available at times come like a bolt of lightning, out of the blue, and players of all standards will enjoy being able to play some of the ‘flashy’ moves available.”


The Max Lange is a very dangerous career weapon.

Before entering discussion of this reference material, an analysis outline is appropriate:
Max Lange: Long Variation

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5
4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 Nf6 6 e5 ...

6 .... d5
    .... Ne4?  (62)
         Ng4  (63)

7 exf6 ....
7 Bb5  (Two Kts. - 206)

7 .... dxc4
8 Re1+ ....
8 fxg7?! (64)

8 .... Be6
    Kf8  (65)

9 Ng5 ....
9 fxg7  (66)

9 .... Qd5
    Qxf6?  (66)
         Bf8  (67)
         Qd6?  (67)
         g6?  (67)
         0-0?  (67)

10 Nc3 Qf5
    Qd8/Qd7?  (68)

11 Nce4 ....
    11 g4!? (68)

11 .... 0-0-0
    0-0?  (69)
    gxf6?  (69)
    Bb4?!  (69)
    Bb6?!  (69-71)

12 g4! Qe5!
    .... Qd5?  (72)

13 Nxe6 ....
    13 Nf3  (72-74)

9 .... fxe6
13 .... fxe6
14 fxg7 Rhg8
15 Bh6! d3
15 .... Bb4?  (74)

16 c3 d2
16 .... Bd6  (74)
    Be7  (75)

17 Re2 Rd3!
18 Qf1! Qd5
19 Rd1 Ne5  (75)
6...d5 (diagram)

Black defends the Long Variation - Koltanowski.

White exploits the exposed Black King in tremendous open gambit play. A formidable two-pawn Black center will permit equality, but only with letter perfect defense. Despite (or because of!) a century of analysis, there are numerous, treacherous byways the second player must know, or lose immediately.

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Acers on Koltanowski’s Max Lange Attack...

This variation, in tandem with his 4...Bxd4 5 Nxd4 Nxd4 6 0-0 line from the First Game, was George Koltanowski’s living (eight decades long). He employed it to defeat fifty opponents alone in New Orleans (1956 - Tulane University Cafeteria) and San Francisco, (1968 - Ghirardelli Square).

Just two of more than 1,000 Koltanowski Simultaneous Exhibitions (many played blindfolded with 5-10 opponents at one time)... witnessed by Acers, William Bills, Robert Byrne, Max Burkett, Dennis Fritzinger, John Hall, K.R. Smith, Subu Subramaniam... and hundreds of chess masters all over the world as “Kolty” traveled.

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a) not the often played blunder 6...Ne4? which lost immediately to Paul Morphy’s murderous 7 Bd5! f5 8 exf6 Nxf6 9 Bg5 Be7 10 Bxf6 Bxf6 (10...gxf6 11 Nh4! h5 12 Bf3 ++ Acers) 11 Re1+ Ne7 (∅ 11...Kf8) 12 Ne5! Bxe5 13 Qh5+ g6 14 Qxe5 Rf8 15 Nd2 c6? 16 Ne4! d6 17 Nxd6+ Kd7 18 Be6+ Kc7 19 Nxc8+ with mate in one. (19 Nc4+! - Acers) P. Morphy - P. Domínguez, (Three Board Blindfold Exhibition) Havana, 1864.

Also quite elegant was 8 Nbd2 d6 9 Nxe4 fxe4 10Bg5 Ne7 11 Nh4 g6 12 e6 c6 13 Nf5! ± Breede- H. Kahn, 1996 - Informator.
Position after 6...Ng4 (analysis)

b) 6...Ng4 7 Bf4:

b1) 7...d6 8 exd6 Bxd6 9 Re1+ Kf8 10 Bxd6+ Qxd6 11 c3

(The point: 11...Qc5 12 Nxd4! ± - C. Baker)
Rossolimo-O'Kelly,
Trencianske Teplice 1949.

b2) 7...0-0 8 h3 Nh6, Now:

b2a) 9 Bg5 Be7 10 Bxh6 gxh6 11 Bd5 Kh8 ±
O. Bernstein-R. Fine,

b2b) 9 Bxh6 gxh6 10 c3 d5 11 Bb3 Bf5!

(11...dxc3?! 12 Nxc3 d4
Dobrowolski - Osinski, mailgame 1993)
13 Nd5! Be7 14 Qd3! +- (Euwe, years prior) or
13...Bf5 14 Qc1 Be7 15 Qh6 ± Gligoric
- Informator

12 cxd4 Bb6 13 Ne3 Be4 14 Re1 Bxf3 15 Qxf3 Nxd4
16 Qg4+ Kh8 17 Nxd5 Rg8 18 Qe4 Nxb3
19 axb3 Rg6 with a difficult (but playable) defense
for Black. Louma-Dobias, Prague, 1943.

After 6...d5 White has many weapons, and as noted at the outset,
may now “exit” with 7 Bb5 Ne4 8 Nxd4 - the Sveshnikov Attack of
the Two Knights Defense (See Rogers-I. Pavlovic, p. 206, as White
has already committed to castling).

Journey on!!
All of Black’s pieces are on open lines of attack. Necessary is b) 9...Be7 10 Bxe7 Kxe7!

b1) 11 Nbd2 Rxe7 12 Nxc4 Be6 13 Re1 Kf8 Fotys-Stulik 1940, whereupon Black is still alive with active pieces to compensate for the weak pawn structure. Even here, there is a dangerous second line by Fahrni:

b2) 11 Re1+! Be6 12 Re4! f5 13 Rh4 Kf7 14 Rxe7 Kxg7 15 Rxe7+ Kxg7 (Fahrni-Tartakower, Baden Baden 1914) after 16 Qd2! (Acers) White intends 17 Qf4/18 Nbd2-f1-g3- with a strong attack. Black’s Kingside is seriously weakened.

8 Re1+

Direct attack before the Black King leaves the center. This is by far the most dangerous main variation... Black must know the chosen defense from A to Z, to maintain the balance. White has a forced draw with the initiative in several variations. “The slightest error, loss of time is likely to be fatal” - G. Koltanowski.

“It is a brave man who will enter into the Black side of the Max Lange Attack, unless he is extremely well prepared... He needs to be very careful not to drift into an inferior middlegame/endgame...” - Chris Baker, concluding his 20-page Max Lange encyclopedia.
The Max Lange, 5 0-0 Nf6 6 e5 (Third Game)

Position after 8...Be6 - "Automatic"?

Position after 8...Kf8 (analysis)
Very few players know that serious problems occur for both players after 8...Kf8 9 Bg5!

a) 9...Qd7? 10 Bh6!! and Black resigned. (10...gxh6 11 Qd2+-)

"Did you see that?" - W. Bills.


b) 9...Qd6 10 Nbd2 Bf5 11 Nxc4 ± (Baker)
c) 9...gxf6 10 Bh6+ Kg8 11 Nc3 and the position is critical:

c1) 11...Bb4? 12 Ne4:

- 12...Bb6 13 Qe2! ±
  13...d3? 14 Nxf6+! +- or

- 12...b6 13 c3 Ne5? 14 Nxe5!!
  Bxd1 15 Nd7! Be7 16 Nexc6+
  Bxf6 17 Re8+! Qxe8 18 Nxf6
  mate. Kazic-Vukovic,
  Belgrade 1940

c2) 11...Bb5 12 Ne4 Bf8 13 Qd2.
Now C. Baker shows 3 tries:

- 13...Bg7 14 Ng3!
- 13...Bxh6 14 Qxh6 Bxe4 15 Rxe4 f5 16 Rf4 Qd5 17 Nh4 +-  
- 13...Bg6 14 Bf8 Kxf8! 15 Qh6+ Kg8 16 Nh4 →

c3) 11...Bf8 12 Bxf8 Kxf8 13 Ne4 f5 14 Ng3. C. Baker's Opinion:
"The position at the end is hard to evaluate. Black is two pawns up, but has his Kingside pawn structure shattered. With White’s lead in development, his attacking chances should not be underestimated."

Acers: “Consistent, looks right. Just 15 Qd2 and centralization by 16 Rad1 with the prospect of Qf4. It is still very instructive.”

The find 8...Kf8 can present little-known problems for White.

Ages before, twenty-seven-year World Champ Emanuel Lasker found: b) 11...Qxe7 12 Nxd4 Rd8 13 c3 Rxg7 14 Qa4 Kf8! 

After 9 Ng5, White has powerful threats, and Koltanowski won games with all of them in a hurry...
- 10 Nxe6 fxe6 11 fxg7! Rg8 12 Qh5+ winning Black’s remaining Bishop...
- 10 fxg7 immediately, and
- 10 Rx6+ fx6 11 Nxe6 regaining two minor pieces for Rook and pawn

Losing immediately is 9...Qxf6? 10 Nxe6 fxe6 11 Qh5+ when Black will be a Bishop down in just 12 moves.
Very interesting is 9...Bf8, the “Never Play” Defense (diagram):
(Riddell-Levitt, Chicago, 1994)

Levitt (Informator) showed
10 Rxe6+ fxe6 11 Nxe6 Qxf6!!
12 Nxc7+ Kd7! 13 Nxa8 Qe6!
14 Bf4 Bd6 15 Bxd6 Kxd6!
16 Nc3 Qe5 17 Qd2 Rxa8
18 Re1 Qf5 19 Ne4+ Kc7

as a new chance to hold equality. But fatal errors are still possible:

a) 9...Qd6? 10 Nxe6 fxe6 11 fxg7 Rg8 12 Qh5+ Kd7 13 Nd2! +-

Qe7 14 Ne4 Bb4 15 Bg5.

Yuchtman-Kim, USSR, 1950

b) 9...g6? 10 Qf3 Kd7 11 Nxf7! Bxf7 12 Qg4+ Kd6 13 Bf4+ Ne5
14 b4! Kc6 15 Bxe5 Bxb4 16 c3 Bc5 17 cxd4 +-

Estrin-Ginsburg, Moscow 1944

c) 9...0-0? 10 Rxe6! fxe6 11 f7+ Kh8 12 Qh5! h6 13 Qg6! hgx5
14 Qh5 mate.

10 Nc3 (diagram)

White’s attack continues. Employing multiple pins, Black’s exposed King, open lines, White will regain the gambit pawn. The attack is considered playable to this day. It is to White’s great advantage that Black’s defenses are all high-wire acts, and the right choices do not appear to be the natural ones.

One slip, you’re gone.
10...Qf5

Putting the Queen in the open field is unavoidable. George Koltanowski wrote in *The San Francisco Chronicle* that there was a "need for safety" that led many shocked players to reply 10...Qd7? or even 10...Qd8, whereupon 11 fxg7 Rg8 12 Nxe6 fxe6 13 Qh5+ +− yields a blistering attack, with a bonus piece to boot.

11 Nce4

Position on 11 g4!? (analysis)
This is another dangerous Kolty/Steinitz weapon, winning a piece, and, if Black does not properly react, the game, despite the exposed White King.

a) 11...Oxf6? (perfectly plausible, but...) 12 Nd5! Qd8 13 Rxe6+

fxe6 14 Nxe6 Qd7 (Steinitz-Meitner, Vienna 1860). Now comes the hay maker 15 Bh6!! +− (Howard Staunton).

b) 11...Qg6 12 Nce4 Bb6:

b1) 13 f4 0-0-0 14 f5 Bxf5 15 gxf5 Qxf5 16 Rf1 Qg6 17 Qg4+

Kb8 18 fxg7 ∞ / = Kinzel-Miranda, Lugano Olympiad 1968. The burden of proof is on Black:
- A Knight down at this point, but with real compensation. - White’s perforated residence, Black’s central pawns.

b2) 13 Nxe6 is another important line.

13...fxe6 14 f7+ Kd7 15 Ng5 e5 16 f4 h6! = (Radchenko) Black wins the f-pawn with a mighty center. Consolidation is only a shout away.
Castling is safest, as Black’s entire army is mobilized and connected. However, his kingside is sacrificed, and White obtains a dangerous passed pawn at g7. Black must blockade and attack elsewhere to keep White from supporting the pawn any further.

It is remarkable how many lines lose here:

- **11...0-0**? 12 fxg7 Kxg7 13 Nxc5 Qxc5 14 Rxe6! +- win by fork.
  or ...Rfe8 13 g4! Qe5 14 Nhx7! +- win by force.

- **11...gxg6**? 12 g4! Qe5 13 Nf3! +- (C. Baker)

- **11...Bb4**?! 12 c3 dxc3 13 bxc3 Ba5 14 g4! Qg6 15 Nxe6 fxe6 16 f7+ Kxf7 17 Ng5+ Kg8 18 Rxe6 Qd3 19 Qe1 Rf8? (20 Rxc6 +- Koltanowski)

- **11...Bb6**?! loses time, but was once thought quite reliable.
  The reality patio:
  
  A. 12 Ng3 Qg6 13 Nxe6 fxe6 14 Rxe6+ Kd7 15 Nh5! Rhe8 16 Nf4 Qf7 17 Qf3→ with a viable attack. (Chigorin-Charousek, Budapest 1896) now ex-World Champion (FIDE) A. Khalifman points out 17...Rxe6 18 Qd5+ Kc8 19 Nxe6 gxg6 20 Bf4 + adding 19...d3 is the only chance for counterplay.

  B. 12 fxg7! ± Rg8 13 g4! Qg6 14 Nxe6 fxe6 15 Bg5! from the 140 year old analysis by G. Abels (England) / F. Saemisch, still valid today.
The Max Lange, 5 0-0 Nf6 6 e5 (Third Game)

Position after 15 Bg5! (analysis)
- from the 11...Bb6?! line.

The Black King is trapped - and visited promptly:

1) 15...h6 16 Qf3! hxg5
   17 Nf6+ Kf7 18 Rxe6!! +- Kxe6 (18...Rxe7 19 Rae1 +-)
   19 Re1+ and now:

   • 19...Ne5 20 Qd5+ Kxf6 21 Qxe5+ Kf7 22 Qe7 mate.
   • 19...Kd6 20 Qd5 mate, or 19...Kf7 20 Nh5+ Qf6 21 Qxf6 mate.

2) 15...Rxg7 16 Qf3!
   2a) 16...h6 17 Nf6+ +- Kd8 (Akers: on 17...Kf7, White does not get fancy. 18 Nh5+ taking the Rook) 18 Rxe6 (Threat: Re8+ winning the hotel) Ne7 19 Bxh6! Qxh6 20 Qd5+! - It’s mate in four.
   2b) 16...e5 17 Nf6+ Kf7 18 h4! (diagram) ±

R. Teichmann

...whereupon Richard Teichmann (1868-1925) “did not need to be a weatherman to see which way the wind was blowing”. Russian chess giant Mikhail Chigorin needed only 10 more moves.

M. Chigorin

18...h6 19 Ne4+ Ke6 (19...Kg8? 20 h5! ends matters - Akers)
20 h5 Qf7 21 Bf6 (Avoiding the trade of super active “live” pieces for Black’s “dead” “tall pawn” figures) Rgg8 22 Qf5+ Kd5 23 b3! prying open Black’s cover with a can opener. 23...Rxg4+ (A distraction, but now...) 24 Qxg4 Rg8 25 bxc4+ Kxc4 26 Bg5 Returning material for just a moment of time. 26...hxg5 27 Qg3! “I’m back!” (Threat: 28 Qb3 mate) Na5 28 Qxe5 and Black Resigns.

2c) 16...Kd7 (running for life) 17 Nf6+ Kc8 18 Rxe6!! Qxg5 19 h4! (F. Saemisch) with a mating attack after 19...Qxh4, and a march for space after (diagram):

- 19...Qg6 20 h5 Qg5 21 Rae1 Nd8 22 R6e5! Qh4 23 Re8! c6 24 Qf5+ Kb8 25 h6! Qxh6 26 Qe5+ Kc8 27 Qe6+ wins.

- 19...Qa5 20 Re8+ Nd8 21 Nd5! +– c6 (21...Rd7 22 Qf5 Qxd5 23 Rd8+! Kxd8 24 Qf8 mate) 22 Qf5+ Rd7 23 Ne7+ Kc7 24 Qf4+ Rd6 26 Nf5.

- 19...Qb5 20 a4 Qc5 21 Rae1 Nd8 22 Re8 c6 23 R1e5 Qd6 24 Qf5+ Kb8 25 R5e6 Qb4 26 Qf4+ Kc8 27 Ne4 Bc7 28 Qf5 Kb8 29 Rxd8+! Bxd8 30 Qe5+ Rc7 31 Re8 +–

2d) Finally, 16...Rf7 17 Nf6 Rxf6 18 Qxf6 Qxf6 19 Bxf6 Kf7 20 g5 ± (Gligoric), or 18 Bxf6 Kd7 19 g5 +– according to Chigorin.

Grandmaster M. I. Chigorin (1850-1908) is still known as one of the major investigators of Classical Openings (1 e4 e5; 1 d4 d5) and as one of the most popular players ever. In a single 5 year period 1889-93, he played right off rickety ships, swaying from fatigue, two
World Championship Matches versus W. Steinitz (Havana, Cuba), defeated Steinitz 2-0 in a world stakes telegraph challenge gambit match, contested two(!) matches with World Candidates Gunsberg and Tarrasch. He also later defeated World Champion Emanuel Lasker +2 -1 =3 in a gambit match - the only competition permitted.

12 g4!

This fearsome tactic often wins immediately on the board, and the clock as well. White attacks with, at the very least, a forced draw in hand. Black’s Queen is “overworked” and can no longer defend everything.

12...Qe5 (!)

Koltanowski - “Not a natural square for the Queen, dangerously exposed to a Rook, center attacks. If Black does not play it, the game is over.” 12...Qd5? 13 Nxe6 fxe6 14 fxg7 Rg8 15 Nf6 Qd6 16 Nxg8 Rxg8 17 Bh6 +- (Marshall)

Position after 12...Qe5

13 Nxe6

White may tread dangerously with a widely quoted line: 13 Nf3?! (Apache Chess. - Acers)

GM John Emms in the normally reliable ‘Black is O.K.’ repertoire book, *Play the Open Games* analyzes 13...Qd5 14 fxg7, when a draw by 3-time repetition is in the works, if Black is most cooperative after 14...Rhg8 15 Nf6 Qd6 16 Ne4! Qd5 17 Nf6.

“May well be good enough to draw.” - J. Emms
Unfortunately, Black may deliver a powerful blow to avoid this tranquil end: **14...Bxg4!** (sacrificing a whole Rook)

15 **gxh8(Q) Rxh8** 16 h3! (The only chance for survival. If 16 Bf4? Rg8+ 17 Bg3 Ne5! — Schoch - Littlewood, Winterthur, 1986 )

16...**Bh5** 17 **Nf6! Qxf3** 18 **Nxh5 Rg8+** 19 Ng3 Rxg3+ 20 fxg3 Qxg3+ 21 Kf1 Qxf3+ 22 Kf2 (diagram) - Spain, 1993:

**Analysis:**

22...**d3+** 23 **Be3**

- 23 **Re3 Qh2+** will hunt down the King, or win the Queen with 24 Kf3 Qh5+ or 24 Kf1 Qh1+.

23...**Ne5!** 24 **Bxe5**

- 24 **Qd2 Ng4+** 25 **Kg1 Nxe3** (Threat: ...Nf1+) 26 Qf2 d2!
  a) 27 **Rf1 Ng4 —+**
  b) 27 **Red1 Qg4+** 28 Kh1 Qh5+! 29 Qh2 Qf3+ —+
  c) 27 **Rad1 Qg4+ —+**

24...**Ng4+** 25 Qxg4+ ⊥ (25 Kg1? Qg3+ and mate next) Qxg4 with a considerable endgame advantage for Black (diagram).
The Max Lange, 5 0-0 Nf6 6 e5 (Third Game)

Analysis - following 25...Qxg4
Threat: ...Qf5+
winning the wayward Bishop.
- 26 Re5? Qf4+ --
- 26 b4 cxb3 ++
- 26 Be3 f5! ++
(...f4 will win the endgame)
illustrating White’s dilemma:
Black’s pawns are everywhere.
27 Rg1? Qe2+.

13...fxe6 14 fxg7 Rhg8 15 Bh6! (Marshall)
Frank J. Marshall’s original idea which makes Black’s position hopeless, unless an immediate counterattack against White’s weakened King is successful.

15...d3
Consistent, leading to certain counterplay. Losing is the often played 15...Bb4? 16 f4 Qa5
17 Nf6 Bxe1 18 Qxe1 Qxe1+
19 Rxel d3
(Carlier-Rate Torcy 1991)
20 cxd3 cxd3 21 f5 ±
“with a won endgame” - Baker.

16 c3 d2
Alternatives:
Marshall-Tarrasch, Hamburg 1910 showed the American wizard rolling down the highway after: a) 16...Bd6 17 f4! Qd5 18 Qf3 Be7
19 g5 Qf5 20 Ng3 Qf7 21 Qg4 Rde8? (Tarrasch could have tried 21...d3 22 Re4 - C. Baker) 22 Re4 with a decisive buildup.
b) 16...Be7 17 Qd2!? (The latest attempt, leaving f4 vacant. 17 f4, and 17 Qf3 have been well explored) Qd5 18 Qf4 Ne5 19 Nd2 Bd6 20 Re4 Rd7 21 Qe3 Nf7?! (choosing to round up the g-pawn in exchange for the a-pawn, but the e-pawn also proves vulnerable) 22 Qxa7 b5 23 Qa6+ Qb7 24 Qxb7+ Kxb7 25 Be3 Rg7 26 a4 e6 27 h3 Re7? 28 axb5 cxb5 29 Ra7+ Kc6 30 Rxe7 Bxe7 31 Rxe6+ ± Bergez-Flear, Montauban, 2000.

17 Re2 Rd3!
Else White continues with Kg2, and f3, going after Black’s d-pawn.

18 Qf1!
With the strong threat: 19 Rd1, 20 Qg2, eliminating the d-pawn. White must not grab 18 Nxd2? for Qd5! clears the way for Ne5-f3.

18...Qd5 19 Rd1 Ne5 20 Nf6! Qf3
“Both players burn their bridges.” - Koltanowski

21 Nxg8 Qxg4+ 22 Kh1
Draw by perpetual check
- (Gligoric)

22...Qf3+ (diagram)
“Most defenders of course never get this far - losing quickly long before.” - Koltanowski.

(White dare not play for more: 23 Kg1 Qg4+ 24 Qg2? Qxe2 25 Ne7+ Kd7 26 g8(Q)? Qxd1+ 27 Qf1 Qxf1+ 28 Kxf1 d1(Q)+ 29 Kg2 Qf3+ mates - Acers).
It came without warning to San Francisco players and lasted three years. In 1969, *The Hayward Daily Review* (100,000 readers each Sunday) began publishing Richard Shorman’s full page chess column, which often focused on old openings and mini lessons. Suddenly, a variation never seen by anyone in California was appearing in San Jose coffee shops. Not for a moment could Black relax. The Max Lange was expected, prepared for. White “took the last train out of town” (6 c3 - rather than 6 e5) with a gambit that is not even mentioned in many opening texts.

If Black dismisses the idea, then the necessary defense will not come. Disaster looms. The clock is ticking. Caught unaware, the Black defender may eventually realize that only one real defense exists, worked out by “Russia’s Chess Teacher”: Emanuel Schiffers (1898).

If Black “does nothing” many things happen:

- **6...0-0?** 7 cxd4 Bb6 8 d5! ± destroys Black’s center position: 8...Na5 9 Bd3 threatening b4 winning the stranded Knight.
- **6...d6?!** 7 cxd4 Bb6, White has several pleasant options:
  a) 8 Nc3 Bg4 9 d5 Ne5 10 Be2 with a two-pawn center middlegame prepared.
  b) 8 Qd3 Bg4 9 Be3 Bxf3 10 gxf3 Qd7 11 Kh1 ± with Nd2-f1, a3-b4, and Rg1 coming.
  11 Bb5 ± is also good.
The Last Exit Gambit, 5 0-0 Nf6 6 c3 (Third Game)

- **6...d5? 7 exd5 Nxd5 8 cxd4:**
  a) 8...Be7 9 Bxd5 Qxd5 10 Nc3 Qh5? 11 d5 Nb8
  12 Re1 Kf8? 13 Qe2 wins,
  or 12...Bg4? 13 Qe2→
  b) 8...Bb6 9 Re1+ Be6 10 Ng5?! Nxd4 11 Nxe6 fxe6
  12 Qh5+ Kf8 13 Nc3→
  opening lines for the attack.

- **6...dxc3? 7 e5! +**
  a) 7...Ne4? 8 Qd5 +
  b) 7...Ng4 8 Bxf7+ Kxf7 9 Qd5+ Ke8 10 Qxc5 +

Emanuel Schiffers (1850-1904) a Grandmaster level player who was doing more than sipping coffee in Vienna 1898, had to defend as Black in tournament play. Mercilessly, Mr. Schiffers, a public chess lecturer, broke down the minuscule rules White had fudged, which allow Black to destroy White’s initiative and achieve equality. On the shoulders of this crisp player, one hundred years later, the Miami Variation was built.

Here’s the reasoning:

- **First.** White has castled in a position where Black’s pieces threaten nothing serious. As Laven repeatedly points out, a move striking at the center might have posed more immediate, concrete problems to solve.

- **Second.** White’s last move, 5 c3, threatens nothing immediate, as Black can capture the pawn on e4, remaining at least one pawn up in a perfectly safe position for the time being. White will have a need for compensation - the pawn must come back!
Third. When White’s c-pawn arrives at d4, it does NOT gain time by attacking Black’s Bishop. Black will safely ignore the attack while playing ...d5 attacking White’s Bishop in turn. Black can draw - White has “lost” three moves.

7 cxd4 d5! 8 dxc5 dxc4 9 Qe2!

9 Qxd8+ is insufficient for advantage: 9...Kxd8 10 Rd1+ Bd7 11 Be3 Ke7 12 Na3 Be6 13 Nb5 Rhc8 14 Ng5 Nxc5 15 Bxg5+ f6 16 Bf4 Ne5 = Thorhallsson-Flear, London 1987.

9...Qd3! 10 Re1 f5 11 Nc3 0-0 12 Nxe4 fxe4

E. Schoffers

13 Qxe4 Bf5 (diagram)

A critical moment. A young Robert Fischer wrote that modern players “Can’t take this sort of rough-and-tumble chess anymore”, adding that old-time players were far stronger (Morphy, Anderssen, especially Howard Staunton - one of the Top Ten of all time according to his list). What in the world was Fischer talking about? Well - this world. Baird now coolly found White’s safe harbor, playable to this day -

14 Qf4!
Attacking c7, avoiding 14 Qh4?! Rad8 15 Be3 Qd5 16 Rac1 Bd3 17 h3? Rxf3! 18 gxf3 Ne5 (Vatter-Fleck, German Team League, 1989) 17 Qg3 = J. Emms, Play the Open Games as Black.

14...Rac8 15 Qg3 Bg6 16 Bf4 Qd5 17 Bxc7 (diagram)

17...Rxf3! 18 gxf3 Nd4 19 Re3 Nf5 20 Qe5 Nxe3

21 fxe3 Qc6 = Baird-Schiffers, Vienna 1898
with chances for both players.

Because the defense must be well-timed, “The Last Exit Gambit” (Sufficient for at least a draw for White) will win heavily in blindfold/exhibition/amateur play, nearly all the games touring players encounter.
For the Defense, ...d6 and ...Bg4 / Be6 (Fourth Game)

Fourth Game

...d6 - for the defense

This is a solid answer to the Italian Gambit, that will no doubt be encountered often. Black’s objective is to slow White down, and dig in for future play. The Fifth Game will explore Emanuel Lasker’s move order (omitting 0-0), but what if 0-0 is played?

After 4 d4 exd4 White can reach the diagram position in many ways:

a) 5 0-0 d6 6 c3 dxc3 7 Nxc3 Nf6 8 Bg5
b) 5 c3 dxc3 6 Nxc3 Nf6 7 0-0 d6 8 Bg5
c) 5 c3 Nf6 6 0-0 dxc3 7 Nxc3 d6 8 Bg5 ...you get the idea.

In each instance, the little pawn push shows itself to be inconvenient, especially for those striving to “win by home prep”, memorizing theory alone. We introduce this line now for two reasons: First, it overlaps so many upcoming lines and is not an easy fit. Second, one of Black’s sturdiest paths is closely related to the previous chapter, and should be accounted for immediately.

The Good News: Unless you are a die-hard Max Lange, 5 0-0 move order enthusiast, the early ...d6 defenses cited here, starting with the diagram above, yield a very strong initiative for White.

The Bad News: If you prefer 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0, your opponents may sidestep your lead in the Long Variation “theory dance”. In the Third Game, our focus was primarily on counterattacking tries with ...d5, engaging White in a center fight. This thrust, when successful, is a known equalizer, and is the best try in principle. After the less ambitious (though not necessarily less good!) ...d6, White is assured a healthy “pull”, taking the fight both up the board and across it. Remember always, that a pawn has been invested, and a moment may come when winning it back will cost White the initiative.
The Best News: These lines are not generally explored today at the GM level, a sign that many (not all) are inferior for Black, at least competitively. We examine the weakest move order, the Max Lange, Long Variation (see Third Game), as our main line. 4 d4 exd4 5 c3 is considered best, as the following warning demonstrates:

It is precisely here that Black has had successes for ages. He can change the direction of the fight with 6...Bg4! when there are no simple solutions for White:

- 7 cxd4? Nxd4 8 Qa4+ Qd7 9 Nxd4 Qxa4 10 Bb5+ Qxb5 11 Nxb5 0-0-0 ≈ with an easy pawn plus. Niggel-Y. Shulman, N. American Open, 2002.

- 7 Bb5?! achieved little after Bxf3 8 Qxf3 Qf6 9 Qd3 Nge7 10 Kh1 0-0 11 f4 d5 12 e5 Qe6 13 Nd2 dxc3 14 bxc3 a6 15 Ba4 Qf5 16 Qf3 h5. ≈ Em. Lasker-Rutenberg, Moscow Simul., 1899. A game which likely helped steer Dr. Lasker to another move order.

- Nor has 7 b4 proven viable. After 7...Bb6:
  a) 8 a4 a5 9 b5 Ne5 10 Be2 d3 11 Bxd3 Bxf3 12 gxf3 Qh4 13 Kh1 Bxf2?! (13...0-0-0 is correct, now Black sets up some targets for the opponent, shifting the balance back) 14 Ra2 Bb6 15 Rg2 Nf6 16 Be2 h6 17 f4 Ng6? (17...Ned7 ≈) 18 f5 Ne5 19 Rf4 Qh3 20 Rg3 +− MacDonnell-Steinitz, 1862.
  b) 8 Qb3 Bxf3 9 Bxf7+ Kf8 10 Bxg8 Rxg8 11 gxf3 Qh4 12 cxd4 Bxd4 13 Bb2 Re8 14 Bxd4 Nxd4 15 Qd3 Qh3 16 Qxd4 Re6 +− Hurdle-W. Shipman, Pasadena 1983.
For better or worse, the best move is 7 Qb3(!) Now:

7...Qd7 allows White to keep his footing. 8 Nxd4 Na5 9 Bxf7+ Ke7 10 Be6 Bxe6 11 Qxe6+ Qxe6 12 Nxe6 Kxe6 13 b4 Bxf2+ 14 Rxf2 Nc4 15 Nd2 Bxd2= Blatny-Krasenkow, Brno 1994. Creative play by two talented GMs. One wonders how Blatny would have handled...

7...Bxf3! 8 Bxf7+ Kf8 (diagram)

Marshall tried 9 Bxg8 Rxg8 10 gxf3 vs. Janowski, Suresne 1908, but his King pursuit ran dry after...

10...Qd7 11 Kh1 Re8 12 Rg1 dxc3 13 Rg4 Ne5 14 Rf4+ Ke7! (Queenside bound!) 15 Nxc3 c6 16 Rf5 Kd8 17 Bg5+ Ke8

Instead, 9 gxf3 was more realistic: Bb6 10 Bd5 Nge7 11 Bg5 h6 12 Bh4? (It was high time to clarify with 12 Bxe7+ Qxe7 13 Bxc6 bxc6 and regroup with 14 Qc2 Re8 15 Nd2 with a murky road ahead. Now Black begins to roll...) 12...g5 13Bg3 h5! 14 h3 Ng6 15 Bxe6 bxc6 16 Qe6 Kg7 17 Nd2 Rf8 18 Qc4 c5 19 Rad1 Qf6 left White second best. Kurtovic-Szafarczyk, mailgame 1982.

As Dr. Lasker knew, and witnessed, there is not a lot to give White confidence here, but as always there are practical chances, and an edge-keeper move may yet be unearthed.

6...Bg4! demonstrates why the Max Lange Long Variation is correctly reached only when Black has committed ...Nf6. e.g.: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 Bc5 6 e5 not 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Be5 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 d6(!)

Therefore, if White is committed to the coming analysis, he should choose 5 c3 dxc3 6 Nxc3 d6, and only then decide between 7 0-0 and 7 Bg5 (Fifth Game).
For the Defense, ...d6 and ...Bg4 / Be6 (Fourth Game) 83

[Diagram]

7 Nxc3 (diagram) Nf6

Here too 7...Bg4!? presents some difficulties, but with the pawn captures resolved, it is easier to negotiate. Surprisingly, 7...Bg4 remains the final frontier in Italian Gambit research. It has been studied to a certain extent, and surely 8 Qb3! must be the answer. For the purposes of this volume, we will defer to Lasker’s move order selection, and will present some sample lines (with the sharp 8 Bg5!? try) with which to give GMs and amateur alike a running start for further research.

7...Bg4 8 Bg5 Nf6 (8...Qd7!? and 8...f6!? are also interesting)
9 Nd5 Ne5 10 Be2 Bxf3 11 Bxf3 c6 12 Nxf6+ gxf6 13 Bh4 Qe7
14 Bg4 Nxe4 15 Qxe4 Bd4 16 Rfd1 Be5 17 f4 Bxb2 18 Rab1 Ba3
19 Bf2 b5 with balanced play,
or 10...c6 11 Nxf6 gxf6 12 Bh4 Rg8 13 Nxe5 Bxe2 14 Qxe2 dxe5
15 Qh5 Rg6 16 Qxh7 Qd4 17 Rfe1 is also even.

8 Bg5

Once this move is achieved, Black must fight to stay afloat, regardless of whether he chooses: A. 8...h6 or B. 8...Be6
(8...Bg4 9 Nd5 transposes into the sample lines above.)

A. 8...h6

Despite forcing exchanges to relieve the pressure, Black quickly runs out of play.

9 Bxf6 Qxf6 10 Nd5 Qd8
For the Defense, ...d6 and ...Bg4 / Be6 (Fourth Game)

11 b4! (diagram)

A surprise. Capturing the pawn is completely out: 11...Nx{b4
12 Nxb4 Bxb4 13 Qa4+, or
11...Bxb4 12 Nxb4 Nxb4 13 Qb3
followed by Bxf7+ is much too disruptive, so...

Zezulkin-Plachetka, Czechoslovakia 1998 followed a familiar path: 12 a4!? Bg4 13 a5 Bd4 14 Rc1 0-0 15 Be2 Bxf3 16 Bx{f3 a6
17 Nxc7 Bxf2+ 18 Rxf2 Qxc7
gives a small nod to Black, as both White’s “b” and “e” pawns are long-term vulnerabilities, while his initiative is not yet proven. Fortunately there is a new discovery...

12 b5!

When finding a good square for the Knight is a problem:
12...Ne5? 13 Nxe5 dxe5 14 Qh5 hitting e5 and f7 is nearly decisive.
12...Na5!? (better than it looks, but unattractive). White can maintain sustained pressure with 13 Be2 0-0 14 Qd3 Be6 15 Rac1
Re8 16 Rfd1 when Black must find 16...Bc5 and 17...c6 to keep the game level.

12...Ne7

In some ways second best, as White is yielded the b3 square for the Queen.

13 Nxb6 axb6 14 Qb3 0-0 15 Rfd1! ±

With the strong threat of 16 e5, played even on!15...Ng6 or 15...Bg4. White’s compensation and initiative are obvious.
15 Rad1 may be even better, or 15 Rfe1 also yields the edge.
For the Defense, ...d6 and ...Bg4 / Be6 (Fourth Game) 85

B. 8...Be6

Those who remember the d5 grip from previous games will recognize the coming Knight leap. The Bishop’s assistance in covering the square is clearly insufficient.

9 Nd5 0-0

9....Bxd5 10 exd5 Ne5 11 Bb5+ Kf8 12 Re1 compensates for the pawn minus. Pressure is on from every angle.

10 Bxf6 gxf6 11 Rc1 Re8

With Black’s King position exposed, White has several options for attack, starting with the Queen’s placement.

- 12 Qb3 Na5 13 Qc3! Nxc4 14 Nf6+! Kf8 15 Nxd5 Ke7 16 Nh5 b5 17 Nxe6 Kxe6 (17...fxe6?? 18 Qg7 mate) 18 b3 wins the piece back (18...Nb6 19 b4 ±)19 bxc4 Qxc3 20 Rxc3 bxc4 21 Rxc4 with the superior endgame for White.

- 12 Qd2 Ne5, when White tries to close in with the deadly Q/N one-two punch: 13 Qf4 Bxd5 14 Bxd5 Nxf3+ (but now the Knights are gone) 15 Qxf3 c6 16 Qg4+ Kf8 17 Bc4 with continued pressure on the weakened kingside.

The feel of the ...d6 lines is decidedly slower than the perilous core options, and a masterful ...d6 defender will bank on White over pressing, in the spirit of the ...d5 lines. It is clear, however, that White has more than enough play for the gambit pawn to concern Black, and it is hard to mishandle Bg5, Nd5, Bxf6 and wriggling in the Queen.
Fifth Game

5 c3 dxc3 (diagram)

The Scotch-Göring Gambit. A variation of primary importance for the Italian Gambit player.

“The best way to refute a gambit is to accept it.” - GM L. Evans

A. 6 Bxf7+ (Sveshnikov)
B. 6 Nxc3 (Mieses, Hurt)

An Introduction: First Scotch Gambit Lessons
~ Question Mark For Danger ~

John W. Collins (1912-2001)
American Chess Master, named “Chess Teacher of the Century”, inducted in the official Chess Hall of Fame. His wheelchair was a world chess crossroads. He knew them all - Fischer, Fine, Denker, Helms, Reshevsky, Lombardy, Bisguier, Evans, Rossolimo... From all over the world, players gunned for the Hawthorne (Street) Chess Club, that was his living room in Manhattan, NY. In the shadow was his annotated games column, written monthly for Chess Life, including the first published game by that weird Louisiana teenager, Jude Acers, from New Orleans.

Acers had traveled via bus to Greenville, Mississippi
[John Hurt (Memphis) - Acers, 1961 (New Orleans)]

(Position after 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 c3 dxc3 5 Nc3)
Black to move.
Tri-State Chess Championship.

Mr. Collins promptly bombed Black’s fifth with a question mark.

Is 5...Bc5(?) an error?
(5...Bc5 6 Bc4! see p. 94 for details)
Always a premier tutor (Fischer was 45th on the depth chart!), Collins was *au courant* with the chess openings long before the classic *Chess Informant Encyclopedia* lived. As The U.S. International (1948 World Chess-by-Mail Championship) Collins already had his entire opening repertoire on paper, ready to pop. This was noticed by Fischer a decade later. Indeed it was Collins’s Russian chess bulletins that the 12-year-old Fischer jammed into pants pockets upon leaving Collins’s home (always carefully returned, always thoroughly rumpled).

Collins met the question of piece placement in the very classic manner. Capture a center pawn, develop, restrain right now. He knew World Chess Champion V. Smyslov had played the “refutation” of the Scotch Gambit, that was handed down for a generation, reprinted in all theory tomes as the *pater nostro*. He could never dream that White’s powerful mobility, development could offer real resistance in the main line. He was not the Lone Ranger. All over the world, publications printed this game from Munich (diagram):

5...Bb4!

J. Penrose (Eng) - V. Smyslov (Rus)  
World Team Olympics, 1958.

“At the time, this game was a great blow to the Goring. Smyslov brilliantly demonstrating the modern defensive technique versus gambits - returning the sacrificed material at an appropriate moment in order to secure positional advantage.”


The game continued fiercely: 6 Bc4 d6 7 0-0 Bxc3 8 bxc3 Nf6.

K. R. Smith lectured:

“Over the board White’s practical chances are enormous. The pair of Bishops will rake the board if White opens the position with e4-e5. The Scotch Gambit is a lifetime point mill.”

White tries:
9 Ba3 with attack, and

9 e5! (Alekhine) - The Ukrainian Lab: Gufeld, Stein, Yuchtman
Rejecting Alekhine’s suggestion: 9 e5, Chess Master Penrose did not consider the position an emergency, and continued with the primitive 9 Ba3 which many commentators dismiss as prayer alone. White invites 10...0-0? 11 e5 ±. Instead, Smyslov countered 9...Bg4!

[Very serious complications may occur on 10 Qh3 Bxf3 11 Bxf7+ Kf8 12 gxf3! Ne5 13 Be6! Nxf3+ 14 Kg2 Nd2 15 Qxb7 Rb8 16 Qxa7 Nfxe4 17 Qe3 Nxf1 18 Qxe4 Nd2 19 Qf4+ Qf6 (diagram)]

Styazhkin-Bunich, Leningrad 1984

20 Bxd6+!

Long ago, A. Alekhine analyzed the attack, and decided to tell a World Champion, Max Euwe, the secret: 10...Na5! is Black’s sole resource.

E.g. 11 Bxf7+ Kf8 12 Qa4 Bxf3 13 gxß Kxf7 14 Qxa5 Re8! with (perhaps) Black advantage.

(Euwe - Theorie der Schach-Eröffnungen, 1968). White has five “pawn islands”, but open b and d-files for the Rooks. Acers now suggests that following Alekhine’s variation White proceeds with 15 c4 Re5 16 Qc3 Nh5 17 Qe3, intending f4; Kh1, Rg1, and Ra1-d1. This will provide some sense of actual playing problems inhabiting the Goring Gambit. Penrose-Smyslov fought on... [Position after 9...Bg4!]

White decided to avoid 10 Qb3 with attack, but lost the initiative: 10 Bb5 0-0 11 Bxc6 bxc6 12 e5 Nd5!

13 Qd3 (The ten-time British Champion Penrose probably considered 13 c4 Nb6! (Alekhine) (but not 13...Nc3? 14 Qd3) 14 c5 (or 14 Rc1 c5!±) Ne4 15 Qd4 Bxf3 16 Qxc4 Qg5 17 g3 dxe5 ± Acers.)

13...Re8 14 exd6 Nf4 15 Qc4 Ne2+ 16 Kh1 Bxf3 17 gxf3 exd6 18 Qxc6 Re8! 19 Qxd6 Qh4 ±

“Black has a tremendous attack” - J. Jacobs, Chess Digest.

Chess Master J. Collins knew this history.

The latest work of the “Ukrainian Laboratory” had replaced 9 Ba3 with 9 e5! (Alekhine) and produced victories all over the world.
The Scotch-Göring Gambit, 5 c3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)

After the best move, 9 e5! Black must consider:

I. 9...dxe5
   • 10 Ng5!? (Yuchtman) was enough to defeat Tal in a wild seesaw game, Black even much better on occasion.
   • 10 Qb3! (Vukovic) 0-0 11 Rd1! Bd7 12 Ba3 Na5 13 Qb4 Nxe4 14 Qxe4 Re8 15 Ng5 with a strong attack. The square f7 is very weak. Keffier-Kolem, Mailgame 1971.
   • 10 Qe2 (used with success by Velimirovic). White sees 10...0-0 11 Ba3 with big plans for White.

II. 9...Nxe5 10 Nxe5 dxe5 11 Qb3
   (11 Qxd8+ led to a draw in Yuchtman-Furman, Leningrad 1960) Qe7 (the only chance. 11...0-0? 12 Ba3 ±) 12 Ba3! c5 13 Bb5+ with a powerful over-the-board initiative that has claimed many victims. White intends 13...Bd7 14 Bxd7+ Nxd7 15 Qxb7 or 13...Kf8! 14 f4! with mutual chances, clock ticking. Six classic reasons White considers the two-pawn gambit well merited were outlined by J. Jacobs (The Göring Gambit):
   • White is better developed
   • White's Rooks are connected and ready to enter play
   • The first player has considerable pressure on the queenside
   • He will quickly gain control of the d-file
   • The White f-pawn may advance, constricting Black's kingside
   • Black has lost castling privileges.

Chess Master Jacobs (Dallas, TX) added a final word of caution:
In spite of this, Black's position is solid as a rock and it is difficult to find a direct method to penetrate it.


14...Be6 15 c4 or 15 Qa4.
14...e4 15 f5 when GM Nikitin's plan was ...Kg8, ...b6, ...Bb7 with a serious attempt to consolidate Black's position.

(Notable note: this entire variation may even occur later in the Italian Gambit, Black desperately playing ...Bb4 a move down.)

Today, we know the interesting Modern Scotch-Göring Gambit:
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 c3 dxc3 5 Nxc3 Bb4! 6 Bc4 d6 7 Qb3 (dispensing with castling, as previously played by the distinguished English Champion) Bxc3+ 8 bxc3 (diagram)

a) 8...Qd7 9 Ng5 Nh6 10 Qc2 Ne5 11 Bb3 Qe7 12 f4 Nd7 13 Ba3 Ne5 14 Bxc5 dxc5 15 0-0-0 f6 16 Nf3 Bd7 17 Rxd7?! Kxd7 18 Rdl Ke8 19 e5 Blees-Bosch, Groningen 1997 with a justifiable attack for the sacrificed exchange.

b) 8...Qe7 the resourceful defense by the American GM James Tarjan (who retired from chess in the shadow of Fischer, forgotten and unknown today) 9 0-0 Nf6 (Velimirovic-Tarjan, Buenos Aires Olympiad 1978) Here 10 Re1 is suggested (Æ Informator)

We have illustrated this important "Open Game" to explain: Why Black plays ...Bb4. With only great effort, Black manages the defense, surviving to the middlegame. Of course, many unwary defenders will never get that far.

In the main Italian Gambit system, play is even more direct. Should Black surrender already when the Bishop is moved to c5? No limit is placed on White’s pieces, handed unexpected, unfettered mobilization.

In the manner of 70+ year old super-GM Victor Korchnoi, “By all means, go right ahead.” White is told - do your worst, I have an extra pawn which will tell in the end. See you in the endgame. The End.

In the back of the Marshall Chess Club (1971), J. Collins softly whispers, “I gave the question mark for danger”.

Indeed. The Italian Gambit offers the same.
**Scotch-Göring Gambit**

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5
4 d4 exd4 5 c3 dxc3

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A. 6 Bxf7+

The Estrin-Sveshnikov Gambit Attack.

White seizes the opportunity to take the offensive - in the most primitive fashion. G. Koltanowski played this around the clock on tours. Black argues that White is now exchanging off the “House of Stone” attacking pieces, quite necessary for a long term initiative. Exchanges relieve the defending player. (Laven note: 6 Nxc3 is fully correct here, period.)

6...Kxf7 7 Qd5+ Kf8

The problematic alternative 7...Ke8 had an inauspicious debut.

8 Qh5+! g6? 9 Qx5 Qe7 10 Qxc3 Qxe4+? (10...Nf6 was stronger - Tarrasch) 11 Kd1! 1-0 Tarrasch-Amateur, 1882

On 8 Qxc5+ Black defends with Qe7 9 Qxe7+ N8xe7 10 Nxc3 ± with a small endgame advantage. Another problem for the defender is 9 Qxc3 Qxe4+ 10 Be3 (Estrin) with rapid mobilization in prospect for the pawn.

8 Qxc5+

White uses the open lines to attack. Black may permit an endgame with 8...Qe7 ± or play for more with 8...d6 ±.

8...d6

On 8...Qe7 9 Qxe7+ N8e7 10 Nxc3 a6 (Not 10...d6? 11 Nb5! ++) 11 Bg5 intending 12 Rc1 and Nc3-d5, or simply putting both White Rooks on the c and d-files, awaiting developments.

Greater board room for the first player.
However, the tactical GM Rudolf Spielmann found 10...d5! 11 exd5 Nb4 with counterplay for Black. (Schlechter-Spielmann, Mannheim 1914) Here too, White has the easier play after 12 0-0 N4xd5 13 Nxd5 Nxd5 14 Rd1 c6 15 b3 (Acers). White will bring his dark squared Bishop to a3 with rapid occupation of the open lines in view.

Keeping Queens on with 9 Qxc3 also has merit:

- 9...Qb4 (= Kalichenko) 10 0-0 (Acers) White tries to hold the initiative: 10...Nf6 11 Re1 ±
  or 10...Qxe4 11 Be3 d6 12 N1d2 Qb4 13 Qc2 (White eyes queenside expansion with 14 a3 Qa5 15 b4)
- 9...Qxe4+ 10 Be3 d5 11 Nb2 =
  with compensation for the pawn (Kalichenko)

White will take a Rook, Black will take the back rank.

Another idea from GM Sveshnikov, the world’s leading theoretician in these lines.

White may also “take a walk on the wild side” with: 9 Qxc3 Qc7 10 0-0 Qxe4 11 Re1 Qb4 12 Re8+! Kxe8 13 Qxg7 Ne5! with mutual chances.

"The House of Stone" Variation, played by Master John Hurt (Memphis, TN) for one-half century. Simply by following the published findings of Em. Lasker, Mieses, Leonhardt and Keres, we find a ready-made advantage for White. Full compensation for the pawn.

Acers: White considers the advantage at move six:

- Iron control of the center
- Threat: 7 Bxf7+ (Time)
- A pawn in the center zone
- A Knight outpost at d5 that may only be challenged by ...Ng8-e7, or ...Nf6 allowing powerful two-Bishop "Pin Play" with Bg5
- White has the ability to strike the queenside, center and kingside with Qd1-b3
- Semi-open c-file which White may occupy with a Rook (World Champion Em. Lasker’s plan)
- Preponderance of White pieces in the center that can not be immediately challenged - 6...Nf6? 7 e5! Ng4 8 Bxf7+ ± with advantage, or 7...d5 8 exf6! ±
- Historical pathways - World class players have mapped out the coming middlegame, especially those avoiding exchanges of Black’s cramped forces.
- Excitement with the move - White can win almost instantly with the great positional advantage in hand. Just one error, or hesitation: ...a6? ...h6? ...b6? ...Nge7? ...Qe7? ...Nf6? may prove fatal throughout the defense.
- Ease of play - White has smooth, direct mobilization, Black defends for the time being, cling to the pawn plus.
- Tactics - Immediate White wins abound.
Weaver “White to move and win!” Adams (1901-1963)
Pioneer of the Vienna Game: 1 e4 e5 2 Nc3

Kenneth R, “Those who study, win” Smith (1930-1999)
of Smith-Morra Gambit fame: 1 e4 c5 2 d4 cxd4 3 c3.

New Yorker Reuben “I develop a routine” Fine (1914-1993)
Super GM who defeated World Champion A. Alekhine 2-0
while equal first at AVRO 1938. [Considered by many to be
the greatest tournament ever: Capablanca, Alekhine,
Reshevsky, Euwe, Botvinnik, Keres, Fine, Flohr.]

World Champion Robert J. Fischer (1943 -
“Learn the chess openings. That’s it. Learn the one’s you

Laven: “Believe me, for the long term initiative, 6 Nxc3
is your move. It gets the Knight out quickly, ready for action.”
According to the Italian Gambit computer project of three years,
(Miami 1999-2002) Best by test!

We consider first the Knight moves:
B1. 6...Nge7 7 Ng5?! (Acers)
   (Ed. - Laven prefers 7 0-0 followed by Na4!)
B2. 6...Nf6? 7 e5 ± Before turning to the critical:
B3. 6...d6 7 Bg5! (Em. Lasker),
where 7...Qd7 and 7...Nge7 are the major branches.

7 0-0 (Laven) is a solid alternative to Lasker’s 7 Bg5, and the subject
of Lacers Press’s emerging “new” book, born out of the Laven/Acers
pioneering monograph and theoretical study.
Scotch-Göring Gambit 5 e3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)

B1. 6...Nge7

Unwary defenders often travel this fateful course, and allow White a thematic strike at the weak Black kingside, though all is not clear.

7 Ng5?!

Black’s collapse seems near:

- 7...0-0? 8 Qh5 1-0 Acers-Morrow, New Orleans 1962.
  Threats: 9 Qxh7 mate and 9 Nxf7.
- 7...d5 8 Nxd5 0-0 9 Qh5 h6 10 Nxf7! Rxf7 11 Nf6+ gxf6
  12 Qxf7+ Kh8 13 Qxh6 mate.

Laven: There is another solution for White - 7 0-0 d6 8 Na4 Bb6 9 Nxb6 axb6 and now 10 Ng5 Ne5 11 Bb3 b5! 12 f4 Nc4 13 f5 with the edge. Note 11...0-0?! 12 Qh5! h6 13 f4 hxg5 14 fxg5 ± or 11...h6 12 f4 Bg4 13 Qd2 ±; 11...d5 12 exd5 Qd6 13 Bf4 ±; and finally on 11...Bg4 White has 12 Bxf7+ Nxf7 13 Qxg4 ±.

7...Ne5

Bringing on the complications. For example: 8 Nxf7! Bxf2+!? (A novelty - Acers) 9 Ke2!! (A high class waiting move - not 9 Kxf2? Rf8 or even 0-0) 9...Nxf7 10 Kxf2 - only now. White preserves the Bishop pair with good prospects for the pawn.

8 Nxf7! Nxf7

Or 8...Bxf2+!? 9 Ke2!! Nxf7 10 Bxf7+ Kxf7 11 Qb3+ d5 12 Rf1 ≡ (Acers).

9 Bxf7+
White thus regains both a piece and gambit pawn, with an added bonus - the positional advantage while Black's King becomes a wandering troubadour.

9...Kxf7 10 Qh5+ g6 11 Qxc5 d6

Also grim was 11...Rf8? attempting to castle by hand, but the King never arrives: 12 Bh6 Rg8 13 Qc4+ Ke8 14 f4 + - Acers.

12 Qe3! Rf8 13 0-0 Kg8 14 b3! (diagram)

Suddenly the road to Rome is on the dreadfully weak dark squared a1-h8 diagonal. White has that Bishop, Black does not.

Seidler really pours it on...

14...Be6 15 Bb2 Qe8

Seidler (Buenos Aires 1974)

"White does not allow the mule to tarry long in the barn."
- Karl Cavanaugh, U.S. Correspondence player.

16 Nd5!!

Most instructive.
Hard to believe, a pure pawn sacrifice to open lines.
There is no immediate breakthrough.

16...Nxd5

Direct. Useless for the defender was 16...Bxd5? 17 Qd4! Kf7 18 Qf6+ Kg8 19 Qg7 mate.
17 exd5 Bxd5
Black assumes White has blundered a pawn, however...

18 Qd2!! (diagram)
Wisely preparing the assault.
Bad for White would have been 18 Qc3? Qe5; 18 Qd3? Qe4!
Win by double threat:
"Make sure you conduct the attack, so that when the fire is out... it isn’t" - H. Pillsbury.

Theorem: Bishops of opposite colors aid the attacking player.
We now see White’s clever point: 19 Qxd5+ and 19 Rae1 followed by 20 Qc3 are both threatened. If now 18...Qe4 19 f3 Qe6 20 Rae1 Qf7 21 Qd4 obtains the victory. (Acers)

18...Rf5!
Black protects the Bd5, and prepares to block the a1-h8 diagonal. E.g. 19 Qc3? Qe5.

19 f4!

First. White ends any blockade at e5, after 20 Qc3 or 20 Qd4 (a safe winning plan).
Second. White will have a later g2-g4 to win the Bd5 or the Rf5. This will only be played if absolutely necessary, as the protective pawn structure around White’s King becomes shaky. White must not allow any counterplay at all.

19...Qd7 20 Qd4! —
White rightly rejects 20 g4 Rh5 21 f5! (Acers) which also wins. Mate is in the air: White envisions 21 Rae1 22 Qh8+ 23 Qg7 mate.

20...Kf8

Desperation - to bring the Bd5-g8 upon 21 Qh8+

21 Rae1!

Winning in the professional manner - you have been to the end zone before. Safe and sure. The alternative 21 g4 +- does not employ all the forces. If now 21...h5 22 Qh8+ Bg8 23 Qh6+ Kf7 24 Qg7 mate.

21...Bc6? 22 g4 1-0.

Time pressure. More accurate of course was 22 Qh8+ Kf7 23 Qg7 mate. (Acers) Black resigned, as a Rook is lost, or mate will follow.

B2. 6...Nf6? (diagram)

Another unfortunate choice which runs headlong into the following thrust:

7 e5 ±

This modern discovery overruns Black’s position. His center collapses immediately upon retreat: 7...Ng8? 8 Bxf7+! Kxf7 9 Qd5+ Ke8 10 Qxc5 Qe7 11 Qxe7+ N8xe7 12 Bf4 ± White will occupy the central files while Black’s King can no longer castle, preventing the defender from easing the pressure via badly needed exchanges. 7...Nh5? 8 Qd5 +- 

7...Ng4

Black is caught, on 7...d5, in a deadly theoretical trap:
After 8 exf6! the kingside can not be defended satisfactorily into the endgame: 8...dxc4 9 Qxd8+ Nxd8 10 fxg7 Rg8 11 Nd5 +- removing a Rook, or 9...Kxd8 10 fxg7 Rg8 11 Bh6 followed by 12 0-0-0+ with a direct attack on the d and e-files.

E.g. 11 Bh6 Be6 12 0-0-0+ Ke7? 13 Ne4 Bd6 14 Bg5+ +-.

8 Bxf7+ Kxf7 ± (diagram)

Nor does declining the Bishop hold up. 8...Ke7? 9 Bg5+ Nf6 10 exf6+ gxf6 11 Bh4 Kxf7 12 Qd5+ wins, or 8...Kf8? 9 Bh5! when 9...Nxf2? 10 Qd5 Qe7 11 Bg5 +-; 9...Bxf2+? 10 Ke2 N6xe5 11 Nxe5 Nxe5 12 Rf1 +- (Acers); or 9...N4xe5 10 Nxe5 Nxe5 11 Qd5 Qe7 12 0-0 + intending 13 Be3.

9 Qd5+ (Simple chess)

Absolutely no risk is necessary. With dead-eye material equality and no sacrifice of any kind, White steers for a dominant endgame. On 9...Kf8 10 Qxc5+ Qe7(?) 11 Qxe7+: 11...Kxe7? 12 Nd5+ Kd8 13 Bg5+ winning, or 11...Nxe7 12 Bf4 followed by 0-0, Rfd1 and Rac1 will provide a considerable endgame advantage. Black must sail into 10...d6!? instead, to try and complicate. Not necessary, but possible, was 9 Ng5+ Ke8 10 Qxg4 Nxe5 11 Qe4 Qe7 12 0-0 with 13 Nd5 looming. Acers also found an acrobatic win with 12 Nd5! Nd3+ 13 Kd2 Qxe4 14 Nxe4. White wins Knight, Bishop or Rook.

Laven: 9 Ng5+ may lead to a forced win: 9...Kf8 10 Qxg4 Nxe5 11 Qg3! is strong: d6 12 0-0 Bf5 13 Be3 Bb6 14 Nd5 c6 15 Bxb6 axb6 16 Qf4 is decisive. This and more coming in 2004; another new book/theory. Of course much more play/practical study should demonstrate the soundness of this "possibility", or at least that the move has a power of subtle complexity. 9 Qd5+ is a simpler choice.
Scotch-Göring Gambit  5 c3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)  

B3. 6...d6 7 Bg5!

A most instructive position. The pure Scotch Gambit Attack, (7 0-0 again, as mentioned a little earlier, is a very solid alternative. The new book is coming...) Now on 7 Bg5 Nf6? 8 Nd5! - (Lasker) interfering with Black’s harmonious play. White builds a “House of Stone” in the center with Nd5 and preserves the pressure by avoiding any and all exchanges, unless necessary to gain space.

White invites the defender to weaken the a2-g8 diagonal with 7...f6, posing many problems for both players.

Black has three major alternatives
a) 7...f6  b) 7...Qd7  c) 7...Nge7

Black will often play this push back when first meeting the Classical Scotch Gambit. It is a dubious looking move, but no analysis shows why the weakening of the a2-g8 diagonal really matters. Black sets up a fortress at e5, and gains time by rolling White back.

“I’m a pawn up - don’t worry.”

What should White do?
8 Qb3 Na5 9 Qa4+ c6 or 9...Nc6 leads to nothing concrete.

8 Qd5 Qd7 9 Bh4 Na5 10 Be2 Ne7 likewise with counterplay.

8 Bh4! (diagram)
Simple chess. Black is now left to ponder what he has just done, the open diagonal now weakened beyond measure. E.g.:

- **8...Nge7** 9 Nd5! Bg4? 10 Bxf6! Bxf3 11 Qxf3 gxf6? 12 Nxf6+ Kf8 13 Nd7+! mating promptly.
- **8...Ne5** 9 Nxe5 dxe5 10 Qb3 +- . A Rook is on the way to d1.
- **8...Nh6** 9 h3 ± Nf7 10 a3 Nce5 11 Ba2 when White may choose to continue 12 Nd4 and f4, or 12 Rc1 and Nd5.

**8...Bg4!**

The only chance for active defense. White is invited to blunder with the “fools rush in” attack, destroyed instantly after 9 Qb3? Na5! 10 Qa4+ (10 Bf7+? Kf8 ⊥) c6! 11 Bxg8? Rxg8 12 b4 Bxf3 13 gxf3 Bd4 14 Rc1 Nc4 15 b5 Ne5! → (Acers).

**9 h3** (diagram)

Black must surrender the Bishop pair or face very passive defense: 
9...Bh5? 10 g4 Bg6 11 Qb3! Na5 12 Qa4+ c6 13 Bxg8! Rxg8 14 b4 wins a piece, or 10...Bf7 11 Bxf7+ Kxf7 12 Qb3+ Ke8 13 Qxb7 Nb4 14 Qb5+ Qd7 15 Qe2 ± (Acers) - White plans 16 a3 Nc6 17 Nd5 with a GIANT KNIGHT. 18 Rc1, 19 b4 will increase the initiative and Qc4 later will seek penetration at e6 (Nd5-f4-e6), all caused by Black’s tragic ...f6.

**9...Bxf3 10 gxf3 ⊥**

A center pawn down, White must avoid simplification with loss of initiative. 10 Qxf3? Ne5 11 Qe2 Nxc4 12 Qxc4 Qd7 ⊥ White controls many open lines, and has the Bishop pair in return for the pawn. A slow, powerful buildup is now possible: 10...Qd7 11 Nd5 N8e7 12 a3 a5 13 Nf4 ± Nd4 14 Nh5.
Black must in turn avoid the trap:

10...a6 11 Nd5! Nge7 12 Bxf6!! gxf6 13 Nxf6+ Kf8 14 Qc1!
(with the terrible dual threats of 15 Qh6 mate and 15 Qf4! with mate in two.) Ng8 15 Nxg8 Rxg8 16 Qf4+ Kg7 17 Rg1+ wins by knockout. (Acers).

B3. b) 7...Qd7

“No problem.”
A Petrosian-Karpov like holding line. Black is a pawn up and envisions the quiet victory in the endgame. White’s wonderful development, positional squeeze everywhere, open lines, and mechanical attack virtually guarantee Black may have real problems ever reaching the endgame alive. In such positions, the second player must simply believe... “GM Evans was correct. A pawn must win by sheer force of will. I, the great one, will survive, will make it happen.” Please forgive the figure in the shadows, the echo of the late K.R. Smith, who played more than 100 YMCA cattle country tourney games in a row with a Smith-Morra one pawn center gambit versus the Sicilian Defense, without losing a single game, defeating a GM 7-3 in a speed match (“I should know, I was the scorekeeper, - Reno 1970.” - Acers). High above, Mr. Smith is going “Ho! Ho! Ho! - Just don’t listen to the warning.”

8 Qd2
Nothing fancy. White will marshall the Rooks to the center. Total mobilization. The queenside pawns will be advanced to limit Black.

8...h6 9 Bh4 Nge7 10 0-0-0!
The big surprise. All of White’s kingside pawns will advance like a typhoon if Black castles kingside. That will come later. Otherwise, White will shift his King to b1, and place Rooks on the center files.

Fatal was 10...Ne5? 11 Nxe5 dxe5 12 Bxf7+ 1-0 Acers-Fowler, Louisiana 1966. (12...Kxf7 13 Qxd7 Bxd7 14 Rxd7 Bd6 15 Bxe7 Ke6 16 Rxd6 ++)

The student should note the frequent blunders:
• 11...Nge5? 12 Nxe5 Nxe5 13 Bxe5 dxe5 14 Bxf7+!! Qxf7 15 Qd8 mate, or 14...Kxf7 15 Qxd7+ +- (endgame)...
• 11...Na5? 12 Bb5! c6 13 Be2 ± White eyes Black weaknesses - the poor pawn at the weak square d6, plus the homeless Knight at a5 for future reference. (Acers)

Removal of defenders... to open up the cannons on Black’s cramped position. After exchanges, a shattering advance f2-f4-f5-f6 is now possible, if Black ever castles to that hostile neighborhood.

After 12...Nxa5, White’s edge is smaller than the text.

Analysis by Emanuel Lasker - “White has a great advantage” With the text, White has a powerful attack, several plans available. Black’s weak shelter on the Queen’s wing will be explored:
• 16 Nd5 ± intending 17 Rhd1 with a methodical build-up.
• 16 Nf5 with “The Big Clamp”
• 16 Rhd1 safety first - completing development with all of the above held in high regard a move later.
Scotch-Göring Gambit, 5 c3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)

B3. c) 7...Nge7

Considered best by Em. Lasker. This simple development offers a persistent initiative for the first player. Black must “get serious” about the defense - “guess right” or lose immediately. The attacker is immeasurably aided here by the extraordinary “combination for attack” ideas of GM Paul Keres, J. Mieses and Paul Saladin Leonhardt (1877-1934)*.

Both quiet development: (I) 8 0-0, and an “Apache Variation” (II) 8 Nd5 are played here. Both should be carefully examined, as they transpose to each other, if a powerful Keres piece sacrifice (universally recommended) runs afoul of a defense found by Jude Acers (Miami Variation Gambit Project, 2001)...

Reader’s choice.

White is defiant. With inchworm, space taking moves, the entire board will be overrun, hopefully with a lot of help from the unwary defender: a) 8...f6  b) 8...h6  c) 8...0-0 (main line):

a) 8...f6 9 Bh4 Ng6 10 Bg3 with a game of maneuvers.

b) 8...h6 9 Bh4Bg4 10Nd5 Qd7 11b4! (Bayonet flank attack on the queenside, a frequent theme in slower games) Bb6 12Bf6! (Acers: A sham sacrifice to open lines: 12...Nxd5 13 exd5 gxf6 14 dxc6 Qxc6 15 Qb3! with lethal threats (16 Bb5; 16 Bxf7+), or 14...bxc6 15 Qb3, with five “pawn islands” for Black, and shaky-quaky Black monarch. Better to play it safe with...) 12...Bxf3 13 Qxf3 Bd4 14 Bxd4 Nxd4 15 Qc3 ± with advantage to White (Jacobs, Chess Digest)

* Paul S. “Win in 10 - Amen” Leonhardt was one of the all-time great chess opening theorists, beat Nimzovich in match play (+4=1, Hamburg 1911), won first prize (ahead of Maroczy, Schlecter), Copenhagen 1907. Died at the board.
Scotch-Göring Gambit. 5 c3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)

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[Diagram]

8...0-0

Line "c" of the previous note.
This will be the common reply.
By far the most important position
for study of the Scotch Gambit,
Em. Lasker Attack.

Black holds on to the pawn plus,
and expects no problems - plans
to cruise to victory. However,

"Before the endgame, the gods have placed the middlegame."
-Tartakower.

9 Nd5!

This simple, but instructive recommendation of Mieses threatens to
mug Black in broad daylight with 10 b4! Bb6 11 b5
and Black is history.

9...Kh8

Black plans ...f7-f6, which is safe and noncommittal, understandably
trying to wait at the hour of prayer.

9...Be6 is the last active counter, and looks most attractive:
10 b4! Bxd5 11 Bxd5(?) Nxb4 12 Bxb7 Rb8 ± defends quite well.

However:

a) 10 b4! Bxd5 11 exd5! Nxb4 12 Rb1! ±
(Threat: 13 a3 Na6 14 Rxb7). If 12...c6 13 Re1! Re8 14 a3!
N4xd5 15 Bxd5 cxd5 16 Rxb7 f6 17 R1xe7! Rxe7 18 Rxe7
Qxe7 19 Qxd5+ (Removing the Rook with check + - Acers).

b) 10 Qd2 (! Acers) intends Qd2-f4-h4.
10...h6? 11 Bxh6 gxh6 12 Qxh6 Bxd5 13 Ng5 1-0
Acers-Allies, Rue Chartres Cafe, Blindfold Exhibition 1981.

c) 10 Qb3 attacking b7/e6, or 10 a3 (b2-b4-b5) with a space edge.
We have examined the position for “tries”, where White is for choice, simply because they are the most likely to occur.

10 b4! +

This powerful flank advance provides the answer for White.

Black may be able to defend the dark squared Bishop, both Knights under siege, and the one pawn advantage...

...but not all at the same time.

10...Bb6

Black must decide what he wishes to do. All choices are difficult for the defense. The alternative was 10...f6 11 bxc5, when:

• 11...Nxd5 12 exd5 Na5 13 Bd3 fxg5 14 Qd2 g4 15 Ng5→ + with an attack on h7, and the hapless “Knight on the Rim”.
• 11...fxg5 12 Nxc7! Qxc7 13 cxd6 Qd8 14 Nxc5 (with decisive threats: 15 Nf7+; 15 Nhx7!; 15 Qh5) Ne5 ≠ 15 Nhx7! invades. 15...Bg4 16 Be2 Bxe2 17 Qxe2 Kxh7 18 Qh5+ Kg8 19 Qxe5 +/ +− with White’s 5-1 pawn majority formidable compensation for Black’s remaining Knight (Acers).

11 b5 f6

Interposition is forced. A routine blunder is 11...h6? 12 bxc6 +− hxg5 13 Nxg5 waving a red flag in front of the defender. (Mate in two with 14 Qh5+ is threatened.) 13...g6 14 Nxb6 axb6 15 Nxf7+ winning a Rook for Knight with many coming adventures for the Black monarch, home alone with no pawn shelter.

12 bxc6 fxg5 13 exb7! Bxb7 14 Nxb6 axb6
15 Nxe5 ++

White’s superb coordination permits these winning threats:
- 16 Nxe7 Kxe7 17 Qh5 mate
- 16 Ne6 (White’s Knight enters a center board square that can not be defended by a pawn, ever, called simply the “hole” by J. R. Capablanca, Cuban World Champion.

On a visit to San Francisco, Capablanca told GM Problemist, master-player-promoter A.J. Fink, that when a Knight enters a “hole” square in his mind - All analysis stops in my mind... I know it must be a win and can not waste my time on it...
into ‘the hole’ and you KNOW, that’s it.
(Actual quote, never before published, from Capablanca. Story from Guthrie McLain, 25-year founder-publisher, California Chess Reporter)

Naturally, the powerful fork of Queen and Rook by the Knight is a secondary factor. Often a Knight at e6 or d6 is more valuable than TWO ROOKS. Terrific tacticians, tremendous GM’s like M. Tal, or U.S. Champion Larry Christiansen (Storming the Barricades) shout as you play over their assaults - plant the pieces deep in enemy territory and build behind them. Think later. Plant now.

Finally:
- 16 Nf7+ - winning a Rook for Knight - called “the exchange”.
  The position is won, with world class wrap-up analysis to boot:

15...d5 16 Ne6
“Into the hole!” - Capablanca

16...Qe8 17 exd5! Rf6 18 Re1 Qd7
Scotch-Göring Gambit. 5 c3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)

19 Rcl! +-

Black's position is cut in two.
Em. Lasker / Jacobs (Chess Digest).
Simple chess. White maintains the extra pawn for the endgame.

- If now 19...Nxd5 20 Bxd5 Qxd5 21 Qxd5 Bxd5 22 Nxc7 Rd8 23 Nxd5 wins the Bishop gratis...
- 19...Ra5 20 Bb3! +- with the threat 21 Rxc7
- 19...Rc8 20 Bb3! (using all the pieces) with the game-winning 21 Qd4-e5 planned. (Acers)

...since White checkmates in two different ways, should Black capture 23..Rxd5 (unprotected back rank).

II. 8 Nd5 (diagram)
- The "Apache" Variation

GM Paul Keres's Attack.

Acers: This is the way to go.

Employing the great U.S. Champion, teacher-theorist GM Lev Alburt to whisper in our ear will be useful:

The Alburt teaching method is to first insist on results - estimate how many games White will win out of 10 with careful preparation. Score for 8 Nd5: 9 out of 10 points likely against equal opposition. We will therefore play it. It is indeed instruction beyond the norm.
The imagination of GM Paul Keres now takes us promptly to the Land of Oz...

II. a) 8...Be6 II. b) 8...f6!

II. a) 8...Be6

The very important manoeuvre defense which occurs again and again. White builds the HOUSE OF STONE ganging up on d5, employing the flank manoeuvre b2-b4 later, castling, centralizing his Rooks while maintaining tactical alertness. (Laven: See Second Game, *The Miami Variation*, p. 37, for details on the many ways to play the "House of Stone" formation.)

9 0-0 0-0

A huge decision. Black rejects as far too dangerous, opening up the board with the Knight located there. 9...Bxd5 10 exd5:

a) 10...Ne5 11 Re1 f6 12 Nxe5
   • 12...fxg5? 13 Qh5+! wins, or
   • 12...fxe5 13 Qh5+ g6 14 Qh4 ±
   • 12...dxe5 13 Bh4 with chances for attack
     (13...Nf5? 14 Rxe5+; 13...Ng6 14 Bb5+ ≈)

b) 10...Na5? 11 Bxe7! embarrasses the K and Q. Not the murky:
   • 11 Qa4+?! c6 12 b4 Nxc4 13 bxc5 Ne5 finds White opening lines right now for the assault with initiative. Acers: 13...b5
     14 Qa6 f6 15 dxe6 fxg5 16 Qxb5 with great complications:
     16...d5 17 Nxe5 ≈; 16...Ne5 17 Nxe5 dxe5 18 Rad1
     Qb8? (18...Qc7? 19 Rd7!; 18...Qc8 19 Rd7 Rb8?! 20 Qa4 ≈ or 19...Nxc6 20 Rd6 ≈) 19 Qc4 ± Qc7 20 Rd6 Rd8 intending 21 Rfd1 ± or 20 Rfd7 / 20 Qe6 with a powerful attack in each case.
• Better is 11\textit{b4}!? (Acers) Nxc4 (11...Bxb4? 12 Qa4 wins the Bishop and the game) 12 bxc5 ± (Threats: 13 Qa4+; or 13 Qd4 - keying in on the Nc4 and g7) 0-0 13 Qb3 ± or 13 Qe2 ±

This will provide the reader with real ideas in the middlegame. Many defenders will not reach move 20 alive. Indeed, a lifetime chess weapon, quite historical, little known... the “LEARN AS YOU PLAY” method will work here. Acers’s advice to the novice:

“Even if you experience initial problems, your pieces will be active. You will learn to keep it alive, to the last pawn. Above all, you will learn the value of THE MOVE, the initiative, and to play for superior position - the most important. When does material count; when do material considerations go by the wayside.”

We follow \textit{Mieses-Salwe, Carlsbad 1907.}

10\textit{b4}!? (Mieses)

“Just like that, here we go again.”
- Acers. At this moment,
White may have missed victory.
- an extraordinary GM Keres suggestion. You, the reader, must decide if he is correct: See \textit{The Two Piece Sacrifice, 10 Nf6+!!} directly following Mieses-Salwe.

10...Bxd5 11 exd5 Nxb4

Correct now is 12 Rb1! with attacking chances: 12...f6 13 a3 ± or 12...c6 13 Re1! Re8 14 a3! N4xd5 15 Bxd5 exd5 16 Rxb7 f6 17 R1xe7! Rxe7 18 Rxe7 fxg5 (18...Qxe7 19 Qxd5+ picks up the Ra8) 19 Qxd5+ Kh8 20 Nxe5 Qb8 21 Nf7+ Kg8 22 Nd8+! with “Mate on the wall after all.” - W. Waguespack, New Orleans, or 20...Qf8 21 Nf7+ Kg8 22 Nxd6+ Kh8 23 Rf7! (Acers)

“With contact.” - (GM Averbach). The Black Q/R/B are stuck.
The Two-Piece Sacrifice

10 Nf6+? (!! - Keres)

Acers: For the student, this is a once-in-a-lifetime chess lesson.
Keres: “For the sacrificed pawn, White has obtained a good attacking position, straining the defense. The two-piece sacrifice 10 Nf6+!! shatters the Black position.”

“Imagination in chess is a very important thing.” - Capablanca.

Indeed, 10...gxf6 11 Bxf6 paralyzes Black. (Threat: Simply 12 Qd2 or Qc1 with checkmate on the c1-h6 diagonal in mind.)

Acers: One other finesse does it:

• 11...Bxc4 12 Qd2 Qd7 13 Qg5+! (to block the g-file FIRST with Black’s Knight) Ng6 14 Qh6 and Black’s Queen can not reach g4 preventing mate... But what if...

• 11...h6 12 Ng5!! +- (diagram) with the bold threat 13 Qh5 and mate everywhere. My goodness - GM Keres is “cooking with gas” here... Elegant. All this had been overlooked for decades. Well, it’s a GM at work. With a smile, the reader will go one hundred games without a sacrifice. Laughing, he will dismiss all this analysis. No, it can’t be sound, just play “safety first” 10...Kh8. “The practical move, it will work out all right.” With one-half century to ponder the defense,

Acers finds the way out:
When Black's survival appears on the horizon, checkmate is nowhere to be found.

Keres now belongs to the ages. You can not ask him, ask yourself: “Can White maintain the assault?” After:

• 14...Bxf1? (“Greed - man’s noblest motive” - GM Seirawan)

  15 Bg7+! Kxg7 16 Nh5+ draws by perpetual check - the attacker’s dream, operating with life insurance as the clock runs. Acers found one more idea to realize the attack:

• 14...Rg8? 15 Bg7+! (anyway) Kxg7 (else mate in 2) 16 Nh5+ Kf8 17 Qh6+ Ke8 18 Nf6 mate. But all is not well...

• 14...Bd4! (The question remains how to handle an alert defender who mobilizes a dark-square defensive scheme) 15 Rfd1 Be5, when the coming ...Ng8 adds both Knight and Queen to the reinforcements.

We have traveled a long theoretical highway - an entire middlegame which will happen often in the Italian Gambit system. Armed with Keres’s attacking ideas and themes, we come to:

II. b) 8 Nd5 f6(!)
Paul Keres’s “Apache” Variation. Some players with the Black pieces will resign after just a few moves, never having dreamt there was danger afoot.

For those concerned that White has gone a bit “sac-happy”, the Miami Computer Team (See Second Game) suggests a second arrow in the quiver: 9 Bh4. In return for the pawn, the clock goes on, with free play for the White pieces and “The House of Stone” formation. The now weak a2-g8 diagonal, and the e6 “hole” are a noticeable plus for White, as the following variations attest:

- 9...Bg4? 10 Bxf6!;
- 9...Be6? 10 Nxf6!;
- 9...Ne5? 10 Nxe5 dxe5 11 Bxf6! all with a now winning edge.
- 9...Ng6 (best) 10 Bg3 Ng5 11 Nxe5 Nxe5 12 Bxe5 dxe5 13 Qh5+ g6 14 Qh6 Bf8 (14...c6? 15 Qg7!) 15 Qh4Bg7 16 0-0-0 with a direct assault in prospect: 16...c6 17 Ne3 Qe7 18 Rd2 and 19 Rfd1. Black may also defend in a much different manner: 10...Bg4 11 Qb3 with dynamic, point-filled play, Black holding an extra center pawn, White having easy piece coordination and more space.

“White has a very dangerous attack.”

“Black faces a startling improvement. Formerly played was 11 Ng5? Ng6, and Black can defend safely. There are mutual chances after either 12 Qf3 Nce5 13 Nd7++ Ke7, or 12 Nfxh7+ Kg7.
Scotch-Göring Gambit, 5 c3 dxc3 (Fifth Game)

“The Black defenders are noticeably silent here. After all, only a close examination can tell what is happening.”

Again, let us repeat: This (11 Qc1!) is ideal for *forced play only*.

Position after 11 Qc1!

An astonishing development. Black often needs enormous time on the clock to discover (recover!), *this is for real*. Multiple threats abound. White opens up with Qc1-h6 mate in view. Next, Black spies 12 Qf4 with the terrible threat of 13 Nd7 double check, with mate in 2. Also 13 Nhx7++ Kg7 14 Qf6+

Kxh7 15 Ng5 mate. Surely, it is not possible to fault Black’s loss here. Resign gracefully now, off to the cinema, a rest hour.

Wait - a last minute check: 11...h6? (stops 12 Qh6 mate, but...) 12 Qf4! forces Black to run for his life... 12...Kg7 13 Nh5+ Kg6 (13...Kh7 14 Qf7 mate) 14 Qg3+ Kxh5 15 Bf7+ Ng6 16 Bxg6 mate. The clock will almost always stop here, Black resigns... yet there is a defense to this attack, never found in a multitude of opening manuals all over the world. Is there anything to do for Black but resign gracefully?

11...Ng8!!

(Acers, 2002)

“Whew Bobby, that was close... That was your only move.”
- (Amateur)

“Sir, believe me, one’s all I need.” - Fischer, U.S. Tour 1964.
(Recalled by chess Master William Bills, Houston TX)
Black has a powerful extra Bishop for two dormant pawns. He must stop checkmate in one and the enemy Knight must be evicted. Acers opens a small closet, an escape march for the King is underway. White will win an inactive Rook for the strong Bishop, while a mighty White pawn armada on the King’s wing awaits. Make no mistake, this is a high-wire performance for Black at every turn.

12 Nd5

Others:
- 12 Qf4? Qxf6 +
- 12 Nxg8 Rxg8 13 Qh6+ Rg7 14 Qf4+ Ke7 $\not=$ ;
  13 Bxg8 Kxg8 14 Qg5+? Qxg5 $\not=$;
  13 Qf4+ Kg7 14 Qf7+ Kh8 $\not=$
- 12 Nh5 Qe7 13 Qf4+ Ke8 14 Bxg8 Rxg8 15 Nf6+ Kf8! 16 Ng5 Rxe5! 17 Nhx7+ Kg7 18 Nxg5 Qf6 $\not=$

12...Kg7 13 Qf4 Nh6!

Not 13...Nf6?? 14 Qg5 +–.

14 Qg3+ Ng4! 15 0-0 h5!

...and Black repels the last wave: (16 h3 h4 17 Qf4 Rf8 18 Qd2 Rxf3 19 gxf3 N4e5 20 Be2 Nd4 21 Kh1 Nxe2 22 Qxe2 c6 23 Rg1+ Kf8! should win for Black.)

We mention in closing with no comment, the lost highway:
9 Nxf6+? (Instead of 9 Bxf6!! or 9 Bh4) gxf6 10 Bxf6 Rf8 11Bg7 Rf4 $\not=$ 12 Ng5 Ng6 13 Qd5, or simply 12...Bg4 $\not=$.
Sixth Game

5 c3 Nf6 6 e5 (diagram)

The Steinitz-Sveshnikov Attack.

A. 6...Qe7?
B. 6...Ng4?
C. 6...Ne4?
D. 6...d5!

A viable alternative attack used by Paul Morphy, London 1859. Throughout the Italian Gambit system, White may choose to offer less frequently seen problems right away. This is another, quite sound, center thrust, hoping to catch the defender asleep at the wheel. “This advance is interesting” - M. Euwe.

There is another advantage to the study of such Italian Gambit variations - hundreds of absolutely forced career wins, upon the slightest historical error, all pointed out by leading theoreticians Yuri Estrin and Evgeny Sveshnikov! Note also that because the early e5 advance is not common, it “must be bad” in the eyes of many. Reality visits the scoreboard soon enough. Morphy was correct.

~ If You Don’t Have Time for Perilous Explorations ~

Akers recommendations note: If you are a professional person (with very little time for chess), you could even select this one line, rather than the intricate 6 cxd4 or 6 0-0 lines, learn it from A to Z, with the assurance of a playable Morphy system, many wins versus the unprepared throughout your career. You would then develop an extremely limited, yet functional “draw-in-hand” variation versus all Volume II variations. Set these opening choices down on paper, and dedicate the main lines you absolutely will play in every game if
allowed, to memory. You then add a study book on the middlegame (what happens after the opening), *The Art of Attack*, by V. Vukovic - the best ever written on attack themes, with delightful explanations for every reader. Finally, keep a “How-To” endgame book, one with diagrams that are easy to study in under a minute. *Batsford Chess Endgames* by British GM J. Speelman, and *Chess Endgames* by top teacher L. Polgar, who made all three of his daughters GMs. Polgar’s masterpiece of “Chess Picture” teaching deserves special mention for the student, with a staggering 4,560 (10 second) picture lessons, 171 simple types of endgame themes, such as: ‘Knight Manoevers’, ‘Pushing the King away’, ‘Frontal Defense’, ‘Pair of Bishops versus Bishop and Knight’, and much more. *Chess Endgames* will last a lifetime, a delight forever.

**A. 6...Qe7?**

Players of the White pieces will swiftly win games throughout their careers against anything but direct center counterplay by Black. All piece moves are bad. Black must fight for the board center. The Queen now is poorly placed on the high-temperature “e” file.

**7 0-0 Ng8**

What else? 7...Nxe5? 8 Nxe5 Qxe5 9 Re1 +- and the Queen is lost; 7...Ng4 8 cxd4 - also with a crushing pawn “phalanx” roller.

**8 cxd4 Bb6 9 d5! Qc5 10 Na3 Nd4 11 Be3 Nxf3**

12 Qxf3 Morphy-Cunningham, London 1859. White has total board control.

**B. 6...Ng4?**

A blunder often made, by even strong players.

A. Tarasenko - A. Brockmanns, Sao Lourenco 1995 saw...
and Bilguer’s *Handbuch* shows the finish key line: 9...Ne5 10 Qe4 Qe7 11 0-0 h6 12 cxd4 Bxd4 13 Qxd4 hxg5 14 Nc3 ±
White hopes to blow apart the center with 15 Nd5 or Ne4.

**C. 6...Ne4? 7 Bd5!**

± and “Black has the choice of two evils”: 7...f5 8 cxd4 Bb4+ 9 Nbd2 “and Black cannot castle.” - Euwe, or...

**7...Nxf2 8 Kxf2 dxc3+ 9 Kg3! Ne7**

9...exb2 is of course, the acid test: 10 Bxb2 Ne7 11 Qc2! (*Handbuch*) with the idea 11...d6 12 Be4 Ng6 13 Nbd2 c6 14 Rad1 ± Note also 11 Be4 or 11 h3 ± (Ghulam Kassim)
A note of caution: White should avoid 11 Ng5? Nxd5 12 Nxf7 0-0!! *Hoffman-Petroff, 1844,* and Black has turned the tables with a sham Queen sacrifice.

10 Ne3 Nf5+ 11 Kf4!

± Euwe, *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings*

**D. 6...d5!**

Very interesting now are never-played lines with chances for both sides: 7 exf6 dxc4:

8 fxg7 Rg8 9 Bg5 f6 10 Qe2+ Qe7 11 Bf6 Qxe2+ 12 Kxe2 d3+ 13 Kf1 with a struggle, and
8 Qe2+ Be6 9 fxg7 Rg8 with a fight in progress. Shumov-Jaenisch, 1854. (Kalichenko, Sveshnikov now suggest 10 Bg5 with mutual chances)

7 Bb5

Perfectly playable. Best of all, an opening many players do not see once in their lives... The Giuoco Piano - Ruy Lopez.

White establishes a two-pawn center.

7...Ne4 8 cxd4 (diagram) Bb6

Very few players will play this.

White will often face instead:

a) 8...Be7 9 Nc3 0-0 10 Bd3!

(Gufeld and Stetsko wisely point out 10 0-0 is less good, because of 10...Bg4 with massive hits on White's center pawns) 10...f5 (on 10...Bb4 11 0-0! White could gambit a pawn with a mushrooming attack: 11...Nxc3 12 bxc3 Bxc3 13 Bh7+ Kh8 14 Rb1

14...g6 15 Rb3 Bb4 16 Ng5 - A. Khalifman) 11 exf6 Nxf6 12 Be3 Nb4 13 Bb1 Ng4? (∞ 13...Bg4 - Khalifman) 14 a3 ± Steinitz went on to defeat Em. Lasker, (4), World Title Match, New York 1894. The game was war, so fiercely contested it required three pages to cover in A. Khalifman’s Chess Stars - every game ever played series - Emanuel Lasker, Games 1889-1903, Vol. 1.

b) 8...Bb4+ “Played nine times out of ten. It just feels good to check.” - Acers. 9 Bd2 (Sveshnikov notes 9 Nb6 0-0 10 0-0 Bg4 11 Bxc6 bxc6 12 Qc2 Bxf3 13 Nxf3 Qd7 14 a3 Be7 15 Be3 a5) and here Black has captured both ways:
b1) $9...Nxd2$ 10 $\text{Nbxd2}$ 0-0 11 $Bxc6$ $bxc6$ 12 0-0 $c5$ 13 $a3$ $Bxd2$ 14 $Qxd2$ $cxd4$ 15 $Qxd4$ $f6$ Eihborn-Anderssen, Breslau 1852. White is better, with an iron grip on the c-file and a direct attack on the d-pawn to keep Black busy.

b2) $9...Bxd2+\) 10 $\text{Nbxd2}$ 0-0 11 $Bxc6$ $bxc6$ 12 0-0 $c5$ 13 $dxc5$ $Nc5$ 14 $Nbd2$ $Nc6$ 15 $Rc1$ $f6$ 16 $Nbd4$ $fxe5$ 17 $Nc6$ $Qd6$ 18 $Nxf4$ $Qf4$ 19 $Rc3$ ± Chelushkina-Botsari, Azov 1990. Chelushkina may play $Qd2$, and place the Rooks on any of the three center files. The White Knights rule the board, though much play remains (Kalichenko sources).

We now follow Balashov-Sveshnikov, Volgograd 1985

\[\text{Diagram:} 9 \text{Ne}3 \text{0-0}\]

(Possible here is 10 $Bxc6$ $bxc6$ 11 $Be3$ $Bg4$ 12 $Qa4$ $c5$ 13 $dxc5$ $Bxf3$ 14 $gxf3$ $Nxc5$ 15 $Bxc5$ $Bxc5$ 16 0-0-0 $Qe8$ 17 $Qa5!$ $Bxf2$ 18 $Qd5$ ± Sveshnikov-Dautov, Russia 1986).

"with the better chances" (Gufeld, Stetsko)

Acers: A powerful takeover of the squares around the Black King is forecast: $Kc2$, $f4$, $Rd3$, $Rf1$ followed by GM Seirawan’s famous “student body right” maneuver.

\[\text{Diagram:} 10 \text{Be3} \text{Bg4}\]

10...$f5$ transposes into Steinitz-Lasker, 1894.

\[\text{Diagram:} 11 \text{Qc2}\]

Also with advantage for White is 11 $h3$ $Bh5$ 12 $Qb3$ $Bxf3$ 13 $gxf3$ $Ng5$ (Stanciu-Urzica, Romania 1974) - Gufeld, Stetsko.
11...Bxf3 12 gxf3

White’s center will be reinforced with gain of time.

12...Ng5 13 Bxc6 bxc6 (diagram)

In Fernandez-Izeta, Bilbao 1987, Black courageously accepted the challenge and went after White’s King a piece down after 13...Nxf3+ 14 Ke2 Nxd4+ 15 Bxd4 bxc6 16 Bxb6 axb6 17 Rhe1 Qg5 18 Kf1 Qh5! 19 f4 f6! 20 e6 Rae8 21 f5 Qh3+ 22 Kg1 Qg4+ and the game was drawn by perpetual check.

White’s task here is quite simple - opening lines on the King’s wing. GM Sveshnikov found a way for White in the post-mortem:
14 0-0-0 Nxf3 15 Qf5 Nh4
16 Qg4 Ng6 17 h4 f5 18 exf6 Qxf6 19 h5 Nf4 20 Rh4 with all the forces in play, but no clear result guaranteed. Sveshnikov actually chose the wild and wooly 14 Qa4 vs. Balashov, 1985.

As mentioned earlier, this line substitutes well for the main Italian Game: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4!? exd4 5 c3 Nf6 6 cxd4 Bb4+ which funnels directly into the Möller Attack, among others (Seventh and Eighth Games). Also note that 6 0-0 (instead of 6 e5 or 6 cxd4) takes us back to the Third Game, “Last Exit” Variation, another line that is a relatively quick study. The risk here is that Black can branch off into sharp gambit lines with 5...dxc3, which was considered in the previous (Fifth) game. The antidote, should you wish not to risk a gambit on move 5, is to transpose thus:

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 e5 (or 6 0-0) - which is the standard, classical move order.
Seventh Game

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4 exd4 5 c3
- The Evolution of Rossolimo’s Attack System.

“He who studies - wins. Strong masters are better than amateurs only because they are willing to study, to do the things amateurs are unwilling to do.”


With 5 c3, Black is faced with another huge “fork in the road”.

Possibilities: 5...dxc3 (Fifth Game) 5...Qe7 (Intro) 5...Nf6 (Main). The usual move order for ...Qe7 is 4 c3 Qe7 [or Nf6] 5 d4 exd4, ignoring The Italian Gambit. (4 c3 was Rossolimo’s choice.)

White must be prepared for each turn, as partially mapped and assayed by Nicholas Rossolimo.

GM Nicholas Rossolimo (1910-1975)

A ten-time Paris Champion, best known for his pioneering Sicilian work, (1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5, see Volume II) Rossolimo would die alone in the night, in surroundings of ice and snow. He could ponder stirring chess visions, tooting around New York as a taxi driver. The Russian-French-U.S. GM could remember his draw with Capablanca (Paris 1939) and a 1962 draw with Fischer. To keep the cash register ringing, he would play countless games, beneath the clothespin laundromat sign, with thrilled chess students as a necessary, more lucrative trade. He could not wait for the never-to-come American Chess Circuit, as the country’s Chess Federation wasted millions. Into the New York night, into back alleys, in freezing winter the chess pro had to go... to instruct, at all hours, to just barely survive.

Largely ignored in the swirl of Fischer Era giants about him - Reuben Fine, Samuel Reshevsky, Larry Evans, William Lombardy, Walter Browne, Pal Benko, he was a chess professional to the end... a fall to his death.
The open game *Giouco Piano* (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5) was his lifetime income. Rossolimo knew that a coffeehouse quiet variation was not equal, but could be “milked” for endless victories, no matter how well Black defended. For most players, the defensive task was simply too difficult (“An unequal draw” - Acers).

Strangely, only Saviely Tartakower noted this (*500 Master Games of Chess*). Both saw no reason to go further than chess history, the old masters. The Italian Game would do very well. An early example:

**Introduction: 5...Qe7**

Rossolimo-L. Evans, Hastings 1949-50

Today, all are wise. The Queen is not well placed on the e-file.

**6 0-0 d3**

Aim: Keep it closed. GM Evans, always one sharp operator, knew that all open positions will be correctly handled by the theory wizard, according to the Steinitz recipe:

6...Ne5 7 Nxe5 Qxe5 8 f4! dxc3+ 9 Kh1 (diagram)

a) 9...cxb2? 10 fxe5 bxa1(Q) 11 Qd5 +− when Black is history. The King stands alone.

b) 9...Qd4 10 Qb3 Nh6 11 Nxc3 0-0 12 h3 Staunton-St. Amant, Paris, 1843 when Black must consider declaring an emergency, play 12...d5 13 Bxd5 with White still better (Unzicker - ECO).

7 e5

Direct. White has greater board room.
7 b4 Bb6 8 e5 d6 is an important, forceful alternative, when Black is in a box. 9 Bg5! White has castled, Black has not, and this permits White to swiftly occupy lines as they are opened, with gain of time. 9...f6 10 exf6:

- 10...gxf6 11 Re1 Ne5 12 Nxe5 dxe5 13 Qh5+ Kd8 14 Bh4 a5 15 Rxe5! Qf8 16 Bxg8 Rxg8 17 Re8+! Qxe8 18 Bxf6+ Qe7 19 Qd5+ 1-0 sweeps the board. Estrin-Zhivtsov, Russia 1945.

- 10...Nxf6 + Chekhover-Panov, Russia 1936.

First, do no harm. 7...d6 8 Bg5 f6 9 exf6 Nxf6 10 N1d2 ± (Keres)

8 b4 Bb6 9 a4 a5 10 Ba3 axb4 11 cxb4 Nxb4 Grabbing a pawn for self defense - often fuel for GM Evans.

12 Qb3 Bc5 13 Nc3 (diagram)

± White’s advantage, ideal for the first player, has “cleared the back rank” and is ready to push both Rooks to the center files.

- White has an unopposed center pawn, always an advantage if it can not be captured or exchanged off the board.
- King safety through castling.
- Gain of time: White threatens to win by 14 Bxb4 Bxb4 15 Nd5.
- Center outposts: White has both e4 and d5 for the Nc3: 13...c6 14 Ne4! ±
This was real.
The word spread.
Black would no longer cooperate.
The world over, Rossolimo would now face “The Big Kahuna”

The Italian Game Main Line:
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4 exd4 5 c3 Nf6! (diagram)

*The Classical Defense*
- Best by Test.

**What would be thoroughly re-explored:** 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Bd2!
- The Mednis-Rossolimo “Quiet” attack, which saw:
  - Mednis-Spassky, Sofia, Bulgaria 1958,
  - Mednis-Fischer, New York 1963, and
  - Rossolimo’s Immortal Game vs. Reissman, San Juan, 1967.

**What was known, and virtually played out:** 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Nc3
- The Steinitz-Möller Gambit, (Eighth Game) which witnessed

Direct attack took two forms. Rossolimo first examined the gambit attack by Möller (6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Nc3) - and what happened along the way. Then he chose the second option (7 Bd2), knowing what practical chances the move held. Decades later, we see the value of his choice, through the following well-known theory...

Grandmaster, Repeat U.S. Champion Lev Alburt’s Rule:
*Estimate the chances to win out of 10.* White’s powerful two-pawn center promises a clear practical advantage unless destroyed immediately.

By contrast, the first choice, 7 Nc3, placed great demands upon the memory, where *both* players could lose their way. When Steinitz employed it, the landscape was open and new discoveries were plentiful. Today, those findings are known deep into the middlegame.
First played by Greco, a pure pawn sacrifice for development, playable for chess players of any rank. Ex-World Champion Anatoly Karpov (winner of 160 International tournaments) now carefully avoided the standard lines for Black. They permit White to aim for attack with a draw in hand.

(Dzindzichashvili-Karpov, 1988 - Illustrative Game #5)

That is precisely the point. Greco, who lived but 34 years, still published the first games/analyses in Rome, 1619, that went through at least 41 editions. *The Royal Game of Chess Play* (1656) employed his work.

Proving the sacrifice valid, Greco answered 7...Nxe4 with 8 0-0 (A second sack to attack now.) Nxc3 9 bxc3 Bxc3? 10 Qb3! Bxa1 11 Bxf7+ Kf8 12Bg5 Ne7 13 Ne5! (clearing f3 for the Queen) Bxd4 14 Bg6! d5 15 Qf3+ Bf5 16 Bxf5 +–.

A second trap was *The Krakow Variation* 6...Bb4+ 7 Kf1?! successfully used by Marshall. Black suddenly can not play 7...Nxe4? 8 d5! Ne7 (8...Na5 9 Bd3 threatens 10 Bxe4 and 10 a3 winning a Black minor piece) 9 Qd4 Nf6 10 Bg5 Ng6 11 Nbd2 0-0 12 Ne4 Be7 13 d6! exd6 14 Nxd6 “with strong pressure for White” - Gufeld, Sosonko.

Better to leave the pawn alone with 7...d5!

E.g: 8 exd5 Nxd5 9 Nc3 Be6 10 Qe2 0-0 and Black has no worries.
### Giuoco Piano

**Classical Variation**

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bc4 Bc5
4. d4 exd4
5. 0-0 Nf6
6. cxd4 Bb4+

#### Move Outline

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<td>Bf5?</td>
<td>(158)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0-0</td>
<td>(158-159)</td>
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No shortcuts. There is a long history here, and there are always benefits to returning to original sources:

6...Bb4+ (diagram)

(Ed. - the 4 d4!? Italian Gambit move order has a hidden bonus: The Closed Giuoco Piano is avoided!
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Qe7 5 d4 Bb6)

Now, time for the BIG CHOICE:
7 Bd2! (Seventh Game), or
7 Nc3!? (Eighth Game)

Without risk of any kind, no material sacrifices on offer, White brings the entire army to the center, and occupies three separate files as needed. There is no easy equality for the defender as Rossolimo well knew - fifty two years before the Encyclopedia of Chess Openings (ECO) published simple advantages for White. “It is an unequal draw at best for the second player.” - Acers.

Even Fischer was trapped here. The audacity, the cash register-a-ringing’ just boggles the mind when one game after another is won with the White pieces. The variations are easy to learn, teaching the player about Knight outposts, maintaining the tension, attack against the castled King, use of open lines for the Rooks, deep analysis of the position at the “critical moment” which, as Kasparov points out - every fiercely fought game has. What should Black do?

Defense for Black in all variations is hair-raising.
First the Old World view, Dr. Tarrasch’s Comments: (from Tarrasch’s First Lessons, 300 Master Games of Chess)
Albin-Tarrasch, Dresden 1892.

7...Nxe4?! (diagram)

Dr. Tarrasch comments are in quotes, unless when otherwise indicated: “7...Bxd2+ and 8...d5 are usual moves here. I chose the text move as it has shown itself to be good for Black a number of times during the Nuremberg tournaments.” (for 7...Bxd2+, see Tartakower’s Verdict, p. 133)

8 Bxb4 Nxb4 9 Bxf7+ Kxf7 10 Qb3+ d5 11 Ne5+

“Black may play with the King here, but the risk is all Black’s.”

11...Kf6 (diagram)

(11...Ke6 - Modern Theory is just as difficult ±/± - Acers)

“This was initiated by Vitzhum and strongly recommended by Dr. Lange, and in Bilguer’s Handbuch, it is given as correct. Together with the two following moves it clarifies the point of the Black defense.”

12 Qxb4 c5 13 Qa4 Qe8?

“If I had not been so familiar with the Handbuch and if instead
I had relied upon my own combinative abilities, the much better 13...Qb6 would not have escaped me. Dr. Schmid indicated this move and we analyzed it extensively. Even so I do not believe that this move will give Black the edge." (Akers: For the student, please note that even the slightest error by Black appears fatal.)

"This maintains a positional advantage, which consists of the endangered King position, the weak d-pawn and the dominant Knight on e5. 'Theory' indicates trading Queens after which Black has quite a good position. It is strange that none of the analysts realized the weak nature of 13...Qe8."

"On 14...cxd4, White protects his Knight - 15 f4, and then replies to 15...g5 with 16 g3. Best was 14...g6 followed by 15...Kg7, but what would follow is 15 0-0 and 16 Nc3 and White maintains a considerable plus."

"With this and the next two moves, Black tries to obstruct the White plan, but White will not be confused and he continues the game directly."
20 f6+ Kf8 21 Ne7 Qb5

(diagram)

22 Rxf4

"This is the right move. Bad would be 22 Qe1 because of 22...Ne2+ followed by 23...Qxe5."

22...Qxe5 23 Qxd4 Qxd4 24 Rxd4 Be6

"Black at least has succeeded in defending against the attack on his King, but the f6-pawn which can not be captured will decide the endgame in White's favor."

25 Rd6 Kf7 26 Re1 Bxa2 27 Nd5!

"White keeps making best moves. On 27...Bd5 28 Re7 follows keeping the Rook out of the game."

27...Rhd8 28 Re7+ Kf8 29 Rxd8 Rxd8 30 Nd3 Bf7

The game concluded with Albin optimizing Rook, Knight and Pawn until surrender is forced. 31 Rxb7 a6 32 Ra7 Rd2 33 Ne4! Rxb2 "Of course the game is lost on other moves too."

34 Ra8+ Be8 35 Nd6 1-0.

"On 35...Re2, White answers 36 f7." - White plans the win of the pinned Bishop, indeed to promote to a new Q with Rxe8+ next.

"Dr. Tarrasch had played no fewer than thirty-nine continuous games without a loss before this loss." - Tourney Book.

7 Bd2 Bxd2+ 8 Nbxd2 - Tartakower’s Verdict

“Prosaic, but dangerous.”
- S. G. Tartakower

In Tartakower’s time, two games were of particular relevance:

- O’Kelly-Dr. Euwe, Amsterdam 1950
- Rossolimo-König, Hastings 1949-50

8...d5 9 exd5 Nxd5 10 Qb3

“Or 10 0-0 0-0 11 Re1 with a slight lateral pressure.” - Tartakower

Acers: Here again is yet another simple pressure with safety play which will win the reader countless games. Not a single annotated reference book mentions this simple plan. I have won many games with it. Thank you Mr. Tartakower.

10...Nce7 11 0-0 0-0 12 Rfe1 c6 (diagram)

I. 13 Ne4
II. 13 a4
(Ed. Much of GM Rossolimo’s work stemmed from 13 a4)

I. 13 Ne4 Nb6 14 Ne5

“With a slight lateral pressure.”
II. 13 a4 Qb6 14 a5

"Or 14 Qa3 Be6 15 a5 Qc7 and Black holds his own."- Tartakower

Acers: In reality White will often win even this position in practice:
16 Ne4 / 16 Ne5 (A. L. McAuley) / 16 Rac1 / 16 b4 all present long-term problems for Black. It’s going to be a long afternoon for the second player.

14...Qxb3 15 Nxb3 Bf5 16 Ne5

Here O'Kelly-Euwe continued
16...Nb4 17 Rac1
"...and White has secured a slight positional advantage."
- Tartakower

16...Rfc8 17 Rac1 Kf8
"In a game Rossolimo-König, the dilatory 18 h3 was played... Black succeeded in throwing back the hostile cavalry with

18...f6 19 Nf3 b6 etc.

"18 g4! Playing his trump without delay 18...Bg6 19 Nc5 and White’s pressure becomes dangerous which shows the whole of this variation (7 Bd2), although reputed to be quiet or even ineffective, contain quite subtle possibilities."

- S. Tartakower/J. Du Mont, 100 Modern Games of Chess.
It would indeed be interesting to know exactly which lines both GMs Rossolimo and Mednis gave priority, when they prepared for the epic encounters that followed. Every discovery made at home is precious - a new move gets only one debut.

Today, a move played over the board is instantly broadcast around the world via Internet, and a novel one can make or break a variation, often depending upon its pedigree. It can burst on the scene, become all-the-rage, be played to death in every corner cafe, and then be discarded once all its secrets are known. Then a more subtle line is revealed, and the whole cycle starts all over again!

It is not unusual at all for today's top players to hold back an important discovery for years, for just the right moment, perhaps to surprise just the right player! Such intrigues surround the highest class events. No doubt any theoretical study is skewed depending upon which “shots” are fired first, but there is the advantage of having the games to study, once a line reappears.

Grandmaster beware, your colleagues are watching!
A. 7...d5?  B. 7...Nxe4?!  C. 7...Bxd2+

A. 7...d5? 8 exd5 (diagram)

Black has blundered into a positional trap. The attacked e-pawn has been exchanged off before White’s Knight has journeyed to d2. This makes possible pressure on d5 with the Knight now detouring to c3.

Black often loses here with 8...Nxd5 9 Bxb4 Ncx b4 10 Qb3 Qe7+ 11 Kf1! (± - GM Levenfish)

8...Bxd2+ 9 Qxd2! Nxd5 10 0-0 0-0


11 Nc3

± - Analysis by Levenfish
(Acers: If now 11...Be6, White will not permit exchanges without pressure on the c-line, e.g. 12 Rac1 intending Ne4-c5.)

B. 7...Nxe4?! (Tarrasch)

The Handbuch recommendation cited earlier.

Despite textbook claims that all is solved, automatic play now heads for “The Walk of Death” Variation.

8 Bxb4 Nxb4 9 Bxf7+! Kxf7 10 Qb3+ (diagram)
The following refinements have been found: I. 10...d5 II. 10...Kf8

**I. 10...d5 11 Ne5+ Ke6!**

The modern Levenfish line, replacing 11...Kf6?! (Albin-Tarrasch, Dresden 1892) when Krause found the remarkable improvement 12 f3!! ± refusing to waste time on the Nb4, and opening fire on the other.

**12 Qxb4 c5**

In Rossolimo-Addison, US Championship 1965, Black exchanged and held the ending with 12...Qf8 13 Qxf8 Rxf8 14 f3 Nd6 15 Nc3 Nf5 16 0-0-0 c6 17 Rhe1 Kd6, an exchange idea echoed in Line II. After the text, GM Levenfish found a potent direct attack now.

**13 Qa3! cxd4 14 Nf3**

Whereupon Black really has to find moves right now to survive. No one did before Levenfish published his analysis.

**14...Qb6 15 0-0 Kf7! 16 Ne5+ Ke6 17 Nf3**

with a draw by move repetition (All analysis by Levenfish).

To the surprise of the chess world, another hidden possibility was found:

**II. 10...Kf8!?**

Clever, much safer.
Giuoco Piano, 7 Bd2 Current Theory (Seventh Game)

11 Qxb4+ Qe7 (diagram)

The point.
Exchanges relieve the defender.

According to Informator (2002), after 12 Qxe7+ Kxe7 13 0-0 Re8 Black has achieved equality.

Some care, however, is required as White has a lead in development:

a) 14 Nc3? (Direct exchanges aid Black) Nxc3 15 Rfe1+ Kf8
16 Rxe8+ Kxe8 17 Re1+ Kf8 18 bxc3 d6, when a convincing continuation for White is nowhere to be found. Black’s strong Bishop is beginning to emerge in the endgame.

b) 14 Re1 Kf8 15 Na3! with both Nb5 and Nc4 in prospect - ready for a very active endgame. If then 15...Nd6?! naturally White keeps a bind and avoids exchanges, 16 Ne5, followed by Rac1 with more room and real problems for Black later.

C. 7...Bxd2+ 8 Nbxd2

It is not hard to see after eight moves that White is unhindered, can occupy the “c” and “e” files at will. Already 9 e5! ± is threatened. “Auto-initiative” - S. Buining (Honduran Master)

8...d5

Black avoids the “fork trick” 8...Nxe4 clearing the center, as in Illustrative Game #1 Mednis-Fischer. World Title Contender Paul Keres found even more right away by ignoring the Knight, playing an enterprising pawn sacrifice for blockade: 9 d5!
(Instead, 9 Bxf7+ Kxf7 10 Nxe4 d5 11 Neg5+ is equal - Levenfish)
A true gambit for more space, easy development and board control. Now not 9...Na5? “Knight on the rim leads to a trim” 10 Bd3, with b4 coming ± (Acers), but...

9...Nxd2 10 Qxd2 Ne7 11 d6! cxd6 12 Qxd6 (diagram)

a. 12...Nf5 13 Qe5+ Qe7 14 0-0-0 with clear compensation for the pawn - Makarichev. (White has a terrific position ± - Acers)

b. 12...0-0 13 Nd4!
(Keres’s clever point, prevents the freeing ...Nf5) Nc6 14 0-0-0 “White’s initiative is very dangerous” - Gufeld, Sosonko

The Giuoco Piano.

c. 12...b5 13 Bb3 0-0 14 0-0 a5 15 Rfe1 a4 16 Bc2 Ng6 17 Bxg6 hxg6 18 Qg3-> with good chances for an attack on the Black King.


(Ed. Keres’s original plan, 12 0-0-0 = also must be noted.)

| 9 cxd5 Nxd5 10 Qb3 Nce7 |

Perhaps Black should prefer 10...Na5 11 Qa4+ Nc6= to build a fortress at d5, with chances for both sides according to Sveshnikov. However the text, universally recommended, loses valuable time. White is now far ahead in development, slightly better in all cases.

| 11 0-0 0-0 12 Rfe1! |

- 12...Nb6 13 Bd3 Illustrative Game #2, Mednis-Spassky, p. 146
- 12...c6 13 a4 Illustrative Game #3, Rossolimo-Reissman, p. 150

12 Ne5! c6 13 Ne4 was also strong. See Game 3 notes, p. 150.
Before turning to the games that made history, remember this: Not all theoretical novelties (move debuts) are winners-in-waiting. It is possible to lose in one move. Many have. I witnessed once, strange to recall, a 1956 game, played for the New Orleans City Championship by “The Great McAuley”. I remember it was played at the Lee Circle YMCA Chess Club, the K-Chug-A-Chug Coca-Cola machine, 95 degree heat, with no air conditioning. The position after 10 Qb3 on the board.

The opponent, nervous at facing the first officially rated Chess Master in the city’s history, studied Mr. McAuley’s oversized board and pieces for inspiration. Here, he grasped his six-inch high wooden Queen, and thundered out 10...Qe7+??

Mr. McAuley took a long time, then quietly moved...

11 Kd1

Black thought for a full hour, and resigned.

All the while, Mr. McAuley was gently holding his head with both hands, running his right hand through his jet black hair.

He never said one word. It was awesome to behold.
Illustrative Game #1
Round 1, New York, 1963

Mednis vs. Fischer

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3

Fischer “goes for it”, the fork trick for center clearance, to keep the position complex, risking (or was there a surprise in store?) Keres’s gambit 9 d5! - See p. 138. Fischer had once been badly outplayed in a 73 move loss to Mednis, a game that lasted over several days before Fischer whispered his resignation, by proxy, to Hans “Pawn Power in Chess” Kmoch, the referee.

Always one very savvy customer, Fischer knew that 8...d5 permits endless, sure, quite positional manoevers, suitable to the opponent. Therefore this grim selection, barely playable. This game apparently had a great effect upon him. The Ruy Lopez he easily dealt with, but the direct Italian reduces Black’s chances. He abandoned 1...e5 soon after.

9 Nxe4

As pointed out by Levenfish, 9 Bxf7+ Kxf7 10 Nxe4 d5 11 Neg5+ = is perfectly playable, as Black is too underdeveloped to push back White’s Knights effectively.

9 ....... d5

Regaining the piece, but with problems on the horizon.

A Mednis surprise - presenting new problems, clearing the back rank for queenside castling. Fischer expected 10 Bxd5 Qxd5 11 0-0! Bg4 12 Ne3 Bxf3! 13 Nxd5 Bxd1 14 Re1+! Kd7 15 Raxd1 when White also has an interesting position, despite book evaluations as “dead equal”. Milliani-Rubinstein, Merano 1924. (15...Rhe8 16 Ne3 Re4? fails to 17 d5 Ne5 18 f3 Rb4 19 Nf5 ± or 18...Rf4 19 d6 c6 20 Nd5! ± - Acers)

10 ....... 0-0

11 0-0-0 Bg4!

Stepping it up. Still a piece down for a long time. A simple “it’s just there” trap was 11...Re8? 12 Bxd5 Qxd5 13 Nf6+ winning. Mednis forces the issue.

12 h3 Bxf3

13 gxf3 dxe4

14 Qxe4 Qh4

White’s only weakness is the pawn structure on the kingside. Mednis has five “pawn islands” - (Capablanca).
Fischer goes there while permitting Mednis a powerful passed d-pawn.

15 Kb1

Mandatory - getting the King off the white-hot c-file. White is winding up, while safe-guarding the King. A Greek tragic-comedy indeed would be 15 d5?! Ne5 16 Qxc7?? Rac8.

15 Qf4

16 d5!

The only way to keep winning chances alive. Fischer strives to avoid 16...Ne7 (wins security, loses ambition) 17 Qb4 Qxf3 18 Qxe7 Rfe8 19 Nf6+! - Acers; also 17 Qb3 - Colin Crouch.

17 Qxc7

Mednis could not believe his eyes. With a second consecutive victory over Fischer now in good prospect, a great deal of “clock burning” was certainly called for, the bill to be paid in full later. The d-pawn now cannot be stopped. Black operates on fumes and prayer alone...

17 Rac8!

18 Qd6!


18 Rac8!

Getting it right the first time.

19 Qc7

20 Qd6

Hair-raising, but again, the only chance. Black avoids the three-time repetition and “goes for it”. That means White’s d-pawn goes too.

21 Rfd8!

Mednis eyes 22 Nd6 and 22 Qg5. Fischer must answer.

21 Nxf3

22 d6! ±

23 Rhe1

With the simple idea of 24 d7 Rb8 25 Nd6! cutting Black’s position in two. 25...Nxd7 26 Nxb7 wins. Black’s Rooks will always be targets.
23 \ldots \ \textbf{Rd7}

Consistent, beyond criticism, forcing a decision while weakening the back rank.

24 \textbf{Qg5?} \ldots \ldots

Missing the opportunity of a lifetime - a Queen sacrifice versus Fischer. 24 \textbf{Nc5!!} (J. Hall - \textit{Bobby Fischer's Games of Chess}) highlights Black’s unprotected back rank.

White threatens to capture Fischer’s Knight and Rook, so the sacrifice must be accepted. Analysis:

24...\textbf{Rxe7} 25 \textbf{dxe7} (with the mating threat \textbf{Rd8+}. Promoting the e-pawn is near.) \textbf{Re8} 26 \textbf{Rd8! f6!} 27 \textbf{Rxe8+ Kf7}. White has two Rooks for the offered Queen, but Fischer would get out alive with White’s queenside pawns a real target now.

A difficult endgame.

“Believe me, Tal would have found it instantly - Always.”


What might have been...

\textbf{Qxg5}

A reprieve.

25 \textbf{Nxg5} \textbf{f6}

26 \textbf{Ne4} \textbf{Ng6!}

White’s pawns on the kingside start counting. Fischer cruises home with his 2800+ Elo practical endgame close-out. Black can draw, but...
"The moves were coming in there fast." - Mednis.

27 \textbf{Rc1} \textit{Rxc1+}
28 \textbf{Rxc1} \textit{b6}
29 \textbf{Rc7} \textit{Nf8}

Fischer blockades. Presently, the White isolated d-pawn is target number one. Mednis has played a near perfect game, yet faces loss...

30 \textbf{Kc2} \textit{Kf7}
31 \textbf{Kc3} \textit{Ke6}
32 \textbf{Re8} \textit{Ng6}
33 \textbf{Kd4} \textit{h6}

Grim. Fischer will win the d-pawn \textit{gratis} if 34...f5 is permitted.

34 \textit{Re8+} \textbf{Kf7}
35 \textit{Re8} \textbf{Nf4!}

Avoids all White counterplay. 35...f5 36 Ng3 Rxd6+ 37 Kc3 f4 38 Rc7+ (Crouch) White invades the 7th rank first, "with good kicking chances" - (W. Waguespack)

36 \textit{h4} \textit{g6}

Simple endgames will offer Black a passed pawn on the h-file with ...h5, ...g5, heading north for the promised land. Threat: 37...f5, winning the stranded d-pawn.

37 \textbf{Rh8} \textit{f5!}  \textbf{\texttt{+}}

The decisive moment. (Thank you Mr. Mednis). White to move, draws! Under pressure, White needs a miracle to hold. It must be found in a heartbeat, on the high-wire, while Fischer's moves "were made like rocket-man".

38 \textbf{Rh7+?} \textit{......}

Tragic... Losing precious time, plus the precious center pawn. Instead: 38 Ke5!! (Theme: centralization) Puts Fischer's King and Rook in a closet forever, drawing by perpetual check after he wins the Knight: 38...Nd3+ 39 Kd5! fxe4 40 Rh7+ Ke8 41 Rh8+ Kf7 42 Rh7+.

(Analysis by C. Crouch)

38 \textit{......} \textbf{Ke6}
39 \textbf{Rxd7} \textit{Kxd7}
40 \textbf{Ne3} \textit{Kxd6}
41 \textbf{Nb5+} \textit{Kd7}
42 Nxa7 Ng2

All Fischer has to see: Black obtains united passed pawns on the King’s wing. Without analysis he instantly knows what that means...

43 Ke5

Attacking the pawns: 43 h5 looks ideal for escape, however 43...g5 marches, 44 Ke5 f4 45 Kf5 Ne3+! where 46 fxg3? f3 will Queen. There is also nothing wrong with 43...gxh4 (Crouch). The burden of proof is on White - pawns go forth.

52 h5 ........

Unfortunate alternatives:
52 Na2 Ke5 invades. 52 a5 Nxa5!!
53 bxa5 bxa5 with a “book win”. White’s extra Knight is chained by the passed pawn.

52 ....... Ne5
53 fxg4 hxg4

“Two united passed pawns always beat a pawn mass on the opposite wing, unless a pawn can promote immediately.” - William Addison, Mechanics Institute Chess Rooms, San Francisco, 1969.

54 Kf2 Nd3+
55 Kg2 Ne5
56 Kf1 Kf5
57 Kg2 Ke5
58 Kf2 Nd3+
59 Ke2 g3!

Not delaying the festivities.
59 Kg2 was fatal after Kd4.

“A dangerous criminal, a passed pawn must be kept under lock and key”
- (Nimzovich)

60 Kf3 Ne1+
61 Ke2 g2
62 Kf2 f3 0-1.

Ten games later Fischer hammered home a pawn in exactly the same way versus Dr. Saidy, who “had a draw” almost to the end.

“At this point, believe me Jude, we had no idea Fischer was on the historic run of a lifetime.” - Addison.
Illustrative Game #2
U.S. v U.S.S.R., Sofia, Bulgaria
Mednis vs. Spassky

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Be5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Bd2 Bxd2+ 8 Nbxd2 d5

Five years before his encounter with Fischer (Game #1), Mednis obtained excellent play with the same Italian moves against Spassky, thanks to his tough, no-nonsense, clever opening preparation that did not cooperate with the aims of either opponent. Remember: The simpler the better.

9 exd5 Nxd5 10 Qb3! Nce7 11 0-0 0-0 12 Rfe1! Nb6

13 Bd3 h6?!

A surprise try. Spassky, the only player in history to defeat Fischer ten times, is under great pressure to win for his team. The Italian system thus proves to be a wise choice against another tremendously strong player. Mednis has trapped the opponent neatly. White is clearly better; Black surrenders time to keep it tense.

14 a4! a5
15 Rac1 ........

Spassky knows also that to play for theory equality with 13...Bf5 (Leonhardt-Suchting, Vienna 1908) may actually be dangerous: 14 Rxe7! Bxd3 15 Rael Bf5 16 Ng5! Bg6 17 N2f3 White's lead in development is most impressive, and may cramp Black in the future.

14 a4! a5
15 Rac1 ........

Time to take stock. White has a huge lead in development - five well deployed pieces versus two "Knight wanderers". Total mobilization - the Rooks survey open center lanes, King safety is complete. Additionally, White's isolated d-pawn is not really alone. It will be a long time before it can be menaced. Ease of play favors White. No risk is necessary. Threats are parried actively, as in the game.

15 ........ Bd7
16 Qc2! Nbd5
17 h3 ........

Naturally White offers to trade a Black Knight for White's remaining Bishop,
replacing it with the active Queen. Black must play very well just to hold.

17 ........ Nb4
18 Qb1 Nxd3
19 Qxd3 Be6
20 Re5! ........

Perfect restraint - White is now ready to double Rooks on the c-file or e-file and advance kingside pawns to assault Black’s position. (h3, g4, Nf3-h4-f5) Meanwhile White eyes the a5 pawn, which must be protected and soon.

20 ..... Re8
21 R1e1 Nd5
22 Qe4 ........

Alekhine’s gun: Tripled major pieces on the file.

22 ........ Qd7
23 h3 c6
24 g4!

The heat is on. White, left alone, will play Nh4 clearing the way for f2-f4-f5. Black’s Ra8 is a guilty bystander, White envisions the house of the Black King with g4-g5-g6.

24 ........ Re7
25 Nh4 Re8

Knowing defense and exchanges are urgent, Spassky gains time with the threat 25...f6, trapping a Rook.

26 Qf3 ........

Regrouping. White clears e4 for a Knight, for queenside, Nd2-e4-c5 or kingside play, Nd2-e4-g3-f5 boom. Spassky really must find moves now.

26 ........ Nb4!

Attacking the d-pawn, forcing play which grows wild despite exchanges.

27 Nf5 Bxf5
28 Rxe7 Rxe7
29 Rxe7 Qxe7
30 Qxf5 g6

Spassky hopes to make White pay for the weak pawn structure incurred while pressing the attack. Of course not the common blunder 30...Qe1+? 31 Kg2 Qxd2 32 Qc8+ with a draw by perpetual check.
As Mednis plays on the high-wire.

31 Qxa5! ........
Now 31...Qe1+ 32 Nf1 Nd3 33 Qxe1.

31 ........ Nd3!
Threat: 32...Qe1+. Spassky is now at his most dangerous.

32 Nf1 Nf4
A terrific battle! White’s pawn plus is not a factor: Threats: ...Nxe3+, ...

33 Qe5 ........
Salvation - heading to a remarkable, balanced Knight endgame. Spassky’s pawns look better, but...

33 ........ Nxh3+
34 Kg2 Qxe5
35 dx e5 Nf4+
36 Kg3 Nd3
Right on schedule. Spassky wins the center e-pawn with a well-supported kingside pawn front, expecting no problems, a quick resignation.

Watch for that Mednis King push, and extended handshake...

37 f4 g5!
38 fxg5 hxg5
39 Nd2 Nxe5
40 Ne4 Nd3
Playing for keeps - 41 Nxd5? Nc5 ++
Remarkably, Mednis needs a miracle, as he would against Fischer years later. This time, he finds it, launching a series of First Prize studies over the board. Spassky, no slouch, added one himself.

41 a5!! ........
Paralyzing Black’s pawn, preparing a magical breakthrough.

41 ........ Kf8
Spassky couldn’t believe his eyes.

42 Nd6 Nc5
43 Nxb7?!! ........
The sheer audacity of this stroke brings a pang of envy. White suddenly has the distant pawn majority, against an all-time great!
43 .... Na6!
The Knight can’t handle the pawn on 43...Nxb7? 44 a6 and touchdown.

44 Kf3 Ke7
45 Ke4 c5!
46 Kd5 f5!
47 Nxc5 .......

Mr. Spassky, O.K. - “Let’s see it” Equally unsuccessful was 47 gxf5 g4 48 Ke4 g3 49 Kf3 Kf6 50 Nxc5 (Let’s do this again!) Nxc5 51 b4 Na6! 52 b5 Nb8! 53 a6 Nd7 when Spassky gets out alive. Players who had not studied works like Chess, 5,334 Positions, by L. Polgar, would not find this save, and simply have to resign a drawn position. - Acers.

47 ....... fxg4!!

Mednis had perfectly calculated and counted on 47...Nxc5? 48 Kxc5 f4 49 Kd4 Kd6 50 b4 Kc6 51 Kc4! Kc7 52 b5 Kb7 53 b6 Ka6 54 Kd3 Kb7 55 Kd4 Ka6 56 Ke4 Kd7 57 Kb5!! f3 58 a6+ Kb8 (58...Ka8? 59 Kc6++) 59 Kc6 f2 60 a7+! Ka8 61 Kc7 f1(Q) 62 b7+ Kxa7 63 b8(Q)+ Ka6 64 Qb6 mate (Crouch).

48 Ne4 ........
Escapes, thrills, games like this one made Boris Spassky’s fearsome reputation. Indeed, he went twelve years without losing to Fischer before their epic matches of 1972/1992. With two powerful connected pawns, Mednis cannot win.

48 ....... Kd8
49 Ke6 g3
50 Nxg3 Ke8
51 Ne4 g4
52 Kb6 Nb4
53 Kb5 Nc2
54 Ke5 Kb7
55 b4 Na3!
56 Ng3?! .......

Mednis could play 56 b5, forcing Spassky to prove the draw.

56 ....... Ka6
57 Ne4 Game Drawn.

Final Position

“Grueling.” - Mednis
Illustrative Game #3
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Rossolimo’s Immortal Game

Rossolimo vs. Reissman

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bd4+ 7 Bd2 Bxd2+ 8 Nbd2 d5

Acers: Please allow me to mention a rare, delightful attack, published by Levenfish/Kalichenko as satisfactory: 8...Nxe4 9 Bxf7+ (9 Qe2! is Mednis-Fischer, Game 1) Kxf7 10 Nxe4 d5! 11 N4g5+ Kg8=. Black appears better as he plans to evict the Knight, but this is not so: 12 Qe2! h6! 13 Ne6 Qd6 apparently strands the Knight, however 14 Nxc7! Qxc7 15 Qe8+ Kh7 16 Ng5=+. Black appears better as he plans to evict the Knight, but this is not so:

The d5 square is thus fortified forever, but White’s pieces are five-strong right now.

13 a4 .........

White squeezes the queenside, and opens up the Rook to the a-file. After 13...Qb6 14 a5 he can play the endgame with more room, or contest the middlegame should Black retreat.

White also has 13 Ne4 with a subtle positional trap in mind:

9 exd5 Nxd5 10 Qb3

Remember: Also possible is 11 0-0 0-0 12 Re1 (Tartakower) with real pressure on the e-file.

10 ...Nce7 11 0-0 0-0 12 Rfe1

“Rooks belong on open lines, preferably in the center lanes.” - R. Fine.

Also tremendous for White was British GM Tony Miles’s 12 Ne5! c6 13 Ne4 Qb6 14 Rad1 Qxb3 15 Bxb3 Rd8 16 Rfe1 with an endgame edge. Miles - Korchnoi, Johannesberg, South Africa, 1979.

12 ........ c6

- Analysis, Sveshnikov/Kalichenko
13.\ldots\ldots\ldots b6?!  

Understandable. Black did not relish 13...Qb6 14 Qa3 Be6 15 a5 Qc7 16 Ne4 Rad8 17 Nc5 Bc8 18 Ne5! with a long afternoon in store. The big clamp is on, albeit with no forced win in sight.

14 Ne5 \ldots\ldots\ldots  

Left alone, White intends 15 Nxc6 and capture the Nd5, whereupon the game is over. The Knight “lift” to the mighty outpost also clears the third rank for White’s Queen to penetrate on the kingside.

14 \ldots\ldots\ldots Bb7  

15 a5! \ldots\ldots\ldots  

Threat: 16 a6 Bc8 17 Nxc6 wins. If now 15...b5 16 a6! which continues the bind. Black would surely have played this if he had even dreamed of future events.

15 \ldots\ldots\ldots Rc8  
16 Ne4 Qc7  

British Master Colin Crouch doesn’t give up on Black’s hopes here, citing 16...Rc7, and 17...Bc8 for defense.

17 a6! \pm  
18 Qh3 \ldots\ldots  

All of White’s mighty pieces move to the King’s flank. Notice the possibility of a “Rook lift” to a3 - up and over for attack by lateral maneuver. GM Rossolimo does. If now 18...f6? 19 Qe6+ -- where White’s Knights flood in.

Annotators justly declare a state of emergency, and offer 18...c5?! with practical chances. Jude Acers took this possibility into account: 19 N4g5

\begin{itemize}
  \item \quad a) 19...Nf6 20 Ng4! (Theme: “Removal of the guard”) h6 21 Nxf6+ gxf6 22 Qxf6+ Kg7 23 Qxg5+ Kh8 24 Qf6+ Kg8 25 Rxe7 ++. The King awaits execution by the Rook lifted to Black’s shattered kingside.
  \item \quad b) 19...h6 (the only move) 20 Ngxf7 Rxf7 21 Nxf7 Kxf7 22 Qe6+:
  \begin{itemize}
    \item \quad 22...Ke8 23 Bxd5 -- or
    \item \quad 22...Kf8 23 Ra3! Qc6 24 Rf3+ Ke8 25 Bb5! Qxb5 26 Qxc8 mate.
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

“Pin and Win”.
18 \ldots\ldots\ldots Nf4
19 Qg4 \ldots\ldots\ldots

19 \ldots\ldots N\text{ed}5

The King is under fire on the alternative: 19...N4g6 20 Nxf7 Rxf7
21 Bxf7+ Kxf7 22 Ng5+
• 22...Kf8 23 Ne6+ +--
• 22...Ke8 23 N\text{xh}7 Threat: Qxg6+
• 22...Kg8 23 Qe6+ Kh8 24 Nf7+ Kg8 25 N\text{d}6+ spear\s the Rook.

20 Ra3! \ldots\ldots\ldots

"Rook lift" development of an unused piece. A magnificent illustration of development of the whole army. All six pieces are in concert.
"Student body right." - GM Seirawan
Now 21 Rf3 threatening to win two Knights for the Rook ("Removing the Defenders") is one menace.

20 \ldots\ldots Ne6?

Unsavory alternatives include:
\begin{itemize}
  \item a) 20...f5 21 Qxf4 fxe4 22 Qxe4
  \item b) 20...Qe7 21 Rg3 Ng6 22 Ng5 +--
\end{itemize}

21 Bxd5! \text{exd}5
22 Nf6+ Kh8

23 Q\text{g}6!! \ldots\ldots\ldots

Truly astonishing. White sacrifices to open highways to the Black King.
23...hxg6 24 Rh3 mate, 23...fxg6 24 N\text{x}g6+! hxg6 25 Rh3 mate.

23 \ldots\ldots Qc2

Hoping to play spoiler. Stops Qxh7

24 Rh3! 1-0

Breaks all remaining resistance.
24...h6 25 R\text{x}h6+ gxh6 26 Qxh6+ Qf7 27 Q\text{x}h7 mate; 24...Qxg6
25 N\text{x}g6+ fxg6 26 Rh7 mate; 24...Ng5 25 Qxg5 with the terrible threat of 26 Qg6!! (Crouch)

24...h6 25 Rxh6+ gxh6 26 Qxh6+ Qf7 27 Q\text{x}h7 mate; 24...Qxg6
25 N\text{x}g6+ fxg6 26 Rh7 mate; 24...Ng5 25 Qxg5 with the terrible threat of 26 Qg6!! (Crouch)

24...h6 25 Rxh6+ gxh6 26 Qxh6+ Qf7 27 Q\text{x}h7 mate; 24...Qxg6
25 N\text{x}g6+ fxg6 26 Rh7 mate; 24...Ng5 25 Qxg5 with the terrible threat of 26 Qg6!! (Crouch)

24...h6 25 Rxh6+ gxh6 26 Qxh6+ Qf7 27 Q\text{x}h7 mate; 24...Qxg6
25 N\text{x}g6+ fxg6 26 Rh7 mate; 24...Ng5 25 Qxg5 with the terrible threat of 26 Qg6!! (Crouch)

D\text{\`e}\text{\`a} vu? See The Immortal Game.
Eighth Game (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d4! exd4 5 c3)

5...Nf6 6 exd4 Bb4+ 7 Ne3 - Steinitz-Möller Variation

~ The Perilous Journey Godfather ~

Perhaps the oldest line debated among World Champions and contenders, little has been left unexplored for today’s touring professionals and/or tournament players. The length of the main lines easily rival the so-called “Long Variation” of the Max Lange Attack, though in truth this time White is equally at risk of making natural move errors.

Indeed, White “makes Black an offer he can’t refuse” (the e-pawn):

- 7...d5?! is Steinitz-von Bardeleben, 1895, Illustrative Game #4.
  where the line runs 8 exd5 Nxd5 9 0-0! Be6! (best)
  Steinitz proved all Black 9th move tries insufficient for equality.
  See also GM Zaitsev’s Möller Analysis, following that game.

- 7...0-0?! 8 e5! Ne4 9 0-0 Nxc3? 10 bxc3 Bxc3 11 Ng5! Bxa1
  12 Qh5 h6 13 Nxf7 Rxf7 14 Qxf7+ Kh8 15 Bg5!! +–
  (Sveshnikov). 9...Bxc3 10 bxc3 d5 offers more resistance.

- 7...Bxc3+ 8 bxc3 Nxe4 9 Qb3? 0-0 10 0-0 Na5! ⊕ New York - London, Telex Match 1976 was very interesting, but this line is not explored seriously. 9 d5! ≈ - Acers.

7...Nxe4 8 0-0

The 28 year World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz successfully played this direct attack all of his life. When he arrived in Moscow in 1896 to face his conqueror, Dr. Lasker for the title, he sacrificed a whole piece in the first hour of the Game 1: 8...Bxc3 9 bxc3 d5!
10 Ba3 dxe4 11 Rel f5, and almost got away with it in the second hour: 12 Nd2 Kf7 13 Nxe4 dxe4 14 Rxex Qf6 15 Qe2 with some compensation after 15...Bf5 16 Qxc4 Kg6 17 Re3 with problems still to be solved. (17...Rae8 18 Rael Rxe3 19 Rxe3 h5 20 h3! h4 21 d5 Ne5 22 Qxc7 ±). Lasker, never asleep at the switch, would have no more of that, playing the safe 11...Be6 in Game 3 of the match, and after 12 Rxex Qd5 13 Qe2 0-0-0 14 Ne5 Rhe8 Black was already packed and ready to roll, fully developed with no risk of any kind. Players all over the world followed the event closely, wagering cash on-the-line with cabled reports, even betting on the next move. Black could do anything it seemed.

8...Bxc3

Years later, in the New Orleans 1961 City Championships, Master Adrian L. McAuley (Plumber, Electrician, Builder of Chess Clubs and Chess Men) decided to shock teenie-bopper Jude Acers with...

8...0-0?!

Eyebrows arched, Acers went for

a) 9 Nxe4? d5 10 Bd3 dxe4

11 Bxe4 Bg4 leading to a middle game that found the fledgling tenderfoot adrift at sea. Twice in one year. Time for a consultation with GM Paul Keres - a visit to the New Orleans Public Library showed:

b) 9 d5! when Black’s position is cut in two. 9...Bxc3 10 bxc3 Ne7 11 Rel Nf6 12 d6! (Spielman-Cohn, Carlsbad 1907) ± delivering the message by magnetic pocket set at the Cafe Du Monde. Black was bottled up, the attack automatic. The line was mercifully brief. “Enter now ‘I Spy’, stealth preparation” - For the full story of the final epic encounter, see The Acers-McAuley Showdown, page 164.
For all chess players, World Title matches were teaching events. None was more attentive and learned more, than Denmark’s Jorgen Möller (1873-1944), who determined that a ferocious attack was still possible. There would be no simplification, certainly not a Black bayonet in the center with ...d7-d5, freeing Black for keeps. With 9 d5! (Tidsskrift for Skak - 1898), Möller instantly established himself as a master contributor to chess thinking. His intermezzo blockades, while remaining temporarily down a piece and pawn. To this day, Möller’s attack is regarded as a magnificent teaching variation for the chess student. It is also well suited for the professional’s simultaneous exhibitions, where it is possible to win games in record time - assuming he has all the lines memorized in advance, with his own personal twists ready.

Other often played moves lead to immediate difficulties for Black:

\[ 9...Na5 \]
10 Bd3 Nc5 11 bxc3 Nxd3 12 Qxd3 0-0 13 Ng5 g6
(or 13...f5 d6! ±) 14 Qh3 h5 15 Ne4! ± Möller.
White has the big idea 16 Bh6 Re8 17 Bg5 + Acers.

\[ 9...Ne7 10 bxc3: \]

a) \[ 10...0-0 11 Re1 Nf6 12 d6! cxd6 13 Ba3 b5 \]
14 Bb3 Bb7 15 Qxd6 Ng6 16 Ne5 Nxe5 17 Rxe5 ±
Leonhardt-Berger, Karlsbad 1907

b) \[ 10...Nd6 11 Bb3 0-0 12 c4 b6 13 Bb2 Ne8 14 Be2 \]
(with the very real threat 15 Bxh7+ the corner pocket sacrifice -Acers) Ng6 15 Qd3 d6 16 Nd4 ±
9...Ba5 10 dxc6 bxc6 11 Ne5!

(11 Qa4? is bad, Bb6 12 Bxf7+ Kxf7 13 Qxe4
d5 14 Qa4 Re8! 15 Qxc6 (Maroczy-Janowski,
Carlsbad 1907) Bg4! 16 a4 Qd7! 17 Qxa8
Bxf3 ⊥ Maroczy)

11...Nd6 12 Qg4! Qf6 13 b4! Qxe5 14 Bf4! Qf6
15 Bg5 Qg6 16 Rfe1 Kf8 17 Be7+ Kg8 18 Bxd6
Bb7 19 Qxd7 h5 20 Bc5 ⊥ Möller

9...Nd6 10 dxc6:

a) 10...Nxc4 11 Qe2+ Qe7 12 Qxc4 Ba5 13 Bg5 f6 14
Rae1 Bxe1 15 Rxe1 Qxe1 16 Nxe1 fxg5 17 Qe4+ ⊥ Möller
b) 10...Bf6 11 Re1+

(1) 11...Kf8 12 cxb7 Bxb7 13 Bb3 ⊥
(2) 11...Be7 12 Bg5! f6 13 Ne5! Kf8
14 cxd7 Bxd7 15 Nxd7 Qxd7 16 Bh4
⊥ Möller.

9...Ne5, see Dzindzichashvili-Karpov, Mazatlan 1988,
Illustrative Game #5

Modern players prefer 9...Bf6, leading to the most violent play:

10 Re1

A. 10...0-0
B. 10...Ne7!

A. 10...0-0 11 Rxe4

An apparently playable defense, but finding a home for the Knight
on c6 presents some difficulties:
11...Ne7

11...Na5? (A Knight on the rim leads to a trim - Acers) 12 Bd3 d6 13 g4 c5 14 g5 Be7 15 Bd2 b6 16 Qe2 Bf5 17 Re1 c4 18 Bc2 Re8 19 Ba4 Bd7 20 Bxd7 Qxd7 21 Nh5 +- Black has run out of tactical delays. (Thomas-Markwell, Mailgame 1966)

12 d6 cxd6 13 Bg5!

The alternative, 13 Qxd6 has an antidote in Nf5 14 Qd5 Ne7! =. 14...d6? however fails to 15 Bg5!! Bxg5 (15...Be6 16 Rxe6! -Acers) 16 Nxe5 Qxe5 17 Qf7+! 1-0. Euwe-Van Mindeno, Holland 1926.

13...Ng6 14 Qd5! (Euwe)

± White, with greater board room, has the better prospects.

B. 10...Ne7! (“Best” - Keres) 11 Rxe4 d6

12 Bg5! Bxg5

Black is well-advised to keep it simple: a) 12...0-0? 13 Bxf6 gxf6 14 Qd2 Ng6 15 Rae1 ± Spielmann-Duras, Karlsbad 1907. The e-file rooks and weak Black pawns near the King assure White a big edge, though much work certainly lies ahead.
b) 12...Bf5? 13 Bb5+ Kf8 (13...Bd7 14 Qe2 +) 14 Rf4!
Steinitz-Möller, Libverda, 1934. White intends Nd4 +

When Black must be on high alert:

a) 13...Bf5? 14 Qf3! +

b) 13...0-0 14 Nxh7!
A sound attack that at least draws:

b1) 14...Bf5! (safest) 15 Rh4! Re8
16 Qh5 Ng6 17 Rd4 Re5 18 f4
Nxf4 19 Rxh4 Bg6! 20 Qf3 Kxh7
21 Bd3 with mutual chances (Sveshnikov). Naturally not 15...Bxh7?
16 Qh5 regaining the piece with a breakthrough attack.

b2) 14...Kxh7!? Lives with danger. Black can hold with an historic
defense that must be letter perfect:

15 Qh5+ Kg8 16 Rh4 f5...
 The famous Chess Trainer Vladimir Zak found 16...f6
17 g4! (to bring the White Bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal,
preventing ...Bf5 also) Re8 18 Bd3 Kf8 19 Qh8+ Ng8
20 Bh7 Kf7 21 Bg6+ Kf8 22 Bh7 with a draw by repetition.
21...Kxg6? 22 Qh5 mate.

17 Qh7+ Kf7 18 Rh6!
(preventing the freeing Ng6 and surrounding Black’s King. White
also operates with the terrible threat Be2-h5 mate, e.g. 18...Re8?
19 Be2 +- Rg8 20 Bh5+ Kf8 21 Rf6+ gxf6 22 Qf7 mate.)

18...Rg8!
To play ...Kf8 and ...g6 if necessary. The defense is very difficult,
but after many losses a fortress was found.
19 Re1 (diagram). Now:

- **19...Bd7** loses. 20 R1e6! Bxe6 21 dxe6+ Kf8 (21...Ke8 22 Rg6! - Keres) 22 Rf6+ Ke8 23 Qh5+ g6 24 Qh7 Qc8 25 Rxe6!! Rf8 26 Rg7 +-. First rate analysis by E. Bogolyubov.

- **19...Kf8** (Bogolyubov) can be played. 20 Rh3 Bd7 21 Rhe3 Nc8 (finding his way in cramped quarters) 22 Bd3 g6 23 h4 Rg7 24 Qh8+ Rg8 25 Qh7 = (! - Keres), but not 25 Qh6+? Kf7! 26 Re6 Qf8 +-. This analysis provides a glimpse into the playing strength of GM Bogolyubov, a player who defeated World Champion Alexander Alekhine eight times in peak form.

- **19...Qf8** (Trying to get the King out of there - Acers) 20 Bb5! - Not cooperating, and envisioning 21 R1e6-f6 mating if given the chance. 20...Rh8! (Not 20...c6? 21 Be2! Kd8 22 Rxd6 - Keres) 21 Qxh8 gxh6 22 Qh7+ Kf6 23 Rxe7! Qxe7 24 Qh6+ Ke5 25 Qe3+ Kf5 26 Qh6+ Kf7 27 Qh7+ White will draw by perpetual check (Bogolyubov).

**13...h6** (Portisch)

Black tries to drive White away before castling. White’s practical chances exist here as well, with all major pieces on the e-file in a hurry. FIDE Ex-World Knockout Champion Aleksandar Khalifman suggests White could ignore Portisch’s enduring provocative move, playing 14 Qh5?!
Indeed, what a wicked move it is! Black expects the standard blockade and the quick exchange of pieces: 14...g6(?) 15 Qh4? Bf5; 15 Qe2? hxg5 16 R1e1 Be6! 17 dxe6 f5 ±. Instead, there comes 15 Qf3! +- and Black receives the terrible news. f6 is fatally weak. Treybal-Engler, Prague 1908. What a difference a small pawn move makes here: 15...hxg5 16 Rae1 Rh4 (16...Be6 17 Qf6 +- Acers) 17 Qf6! Rxe4 18 Rxe4. White is gravely behind in material, but greatly ahead in ideas. E.g.:

- 18...Kf8 19 Rxe7! Qxe7 20 Qh8 mate.
- 18...Bd7? 19 Qh8 mate
- 18...c6 19 dxc6 d5 20 c7! Qxc7 21 Bb5+ Kf8 22 Qh8+ Ng8
  23 Re8 mate, or 19...bxc6 20 Qxf7 Kd7 21 Be6+ Kc7
  22 Bxc8 +- Both Queen and Rook sweep the 7th rank
  in the King hunt. - Acers.

- 18...Bf5 19 Bb5+! c6 (19...Kf8 20 Rxe7 Qxe7 21 Qh8 mate)
  20 dxc6 Bxe4 21 c7+ ends it. Black loses both Queen
  and minor piece after 21...Qd7 22 Qh8+.

This is not the last word. Top theorists Pachman, Gufeld and Stetsko are not in agreement, and completely turn the tables for Black with the calm 14 Qh5?! 0-0 15 Rae1 Nf5! ± with cold-blooded defense. 16 Nxf7?! Qf6 strands the Knight far afield.

14 Qe2

Certainly not the strategic error
14 Bb5+? exchanging pieces:
14...Bd7 15 Qe2 Bxb5!
16 Qxb5+ Qd7 17 Qe2
with very good play for Black:

I. 17...hxg5 18 Re1 0-0-0
19 Rxe7 Qf5 - Gufeld, Stetsko.
II. 17...Kf8! 18 Nxf7 Kxf7 19 Re1 Ng8! 20 Re6 Kf8! 21 f4 Nf6 22 Re7 Re8! 23 Rxe8+ Qxe8 24 Qf2 Qb5! 0-1 Barczay-Portisch, Hungary 1969. On 18 Qh5 Nxd5 19 Nh7+ Kg8! +

When he was a World Top Ten International, Lajos Portisch did 10-24 hour home study sessions with fellow masters on any phase of the game that puzzled them. People crawled from his house afterward. Walter Browne, the most traveled American professional player, told me (1971) that Portisch evidenced the best knowledge of all chess phases, no exception made for Fischer, Tal, Botvinnik or the like. Today Portisch is a shadow, a name in chess manuals, but in those years... - Acers.

14...hxg5 15 Re1 Be6!

Another invention by Zak (Chess in the USSR) in 1936.

16 dxe6 f6!

The attack is still very dangerous, Black must set up the fortress. Opening lines leads to 16...f5? 17 Re3 g4 (Ribas-Barjoma, Chile 1990) 18 h3! ± (Gufeld, Stetsko) implodes Black’s walls.

17 Re3

With the threat 18 Rh3! It does not appear that the initial verdict, Black has easy defense with winning chances to boot, can be guaranteed. White has many ways to go about crashing through. GM Kalichenko’s Modern Chess Opening Encyclopedia presents a blow by blow chart:

(a) 17...0-0, (b) 17...d5, (c) 17...Ng6, (d) 17...Kf8, (e) 17...c6
a) 17...0-0 18 Qh5 g6 (18...Qe8? 19 Qf7+!! ++) 19 Qh6
   Threat: Re3-h3 mates in one. 19...g4 20 Rh3!! gxh3
   21 Re3 Nf5 22 Qg6+ ++ or

   18 Bd3 (Threat: 19 Bh7+!) g6 19 Bxg6! Nxg6 20 e7
   Nxe7 21 Rxex7 Rf7 22 Rxf7 Kxf7 23 Qh5+ Kg7 24 h4!
   ++ (Bottlik). Nifty analysis, Black can defend e6 and
   g5, but not at one time: 24...gxh4 25 Re4 f5 26 Re6
   when the rest is history - Acers.

b) 17...d5 18 Rh3! Now:

b1) 18...Rf8? 19 Bd3 Qd6 20 Qh5+ Kd8 21 Qf7! Re8
   22 Qxe8+! Kxe8 23 Rh8+ Ng8 24 Rxg8+ Ke7
   25 Rxa8 Qb4 26 Kf1 Qxb2 27Bg6 1-0

b2) 18...Rxh3 19 gxh3 g6 20 Qf3!

   • 20...f5? 21 Qc3! d4 22 Qb3 b6 23 Qb5+ Kf8
   24 Qe5 Kg8 25 Qf6 ++ Sheksi-Tasiadi,
   Mailgame 1986. The only chance at survival is...

   • 20...Qd6! 21 Qxf6 Qf4 22 Qh8+ Qf8 23 Qd4
   Qf4! 24 Qh8+ Draw by Repetition of Moves.

c) 17...Ng6 18 Qc2! Now:

c1) 18...Ne5 19 Rxe5 dxe5 20 Qg6+ Ke7 21 Qf7+
   Kd6 22 e7! Qxe7 23 Qd5 mate (Acers)

   c2) 18...Ne7 19 Rh3! Rxhr3 20 gxh3 (Threat: 21 Qh7)
   f5 21 Bd3 c6 (21...g6 22 Qc3 ++) 22 Bxf5 Nxf5 23
   Qxf5 Qf6 24 Qa5! Qd8 25 Qa4 Qe7 26 Re4! ±
   Sorry-Drakonescu, Mailgame, 1985

(Analysis Survey based on N. Kalinchenko)
d) 17...Kf8 18 Rh3 Rxh3 19 gxh3 g6 20 Qf3! Kg7 21 Qxb7 Qc8
    22 Qf3 Rb8 23 h3 Qb7 24 Qd3 Rh8 with mutual chances. (Pihala-Dobrovolsky, Odessa, 1989)

e) 17...c6 18 Rh3 Rxh3 19 gxh3

  e1) 19...Qa5? 20 Qh5+ Kd8
      21 Rd1 +–
  e2) 19...g6 20 Rd1
     • 20...Nf5 (20...d5 21 h4! +)
      21 Bd3 Nh4 22 Bxg6+! Ke7
      23 Qd3 Nxg6 24 Qxg6 Qg8 with fighting chances, or
     • 20...Kf8 21 h4 gxh4 22 Rd4
      Kg7 23 Bd3 with lively play.

We end our survey of 9...Bf6, and conclude this leg of the perilous journey. There remains for the reader to work his own magic, armed with the necessary theory to confront even the strongest opponents, should he prefer this path.

Now, time for the Acers-McAuley conclusion, and a few illustrative games...
The challenge must now be to remain silent, save, "Hi Mr. McAuley." - the good, the bold, the innocent lamb awaiting the next nationally rated tournament game, with THE MAN. Never for a second providing a clue that I was "clued in", never even at the chess club, except on nationally rated tournament nights. This was it.

~ THE BIG GAME ~

"It lived up to its billing. Our third meeting was indeed titanic. It began with "The Great McAuley" buying the starring chess kid four Royal Castle hamburgers, six beignets with two Barq's "Red Drink" creme of sodas as chasers. It would prove fatefully needed provisions indeed.

"Hostilities commenced with a repeated thud of Mr. McAuley's six-inch high chess pieces... all wood... along with 15 wildly effusive spectators, cheering, backslapping... while in the far corner was Cameron, the Danger Girl - an absolutely gorgeous chess cheerleader, ballerina.

"On an especially good move, Cameron would not hesitate to give a rocket shot exclamatory kick, punctuating the entire equator of the chessboard... her entire leg straddling the board until you politely moved it. It took a long time to do this on occasion, though my clock was running..."

"A lot was happening... as A.L. McAuley faced the vicious prepared attack... A Louisiana State Champion, Frank Repass, could be heard in the background introducing himself,

"Hi I'm Frank Repass, Chess fiend. Are you a Chess fiend?"

How crude, I thought. No way. Smiling, Cameron gently kissed him upon the cheek, nodding. I could not help but recall a game in the legendary Seven Seas Pub, delivering a smothered checkmate (Philidor's Legacy) to an astonished opponent, as Cameron's leg slid over the chess table. My final move was of course, Knight over Cameron's well-turned ankle, checkmate. (OCWTA mate, as I actually wrote it on the score sheet!)"

"Hour after hour the game went on... A.L. McAuley "on-the-hook" after Spielmann's attack was played.
'Oh, I see', said McAuley with manufactured piety when I played 12 d5-d6! (He'd known about it for ten years). The game was stopped at hour five, moved (complete with the entire crowd) to the downtown law offices of William "Never Resign" Waguespack, in the American Bank building.

Location two.
Bets were piling up all night.

"Finally, the lost endgame was played out, across the Mississippi River at the Waguespack home, aside a small swimming pool - which I made good use of while awaiting the inevitable resignation of the old master at dawn's early light."

"Strangely, Mr. McAuley had other plans, suddenly winning a Knight and Bishop for only a Rook, securing a powerful passed pawn in the process...

_During the fifteenth hour of play!!_

(In transit play time counted of course)... winning in approximately one hundred and fifty (150) moves... I say "approximately" as I had only three score sheets, totally filled, and ran out of ink as well.

"Three of the spectators survived to the very last move. We all had light beards.

"I will never forget that game as long as I live."
The Immortal Game

~ Just What Makes A Game Immortal? ~

Many players wonder how far a world class player can see in a middlegame. GM's Capablanca and Miguel Najdorf believed “the natural move” or “the best move” would come almost instantly... no calculation. In Steinitz-von Bardeleben for instance, we can see the game move 20 Qg4, with variations fifteen moves long, well calculated by an aging Steinitz.

For a game to be “immortal” however, it must grip the public. Usual requirements are short and snappy color, suitable for the demonstration board and chess column. Stories of the game must follow. It must, above all, be an EVENT. We walk down some sacred halls of chess history. Analysis will be given only afterwards:

(1) London, May 5, 1883. Joseph Blackburne was strolling during a marathon contest with Johann Zukertort, pondering a long defense ahead. Suddenly, “blindfolded”, Blackburne realized a shocking Rook sacrifice would uncover all of his (Black’s) King shelter. The only question was whether Zukertort would find it... Blackburne tried to hide a block away from the table, quiet, silent, waiting in prayer. First a Queen sacrifice, now a Rook too. Then, the wait was over. A thunderous K-boom of a triple-weighted White Rook crashed down upon wood. Pitter-patter, across the floor came the sound of footsteps, all the way to a turned-away, doomed Blackburne. Then there came a tap on the shoulder of the man in hiding. In full reverse now...

"Your clock is going, I have made my move."

Position after 29 Rf8+!

"From the expression on his face and the manner which he drew himself to full height, I felt that I might remark as the writer did when the audience damned his play,

‘He as found it, has he?’

- Blackburne.

And then of course, there was that long, long walk across the hall, back to the chessboard.
Breslau, 1912. So well-known and studied a position by amateur and master alike, this game launched Frank J. Marshall above American history and into folklore.

Black to move. 23...Qg3!!

Legend has it that the spectators "showered the board with gold pieces" in honor of the stupefying conception and sacrifice.

"Probably one of the most brilliant (moves) in the history of chess."
- A. Karpov

"The most beautiful move ever played."
- The Golden Treasury of Chess

In fact, Lewitsky, as White, could have answered with the relatively best try, 24 Qxg3 Ne2+ 25 Kh1 Nxg3+ 26 Kg1 Nxfl 27 gxh3 and vainly struggle on a piece behind, but how much more wonderful to resign on the spot and leave the artful finish for all to solve as he did!

For the record, on 24 Re1(?) or anywhere along the first rank, 24...Qxh2+ 25 Kfl Qh1 mate, or 24 hxg3 Ne2 mate, or 24 fxg3 Ne2+ 25 Khl Rxfl mate.

* * * *

St. Petersburg, May 18, 1914.
In the Five GM Final playoff, Emanuel Lasker mowed down the best in the world with six wins, two draws, defeating Capablanca in a signature masterpiece, witnessed by thousands of paid spectators. "Now the amateur of any class could see Black's position was in ruins. Now Capablanca turned his King over. Instantly, cascading applause from the hall went on and on, unlike anything ever experienced in my lifetime. I had completely forgotten the audience was there." - Emanuel Lasker (1940)

(Recalled by Irving Chernev)
J. Hannak certainly remembered:

“For the first time, the young Cuban, usually so cool and unperturbable, showed signs of nervousness, and when he eventually tried his counterattack on the Queen’s wing, his game was going to pieces. It was Capablanca’s first defeat for many a year, and when he laid down his King and silently rose from his chair, he was deadly pale. Since the two masters were not on speaking terms, they did not shake hands, and Capablanca silently left the board; but now the pent up excitement in the overcrowded hall relieved itself in a burst of cheering and applause that went on for minutes on end: A truly unheard of spectacle at a chess tournament, where even a whisper is frowned upon.”

(Emanuel Lasker - the Life of a Chess Master).

* * * * *


(Ed. - Fischer had innocently begun that run on the Black side of a tense Giuoco Piano. See Seventh Game, Illustrative Game 1, p. 141)

In a room nearby, moves tumbled in for demonstration board analysis, by the just arriving GM’s Rossolimo and I.A. Horowitz.

“What’s this? - Fischer is a piece down?” - Rossolimo
“Check the position upstairs.”
- Horowitz
“This can’t be right.” - Rossolimo
A breathless runner arrived in the next instant with another move. The position was correct.
Another runner - R. Byrne had resigned! A piece to the good.

Final Position after 21...Qd7!!

White resigns.
Silence.

Robert Byrne came down the steps slowly, and explained why Fischer must win. No one could believe their eyes. There had never been a game like it. Period.
Months later, on the telephone in Baton Rouge...

**Acers:** “The only game you have played that can never be used for lectures is the win over Byrne. It can’t be explained to an audience.”

**Fischer:** “Why? You have Byrne’s notes in *Chess Life*, you have my notes...”

**Acers:** “Bobby, you don’t get the view of the final position before a large crowd - they are stunned. There is no identifiable thrill. Checkmate they have seen before. It is far too deep for any audience.”

Curiously, there are human events replayed long after an epic game. At Seville, Spain, Kasparov saved his World Title (1987) by drawing his match (the 4th!) with Karpov - a game down, he won the very last game in a two day marathon, broadcast live to millions, an overflow crowd stacked ten-deep in the halls, silent electronic camera equipment everywhere, recording every moment. What in the end was so memorable? Years later, what is the fingerprint of this game? Not Karpov’s fleeting chance missed in the time-pressure of the first session, but the sounds of the last hour of Kasparov’s miracle save. Small children could be faintly heard playing beneath the make-shift wooden stage as Kasparov closed it out!

A victory that cost Karpov millions. Manolete in Seville.

**Analysis:**

(1) Zukertort-Blackburne. It should not surprise you to learn that some of these performances had several scenes. Back to move 25:

A dangerous position with opposite colored Bishops and penetrating Rooks. The attacker’s eyes light up, but there’s no time to waste: The game went 25 fxg6! allowing Rc2 26 gxh7+ (all lanes open) Kh8(!) hoping the use the enemy pawn hostage as a shield. There followed 27 d5+ e5 with the daredevil 28 Qb4!! announcing that something historic was afoot. She can not be captured:

```
28...Qxb4? 29 Bxe5+ Kxh7 30 Rh3+ Kg6 31 Rf6+ Kg5 (or 31...Kg7 32 Rg3+) 32 Kg3+ Kh5 33 Rf5+ Kh6 34 Bf4+ Kh7 35 Rh5 mate.
28...Rxg2+ only leads to more carnage; 29 Kxg2 Re2+ 30 Kh1 Qxb4 still leads to the rampage of White’s Rooks - 31 Bxe5+ Kxh7 32 Rh3+ Kg6 33 Rg3+ etc. - Strong as that White Bishop is, his counterpart can not break through the center barricades. Blackburne wisely chose to block
```
the Qb4 with R8c5, rather than remove her, but 29 Rf8+! was too much. 29...Kxh7 (29...Qxf8 30 Bxe5+ Kxh7 31 Qxe4+ Kh6 leaves the Black army scattered and out of reach 32 Rh6+ Kg5 33 Rg3+ mates) 30 Qxe4+ Kg7 31 Bxe5+ Kxf8 32 Bg7+ Kg8 33 Qxe7 1-0.

(3) Em. Lasker-Capablanca. A small sacrificial offer had loomed large over Lasker on move 32 (diagram) 32 Rxd6?! as noted by Reti, “would give Black counter chances by ...Rh8 and ...Nc4”.

Instead, Lasker played strongly:
32 Rh3! Rd7 33 Kg3 Ke8
34 Rhl1 Bb7 35 e5!
(clearing the square to post the N)
35...dxe5 36 Ne4 Nd5 37 N6c5
(winning material with the threat 38 Nxb7 Rxb7 39 Nd6+)
37...Be8 38 Nxd7 Bxd7 39 Rh7 Rf8
40 Ra1 Kd8 41 Ra8+ Bc8
42 Ne5 and victory was complete.

(4) R. Byrne-Fischer witnessed Black “setting up shop” deep in White’s position by posting the Knight on d3, but to what ends?
There now came, amazingly, an attacking scheme that GM Byrne (Ed. - or anyone else at the time, i.e. Rossolimo et all) in no way suspected (diagram). 15...Nxf2!!
16 Kxf2 Ng4+ 17 Kgl Nxe3
18 Qd2 “As I sat pondering why Fischer would choose such a line, because it was so obviously lost for Black, there suddenly came 18...Nxg2!! This dazzling move came as a shocker.” - R. Byrne.
19 Kxg2 d4! 20 Nxd4 Bb7+ 21 Kfl Qd7!! 0-1.

Fischer had prepared the unanswerable threat of ...Qh3+, followed by ...Qg2 mate. If for instance 22 Qf2 Qh3+ 23 Kg1 Re1+!! 24 Rxel Bxd4 demonstrates the value of all the deadly open lines.
Or 22 Kg1 Bxd4+! with similar ideas, 23 Qxd4 Re1+! 24 Kf2 Qxd4 25 Rxd4 Rxa1 winning.
Illustrative Game #4
The Game of the Century
Hastings, 1895
Steinitz vs. von Bardeleben

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Be5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bb4+
7 Nc3 d5
Considered playable, but poor.

8 exd5 Nxd5
9 0-0! Be6!

So far so good. Black holds the center sensibly, but “certain difficulties” (B. Ivkov) prevent mechanical development - the K's escape from the center. A very important appraisal - not if the defense is playable, but how difficult it is to play. Already, there is no longer a way for Black to bail. Later Steinitz games show convincing ways for the reader to win after the alternative - to capture material at the expense of development:

a) 9...Bxc3 10 bxc3 0-0 11 Qc2 h6 12 Re1 Be6! 13 Bxh6!
Steinitz-Shiffers, Match 1896.

b) 9...Nxe3 10 bxc3 Bxc3 11 Qb3 Bxa1 12 Bxf7+ Kxb8 13 Ba3+ Ne7 14 Rxa1 ± with the simple idea of Re1 turning up the heat on the dark squares that Black no longer can defend (Euwe). White’s active minor pieces have brought an easy edge.

c) 9...Nb6 10 Rel+ Be7 11 Bb3 0-0 12 d5 Na5 13 Bc2 Nac4 14 Qd3 ±
Steinitz - Blackburne, Nuremberg 1896

10 Bg5! Be7
10...f6 11 Rel ± (Reti). 10...Qd7 11 Bxd5 Bxd5 12 Rel+ Be7 13 Nxd5 Qxd5 loses time (Euwe).
11 Bxd5 Bxd5
12 Nxd5 Qxd5
13 Bxe7 Nxe7

Bad is 13...Kxe7 14 Rac1 Rhe8 15 Rc5 Qd6 16 Qe2 with the threat of 17 d5 and Rxc7 - Steinitz.

After 13...Nxe7, White to Move

Certainly not a position where White plans one of the great chess "combinations" of all time. He can harass Black’s stranded center pieces, "pin" the Black Ne7, exploit the practical difficulties Black has defending the Ke8 - never to castle at all, but it is a tall order to win.

14 Re1

We now see why White aimed for exchanges. All of White’s pieces go to open lines that may not be immediately opposed by the self blocking defender. “Above all the Black King remains in the center.”

- Ivkov

14 f6!

Correct - to put the K at f7, shift Rooks to the center smoothly.

White tries to sidetrack this plan...

15 Qe2 Qd7
16 Rac1 .........

See Zaitsev’s analysis (p. 174) for alternatives.

16 ......... c6 ?

Here, von Bardeleben makes one mistake... securing immortality. “Avoid pawn moves in the opening that are unnecessary.” - Reuben Fine. “Loses.” - Igor Zaitsev. “Black should connect both Rooks, now.” - Acers. Perfectly good was 16...Kf7!:

a) 17 Qxe7+ Qxe7 18 Rxe7+ Kxe7 19 Rxc7+ Kd6 with a rather favorable endgame for Black. GM Bondarevsky suggests two different Knight sacrifices, bringing an earthquake to the position, but neither is decisive:

b) 17 Ne5+ fxe5 18 dxe5 Qe6 19 Rxc7 Rhd8, or c) 17 Ng5+ fxg5 18 Qf3+ Nf5 19 g4 Rhe8.

17 d5! .........

A free chess lesson, most instructive. “Clearing" d4 for the invading Knight - aiming for e6 pronto.

17 ......... cxd5
18 \textit{Nd4} \textit{Kf7}
19 \textit{Ne6} \\

Into the "hole" - Capablanca.
Threats: 20 Rc7 or 20 Qg4 winning.

19 \textit{Rhc8}

Dr. Euwe: "Black defends against the threat 20 Rc7 and also clears a path for his King to escape at g8, without sealing in the Rh8. Impossible was 19...Rac8 20 Qg4! g6 21 Ng5+! (unprotected Queen) Ke8 22 Rxc8+ wins by pin."

20 \textit{Qg4} \textit{g6}

To prevent mate in two.

21 \textit{Ng5+} \textit{Ke8}

Forced, otherwise the Queen is lost.

22 \textit{Rxe7+!!} (diagram)

"I may be an old lion, but I can still bite your fingers off if you put them in my mouth." - Steinitz to spectators. Black will be a Knight down in the endgame after 22...Qxe7 23 Rxc8+ Rxc8 24 Qxc8+ Qd8 25 Qxd8+ Kxd8 26 Nf3 (Simplest) - Acers.

The magnificent point of the combination is the King hunt:

22...Kxe7 23 Rel+ Kd6 (or 23...Kd8 24 Ne6+ K- any 25 Nc5+ removes the Queen with check) 24 Qb4+ Kc7 (on 24...Rc5 25 Re6 -- Vukovic, and on 24...Kc6 25 Rc1 mate) 25 Ne6+ Kb8 26 Qf4+ Rc7 27 Nxc7 Qxc7 28 Re8 mate. (Steinitz)

22 \textit{Kf8!}

White's back rank needs protection. Now 23 R1e1? loses to 23...Qxe7!

23 \textit{Rf7+!} \textit{Kg8}

Again forced. 23...Qxf7 24 Rxc8+ wins; 23...Ke8 24 Qxd7 mate (Reti).

24 \textit{Rg7+!!} \textit{Kh8}

On 24...Kf8 25 Nhx7+ (Ivkov)

25 \textit{Rhx7+!} \textit{1-0.}

Opening the way for White's Q on the h-file. -Acers. All eyes were upon him. Without a word, undefeated Hastings leader von Bardeleben fled the hall. When his flag dropped (losing the game by time forfeit), Steinitz rapped out the reason: 25...Kg8 26 Rg7+ Kh8 (26...Kf8 27 Nhx7) 27 Qh4+! Kxg7 28 Qh7+ Kf8 29 Qh8+ Ke7 30 Qg7+ Ke8 31 Qg8+ Ke7 32 Qf7+ Kd8 33 Qf8+ Qe8 34 Nh7+! Kd7 35 Qd6 mate.
The Game of the Century. Zaitsev’s Analysis

Steinitz - von Bardeleben, Hastings, 1895.
Position after 15...Qd7.

Will White be able to advance before Black plays ...Kf7 and ...Rhe8? The answer is no. Black has not made a losing error despite analysis of years gone by.

Three dangerous tries suggest themselves:

a) 16 d5?! b) 16 Rad1 and c) 16 Rac1!
Igor Zaitsev, a GM who loved explosive moves, wrote in-depth (1973) about this famous position. The Russian newspaper 64 carried his brilliant tries:

a) 16 d5?! - The attacking theme is “Clearance” - the square d4 is evacuated, so the Knight at f3 can go to d4 and of course “into the hole” (Capablanca) - e6 is unprotected. Zaitsev recalled the problem of moving the center pawn without all of White’s pieces to back it up: 16...Kf7 17 Rad1 Rad8 - I. Zak, (1936), when Black has his own counterattack cooking on the stove.

b) A last ditch effort to win for the first player led Zaitsev to avoid all exchanges with 16 Rad1 which presents an attack in all lines. He states, “The main point of this move is to hinder the evacuation of the Black King from the center.”

1) After 16...Kf7 17 Qc4+
   i) 17...Qd5?? 18 Rxe7+ +- (or 17...Kf8 18 d5! +- )
   ii) 17...Nd5 18 Ne5++! fxe5 19 dxe5 with the twin threats of e6+ and Rxd5 +- White wins easily. We also note other tries lead to White hammering into Black’s position.

2) On 16...Rad8 17 Qc4!
   (threatens to line up R’s at e6 and e1 - Acers) Kf8 18 Qb4! c6 19 d5! cxd5 20 Nd4 Kf7 21 Ne6 Rde8 22 Qg4! Nf5 23 Nxe7 and White wins. (I. Zaitsev)
A good reply to 16 Rad1 is Kf8 (Almost impossible to find over the board - Acers) “In that event, White has only one method to hold the initiative:
17 d5! (otherwise Black blocks with ...Nd5 whereupon the position is fully stabilized)
17...Nxd5 18 Ng5! once more emphasizing the weak square e6. Capturing the Knight is out - no detailed analysis required:
18...fxg5 19 Qf3+ Qf7 20 Qxd5 Qxd5 21 Rxd5 leads to a difficult endgame for Black.
18...Re8 19 Qf3 (diagram)

Black has two paths:

i) 19...Rxel+ 20 Rxel c6 21 Qg3! leaves Black defenseless. b8, d6 and e6 are decisively weakened.

ii) 19...c6 is not so hopeless. 20 Qa3+! Kg8 21 Ne4 b6 22 b4! g6 23 b5 ± For the price of a pawn, White obtains pressure on the opponent’s position, but there is of course no guarantee of full success. - (I. Zaitsev)

Acers: The analysis requires a postscript. Steinitz, knee-deep in his immortal game, chose the third option, (c) 16 Rac1. The man who played Anderssen, Lasker, Chigorin, Gunsberg, Pillsbury... (A staggering 28 years of World Title Match play), places an undeveloped Rook on an open file, judging it offered the best chances for a cash prize point. Please allow practicality in your move selection.

Alburt’s Law: *What is likely to win?*
Evans’s Law: *Note not what a master says, but the move he puts his money on.*

Steinitz will now undertake an attack with every piece on open lines. This impression will be a most valuable one for the student.

By far the most important.
Illustrative Game #5
Rapid Championship, Game/25
Mazatlan, Mexico

Dzindzichashvili vs. Karpov

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6
5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Nc3 Nxe4 8 0-0 Bxc3 9 d5 Ne5

Karpov rejects 9...Bf6 instantly, realizing that White has a draw in hand attack, despite the Portisch line. Karpov also knows that GM Dzindzichashvili has drawn blood from elite players before, including a recent win for the U.S. in the World Team Olympiad, versus Russian theoretician Alexander Beliavsky. A win that helped lead the U.S. to victory in the overall event. Had “Dzindzi” found something new?

10 bxc3

10 Qe2 sets a dangerous trap, which will shock those unprepared: 10...f5 (A hard move for most defenders to willingly play) 11 Nxe5 Bxe5 12 f3 d6 13 fx e4 Qh4? Almost always played, it loses to 14 g3 Qxe4 15 Bb5+ Bd7 16 Qxe4 fx e4 17 Bxd7+ Kxd7 18 Rf7+ Kd8 19 Bg5+ Bf6 20 Bxf6 gxf6

21 Rf1 -- Baranov-Grigorev, Russia, 1918. Best was 13...0-0 (Sveshnikov) with a good position.

11 Qd4

Regaining the piece with near decisive threats. Black will have to counter, very well. “The position is alive with danger for Black.” - S. Buining, New Orleans 1962. Threats now include Qxe4+ and Qxg7.

11 ... 0-0

Lasker’s creation - 11...f5, leads to treacherous play. No player in history was better at the gentle suggestion, leading the opponent down the primrose path. The man who held Lasker to a thrilling 10 game drawn World Title Match (1910) must have thought, “That’s a blunder, this is gonna be easy.”

- Karl Schlechter played now 12 Bg5? to checkmate today, clearing the e-file for the Rooks (Paris 1899). Suddenly Lasker captured 12.Nxg5 with a two piece advantage but apparently doomed King, after 13 Qxg7
With mate in mind), Most uncooperative, the World Champion moved the attacked Rook to f8, and White realized it was all over: 13...Rf8! 14 Nxg5 Qf6 15 Rfe1+ Kd8 16 Qxf6+ Rxf6 and White was already a piece down..

Better was 12 Qxc4 d6 13 Nd4 0-0:
a) 14 Rb1 Kh8 15 Re1 Ne5 16 Ba3 b6 17 Bxc5 dxc5 18 Nc6 ± Znosko-Brosky-Salwe, Ostende 1907
b) 14 f3 h6 15 Bh5 h5 16 Bh4 g5 17 Bf2 Kg7 18 Rfe1 Bd7 19 Qb3 c5 ± Schlechter-Meitner, Vienna 1899.
c) 14 f3 Ne5 15 Re1 Kh8 16 Ba3 b6 17 Nc6 Ba6! 18 Qd4 Romanov-Kotikov, Mailgame 1964, when Unzicker says 18...Qf6 as the move.

Acers: White must consider taking the Knight first with 17 Bxc5 dxc5 18 Nc6 Qd6 19 Ne5 Bb7 20 Rad1 Rad8 21 Qf4 (analysis diagram)

Instead 11...Ncd6? combines greed with danger. White’s attack more than compensates for the full piece gambit, as Black’s K is trapped at e8. 12 Qxg7 Qf6 13 Qxf6 Nxf6 14 Re1+ Kf8 15 Bh6+ Kg8 16 Re5! Nfe4 17 Re1 f6 18 Re7 +-. Durao-Ferrera, Seville 1994. White has a paralyzing grip. Though a Knight down, White rules. Black’s army is entombed, permitting White to regain material at will: 19 R1xe4 Nxe4 20 Re8+ or to increase the bind with other plans: 19 Nd4 (centralization 1st - Acers).

After 11...0-0, the standard reply was 12 Qxc4 Nd6 13 Qf4?! Re8 14 Re1 Rxe1 15 Nxe1 b5!= Zude-Spassky, Germany 1990.

Dzindzichashvili chooses the other Knight, and pursues a logical kingside attack.

Black loses on 21...Bxd5 22 c4; 21...c6 22 Nf7+; 21...Rde8 22 Nf7+.

The energetic alternative (= Spassky) was 12...Nd6 13 Qd3! b6 14 Ba3 Qf6 15 Qd4 Qxd4 16 Nxd4 Bb7 17 Bxd6 cxd6 18 Nf5 g6 19 Nxd6 Bxd5 20 Rfe1 Be6 21 f4! Fritz6-Anand, Round 3, Match, Frankfurt 1999.
White has the freer play and a dominant \textit{Nd6}. A win however was far in the distance. Karpov now employs the A. Kovacs suggestion, leading to double-edged play. White will seize the kingside while Black advances on the opposite wing. The suggested line is followed all the way, through move 17...

13 \textit{a4} \quad \textit{c6}
14 \textit{axb5} \quad \textit{cxd5!}

(Hoping to open the white-squared diagonal for the Bishop - Acers)

15 \textit{Qd4!} \quad \textit{Nb6}
16 \textit{Be3} \quad \textit{d6}
17 \textit{Ra2} \quad \textit{Be6}

...and the game begins.

18 \textit{Re2!} \quad \textit{\ldots}

Everything goes to board center. Of course, Karpov does not remain idle.

18 \textit{\ldots} \quad \textit{Nc4}
19 \textit{Rfe1} \quad \textit{\ldots}

A perfect mobilization, ideal for the instructor. White must now provoke weaknesses in Black’s kingside for this to matter. White has the better pieces and pawn structure, Black has a pawn more...

20 \textit{Qh4} \quad \textit{\ldots}

White begins to prepare 21 \textit{Be3-d4} with \textit{Bxg7} next; also uncovering both Rooks on the e-file. Furthermore, \textit{Nf3-g5} will provoke pawn advances, and weaknesses around Black’s King much later. Only first-rate defense will save him.

20 \textit{\ldots} \quad \textit{Bg4!}
21 \textit{Qg3!} \quad \textit{\ldots}

Intending 22 \textit{Bd4} ± (with all-out attack - Acers)

21 \textit{\ldots} \quad \textit{Bxf3}
22 \textit{Oxf3} \quad \textit{Nxe3}
23 \textit{Rxe3} \quad \textit{Oxb5}

A dynamic struggle is set.

Black: +2 weak pawns, King alone.
White: dbl R on the e-file, h4-h5-h6†

24 \textit{Re7!} \quad \textit{\ldots}
A distraction. Unhindered, Black rushes his a-pawn forward. White thus prevents the passive Rf8 from moving, and sweeps the 7th rank. 24...f5? 25 Qg3 ± attacking d6, threatening mate at g7 and leaving Black fatally weak. In turn, White must now look for a clear draw. Play is at a high level.

24 a5

In my opinion GM Dzindzichashvili intended to sit tight, answering 24...Rae8 with 25 h4 rather than tripling major pieces with 25 Qe3 (“Alekhine’s Gun” - Acers)

25 h4 a4

Also 25...Qc6 + - Acers.

26 Rc7! 

A real thriller - neither side pays any attention to the other’s moves.

“Suddenly 27 R1e7 becomes a genuine menace, at least at first sight. Karpov now has a clear (problem like indeed!) win with 26...a3 27 R1e7 a2 28 Rx7 a1(Q) 29 Kh2 Qab1! 30 Rxg7+ Kh8 31 Rgf7! Rx7 32 Rxf7 Kg8!! avoiding perpetual check.” (Laven Team, 2003)

“Was Dzindzi’s move a bluff?”
- Acers.

26 Rae8 (?) Safety first. The 26...a3 verdict fades as the clocks tick on.

27 Rxe8 Qxe8
28 Ra7 h6
29 g3 Qe4!
30 Qxe4 dx4
31 Rxa4 Re8

With an active Rook endgame, Karpov is at his most dangerous. He avoids 31...f5 32 Rd4 Rf6 33 Kg2 with a blockade coming.

32 Rd4! 

“Always capture the distant passed pawn furthest from your King, even if it is not strictly necessary.”

32 Rc6
33 c4 f5
34 h5! Drawn ½-½

Very close indeed. A fighting game between great players. White must destroy Black’s pawns pronto. 34...Kf7 35 Kg2 Kf6 36 g4! and Kg3 secures a likely draw. - Acers.
### Italian Gambit Move Index

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Be5 4 d4

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The Two Knights Defense, 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6

3...Nf6
- The Two Knights Defense

The Two Knights defense is, by far, the most dangerous challenge to White’s classic center position. The first great player to refine it was M. I. Chigorin (1850-1908), “The First Russian Grandmaster”.

Black threatens 4...Nxe4, destroying White’s only center pawn with very easy equality. Tepid is 4 Nc3 Nxe4! (anyway) 5 Nxe4 d5 which “clears the center” while regaining the sacrificed Knight. Though recently gaining in popularity, 4 d3 lacks initiative, and forestalls the creation of a mobile central pawn phalanx for White, which is very much the theme of our recommended approach. Black replies 4...Bc5, already ahead in development of the pieces with a satisfactory defense. The “blind spot” of the driving Knight move is the blocking of the g5 square’s protection, so 4 Ng5 suggests itself, with decisive threats against f7. As to its real value, we note Fischer, 1964:

“This whole variation is probably a bad idea for White.”

where 4...d5! 5 exd5 blunts the initial threat, and formidable variations lay in wait (5...Nd4 - Alexander Fritz, 5...b5 - Ulvestad, and the standard 5...Na5), ending White’s “easy life”. In addition, the wild, and ancient 4...Bc5 has made credible showings, thanks to GM Beliavsky, vs. Karpov (1983 - draw), and Anand (1991 - win!). Today, many top players, unwilling to yield the initiative, now prefer direct center attack, with 4 d4! steering toward:

4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 - Koltanowski, and
4 d4 exd4 5 e5! - E. Sveshnikov
~ Then As Now, Morphy is a Useful Guide ~

There is however, an important crossover, that displays the merits of Ng5 while drilling for successful d4 continuations: *The Morphy Win’Mill* position - one that still claims even Grandmaster victims in world rated play two centuries later. An astonished Bobby Fischer remembered, “I must have won a dozen games” with this trick:


4 Ng5?! d5! 5 exd5 Nxd5? 6 d4! exd4 7 0-0 We have flagged this position, as it recurs several times in the survey that follows.

Note well too that this chapter will branch into *Italian Gambit* lines previously covered on many occasions. *Watch carefully for transpositions of your choosing!*

- The Morphy Win’Mill Opening Survey

5 Ng5 is still playable today, but almost never played.

5...d5

Black may also hold with 5...Ne5:

a) 6 Bb3 h6 7 f4! hxg5 8 fxe5 Nxe4 9 Qxd4 Nc5 10 Nc3 d6 11 Be3 Nxb3 12 axb3 dxe5 ± Pfleger-Spassky, Hastings 1965.

b) 6 Qxd4! Nxe4 7 Qxc4 d5 8 exd5 Qxd5 9 Qe2+! Be7 10 0-0 h6 11 Nc3 Qd8 12 Rd1 Bd7 13 Nf3 0-0 14 Ne5 “with some advantage.” (Beliavsky/Mikhalchishin) Dubois-Donchev, France 1997.
A most instructive error. Black must prevent direct attack with 6...Qe7+! 7 Kf1 Ne5 8 Qxd4 Nxc4 9 Qxc4 Qe5 10 Qe2+ Be7 11 c4 Nxd5! 12 Ne4 Qc6 Sax-Smejkal, Budapest 1975, or 9...h6 10 Nf3 Bd7! 11 Nc3 0-0-0 12 Bf4 Qc5 13 Qxc5 Bxe5 Sorri-Norri, Espoo 1992. Black’s Bishop pair, and rapid development appear to compensate for the pawn minus.

Morphy’s great discovery - a gain of three moves for attack with all lines open. Years later, Fischer knew this, avoiding the nebulous Fried Liver Attack: 4 Ng5 d5 5 exd5 Nxd5 6 Nxf7 (6 d4! exd4 Kxf7 7 Qf3+ Ke6 8 Nc3 Ncb4 9 Qe4 c6 10 a3 Na6 11 d4 Nac7 12 Bf4 Kf7 13 Bxe5 Be6 14 0-0) Rozhlapa-Yakovic, Russia 1971. (14...Be7! -Gligoric) when White must win the game all over again. Morphy understood that Black has no useful move. White will win right now, risking nothing.

...and yes, some two centuries later - 7...Be6 8 Re1 Qd7 9 Nxf7! Kxf7 10 Qf3+ Kg8 11 Rxe6! 1-0 R. Huerter-Balinas, Costa del Carmen, 1997. The idea: 11...Rd8 12 Bg5! Qxe6 13 Bxd8 Qe1+ 14 Bf1 Qe5 15 Bh4 + Beliavsky.

Black’s only chance to offer any resistance is 9...Ke8 (Beliavsky, Mikhalchishin - Two Knights Defense)
10 Nc3!! dxc3

Black must open the files to his King - 10...Ncb4 loses to 11 Nxd5 Nxd5 12 Re1+ or simply 11 Re1+ first.

11 Re1+ Ne5 12 Bf4 Bf6 13 Bxe5 Bxe5

14 Rxe5+! (diagram)
The final blows begin.

14...Kxe5

A “King Hunt” will end the game.

15 Re1+ Kd4 16 Bxd5

The “ladder” checkmate. White threatens 17 Qxc3+ Kxd5 18 Re5+ Kd6 19 Qc5+ Kd7 20 Qd5 mate.

16...Re8 17 Qd3+ Kc5 18 b4+ Kxb4 19 Qd4+

Final Position, Morphy-Amateur
New Orleans, 1858
Checkmate in 4 moves.

This game should be reviewed with great care, and regarded as the starting point for further Two Knights Defense study.

Turning now to Koltanowski’s and Sveshnikov’s 4 d4 analyses:
The Two Knights Defense. 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6 185

A prelude to the instructive Max Lange Variation, where Black has many ways to lose.

White takes the initiative in the center, threatening 5 dxe5 Nxe4 6 Bxf7+! Kxf7 7 Qd5+ regaining the sacrificed piece, remaining a pawn up with an attack.

4...exd4

Here, 4...Nxd4? 5 Nxe5 d5 permits both 6 exd5 +- and 6 Qxd4 ++. On 4...d6? 5 dxe5 dxe5 6 Qxd8+ Kxd8 7 Ng5 snips a pawn. Koltanowski pointed out the cramped but playable 4...Nxe4?! is met with 5 dxe5, with twin threats: 6 Bxf7+ Kxf7 7 Qd5+, or simply 6 Qd5 winning a whole Knight at high noon, or mating. Understandably, Sokolsky-Navrodsky, Russia 1944 continued 5...Nc5 6 0-0 Be7 7 Nc3 0-0 8 Nd5 Ne6 9 Be3 with freer play.

A. 5 0-0 (Koltanowski) B. e5! (Sveshnikov)

Again, we remind the reader of 5 Ng5 d5 6 exd5, where in addition to 6...Qe7+! and 6...Nxd5 7 0-0 [ there is 6...Na5 = , as played in Malvakin-Vul, Moscow 1992.

A. 5 0-0 Nxe4

There was still time to “catch the last train” - losing immediately by the subtle 5...d5?! 6 exd5 Nxd5? 7 Ng5!! [ there is The Italian Gambit, Third Game, a wise transposition.

6 Re1 d5 7 Bxd5! Qxd5 8 Nc3
The famous Max Lange Attack, Pin Variation. White will regain the sacrificed center pawns, due to his great lead in development and Black’s weak King at e8.

Black to move, 8...

“White is behind in development, ahead in ideas” - Acers.

![Diagram](image_url)

8...Qh5

Considered best by GM S. Gligoric, 11-time Yugoslav Champion, who, at age 75 (Belgrade 1998) was still making vital contributions to his beloved 1 e4 e5 defenses. Staying in the neighborhood of the White monarch is the idea. Black wound up there anyway after the modern alternative for equality: 8...Qa5 9 Nxe4 Be6 10 Neg5 0-0-0 11 Nxe6 fxe6 12 Rxe6 Bd6 13 Qe2?! Qh5! 14 Qe4 Rde8 15 Bd2 Ne5! 16 Rxe8 Rxe8 17 Nxe5 Bxe5 18 f4 Bd6 19 Qd3


GM Kamsky knew of course, that White may draw, secure a risk-free position at any time with Y. Estrin’s innovation: 13 Bg5! (preventing ...Qh5) Rde8 14 Qe2 Kd7 15 Re1 Qxe1+! 16 Nxe1 Rxe6 17 Qg4 Rhe8 18 Nd3! Ne5! 19 Nxe5 Bxe5 20 g3 = Estrin-Krogius, Russia 1949. The pull to play to win is strong.

Both players should consider the remarkable choices here offered, long forgotten, ready for revival by enterprising newcomers:

a) 8...Qf5?! 9 Nxe4 Be7 10 Bg5! Be6 11 Bxe7 Kxe7 12 Nxd4 ± White’s pieces invade with tempo. Or 9...Be6 10 Nxd4 Nxd4 11 Qxd4 Be7 12 Bh6! Rg8 13 Bd2 ± (Pachman)

b) 8...Qc4?! 9 Nd2! Qa6 10 Nd5! Qa5 11 c4! Be6 (11...dxc3 12 Nc4! ++) 12 Nb3 Qa4 13 Nxc7+ Kd8 14 Nxe6+ +-- Analysis by K. Schlecter, Bilguer’s Handbuch.
c) 8...Qd8 9 Rxe4+ Be7 10 Nxd4 f5! 11 Rf4 0-0 12 Nxc6 Qxd1+ 13 Nxd1 bxc6 = (Pachman). Also equal is 9 Nxe4 Be7 10Bg5! Be6 11 Bxe7 Kxe7 12 Neg5.

9 Nxe4 Be6 (diagram)

10 Bg5!

GM Gilgoric has cleverly shown White must not regain the center pawn immediately - falling into an endgame where the pair of Bishops ("the 2 spears" - Fischer) pronounce sermon: 10 Nxd4?! Qxd1 11 Rxd1 0-0-0! 12 Be3 Nxd4 13 Bxd4 Bf5! 14 Ng5 Bg6 promising a long afternoon.

Dzhurner-Lang, Nanya 1994. One additional note. In their authoritative (if poorly translated) book, The Two Knights Defense, Beliavsky / Mikhalchishin point out 10 Ng3 - attacking Black's Queen with a serious initiative, hemming her in, and building a fortress as well. Readers should decide on its value for their competitive encounters.

10...Bd6!

This was Gligoric's amazing find - a complete system to hold both pawn and center, by surrendering the "minor exchange" (B for N). Now a) 11 Nxd6+ and b) c4! are possible.

a) 11 Nxd6+

Not 11 Bf6 Bxh2+! swaps Queens and removes White's Bishop.

11...cxd6 12 Bf4 Qd5!= 13 c3 (diagram)
The Two Knights Defense. 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6

13 c4!? Qxc4 14 Bxd6 Qd5!
offers balanced chances.
Kontic-Gligoric, Belgrade 1998

After 13 c3, Black can try:

a1) 13...Kd7 14 Qa4 b5 15 Qa6 Rhb8 16 Nxd4 Nxd4 17 cxd4 g5!
18 Bd2 h5! with counterplay.
(19 Rac1 \(\infty\) - Acers)
Wirschell-Hector, Berlin 1993

a2) There’s wild play on 13...Rc8 14 Nxd4 Nxd4 15 Qxd4 cxd4
16 cxd4 Kd7 as in Fette-Sermek, Kecskemet 1992.

b) 11 c4! (diagram)
Sveshnikov’s reply to Gligoric.
White intends c4-c5, removing Black’s pieces from the center and picking up the d-pawn.
11...dxc3? solves little:12 Nxd6+ cxd6 13 Qxd6 with an attack.

11...0-0 12 c5! Be5!

13 Nxe5 Qxd1 14 Raxd1 Nxe5 15 Rxd4 f6
White’s total development holds sway. Black makes a stand on e5.
15...Bxa2? 16 Nc3 Nc6 17 Rd7 ±

16 Bf4 Bxa2 17 Nc3 Bf7 18 Bxe5 fxe5
Sveshnikov-Bezgodov, St. Petersburg, 1994. 19 Rd7! ±
(Sveshnikov) would now leave White well placed for the endgame.
The Modern Sveshnikov. This formidable pressure system for White has caused many players to abandon the Two Knights Defense. Sveshnikov devised it to weaken Black’s pawns after $5...d5\;6\;Bb5!\;Ne4\;7\;Nxd4$.

The “Modern Attack” came into world prominence when Sveshnikov used it to swiftly obtain a winning advantage against GM Paul Keres, Russian Championship 1973: $7...Bd7\;8\;Bxc6\;bxc6\;9\;0-0\;Bc5\;10\;f3!\;Ng5\;11\;Be3\;0-0\;12\;f4\;Ne4\;13\;Nd2!\;f6!\;14\;Nxe4\;dxe4\;15\;Qe2\;Bg4!\;16\;Qf2\;Qd5?\;17\;Nxc6!$ (The point: 17...Bxe3 18 Ne7+! ++) Tactics for a pawn with a bomb-proof position.

Advantages of the Modern Sveshnikov Attack are Known

- **The Edge.** Opening, Middlegame and Endgame are all *slightly favorable* for the first player, due to the better pawn structure.

- **Surprise.** Defenders do not encounter it often.

- **Pathways.** Several outstanding chess masters have charted a clear course of play, perfect for study.

- **King Safety.** White has castled immediately in all variations, while Black’s counterplay involves $...f6$, weakening the King’s wing.

- **Themes.** Formations recur in many lines.
The Classic Position.

For example: 7...Bc5 8 Be3 Bd7 9 Bxc6 bxc6 10 0-0 0-0 11 f3! Ng5 12 Qd2 Ne6?! 13 Nxe6 Bxe3+ 14 Qxe3 Bx e6 15 Nd2! (diagram).

White’s lethal positional threat manifests itself: Nd2-b3-c5 is planned, with Qe3-d4, Pb2-b4 and Pc2-c3 as support. White would also love to advance his kingside pawn majority: f3-f4-f5 in the middlegame. Quiet play by Black will lead to a certain positional loss. Black often faces defeat before move twenty.

“Often Black players never know what hit them.” - Acers.
Examples: 7...Bd7 8 Bxe6 bxc6 9 0-0 Be5 10 f3! Ng5 11 f4 Ne4 12 Be3 0-0 13 Nd2 f5 (varying from the Keres game) 14 Nxe4 fxe4 15 Qd2 Qe7 16 Nb3! Okhotnik-Sokolov, Russia 1980. (diagram)

Black must avoid 16...Bxe3? 17 Qxe3 with 18 Nc5 + in view.

“The Knight is a Hotel!!”

White took over on c5 following 16...Bb6 17 Qc3 when Black was already strategically crushed.

Or, instead 13...Nxd2 14 Qxd2 Qe7 15 Nb3! Bb6 16 Qc3 f6, where White can choose 17 Ne5 + Pogats-Szabo, Hungary 1959 or 17 Bc5 ± Witkowsky-Bilucic, Laibach 1960.

Sterner measures from Black are required to avoid this fate.
Two Knights Defense, Sveshnikov's 5 e5

Black defenders from Miami to Budapest do not blindly accept this freeing advance as gospel. Fierce counterplay is possible here - from GM Zoltan Almasi, no matter what traditional textbooks tell the student. Remember - the "One Million Dollar Analysis" of the Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defense:

(1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 0-0 Nxe4! - a favorite of 27-year World Champion Emanuel Lasker) was revived by Almasi prior to the 2000 World Championship Match, where Kasparov, in turn, did not win a single game versus the Almasi "Titanic", (as employed by Kramnik). Returning to e4 (his favorite square), Almasi does not hesitate in this variation either - shoots his Knight to e4 and worries about it later. He has defeated world-class players with Black here. Black may also choose 5...Ng4. We examine both:

a) 5...Ne4

i) 6 Qe2 Ne5 7 0-0 (White will play 8 Rd1 and regain the d-pawn if Black plays passively) Ne6 8 Bxe6 dxe6 9 Rd1 Be7 10 Be3! Bd7 11 Bxd4 Nxd4 12 Nxd4 0-0 13 Nc3 c5 14 Ndb5 a6 15 Nd6 Qc7 16 Nce4 Bc6 Tzermiadianos (Greece)- Gligoric (Yugoslavia), Panormo 1998. Correct here is 17 Rd3! ± (17...Bxe4 18 Bxd6 exd6 19 exd6 Qd7) - Analysis by Tzermiadianos.

ii) 6 Bd5 (Koltanowski) Ne5 (Here very possible is the "never played, never mentioned" 6...Bb4+! with defensive chances after 7 Nbd2 Ne5 8 a3 Bxd2+ 9 Bxd2 Ne6 10 Qe2 Ne7 11 Bxe6 dxe6 12 Bg5 d3! 13 Qxd3 Qxd3 14 exd3 c5 15 Rc1 b6 16 d4 cxd4 17 Nxd4 Nd5 18 0-0 Ba6 19 Rfd1 Kd7 Ward-Blackman, England 1999. (≈ Informator) ) (Acers: White now could play 20 Nf5 with initiative.)
7 0-0 Be7 8 Qe2 Alternatives are...

- 8 Nxd4 Nxd4 9 Qxd4 0-0 10 Nc3 c6 11 Bf3 d6
- 8 Re1 0-0 9 Nxd4 Nxd4 10 Qxd4 d6 11 Nc3 Ne6
  12 Qe4 c6 13 exd6! Bxd6 14 Bc4 Qc7
  Dzindzichashvili-Tal, New York 1991
- 8 Nbd2 Ne6 9Nb3 0-0 10 Re1 Nb4
  Witkowski-Geller, Dresden 1959

8...0-0 9 Re1 Qe8
The latest try. 9...Ne6 10 c3! Sax-Gligoric England 1972
Now 10...dxc3 11 Nxc3 d6 12 Ne4 = with powerful pieces
and extra space to compensate for the pawn.
10 Na3 Nb4 11 Bc4 d3! 12 cxd3 d5 13 exd6 Bxd6
14 Qxe8 Rxe8 15 Nb5 Bg4= Kelmenitsky-Malaniuk
Sibenik 1990. This will provide an idea of Black’s play.
Real finesse by Black is needed to hold the balance.

b) 5...Ng4 (diagram) Black does not fear the dangerous attack that
in its time claimed many victims: 6 Bxf7+?! Kxf7.
Survival lines have been painstakingly worked out
by GM Gligoric. 7 Ng5+ Kg8! now 8 Qf3 (threatens
mate on d5, f7) Bb4+! 9 c3
Nge5 10 Qd5+ Kf8
11 cxb4 Nxb4 =.
Or 8 Qxg4 h6 (but not
8...d6?? 9 Qf3 += Acers)

9 Nf3 d6 10 Qe4 dxe5 11 Nxe5 Nxe5 12 Qxe5 Qe7 13 Bf4
Bf5! ≈ Garcia-Findlay, Haifa Olympiad 1976. With a
slightly better endgame. Thousands worldwide know
Koltanowski’s choice: 14 Qxe7 Bxe7 15 0-0, challenging the
opponent to a technical endgame, worrying only later!
Instead of 6 Bxf7, 6 Qe2 is to be preferred, as White maintains his central strong point and concentrates on development. Then after

6...Qe7 7 Bf4 (diagram) White applies the full court pressure, with compensation for the pawn in all cases:

b1) 7...Qb4+ is a fatal Koltanowski trap that has snared multitudes. 8 c3 dxc3 9 Nxc3 with a decisive attack. White will play 0-0 and Nd5 +-  

b2) 7...d6 8 exd6 Qxe2+?! 9 Bxe2 Bxd6 10 Bxd6 exd6 11 Na3 Bf5 12 Nb5 0-0-0 13 Nfd4↑ Sveshnikov-Kuzmin, Russia 1980 with initiative. White has fewer “pawn islands” (Capablanca). A real advantage for the endgame - the typical continuation that will lead to many victories for the reader. No better for Black was 11...Nge5 12 Nb5 d3 13 Nxe5 dxe5 14 Bd3 0-0 15 0-0-0 Nb4 16 Bc4 ± Lebovich-Umansky, Russia 1968 (Informator), but 8...cxd6! does hold, according to current theory:  

- 9 Na3 a6 10 Rd1 Qxe2+ 11 Kxe2 Be6 12 Nxd4 d5 13 Nxe6 fxe6 14 f3 dxc4 15 fxg4 b5 16 c3 Bxa3 17 bxa3 0-0= Sveshnikov-Kuzmin, Yerevan 1996.  

- 9 Nbd2 Bf5 10 Nb3 has been tried twice. 10...Qxe2+ 11 Bxe2 d3! 12 exd3 Nge5= 13 Kd2 Be7 14 Nbd4 Nxf3+ 15 Nxf3 0-0 16 Rc1 d5 17 Be3 Rfc8 Tzermiadianos-Lirindzakis 1997 Greece Championship (Informator). 10...d3 11 cxd3 Qxe2+ 12 Kxe2 Nge5 ½-½ Polzin-Marciano, Austria 1999.

b3) Finally, Black can answer 7 Bf4 with 7...f6 8 exf6 Nxf6
8...gxf6?! is rarely played. 9 0-0 Qxe2 10 Bxe2 Nge5 11 Nbd2 d5 12 Nb3 Bd7 13 Nfd4 Nxd4 14 Bh5 Ng6 15 Nd4 0-0-0 16 Bg3 ±

9 Nbd2 Qxe2+ 10 Kxe2 Bc5 11 Rhe1 d5 12 Kf1+ Kd8 13 Bd3 ± Sveshnikov-Ehlvest, Helsinki 1992.

Black has also tried 10...d6 11 Rhe1 Bf5 12 Kf1 Kd7 13 Nb3 Be4 14 Nbxd4 Nxd4 15 Nd4 ± Sveshnikov-Rodriguez, Manila 1982, when Sveshnikov suggests 13...Bxc2 14 Nbxd4 Nxd4 15 Nxd4 Bg6 16 Be6+ Kd8 17 Bh3 ± with compensation.

(Informator)

** * * * *

Sveshnikov’s “Modern” Attack.
A sudden shift.
Often a very unwelcome surprise.

White prepares Nxd4 with pressure on Black’s weakened queenside. A long term structural advantage can then be taken to the bank. Black must enter highly

forced lines, as his Nf6 is attacked (6...Bb4+? 7 c3 dxc3 8 bxc3 1-0 Acers-Farin, San Francisco 1968)

A routine, deadly error often played here is 6...Nd7 7 0-0 Be7 8 Bxc6 bxc6 9 Nd4! Nb8 10 Nc3 0-0 11 Qf3 Qd7 12 h3 Re8 13 Re1 ± with a notable center grip, and truly stellar White steeds.
Tseitlin-Yuneev, Russia 1980
(Modern Chess Opening Encyclopedia - Kalichenko)
Two Knights Defense, Sveshnikov's 5 e5

7 Nxd4 (diagram)

White threatens to win Rook and Pawn for Bishop (8 Nxc6).
The crossroads for Black.

I. 7...Bd7
The Classical Morphy Defense

II. 7...Bc5?!
The “Macho” Variation

I. 7...Bd7 - The Classical Morphy Defense

Renewed interest in Paul Morphy’s holding defense occurred in 1999. The startled chess world learned that 7...Bc5, the Macho Variation (II) permitted the previously forbidden 8 Nxc6?! Bxf2+ 9 Kf1, when analysis by British GM’s Nunn and Emms showed White will not in fact be checkmated, but will hold an extra piece, with a likely draw by perpetual check in view. Furthermore, Black must know exactly how to achieve the draw immediately, or lose.

8 Bxc6

Executing the plan, surrender of the Bishop pair, the “minor” exchange for substantial doubled “pawn islands” for Black. Interesting was 8 Nxc6?! bxc6 9 Bd3 Bc5! 10 Bxe4 when Morphy displayed the finesse 10...Qh4! Lichtenstein-Morphy, New York, 1857 with already the better game and better development. The two Bishops speak - and not just on Sundays. The critical focus of the following play is on whether Black will advance his c6 pawn for a share of the center, immediately.

8...bxc6 (diagram)
196  Two Knights Defense, Sveshnikov's 5 e5

Fully aware of modern positional play, an edge which causes Black to face a long time defense, White wants no hurry:

9 Be3?! c5! 10 Nb3 d4 11 Bf4 g5! 12 Qe2 Bf5 13 Be1! g4 offers mutual chances. Belinkov-Leonidov, Russia 1967

We mention to the reader, if Black does not employ this active, highly committal continuation, then a quiet plan with 10 f3 will evict the Knight, while playing a later Nb3 or Qd2-c3 according to circumstances, with promising play. Know your opponent.

Alternate Black tries are:

a) 9...c5 10 Nb3! c6 11 c4! dxc4 12 N3d2 Nxd2 13 Nxd2 Be6 14 Qa4 Qb6 15 Qc2! ± Estrin-Sadomsky, Mailgame 1962 (5 “pawn islands” - Acers)

b) 9...g6 10 f3! Nc5 11 f4 Ne6 12 f5! Nxd4 13 Qxd4 Bxf5 14 e6 ± Shipov-Solntsev, Russia 1964

c) 9...Qh4 10 Be3! Be7 11 Nd2! (Black’s entire center position is destroyed) Nxd2 12 Qxd2 c5 13 Nf3 Qe4 14 Rfe1 Bh3! 15 Bf4! Qg6 16 Bg5! ± (Better endgame pawn structure - Acers) Sveshnikov-Zaitsev, Russia 1992.

d) 9...Bc5 10 Be3 when White prepares the simple plan Nd2-b3, or evicts the Knight with f3. - see variation II.
10 f3 Nc5 11 f4 (diagram)

White serves notice...
- The Attack is On -

*Chess Informator* shows the way. The typical attacking position (discussed earlier) provides many victories for a career player.

Examples:

- **11...f5** 12 b4! Ne4 13 e6! +
  Golovko-Grechkin, Mailgame 1962

- **11...Ne6** 12 f5 Nxd4 13 Qxd4 c5 14 Qg4 + Sax-Aitken, Skopje Olympiad 1972

- **11...0-0** 12 f5 Ne4 13 Nc3! Nxc3 14 bxc3 c5 15 Ne2 Bb5
  16 Rf3 Bg5 17 Nf4 Bc4 18 Nh5! ± I. Rogers-Solozhenkin, Noumea 1995

**11...Ne4** 12 f5! c5 13 Ne2

GM Sveshnikov’s finesse and point - defense of Black’s weak d5 pawn will cost precious time.

**13...Bb5** 14 Na3! Bc6

If 14...Ba6? 15 c4! ±

**15 c4! d4** 16 Nf4 Bg5 17 Nd3

± With a definite positional advantage - White will evict Black’s Knight or attack directly. *Sveshnikov-Fercec, Nova Gorica 1996.*
II. 7...Bc5 - The “Macho” Variation

“Dare to take the c6 Knight”
Played automatically
(don’t worry, be happy)
for generations, until GM’s Nunn and Emms (England) uncovered serious White play - analysis that stopped Black’s attack, holding at least a draw.

Black may give perpetual check for sure, all else is uncertain.

8 Nxc6?! Bxf2+ 9 Kf1 Qh4
(Also possible is 9...bxc6 10 Bxc6+ Kf8+ - Acers)
White now has two(!) overlooked defenses:

1. (From J. Emms’s, Play the Open Games as Black): 10 Nxa7+!= c6 11 Nxc8! Rxc8 12 Be2! Bd4! 13 Qe1 Bf2! 14 Qd1 Bd4 will draw by three-time repetition. (A great discovery by Emms, this looks bomb-proof - Acers)

2. John Nunn’s “live-with-danger” 10 Nd4+!?
Incredible, audacious, White plays to win, while stopping checkmate in all cases. 10...c6 11 Nf3 Ng3+ 12 Kxf2 Ne4+ 13 Ke3 (diagram) (+ ECO )

In peril, White forces the play.
13...Qf2+ 14 Kd3 Bf5 looks crushing, but Black is already two pieces (would-be attackers) down. Emms also shows as insufficient to win:
Two Knights Defense, Sveshnikov's 5 e5

i) 14...cxb5 15 Be3 Nc5+ 16 Bxc5 Bf5+ 17 Kc3 Qxc5+ 18 Kd2.

ii) 14...Qc5 15 Rf1 Qxb5+ 16 Ke3

So Black must depend on the intuitive 14...Bf5. Now 15 Nd4! Bg6 16 Rf1! brings about a critical position (diagram):

a) 16...Nd2+ 17 Kc3 Qe3+! 18 Bd3 Ne4+ 19 Kb3 Nc5+! 20 Kc3! Ne4+!=. Too dangerous is 20 Ka3 Qxd4 with no place to hide: 21 Nc3 a5!

b) 16...Qxg2 17 Ke3 when Black will be a piece down, but with two extra pawns, and counterchances. (“Deserves a postal test!” - L. Evans)

Acers: 17...cxb5 18 Qf3? Qxh2 19 Rh1 Qxe5 20 Qf4 Qe7 + provides Black with ideal counterplay, 18 Qe2? Qg5+ 19 Rf4 Qg1+ + 18 Nf3 appears best: Rd8 19 c3 0-0 20 Qe1 when White has a very long ordeal ahead.

(Editor: or 18...d4+ 19 Nxd4 Ng5 (initial analysis seems to point to e4 as a key pivot square, and should be vacated) 20 Nc3 Qh3+ 21 Nf3 Rd8 22 Qe2 Bh5 23 Qxb5+ Rd7 24 e6 (White in turn frees his center squares) Nxe6 25 Ne4 Nc7! 26 Qe2 Re7 keeps a strong initiative, but it is not clear for just how long. Such retrograde maneuvering may well become standard in our new computer age. For insights into computer-based analysis, see Second Game, p. 21)

Final Verdict: White can force a clear draw with Emms’s 10 Nxa7+ followed by the removal of the Bc8. 10 Nd4+ is truly an ordeal by chair for White. Black has clear counterplay against White’s high-wire monarch. Both moves also risk 9...bxc6 10 Bxc6+ Kf8.

In truth, White has a better way than 8 Nxc6?!
A. 8 Be3!  B. 8 0-0

With 7...Bc5, the alert reader may be looking for Italian Gambit transpositions, but Black has deftly waited for 7 Nxd4 (a virtual non-occurrence in those lines) before developing his Bishop. 7 c3 could transpose, but then 7...Bc5 certainly is not forced, and the related Goring Gambit lines which result fall outside our realm.

A. 8 Be3!

The recent play by professionals show Black is not able to penalize White’s direct play.

For the second-best 8 0-0, Line B, see Illustrative Game #6

I. Rogers- M. Pavlovic, Sokobanja, 1989

8...Bd7

The natural 8...0-0? has turned out badly.

9 Nxc6 bxc6 10 Bxc5 Nxc5 11 Bxc6 Ba6 12 Nc3!

(12 Qxd5? Qg5! N. Karaklajic-Trajkovic, Yugoslavia 1968)

- 12...d4 13 Bxa8 dxc3 14 Qxd8 Rxd8 15 b4! ± Maciejiejewski-Bielczyk, Poland 1974
- 12...Rb8 13 Qxd5 Qxd5 14 Bxd5 Rxb2 15 0-0-0 ± Estrin-Gurevich, Russia

9 Bxc6 bxc6 10 Nd2!

White thus closes in on his original goal: The positional bind. This is the key moment for Black to act, should he feel the danger:
Two Knights Defense, Sveshnikov's 5 e5

Other choices are not as good:

a) 10...Ng5 11 c3! Bb6 12 f4 Ne6 13 0-0 g6 14 Kh1 0-0 15 Qe1! Ng7 16 b4! ± Tzermiadianos-Pavlovic, Greece 1995

b) 10...Qh4 is enterprising and wild, as these games show...

1) 11 N4f3 Bxe3!? 12 Nhx4 Bxd2+ 13 Kf1 Ba5 14 Qe2 g5 15 Nf3 Bb6 16 c3 Nxf2 17 Nd4 Nhx1 18 Kg1 0-0-0 19 b4 Rde8 20 Kxh1 ∞ Kotronias-Barbero, Budapest 1988.

2) 11 Nxe4! Qxe4 12 0-0 Bb6 (Avoids 12...0-0 13 Re1! Qg6 14 Ne6! ± Kurajica-Smejkal, Novi Sad 1982) 13 Re1 Qg6 14 Nb3 0-0 15 a4 a5 16 Bc5! Rfe8 17 Re3 ± “Theme Position” (Analysis by Tzermiadianos)

c) 10...Qe7 11 Nxe4 dxe4 12 e6!

1) 12...Bxe6? 13 Nxe6 Bxe3 14 Nxe7+ Kf8 15 Nf8+ ↔ Van Wijgerden-Lengyel, Holland 1983

2) 12...fxe6 13 Nxc6! (13 Qh5+ g6 14 Qe5 ± Nunn) Bb4+ 14 Nxb4 Qxb4+ 15 Qd2 Qxb2 16 0-0 Qb5 17 Rfd1 a5 18 Rab1 Qa4 19 Bc5 ± Dzindzichashvili-Gi. Garcia, New York 1988

3) 15...Qxd2+ (Instead of Qxb2) 16 Kxd2 ± was better, as in Slettebo-Lundberg, Sverige 1993.
Indifferent moves lead to rapid bind: 11...0-0 12 Nb3 Bb6 ±

- Theme position

11...Bb6 12 Nb3 Qe7 13 Qc3 ±

- Theme position, or

12...0-0 13 0-0 f6 14 exf6 Qxf6
15 Nc5 Moor-Donev, Biel 1995

- Theme position (±)

12 Nb3 Bb6 13 Qc3! 0-0 14 0-0 Rfe8 15 f4

And once again, ± Theme position.

Tzermiadianos (Greece) analyzes for Chess Informator:

a) 15...Qe6 16 Rae1 Qg6 17 Rf3 Bf5 18 Rg3 Qh6 19 Rg5! Bd7 20 Kh1 Re7 21 Bc5 Re6 22 Qf3 Rae8 23 Rf1 g6 24 Rg3 Qg7 25 Qc3 ± Tzermiadianos-Cela, Athens 1994.

b) 15...f6 16 Bc5 fxe5 17 fxe5 Qg5 18 Rae1 ±

Karpatchev-D. Frolov, Tomsk 1998

B. 8 0-0

See Illustrative Game #6, I. Rogers-M. Pavlovic, Sokobanja, 1989, which displays admirable fighting qualities and ideas for both sides. A struggle ("war" might be a better term) poorly analyzed in The Two Knights Defense by well-known GM's Beliavsky and Mikalchishin. The game notes contained seven serious mistakes in analysis or evaluation which are here corrected. In particular, we call the reader's attention to the "reputation annotator". Because Chess Master Pavlovic is not (as of 1989) a world class player, his ideas are dismissed, a blind spot in an otherwise superb book, avidly read by chess fans all over the world.
The reader must always, of course, decide which lines are best for competitive play, fine tuning them like high performance engines, while studying every relevant professional game as they are played each month. (Absolutely free on the website chesslab.com - Acers) This will allow you to organize your play in some fashion.

You will know.

When reading and studying illustrative games, which must always be annotated and discussed, remember the result of the games is only the start. Your style, personality and interest may demand that you investigate opening variations dismissed with the wave of theory’s wand. Do you love to defend? Attack? Are the variations easy to study, better yet, unknown to most of the opponents coming up? Do you want to play these variations? (This last point often outweighs everything else combined!)

“When Fischer believes an opening variation is good, it takes dynamite to blow him away.” - L. Evans, Chess Life

In no case should one shy away from opening repertoire lines because of opinion. Perhaps the Grandmasters are quite mistaken, the execution of your opening was flawed, the middlegame was not timed properly. Even worse, your play could be 100% correct, totally winning, as in our illustrative game here. You discover this with close examination of the games. In turn, recording your own games is a must for self-improvement.

Permit us to remind the reader (walk back in time) by citing two world famous players (both certified millionaires), who ignored opinions, knowing that only the moves count, and their banks still count the cash.
Viktor Korchnoi, still a famous chess professional at age 70, solved a problem in 1978... what to play, as Black, in matches leading to his epic world title clashes with Anatoly Karpov. Even if he lost, Korchnoi would clear a fortune then...

Korchnoi had read the Fischer book *My Sixty Memorable Games*, the huge, worldwide multi-language bestseller, with R. Fischer’s opinion: “I may one day be forced to admit that the French Defense (1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5) is sound, but I doubt it. It is too anti-positional.”

Sharp prose that made the book such a great attraction. Korchnoi surely looked at Fischer’s games, indeed he reviewed the book in detail for the chess press. Now he considered that Fischer had been held at bay by the French, defeated by Mednis and Kovacevic with it. Also, Fischer tried many futile approaches. In the last great (1970-1972) “Run for the Roses”, Fischer defeated Denmark’s Bent Larsen in a French Defense. Larsen had never employed it even once before the world title elimination match. Analysis after the game showed that Larsen had blundered, that Fischer once again had nothing, despite voodoo-like claims by annotators for a decade after. *The Art of Chess Analysis* by GM Jan Timman of Holland, broke it down move by move. Therefore...

Korchnoi employed the French Defense in critical elimination games with former World Champion Boris Spassky. He trusted himself, not opinion. The rest is history.

Our second chess millionaire is England’s Nigel Short. *The Thriller in Manila* made him the cash, made it all possible. The Round 13 (Last Round) World Zonal Qualifier in Manila would make GM Short eligible to defeat fellow countryman GM Jon Speelman, and Russian great Anatoly Karpov in matches. They were all chopped down like trees by Mr. Short, but before those dramas, there was... *The Game:*

With it all on the line, a million-dollar opportunity still possible versus Kasparov on the distant horizon, Short, hopelessly back in this final round, had to win with the Black pieces against strong GM Mikhail Gurevich. If he chose 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5, White could play 3 exd5 exd5, the infamous Exchange Variation, considered an all but certain draw for White. Short permitted it.

The Exchange French.
Complete Symmetry,
few winning chances?

A thunderstruck chess world watched as England’s most successful professional player ever played on, hour after hour, trading, winning a 42-move Rook and Knight versus Rook and Bishop endgame out of thin air.

With this British Immortal Game - The French Defense was Short’s ticket out, from a life of deprivation, of universally foolish chess officials, the real tragedy experienced by many notable players in chess history. Believing in himself, Short “caught the last train”, played variations he had studied, worked through and felt comfortable with. Fischer’s opinion didn’t matter a wit to such a player. “Let’s Roll”.

Yes only the moves count, or as the “Texas Theory Titans” (TTT) would say, “If it flies, it dies!” (See the Nimzovich Defense Chapter in Volume II for TTT details).

Returning to our game in question, we resolutely refuse to play by the theory wand, waved by Mr. Pavlovic. Please resign sir, you are wasting our time. A total plan, correct play all the way (“maybe even perfect” - Acers) is to be discovered.
Illustrative Game #6  
Sokobanja, 1989

I. Rogers vs. M. Pavlovic  
(Australia vs. Yugoslavia)

(Indicate the seven errors found.)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Be4 Nf6 4 d4 exd4 5 c5 d5 6 Bb5 Ne4 7 Nxd4 Bc5
8 0-0 The Australian theory wizard GM I. Rogers plays this safety-first, pressure forever move. The central drawback of 8 0-0 is that all of White’s play is on the Queen’s wing. That is why 8 Be3 appears stronger.

8 Nxc6?!  
White also plays 10 Be3, when Black must know 10...Qe8! 11 f3 Nd6 with counterplay, or 11 c3 f6 12 exf6 Rxf6 13 Nd2 Rg6 ± Weitzel-Pobeshuk, mailgame 1978. 10 f3 is met by 10...f6!! (Keres)

10 Bxc6  
Black obtains open lines, rapid development and the Bishop pair for the pawn. Black’s center pawn phalanx looms large after ...Bb6 and ...c5 Pavlovic dodges the bullet. On 10...Qh4?! Rogers sprung a trap on Wahls (Germany) one year later (Groningen, 1990) 11 Be3! Bxe3 12 fxe3 Qg5 13 Rf4! Bb7 14 Qxd5 Rad8 15 Qxe4 (“Greed, man’s noblest motive.” - Seirawan) Rdl+ 16 Kf2 + White is a piece and two pawns up, cramped, but will survive. Or 11...Ba6 12 g3 Qh3 13 Bxc5! Bxf1 14 Qxf1 Qxf1+ 15 Kxf1 Nc5 16 Ne7+ Kh8 17 Nxd5 ± P. Martin-Montes, Mailgame 1993. White’s King is active, with two dangerous pawn majorities in the endgame. Black has the exchange for two pawns. (Informator)

11 Nd4 Qe7  
Black strikes. He must open lines for the pair of Bishops and advance his lethal queenside pawns. Otherwise a lost pawn-down endgame awaits.
Already forced, hardly deserving an exclamation point from the authors. “Black already has the advantage, not noted in numerous major theory books.” - Acers.

Here is the decisive moment.
I. Rogers displays world class: He is being completely blown off the board by an unknown player, but that is not so important. What matters? Rogers knows he is being outplayed.
GM Larry Evans specialized in these moments, both as a player and as a no-nonsense annotator, spanning six decades (and counting!). Evans would be merciless here, asking simply what move Australian Champion Rogers played, put his money/world chess ranking on.
Not what is written later.

The Two Knights Defense follow Informator/Rogers, and do not excuse Rogers here: “After the 14 Nx6 Qxe6 15 Bxc7 Rac8 16 Bf4 White has an extra pawn against no particular compensation.” Totally wrong (diagram) +.

Acers: Rarely have three GM’s made such a complete oversight. Pavlovic has at his disposal immediate invasion: 16...Nx6f2! \ 17 Rxf2 Bxf2+ 18 Kxf2 Qb6+, when 19 Be3 Qxb2 19 Nd2 (19 Qxd5+? Kh8 20 Bd4 Qxc2 \ ) Rxe2 with ...d4 \ coming, or 19 Kf1 Qb5+! intending ...Qxb2. In no case is White’s position satisfactory.

Likewise questioned by Beliavsky and Mikhalevishin: “Again not the best positional decision. - Correct was 16 a4! and then 17 N2b3.”

Acers: There’s absolutely no difference in which move is played first here. However, for the record note Rogers plays N2b3 first to avoid exchanges, complicating as much as possible - all endgames will be difficult indeed.”
In fairness to Beliavsky and Mikhalchishin, we note in wonder a correct appraisal: “Black has a good center and two Bishops, and so White tries to exchange the strong pieces.”

20 Rel d4!
Correct. Black secures a winning advantage with a powerful protected passed pawn, and opens the Bf7 to rake the center and queen’s flank.

"An active continuation, but best seems the centralizing 20...Rad8!" Wrong. 20...d4 should win now.

21 e4 f5
22 f3 Nf6
23 Ne1
White manoeuvres to blockade as well as possible, the Knights hold for some time. Black closes in.

23 .......... Rxe1+

24 Qxe1 Re8 − +
25 Qd1 Nh5
26 Nd3 Nxf4
27 Nxf4 Re3
Simple chess. Black takes the e-file.

“? - Stronger seems 27...Bc7”
Totally mistaken. The Queen should never be blocked from getting to e7 with a mechanical elimination of White’s counter chances.

28 Nf1 Qe7!

White’s virtually a Rook down, operating on prayer alone. With an elementary win in prospect, Black takes possession, naturally of the e-file using tactics, White can not play 29 Nxe3 Qxe3+, losing the Nf4.

“Combinational play makes no sense. Correct was the retreat 28...Re8”. Acers: “Are they kidding? Why should Black retreat his powerful Rook? 28...Qe7 kills!”

29 Qd2! ........
The only chance. What’s this?

WHITE DOES NOT RESIGN?
Pavlovic (Yugoslavia)

The Time for Vigilance!
White is lost, and sets a nifty, lethal drop of poison here.
Frank J. Marshall just stood up (in his current residence) and saluted.
Acers: “White is dead lost - Period. The Yugoslav Master must calmly play 29...Re5, with murderous threats: 30...Bxc4 or 30...g5! On 31 Nd3 Re2 → White’s entire position is en prise.”

I. Rogers (Australia)
Pavlovic now ruins a well-constructed struggle by walking into the swindle full-stride.
“There comes a time in every player’s life when he must learn to eat a little crow.” - GM Yasser Seirawan.
Instead of 29...Re5, Black played

\[29...Bc7?\]

“The mistakes are all there waiting to be made.” - S.G. Tratakower
“When the win is in sight, sit on your hands.” - S. Tarrasch.

\[\begin{align*}
&Acers: \text{“Beliavsky and Mikhachishin also leave this move unmarked - it is the losing move.} \\
&\text{Perhaps Black’s only error throughout.}
\end{align*}\]

\[30 \text{Nd5!} +-\]

“First I will place my Knight where I can regain it later”

\[30...Bxd5 31 \text{Nxe3 1-0}\]

Black resigns
"The Uncooperative Opponent"

The lines given here take into account all the important choices the second player may try, which steer clear of so much main line theory (Italian, Spanish, Scotch) stemming from 2...Nc6.

How else can Black answer the threat to the center pawn?

The obvious 2...f6 (Damiano’s Defense) is a mistake: 3 Nxe5(!) fxe5 4 Qh5+ Ke7 (4...g6 5 Qxe5+ snares the Rook) 5 Qxe5+ Kf7 6 Bc4+ with a clear (totally overlooked!) win, revealed only in 2003:

A. 6...Kg6 7 h4! - Acers
B. 6...d5 7 Bxd5+ Kg6 8 h4! (New - L. Alburt, Chess Life, July 2003) h5 9 Bxb7! Bxb7 10 Qf5+ Kh6 11 d3+ g5 12 Bxg5+ finis. Best was 3...Qe7, but 2...f6 fails in its mission, regardless.

Better Choices:

2...Nf6   Russian-Petroff Defense
2...f5   The Latvian Counter Gambit
2...d6   Philidor’s Defense
2...d5   The Queen’s Pawn “Elephant” Counter Gambit
2...Qe7   Buck System

These systems both supplement and complement those of Volume II. They are born out of the same philosophy and spirit as A Guiding Repertoire for White - 1 e4! ...intended especially (but not solely) for fast, one hour time controls.
The Russian-Petroff Defense 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6

2...Nf6 - Russian-Petroff

A completely sound counter attack on White’s center e-pawn.

Co-author Jude Acers has played it for years, including a 78 move, 7 hour exhibition draw with Fischer (New Orleans, 1964), and a win against GM Walter Browne (Match, Berkeley, 1970) that was voted “World Top Ten” theory game by Chess Informant (Belgrade) “Believe me, overnight, you too will become a Petroff-Russian player for life in critical games... defending 1 e4 with e5.” - Acers

“This is the way to go. Learn to play both sides. Become a mechanical point mill!” - Acers (1995).

3 Nxe5

Many world class players delude themselves - into the symmetrical positions they travel, believing White has a slight advantage with the extra move. GM Kasparov lost eighty thousand dollars to GM Jan Timman of Holland (Paris 1991) - held to a draw, eliminated by the Acers-Trifunovic variation:

3 d4 Nxe4 4 Bd3 d5 5 Nxe5 Bd6
6 0-0 0-0 7 c4 Bxe5! 8 dxe5 Nc6
9 cxd5 Qxd5 10 Qc2 Nb4 11 Bxe4
Nxc2 12 Bxd5 Bf5! (C. Bill Jones-Acers, San Jose 1970)
13 g4 (diagram) Bxg4!

(I played 13...Bg6 in Round 1 against Browne, then found myself in the New York Times, London Times, now in hundreds of books and databases.

13...Bxg4 (C. Bill Jones) was prepared for Game 3.
Incredibly, Browne wheeled out 1 d4 in that game. This was my first real introduction to GM Browne’s almost cat-like sense of danger.

14 Be4 Nxal 15 Bf4 f6 (Also 15...f5=) 16 Nc3 fxe5 17 Be3 Bf6 18 Rxa1 Bxe4 19 Nxe4 b6 20 b4 a5! 21 b5 Rad8 22 Rcl Rf7.
World Champion Kasparov eventually just ran out of time in the forced play / one hour time control, offering a draw.

18 year old World Chess Champion (FIDE) GM Ponomariov knows how to catch the coasters: “White to move and win - no problema!” Witness Svidler-Ponomariov, Moscow World Championship Elimination Match Game, 2002):

3 d4 Nxe4 4 Bd3 d5 5 Nxe5 Nd7!
6 Nxd7 Bxd7 7 0-0 Bd6 8 c4 c6
9 cxd5 cxd5 10 Nc3 Nxc3 11 bxc3
0-0 12 Qh5 f5! 13 Re1 (13 Qf3=, Rublevsky-Oll, Poland 1998) Qc7
14 Bd2 Rae8 (à la Paul Morphy and Fred Reinfeld, both members of the US Chess Hall of Fame for a reason)
15 Bc2 g6 16 Qf3 (diagram)

16...Re4! with board control, defense via sacrifice of the exchange for open lines. (The point: 17 Bxe4? Bxh2+ 18 Kh1 fxe4 19 Qe2 Rf5! (Golubev)) “Svidler was not yet lost, but the clock, blood pressure, and dire complications were now running amok.” - Acers.

3...d6

On 3...Qe7 do not become heroic.
Just play 4 Nf3! (Anderssen-Göring, Leipzig, 1871) Nxe4 5 Be2 Qd8! 6 0-0 Be7 7 d4 0-0 8 c4 c6 9 Qc2 (! - Forintos, Haag, E.C.O.). White has good chances, but there is still a game to play.

3...Nxe4?! 4 Qe2! Qe7 (of course not 4...Nf6?? losing the Queen at high noon - 5 Nc6 discovered check. A trap taught by most teachers, but not the better 4...Qe7) 5 Qxe4 d6 6 d4 with two important lines:
a) 6...f6 7 f4 Nd7?
Here the Tulane University Master player Albert “The Draw” Wills showed the way:

8 Nc3! dxe5 9 Nd5 Qd6 10 fxe5 fxe5 11 dxe5 Qc6 12 Bb5! Qc5 13 Be3 1-0 (Wills-Sparks, New Orleans 1942)

Undefeated in more than one hundred rated games, A. Wills joined A.L. McAuley, and Carlos Torre as recognized Louisiana Masters, 1900-1960. Chess players around the world also discover the Legendary Mexican GM Torre was also Louisiana State Champion at age 19.

b) 6...dxe5 7 dxe5 (Mandatory. A common error is 7 Qxe5? Qxe5 8 dxe5 Ne6 ⊕ when Black commands the board with White’s weak e-pawn as a target.) Ne6 8 Ne3! (Vasiukov)
(Avoiding a deadly trap 8 Bf4? g5! 9 Bg3? f5! Just like that, losing a piece and the game. Rivers-Acers, New Orleans 1961)

8...Qxe5 9 Qxe5 Nxe5 10 Bf4
Also sufficient for endgame advantage was the recipe from the great Bulgarian player K. Georgiev - 10 Nb5! Bb4+ 11 c3 Ba5 12 Bf4 f6 13 Be2 Bd7 14 a4 Bxb5 15 axb5 Bb6 16 Rd1 Rd8 17 0-0 Ke7 18 Rfe1 Rhe8 19 Kf1 Georgiev-Trifonov, Bulgaria 1983 with a good fight still in progress.

10...Bd6 11 Bg3 Bd7 12 0-0-0 0-0-0 13 Ne4 Be6 14 Nxd6 cxd6 15 f3 Rhe8 16 Rd4 Kc7 17 a4 Vasiukov-Chekhov, Russia 1975.

(17...f6 (holding) looks playable, white is better positioned for the ending, possessing the Bishop pair, more space, better Pawn structure. - Acers)
The Russian-Petroff Defense

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6

Cochrane’s Gambit.
Scottish lawyer John Cochrane (1798-1878) invented the gambit that bears his name 150 years ago.

It is a shocking piece sacrifice for two pawns and an attack, that was analyzed seriously by English Champion Howard Staunton.

GM Paul Keres, a six-time World Championship contender, played it successfully in exhibitions. It “arrived” when world top-5 player Veselin Topalov used it to draw versus future world title holder GM Vladimir Kramnik. The sacrifice is sound, and offers several advantages, including...

a) A shocking psychological offer to the defender, who otherwise expects an easy life, a quick handshake.

b) A great advantage on the clock in forced time controls.

c) Mapped paths of attack for White, which permit the imagination to roam on the range.

d) A mushrooming pawn phalanx at the board’s center, awaiting the endgame.

4...Kxf7 5 d4!

The Modern “Vitolins” Attack

Topalov instead chose 5 Ne3 versus Kramnik. There continued 5...c5 6 Be4+! Be6 7 Bxe6+ Kxe6 8 d4 Kf7 9 dxc5 Ne6 (diagram)
The Russian-Petroff Defense 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6

V. Kramnik (Russia)

Whereupon White poured on the pressure with 10 Qe2!
(Threat: 11 Qc4+ with a winning attack) Qd7.

White can now choose 11 cxd6 (Topalov) with a serious initiative, three pawns for the sacrificed piece, or play the fierce middlegame with the game continuation:

V. Topalov (Bulgaria) - at Linares, Spain 1999.

11 Be3!? dxc5 12 f4 Re8 13 e5 Ng4 14 Rd1 Qf5 15 0-0 h5!
16 Bc1 (Also 16 h3 Nxe3 17 Qxe3 intending Ne4 for White comes into consideration - Kramnik, Chess Informant)

16...Nd4 17 Qc4+ Kg6!
(Not 17...Qe6 18 Qd3! g6 19 Ne4! - Kramnik)

18 h3 Nh6 19 Nb5 a6! 20 Nxd4 cxd4 21 Qxd4 with a wild game that Kramnik evaluates much in Black’s favor, however, drawn in 32 moves.

* * * * *

After 5 d4! many Black tries are insufficient. Of these, the most dangerous for him is 5...Nxe4? 6 Qh5+ Ke7 7 Qe2! d5? 8Bg5+ won instantly Acers-Morrow, New Orleans, 1963, or 6...Kg8?? 7 Qd5+ Be6 8 Qxe6 mate. Buining-Rivers, New Orleans 1963.

Otherwise White regains the Knight with a pawn plus, won endgame to boot. The reader may undoubtedly win many games here. The other alternatives:
Black has some problems. His King is left in the center, while White continues his simple development. Quick proofs:

a) \(5...c6\) 6 Bd3 Be7 7 0-0 g6 8 c4 Kg7 9 Ne3 Nbd7 10 Be3 Nf8 11 h3! d5 12 c5 Ne8 13 cxd5 exd5 14 f4 \(\pm\) with a powerful attack (pawn roller) Vitolins-Butnorius, Russia 1985

b) \(5...Nbd7\) 6 e5! dxe5 7 dxe5 Qe7 8 Be4+ Ke8 9 f4 Nb6 10 Be2 Ne4 11 Bf3 Bf5 12 Qe2 Ne5? (12...Qh4+ returning the piece is Black’s only chance - [Domuls]) 13 0-0 (Black’s b7 is weak. White now threatens the crushing 14 g4 - “The Big Clamp”) Ne6 14 Be3 Qb4 15 Bxb7 Rd8 16 Be6+ Kf7 17 c3 Bd3 18 Qf3 Qxb2 19 f5 winning. Lipski-Nachlik, Naleczow 1981.

c) \(5...Qe7\) (Another losing defense, as noted in Chris Baker’s A Startling Chess Opening Repertoire) 6 Nc3! c6 7 Bd3 g6 8 0-0 Bg7 9 f4:

1. \(9...Bg4\) 10 Qe1! Re8 11 Qh4 Be6 12 f5! gxf5 13 exf5 Bd7 14 Bg5 d5 15 Rae1 Qd6 16 Ne2! Kg8 17 c4! with full compensation and a powerful bind - C. Baker.

2. \(9...Ng4\) 10 e5! Qh4 11 h3 Nh6 12 Ne4 Rd8 13 f5! Nxf5 14 Bg5 Qh5 15 Be2 1-0 Erlbeck-Saring, Bavaria 1995. “It’s goodbye Queen!” - C. Baker.

d) \(5...Qe8\) 6 Nc3! g6 7 Qf3 Kg7 8 Be4 Be6 9 Bh6+!! Kg8 (9...Kf7 10 Nd5 - C. Baker) 10 Bxe6+ Qxe6 11 Bxf8 h5 12 0-0-0 Nbd7 (Claus-Wilkie, Auguadilla 1989). 13 e5! Ng4 (The Bishop walks out on 13...dxe5) 14 Be7!! Qxe7 15 h3 Nh6 16 Qxb7 Rf8 17 Qxc7 with a decisive advantage. - C. Baker.
e) 5...Be6 (A very common blockade) 6 Bd3 and now:

1. 6...Be7 7 0-0 g6 8 c4! Kg7 9 Nc3 Na6 10 a3! c6 11 h3! Ne7 (Certainly not 11...Qb6? 12 Be3! Qxb2? Na4 trapping the Queen) 12 d5 Bf7 13 Be3 h6 (13...Rf8 -C. Baker) 14 f4 c5 15 e5 Ng8 16 Ne4 Shirazi-Lane 1987 with a commanding initiative.

2. 6...g6 7 0-0 Kg7 8 f4 Nbd7 (8...c6 9 f5 gxf5 10 exf5 Bf7 11 Qe1! - C. Baker) 9 Nd2 Be7 (9...c6 10 c3! “Maintains the tension” - C. Baker) 10 Nf3 Rf8 11 f5! gxf5 12 Ng5 Bg8 13 Rxf5 h6 14 Nh3 Be6 15 Bxh6+!! winning material. Nagrocka-Khadilkhar, Naleczow 1982.

This leaves three main defenses:

5...Be7

Or, equally: 5...g6 and 5...c5.

First, 5...g6 6 Nc3 Kg7 7 Be2 d5 8 e5 Ne4 9 Nxe4 dxe4 10 0-0 Nc6 11 Be3 Be7 12 Qd2 Re8 with mutual chances. (Analysis by A. Roetsky, Modern Chess Opening Encyclopedia (Kalichenko))

Second, 5...c5 6 dxc5 Nc6 7 Bc4+ Be6 8 Bxe6+ Kxe6 9 0-0 d5 10 Nc3 dxe4 11 Qe2 Kf7 12 Bg5 h6 13 Rad1 Savko-Enin, Riga 1990. White has an enduring attack. Kalichenko/Osnos state Black must sacrifice the Q to resist: 13...hxg5 14 Rxd8 Rxd8 15 Ne4 Kg6.

6 Nc3 Re8 7 Bc4+ Kf8 8 0-0 Nc6 9 Be3 Na5 10 Bd3

and after 10...Kg8 (Kalichenko/Roetsky) White may consider 11 h3 12 f4 with 13 g4 with Qd1-e1-g3† which is representative of the entire Cochrane Gambit. (Note also 8 Qf3 Ne6 9 Be3 Na5 10 Bd3 Nc6 11 h3 Be6 12 g4 Kg8 Fedorov-Salnikov, Russia 1977).
This dangerous counter gambit becomes instantly playable in the forced play 1 hour time controls, where neither player is permitted to leave the board. Although weakening Black’s kingside and conceding development, Latvian specialists like Seattle veteran Master V. Pupols depend on their enormous knowledge of the resulting middlegames and quite special endgame positions to “run the opponent off the clock” or better yet, land a checkmate. Indeed, Pupols did exactly that to a young novice - Robert J. Fischer. White should direct simple piece pressure against Black’s center in the manner thoroughly worked out a century ago by GM Nimzovich. The original “bust” was by Czechoslovakian player J. Louma (1898-1955).

Alekhine’s attack-all-the-way idea was 3...Nc6 inviting 4 Qh5+? g6 5 Nxg6 Nf6! with genuine counterplay. A simple plan is 4 Nxc6 dxe6 5 exf5 Bxf5 6 Be2 \(+\) holding on to the pawn in the spirit of GM Larry Evans. Waid-Acers, Louisiana State University Championship, Baton Rouge, 1964.

White forces Black to establish a weakly supported pawn on e4.
Latvian Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 f5

By far the most common reply White players face. The (quite dangerous) alternatives:

a) 5...Ne7 6 Ne3!
   (Not 6 Nxe4 Qe6 –+) Qe5
   7 d4! ± Pachman-Florian, Prague, 1938.

b) 5...Qe6! 6 d3! is an example of an absolutely necessary gambit for development. Else ...Nf6, ...d5 destroys White. 6...Nf6
   7 dxe4 Bb4 8 Ne3! Nxe4 9 Bd3!! Nxc3 10 bxc3 Bxc3+
   11 Bd2 Qf6 12 Rb1 ± with an attack brewing. Louma-Poisl, Prague 1938. Note also 9 Bc4 ± (Marovic, Susic, 1975)

c) 5...c6 6 Nxe4 Qe6 7 Qh5+! Kd8 8 Qe5! d5 9 Ng5 ± keeping
   the pawn with position. Destrebecq-Bravo, 1980 mailgame.

d) 5...Qf7 6 Ne3! c6 (Else 7 Bc4 ±) 7 Nxe4 d5 8 Ng5 Qf6 9 Nf3

White must know this gambit line: 6...exd3 7 Bxd3
   Qxg2 8 Qh5+ g6 9 Qe5+ Ne7 10 Be4! wins a Rook.

Miss this 10 Be4 intermezzo line, and Black prevails at move 6.

6...Bb4 7 dxe4

Also 7 Bd2 ± (Marovic, Susic)
   7...Qxe4+ 8 Ne3 Bxc3 9 bxc3 Ne7 10 Bc4 d6 11 0-0 Be6
   12 Qh5+! Kd7 13 Bxe6+ Qxe6 14 c4 ± (Analysis by Louma)
White has better King safety, open b, d, and e files for invasion, a powerful Bishop for b2 or a3, along with a possible c4-c5 pawn break. A near mechanical initiative in prospect for White.
2...d6 - Philidor’s Defense 3 Bc4

Played by 6-time U.S. Champion Walter Browne amidst his career renaissance during 2002. The position is an instructor’s dream. Rarely does a GM obtain two pieces in play while the opponent’s entire army “resides dockside”. White cleverly avoids the “Larsen Variation” used to score a draw versus a World Champion, Mikhail Tal,

World Candidates Match 1969: 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 g6 5 Nc3 Bg7 6 Bf4 Nf6 7 Qd2 0-0 8 0-0-0 Re8 9 f3 Nc6 with interesting play.

3...Be6

a) 3...Nf6? (“A common error” - Koltanowski) 4 Ng5! d5 5 exd5 Nxd5 6 Qf3! +- (Koltanowski).

b) 3...f5 (The Latvian Counter Gambit Deferred, which denies White the direct attack Nxe5) 4 d3! Nf6 5 Nc3 ± with much play ahead.

c) 3...Be7 4 0-0 Nf6 5 Re1 0-0 6 c3 Nbd7 7 Bb3 ± White is freer, Black is solid.

d) 3...Nc6 4 c3 Bg4? (4...Nf6? 5 Ng5! ± 4...Be6?! 5 Bxe6 fxe6 6 Qb3 Qc8 7 Ng5 ± 4...Be7 5 d4 ± again, White has more space.) 5 Qb3! Qd7 6 Bxf7+! ± Acers-Addison, Mechanics Institute, San Francisco 1969.

4 Bxe6 fxe6 5 d4
Also good is 5 c3 intending 6 d4 or 6 Qb3 - Acers.

A modern try is 6...Nf6 7 c3 e5 8 Ne6 Qd7 9 Qb3 c6 10 0-0 Nxe4 11 Re1 White attacks, with complex play. Blatny-Barbero, Czechoslovakia, 1995. Alternatively, 7 Bg5! Qe7 8 f4 ± (Estrin) or 7...Qd7 8 Bxf6 gxf6 9 Qg4 ±

6...e5 7 Ne6! Qe7 8 Qh5+ g6 9 Qh3 Na6 10 Nc3 Qd7 11 f4 exf4 12 Bxf4 Nf6 13 0-0 ± Chandler-Large, Hastings 1987.

Black intends 10...Nd8 (Vulfsen)

Finally entering the endgame on his own terms.

Also problematic is 14...Nf6 15 Nc3 Nc4 16 0-0 ± (Chernosvitov)

White has a distinct advantage for the ending. Analysis by Chernosvitov (Modern Chess Opening Encyclopedia, Kalinichenko).
Queen's Pawn Center Gambit 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d5

2...d5 - “Elephant” Gambit

The purpose of this defense is to blunt White’s direct attack in return for a pawn. The San Francisco Master, Problemist, Author (The Chess of Bobby Fischer) Robert Burger has become famous for such wins “In 15 moves or less - in time for dinner” versus Fischer, (1964 San Francisco exhibition) and a U.S. Champion John Grefe (Mechanics Institute, 1969) with such sharp variations. The Australian GM I. Rogers considers it playable. Certainly a surprise.

3 exd5 Bd6 (Botvinnik)

Burger’s pet variation for decades. Other moves are unsatisfactory:

a) 3...Qxd5 4 Nc3 Qe6 5 Bb5+! ± with White’s lead in development paramount (Marovic, Susic)

b) 3...e4 4 Qe2! can not be met adequately.
   1) 4...Nf6 5 d3 ±
   2) 4...Be7 5 Qxe4 Nf6 6 Bb5+! (An absolute must - Acers)
   3) 4...f5 5 d3 Nf6 (5...Qxd5 6 N1d2 =) 6 dxe4 fxe4 7 Nc3 Bb4 8 Qb5+ c6 9 Qxb4 exf3 10Bg5 cxd5 11 0-0-0 Nc6 12 Qa3 Be6 13 Bc4! ± Tal-Lutikov, Tallinn 1964

   This continuation was indeed vintage Tal, on 13...Qe7 14 Nxd5 Qxa3 15 Nc7+ Ke7 16 Rhe1!! White is a Queen down, but a King up.

   4) 4...Qe7 5 Nd4 Qe5 (5...Nf6 6 Nc3 Qe5 7 Nf3! Qe7 8 Ng5 ± L. Pachman) 6 Nb5 Bd6 7 d4 Qe7 8 c4 ± Morphy-Augusius Mongredien, Paris 1859.

   (“A game played by 1 of 2 immortal New Orleans players!” - J. Acers)
The Buck System

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Qe7

This "strongpoint" defense was employed by strong Lynchburg, VA mailplayer, successfully over 60 years of play. "It is amazing how many quiet waiting moves to hold the center occur if White blindly plays 3 Nc3?! c6 4 Bc4 d6 with blockade in mind."

- J. Buck, Interview (1962).

3 Bc4 d6 4 0-0 g6

Clearly better is 4...Be6 - Acers

5 d4 Bg7 6 dxe5 dxe5 7 b3 ±

Euwe; Nunn.

White intends 8 Ba3 c5 9 Nc3 controlling d5.
A Guiding Repertoire for White - 1 e4!

Volume II

Semi-Open Games - Studied and Developed
by the Venerable Chess Master and Teacher
Jude Acers

Essential Lines, Especially Recommended
for Limited Time Controls.

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The French Defense is a fighting effort to establish a beach head in the center, while being able to counter with ...c5, ...Bb4, or ...dxe4 (or all three!) - reacting to White's center play. Play can be sharp and at times may be described as violent, and very effective against strong opponents. American World Champion Robert J. Fischer fell to it on several occasions. Perennial World Title Contender Viktor Korchnoi and American Grandmaster Yasser Seirawan added refinements aplenty for the Black side. Consider nothing safe when encountering the French Defense.

First Game - 3 e5
Advance - Alekhine System

Second Game - 3 Bd3
The Tartakower Variation

Third Game - 3 Nc3 dxe4
The Burn-Rubinstein, and the "Fort Knox"

Fourth Game - 3 Nc3 Nf6
Classical Variation

Fifth Game - 3 Nc3 Bb4
Winawar-Nimzovich Defense
First Game

3 e5 The Advance - Alekhine System

First examined in depth by Aron Nimzovich, this “Advance” Variation was employed by both Alexander Alekhine and Paul Keres - two of the greatest attacking players ever. However, the precious tempo lost to set up a bind was intensely distrusted by the superb chess theory historian, “The Book” Fischer, who never once employed it in a single professional career game. Time waits for no one. The often hair-raising “Advance” is headed for a Renaissance, with one hour time controls - players never permitted to leave the board during the entire game for any reason. The popular English International Master, globetrotter Anthony Kosten has contributed mightily (In play, and an entire book!), advocating its complexities.

3 ...c5

Also possible is the exchange of the white squared bishops, after which only very high class play indeed maintains a tiny, risky edge for White: 3...b6 4 c3 Qd7! (4...Ba6? loses a piece and the game after 5 Bxa6 Nxa6 6 Qa4+) 5 h4 a5 6 a4 Ba6 7 Bxa6 Nxa6 8 h5 0-0-0 9 Nf3 Kb7 10 Rh3 h6 11 Kf1 Re8 12 Kg1 Ne7 13 Na3 Nf5 14 Ne2 c5 15 dxe5 Bxe5 16 Bd2! Rhd8 17 g4! when the world class U.S. player Igor Ivanov kept a slight initiative.


4 Nf3 (Alekhine)

The chess world was quite surprised by Ludek Pachman’s recommendation of this try for attack four decades ago. Mr. Pachman is not normally a gambiteer. Should White support his center with another pawn
move, 4 c3, the center will come under seige with roughly equal chances in well charted waters. The text is largely forgotten, a great advantage indeed.

4...exd4

Destroying White’s two pawn center. This is almost always played - and right up Alekhine’s alley. 4...Nc6 permits 5 dxe5 Bxc5 6 Bd3 - exactly the kind of attacking position White plays for. (It was ideal for example, for the professional touring player George Koltanowski, underestimated, tactical, lethal upon errors.) With accurate play, Black “can equalize”- according to Russian Grandmaster Igor Glek, 6...f6 7 Qe2 fxe5 8 Nxe5 Nf6 9 Bf4 0-0 10 0-0 and now...

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{a) 10...Ne4?! 11 Nxe6 bxc6 12 Be3! Bxe3 13 Qxe3}
\\text{the opening theorist Becker stood well versus Maroczy,}
\\text{(Karlovy Vary, 1929).}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{b) 10...Qe8! (Glek) intending}
\\text{...Nh5 with (hoped for) equality.}
\end{array}
\]

The reader must naturally “size up” this largely forgotten theoretical journey for his own partners. Do your opponents accept this? Will they try to win, overreach as Black, rather than play just to “survive”? “Every game has a story.” R. Fischer, New York 1968.

5 Bd3!

“Only this way can White hope to retain the initiative.” - Pachman.
Perfectly playable, however, is $5 \text{Qxd4}$ (Employed by both Alekhine and Keres) $5...\text{Ne6}$ $6 \text{Qf4} \text{f5}$ $7 \text{Bd3 Nge7}$ $8 0-0 \text{Ng6}$ $9 \text{Qg3 Be7}$ when the game continues.

(Keres-Euwe, Zaandvoort, 1936)

In the game Short - Bareev, Tilburg 1991, there followed

$5...\text{Ne7}$ $6 0-0 \text{Ng6}$ $7 \text{Re1 Ne6}$

$8 \text{a3 Bd7}$ $9 \text{b4 Qc7}$ $10 \text{Qe2 Be7}$ $11 \text{b5 Na5}$ $12 \text{Bg5! Nc4}$ $13 \text{Bxe7 Kxe7}$ $14 \text{g3 Bxb5}$ (diagram)

White has an attack and center control in return for a sound gambit. Grandmaster Short could have continued $15 \text{Nld2}$ intending:

a) $\text{Nb3}$ and $\text{Nbd4}$ with play in the center, as well as
b) $\text{h4-h5}$ with play on the King's wing.
Two years before his death, Tartakower told San Francisco Master, Attorney H. Gross, “The fields of green hold many victims of my variation.” - Paris 1954. Indeed it is a simple way to conduct the opening. Another variation particularly well suited for forced, Grand Prix one hour time limits.

Tartakower’s Idea: Theory provides that 3...c5 allows White attacking possibilities based on the open lines and better pawn structure. 4 exd5 exd5 5 Nf3 and 0-0. Tartakower’s famous trap is 3...Nf6? 4 e5! “You see ...like magic, a better position - Just like that!” - Koltanowski, San Francisco Chronicle (1971).

Passive play is not advisable: 5...Be7?! 6 Nf3 0-0 7 Qe2 followed by, in the words of Yasser Seirawan, “Student Body Right!” White will castle queenside, launching a powerful assault at the Black King (whose address has prematurely been announced).

6 dxc5! Bxc5 7 Nf3 Ne6
8 0-0

White has much more space, and now hopes for 8...0-0 9 Bg5 with the initiative. Black’s Bishop, stranded at c5, does not protect his kingside. In addition, White may advance the three-on-two “pawn majority” on the queen’s wing, with serious problems for the second player.

8...Qc7

It took Mexican Immortal, Grandmaster Carlos Torre to find this “pass”, bailing Black out from immediate difficulties. Tartakower- C. Torre, Moscow 1925. It is however, not over by any means.

9 Nc3 Bd7 10 Bg5 0-0-0 11 Qe2 e5

The only chance -- with a difficult game for both players. Black intends that his active pieces will overcome 12 Ne4 Bg4! (Torre) with razor sharp play.

Position after 11...e5

There is nothing drawish about Tartakower’s idea 3 Bd3. It is a lifetime weapon versus the French Defense.
(3...Nf6 4 e5  (Steinitz))

- See Fourth Game. Black may also employ several totally unrelated defenses which provide good chances for balance in practical play. Most interesting is the “Fort Knox” variation, used in chess lessons by Grandmaster Alexander Chernin, a player who held FIDE World Champion Viswanathan Anand to match draws. Black “freezes” the position. (See line “a”)  

**Third Game**

**3 Nc3 dxe4**

Burn-Rubinstein System, and “Fort Knox” Variation

Black does not permit the advance e4-e5 under any circumstance.

(3...Nf6 4 e5 (Steinitz))

(3...Nf6 4 Bg5 Be7 5 e5! The Tartakower “Classical” System.)

The position also occurs in the Center Counter Game: 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 3 Nc3 Qd8 4 d4 Nf6 5 Nf3Bg4 etc. and was considered playable in The Opening for You by Grandmaster Larry Evans. Anatoly Karpov has employed the system to draw games with little difficulty. White has permanent pressure, but Black holds in practical play.

- See Fourth Game. Black may also employ several totally unrelated defenses which provide good chances for balance in practical play. Most interesting is the “Fort Knox” variation, used in chess lessons by Grandmaster Alexander Chernin, a player who held FIDE World Champion Viswanathan Anand to match draws. Black “freezes” the position. (See line “a”)

4 Nxe4 Nd7

a) 4...Bd7  5 Nf3  Bc6!  6 Bd3  Nd7  7 0-0 ...

(7 Qe2!? - Neil McDonald, Concise Chess Openings)

7...Ng6  8 Nc3 Be7  9 Qe2  0-0  10 Rd1 Bxf3  11 Qxf3 c6  12 b3 Qc7. “Here White’s Bishop pair isn’t very dangerous” - McDonald.

The position also occurs in the Center Counter Game: 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 3 Nc3 Qd8 4 d4 Nf6 5 Nf3Bg4 etc. and was considered playable in The Opening for You by Grandmaster Larry Evans. Anatoly Karpov has employed the system to draw games with little difficulty. White has permanent pressure, but Black holds in practical play.
b) \[4...Qd5\] 5 \[Nc3\] 
5 \[Bb4\] 6 \[Nf3\] \[Nf6\] 7 \[Bd2\] \[Bxc3\] 8 \[bxc3\] ! \[b6\] 
9 \[c4\] \[Qe4\]+ 10 \[Be3\] \[Bb7\] 11 \[h3\] with the advantage. 
(Abramovic - Skembris, Prokulje, 1987) 
White will play \[Bd3\] - Glek.

c) \[4...Be7\] 5 \[Nf3\] \[Nf6\] 6 \[Nxf6\] \[Bxf6\] 7 \[Bd3\] \[Nc6\] 8 \[c3\] \[e5\] 9 \[dxe5\] \[Nxe5\] 10 \[Bxe4\] \[Nf6\] 11 \[0-0\] with a definite plus for White: 
1) \[11...0-0\] \[12 Bxh7+ Kxh7\] \[13 Qh5+\] wins back the Bishop 
2) \[11...Bf6\] \[12 Qa4+!\] 
White attacks (ready to shift to e4 later) 
\[13 Re1+\] to play on the e-line. 
- Glek, Acers.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
5 \text{Nf3} \quad \text{Ngf6} \quad 6 \text{Bd3} \\
\end{array}
\]

On \[6..Nxe4\] 7 \[Bxe4\] \[Nf6\] 8 \[Bg5\] \[Be7\] 9 \[Bxf6\] \[gxf6\] 10 \[Qe2\] \[c6\] \[11 0-0\] \[Qb6\] 12 \[c4\] \[Bd7\] \[13 c5 \+\] 
White can bring his entire army to the queenside, then pawn storm there (Anand - Vaganian, Riga 1995).

Hulak - Skembris, Budva 1981 now continued:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
6...Be7 \quad \text{(Best)} \\
\end{array}
\]

7 \[0-0\] \[Nxe4\] 8 \[Bxe4\] \[0-0\] \[9 Qe2\] \[Nf6\] 10 \[Bd3\] \[b6\] 11 \[Bf4\] \[Bb7\] 
\[12 Rad1 Qc8\] \[13 c4 \+\] 
Better development, more space, control of e5. 
White has superior play. - Glek.
French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 (Fourth Game)

Fourth Game

3 Nc3 Nf6
The “Classical” System
(with offshoot variants on 4 Bg5)

4 Bg5 dxe4
Burn-Rubinstein Deferred

4 Bg5 Bb4
McCutcheon Variation

A. 4 Bd3  B. 4 Bg5

A. 4 Bd3 Henneberger’s Attack

“Still possible”
- Walter Henneberger.
Last interview, New Orleans 1977. The analyst Henneberger proposed (1966) that White develop the King’s Bishop, hoping that Black will waste time or give up the center, allowing e4-e5 at a good moment.
Pachman took it seriously as well.
- at least equal for White.

4...Bb4 5 e5! Ne4? Qg4! ± Acers

4...c5 5 Nf3 Nc6

a) 5...c4? 6 Be2 dxe4 Ne5 ±
b) 5...cxd4 6 Nxd4
1) 6...e5? 7 Nde2 dxe4 8 Bb5+! Bd7 9 Bxd7+ Qxd7 10 Qxd7+ Nbxd7 11 Ng3 Bb4 12 Bd2 Bxc3 13 Bxc3 0-0-0 14 0-0-0 = with a great advantage in the endgame - Analysis Henneberger.

2) 6...Ne6 with 2 choices:
   a) 7 Bb5 Bd7 8 exd5 exd5 9 0-0 Be7 = Em. Lasker-Bogolyubov, Zurich 1934.
   b) 7 Be3 Be7 (7...e5? 8 Nxe6 bxc6 9 exd5+) 8 0-0 0-0 9 Nxc6 bxc6=

6 Be3

a) 6...c4? 7 Be2 dxe4 8 Ne5! Nxe5 9 dxe5 Nd5 Qd4 ±
   b) 6...Ng4 7 Qd2 Nxe3 8 Qxe3 dxe4 9 Bxe4 exd4 10 Bxc6+ bxc6 11 Qxd4 Qxd4 12 Nxd4 Bd7 = Pachman, Henneberger.

Acers “Line b” evaluation: I disagree totally, and consider White far better. Black’s pawns are quite weak.

B. 4 Bg5

1) 4...Bb4 McCutcheon Variation

2) 4...dxe4 The Burn/Rubinstein Variation Deferred

3) 4...Be7 a) Main Classical Defense, b) Michel Attack System.
B1. 4...Bb4 - The McCutcheon Variation.

5 Bd3 (! Henneberger)

"Theory has tended to underestimate this move, but Black has to play precisely if he is to equalize. Many of the recommended lines lead to White's advantage." - Pachman, *Semi-Open Chess.*

The common 5...c5?! (A substantial branching off point in Line B1) is already inferior.

B1 a) 5...c5?! 6 e5! (Euwe) and now:

1) 6...h6 7 Bd2 cxd4 8 Nb5 Bxd2+ 9 Qxd2 ± with an iron grip on d6. *Marshall-Alekhine, St. Petersburg, 1914*

2) Black must find in a hurry 6...cxd4! 7 a3 Be7 8 Nb5 a6! 9 Nxd4 Nfd7 when Black has a playable position (Henneberger).

Deadly traps abound for both players before move ten... it is possible to win or lose with one punch of the clock. After 6...cxd4, White must not try 7 exf6? dxc3! 8 fxg7 exb2+ 9 Kf1 Bc3!! 10 gxh8(Q) Bxh8 11 Rb1 Qxg5 12 Ne2 Nd6 13 c3 Bd7 14 Rxb2 d4! 15 Rxb7 dxc3 16 Be4 Qd2 as in Knishevsky-Fuchs, Berlin 1961.

Losing for BLACK is the plausible 7...gxf6? 8 Bb5+! White has won a Knight after Qxd4 (Henneberger).
12 French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 (Fourth Game)

B1 b) 5...c5?! 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 0-0!? “An interesting, little explored line, originated by Henneberger” - Pachman. Now:

1) 7...cxd4 8 Nb5 dxe4 9 Bxe4 e5 10 Qe2
   1a) 10...0-0 11 Rad1 Bg4 12 c3 ±
       or 11...a6 12 Nc3 ± (Henneberger)
   1b) 10...Be7 11 Rfe1 0-0 12 Bxc6 bxc6 13 Nxe5 ± or
        11...Nxe4 12 Bxe7 Nxc7 13 Qxe4 f6 14 Nxe5!
        fxe5 15 Qxe5 ± (Henneberger)

2) 7...Nx d4 8 e5 h6 9 Bh4 (Not 9 exf6 Nxf3+ 10 Qxf3 hxg5
   11 fxg7 Rg8 - Pachman)
   9...Nxe4 (Not 9...g5? when White uncorks 10 Nxe5
   hxg5 11 Bxg5 demolishes Black’s Kingside.)
   10 Qxf3 g5 11 exf6 gxh4 12 Rad1
   “and White has an attack position” - Pachman.

These potent variations, long forgotten, lead Pachman to play safe for Black. After 5 Bd3 h6 6 Bxf6 Qxf6 7 Nf3 dxe4 8 Bxe4 0-0 9 0-0 Nd7 is “quite playable” - Semi-Open Chess, 1966.

6 Bxe4 Nbd7! (Teichmann)

A suggestion which appears stronger than 6...c5,
where White has 2 choices:

1) 7 Nge2 cxd4 8 Bxf6! Qxf6
   9 Qxd4 Qxd4 10 Nxd4 a6 11 0-0 with a good game for White.
   - Pachman.

2) 7 dxc5 Bxe3+ 8 bxc3 Qa5
   9 Bxf6 gxh6 10 Qd4 e5 ±

Em. Lasker – Tarrasch, World Title Match 1908, when instead 7...Qxd1+ 8 Rxd1 Nbd7 9 Bxf6 Nxf6 10 Bf3 Bxc5= was best.
French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 (Fourth Game) 13

7 Bf3

Other choices:

a) 7 Nge2 c5 8 a3 Bxc3+ 9 bxc3 Qc7 ⊥
Gipslis-Bronstein, Russia 1961

b) 7 Nf3 h6 8 Bxf6 Qxf6 ⊥ Pachman
(Acers: White is at least equal however
"White's Bishop at e4 is a giant.")

c) 7 Qf3 c5! Pachman now gives 8 Bxb7 Bxb7 9 Qxb7 0-0
with excellent compensation for the pawn.

7...0-0 8 Nge2 c5

The game is even - Pachman.

B2. 4...dxe4
The Burn/Rubinstein Deferred

5 Nxe4 Be7 6 Bxf6 Bxf6

Black may choose 6...gxf6, blockading all the way.
For example: 7 Nf3 b6 8 Bd3 Bb7 9 Qe2 Nd7 10 0-0 c6 11 c4
Qc7 12 Rac1 0-0-0 13 c5! bxc5 14 Nxc5 Bxc5 15 dxc5 Ne5 ⊥
7 Nf3 0-0 8 Qd2

White will castle queenside with the better game:
e.g. 8...b6 9 Nxf6+ Qxf6 10 Bd3 Bb7 11 Ng5 g6 12 0-0-0 Rd8 13 h4! Rxd4 14 h5 Qf4 15 Qxf4 Rxf4 16 hxg6 hxg6 17 Bxg6!! with attack. Macieja-Berlinsky, Elista Olympiad 1998.

B3. a) 4...Be7 - The Classical Main Line

After 5 e5 Nfd7 6 Bxe7 Qxe7 we explore two branches:
a1) 7 f4 - Classical
a2) 7 Qg4 - The Michel “Apache” Attack

5 e5 Nfd7

Black has other weapons at the board:

a) 5...Ng8 (Heidenfeld) which is by no means a losing option. White must not free the retreating Knight. 6 Be3! b6 7 h4 h5 8 Be2 g6 9 Nf3 Ba6 10 Qd2 Bxe2 11 Nxe2 c5 12 c4! exd4 13 Nfxd4 dxc4 14 Qe2 Qd5 15 Nf4! Qxe5 16 0-0-0 ± Mikenas - Vistaneckis, Russia 1947.
b) 5...Ne4 6 Bxe7 Now:
b1) 6...Nxc3 7 Bxd8 Nxd1 8 Bxc7 Nxb2 9 Rb1 Ne4 10 Bxc4 dxc4 11 Nf3 Ne6 12 Bd6 ± with a near won ending. Spassky - R. Byrne, Moscow 1975.
b2) 6...Qxe7 7 Nxe4 dx e4 8 Qe2 b6 9 0-0-0 Bb7 10 g3 c5 11 Bg2 Ne6 12 dxe5 0-0 13 Bx e4 Nxe5 14 f4 Bxe4 15 Qxe4 Ng4 16 Qf3 ± Teshkovsky - Lputian, Kropotkin, 1995. White holds his material advantage.
French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 (Fourth Game)

6 Bxe7 Qxe7

B3. a1) 7 f4 0-0

Black avoids the speculative Heidenfeld variation:
7...c5?! 8 Nb5 0-0 9 Nc7 f6!
10 Nf3 Nxe5 11 Nxa8 Nxf3+
12 Qxf3 cxd4 13 0-0-0 ±
- Analysis by Keres.

8 Nf3 c5 9 dxc5!
White will control the d4 square
(heading toward the superior ending)

a) 9...Nc5 10 Bd3 Nxd3+ 11 cxd3 ±
b) 9...Qxc5 10 Bd3! Qe3+ 11 Ne2 Nc6 12 Qd2 Qxd2
13 Kxd2 Nc5 14 Rxe1 Bd7 15 Ned4 Nxd4 16 Nxd4 ±
White controls the board in the coming endgame.

9...Nc6 10 Bd3
Many professional tournaments show White’s spatial edge;
ey easy access to the center confers the advantage.
“Playable only for very tough defenders” is the verdict.
Not 10...Nxc5? here, 11 Bxh7+ with a winning attack.

10...f6 11 exf6
16 French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 (Fourth Game)

With two plausible recaptures:
(the Knight heads to take the pawn on c5):

\[
\text{a) 11...Rxf6 12 Qd2 Nxc5 13 0-0 Nxd3 14 cxd3:}
\]

\[
\text{a1) 14...Qc7 15 Ne2 Bd7 18 Qe3 Raf8 19 Qc5 ± Bronstein -Yanofsky, Saltjubaden 1948.}
\]

Nine years later, Yanofsky returned with an improvement, on foreign soil. Alas:

\[
\text{92) 14...Bd7 15 Rac1 Qb4 16 g3 Be8 17 a3 Qb6 18 Kg2 Nd4 19 Re5 ± Gligoric-Yanofsky, Dallas 1957.}
\]

\[
\text{b) 11...Qxf6 12 g3 Nxc5 13 0-0 Bd7 14 Bb5 Nb4 15 Qd4! Qxd4 16 Nxd4 Bxb5 17 Nxb5 a6 18 c3 Nbd3 19 Nc7 Rac8 20 Nxe6 Nxe6 21 Nxe6 Rf6 22 f5 Nxb2 23 Rab1 ± Fernandez Garcia - Vera, Parma 1988.}
\]

B3. a2) 7 Qg4 - The Michel “Apache” Attack

Wonderfully played by an unknown master during the period 1935-1941, the Michel “Apache” Attack defeated GMs Gideon Stahlberg, Carlos Guimard and many others. Ossip Bernstein first used it to draw with Em. Lasker at Zurich, 1934.

“It packs a lethal punch.” - Acers.

Even Grandmaster Aleksandar Matanovic, the Belgrade chess giant - “Mr. Informator” - a solid Grandmaster once swallowed hard and made this early, yet quite sound Queen sally for direct attack, one half-century ago... long before 80+ Volumes of Chess Informator and Encyclopedia of Chess Openings (ECO), when opening analyses often were but several lines in a notepad...
French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 (Fourth Game)

7...0-0

Already Black makes an error, should he make the much weaker, very common response:

7...f5? 8 exf6 Nxf6 9 Qh4 c5
10 dxc5 Nbd7 11 0-0-0 Nxc5
12 Nf3 Bd7 13 Ne5! ± (Michel - Stahlberg, Buenos Aires 1941)

with total board control - threatening to win immediately with 14 Ng6. Not believing his eyes - “Well, that won’t happen to me...” the Argentine GM Guimard “saw what happened”. Soon after, he ventured the same path, but closed the position with 9...Nc6

10 0-0-0 Bd7 11 Nf3 0-0-0 12 Bb5! ± again with powerful control of the weak e5 square, coming attack on the open “e” file in prospect. (Michel - Guimard, Buenos Aires 1941)

“You see, chess is such an easy board game”

8 Nf3 c5 9 Bd3

Proceeding forthwith:
(diagram)
- White threatens 10 Bxh7+ Kxh7
11 Qh5+ Kg8 12 Ng5 Rd8(?) 13 Qh7+ Kf8 14 Qh8 mate - Michel
(the “corner pocket” sac)

9...f5
A fierce struggle occurred years later after the "I-live-with-danger" idea of Hans Ludwig Adolf Friedrich Rellstab put Michel's concept to the test:

9...cxd4!? 10 Bxh7+ Kxh7 11 Ng5+ Qxg5 12 Qxg5 dxc3 (a third piece falls in exchange for the Queen) 13 bxc3 Ne6 14 f4 Rh8 15 0-0 Nc5 16 Rf3 Kg8 17 Rd1 Ne4 18 Qg4 b5. Michel - Rellstab, Bad Elster, 1937. - Emanuel Lasker Games 1904-1940.

"Unclear" - Alexander Khalifman.

10 exf6 Rxf6

10...Nxf6 11 Qh4 Ne6 (Muir - Yaqub, Manila 1992) is better - (Khalifman). Then Mr. Michel played long ago

12 dxe5 Qxe5 13 0-0-0

a) 13...Rb8? 14 Rhe1 Nb4 15 Ng5 ± with a powerful position for attack (Michel-Koch, Aaschem 1934).

b) 13...Qb4?! considered = by Pachman (Pilnik-Guimard, Buenos Aires 1941)

(14 Qxb4 Nxb4 15 Rhe1 ± with a slight edge in the endgame - Acers).

c) 13...Bd7 (Yaqub) may be answered by 14 Rhe1 or 14 Bb5 with interesting play. - Acers.

GM Lasker wanted none of this long ago...

11 Qh4! Nf8 12 dxc5 Qxc5 13 0-0 Ne6 14 Rae1 Bd7 15 Ne5 Nxe5 16 Rxe5 Qb6 17 Re3! Be8!

a) 17...d4? 18 Rg3

b) 17...Qxb2 18 Rb1 Qa3 19 Nxd5! with the idea 20 Bxh7 +- (Vladimir Zak)

18 Rg3 Bg6 with equality.
French Defense. 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 (Fifth Game)

White must answer the threat of 4...dxe4 destroying his center. The loss of time with 4 e5 (favored by Fischer) as a safe way of playing for advantage without undue risk has had many setbacks, with unreliable, mixed results. See Supplemental Game #1 Fischer-Larsen. This led even Fischer, at the peak of his powers, to flatly abandon it on several important occasions. White has many other center moves, ready to present problems to the second player.

### A. 4 Qg4

White attacks the undefended g7 pawn. Black must counter aggressively to equalize. 4...Nf6 5 Qxg7 Rg8 6 Qh6 c5 7 e5 cxd4 8 a3! Bf8 9 Qxf6 Qxf6 10 exf6 dxc3 11 Ne2 Nd7 12 Nxc3 Bd6!=


### B. 4 Qd3

4...dxe4 5 Qxe4 Nf6 6 Qh4

a) 6...Ne6 7 Nf3 Nd5 8 Bg5! Nce7 9 Bd2 Nf5 10 Qxd8+ Kxd8 11 a3 White has a more comfortable endgame. Chiburdanidze - Farago, Banjalvra 1985.

b) 6...c5 7 dxc5 Bxc3+ 8 bxc3 Qa5 9 Qb4 Qc7 9 Nf3 Nc6 10 Bb5 e5 11Bg5=.

Chiburdanidze - Bareev, Russia 1985 (ECO).
C. 4 Bd2 (Alekhine)

The “Fingerslip” Variation played by Alekhine.

4...dxe4 5 Qg4 Qxd4 6 Nf3! (diagram)

a) 6...h5 7 Qxe6+ 

b) 6...f5 7 Qh5+ g6 8 Nxd4 gxh5

9 Nxe4 Bxd2+ 10 Nxd2 ± 

(Thorhallson-Arkhipov, Gausdal 1991)

c) 6...Nh6 7 Qf4! e5! 8 Qxe5+

Qxe5 9 Nxe5 Ng4 10 Nxd4

Bxd4 11 Nxe4 Bxd2+

12 Nxd2 0-0= K. Wenger -

J. Becker, Mailgame 1991

(ECO), or 7 Qxe6+ is equal.

D. 4 Bd3

4...dxe4 5 Bxe4 Nf6 6 Bf3 0-0 7 Nge2 e5 8 0-0 Bxc3

9 Nxc3! exd4 10 Nb5 c5 11 Bf4 Ne8 12 Re1 Nc6 13 c3 a6

14 Na3 Ne7 15 Bxc6 bxc6 16 Bxc7 Qxc7 17 cxd4 cxd4

18 Qxd4 Be6= Sariego - Pecorelli, Cienfuegos 1996.

5...c5 (Uhlmann) is also satisfactory.

E. 4 a3

4...Bxc3+ 5 bxc3 dxe4 6 Qg4 Nf6 7 Qxg7 Rg8 8 Qh6 Nb7.

Theory now finds there are double edged chances

for both players:

a) 9 Nh3 b6 10 Ng5 Rg6 11 Qh4 Bb7 12 Nhxh7 Nh7

13 Qxh7 Qf6 14 Qh5 0-0-0 (ECO)

b) 9 Ne2 b6 10 Bg5 Qe7 11 Nf4!

French Defense, 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 (Fifth Game)

F. 4 Nge2 - The Emanuel Lasker Variation.

This underrated center holding variation was used by Dr. Lasker to defeat Jose Raul Capablanca, Moscow 1935. “Alekhine chopped wood with it.” - Acers.

4...dxe4 5 a3 Be7 is considered safest.

5...Bxc3 6 Nxc3 f5 7 f3! ± Alekhine - Nimzovich, Bled 1931.

Instead, on 6...Nc6, Pachman found 7 Bb5 Nge7 8 Bg5! f6 9 Be3 0-0 10 Qd2 f5 11 f3! Nd5 12 Bxc6 Nxc3 13 Qxc3 bxc6 14 Bf4! Qd5 15 0-0-0! ± Pachman - Bondarevsky, Moscow 1947.

6 Nxe4 Nf6 7 Nc3 Nbd7?!

Counterplay with 7...Nc6 8 Be3 0-0 has been suggested as much better, or 8...Nxe4 9 Nxe4 e5! - Pachman.

8 Bf4! Nxe4 9 Nxe4 Nf6 10 Bd3 0-0 11 Nxf6+ Bxf6

With only simple piece moves in the center, White already has a great positional bind. Em. Lasker - Capablanca, Moscow 1935.
The mainstay of world class players with long careers (Karpov - 160 plus tournament first prizes and counting, Botvinnik - 3 times World Champion), The Caro-Kann Defense was also a favorite of Cuban wizard Capablanca, who often arrived at the board 59 minutes late, played the blitz defense as a stay-out-of-trouble theme opening... his strength “growing like topsy” as the late middlegame, simple endings approached.

1 e4 c6

First Game  2 d4 d5 3 e5
The “Advance” Closed Variation

Second Game  2 Nf3 d5 3 Nc3
The “Modern” Two Knights Attack

A blockading attack recommended by Nimzovich (1886-1935). He discussed all aspects of the opening in his treatises My System (20th Century Edition), and Chess Praxis. The loss of time with the second move of the pawn was just too much for world-leading players like Fischer and Larsen who carefully avoided it throughout their decades of practice. Present day top players are not so choosy - even Kasparov employing it as a surprise weapon.

3...Bf5
Perfectly playable is the sudden undermining of White’s center 3...c5 4 dxc5 e6:

a) 5 Bf4 Bxc5
   a1) 6 Bd3 Ne6 7 Ng3 f6!
        (Shirov-Kramnik, Wijk Aan Zee, 2001) 8 0-0 =
   a2) 6 Qg4 Nf7! 7 Qxg7? Rg8 8 Qxh7 Qb6 with a powerful counterattack. 7 Nd2 was better. - Kramnik (Informator)

b) 5 Be3
   b1) 5...Nh6 6 c3 Nf5 7 Bd4 Bd7 8 Nf3 Nc6 9 a3 a5
        10 Be2 a4 11 0-0 Be7 12 Bd3 Nfxd4 13 cxd4 b6 with active counterplay (Kovchan - Belikov, Alushta 2001)
   b2) 5...Nd7! 6 Bb5 Qc7 7 Ngf3 Bxc5 8 Bxc5 Qxc5 9 Nc3 Ne7 10 0-0 a6 11 Bd3 h6 12 Re1 Nc6 13 Qd2 g5
        with a lively discussion in progress
        (Kindemann - Korchnoi, Ptuj 1995)

c) 5 Nf3 Bxc5 6 Bd3
   c1) 6...Ne7 7 0-0 Ng6 (7...0-0? allows the famous “corner pocket sacrifice” 8 Bxh7+ Kxh7 9 Ng5+ with a winning attack) 8 a3 Ne6 9 b4 Bb6 10 Re1?! a5!
        (Mitkov-Zvjaginsev, Poikovsky 2001)
        intending 11 b5? Nexe5! 12 Nxe5 Nxe5 13 Rxe5 Bd4! with decisive gains.
   c2) 6...Ne6 7 Qe2 Nge7 8 c3 Ng6 9 b4 Be7! 10 b5 Na5
        11 h4 Nh8 12 Bf4 a6! 13 Nd4 axb5
        (Smirnov - Zvjaginsev, Ohrid 2001) 14 Bxb5+ Bd7= or
        14 Nd2 b4 15 cxb4 Bxb4 16 Rb1 with compensation for the pawn through open lines and towering center pieces.
        - Zvjaginsev (Informator)
d) 5 Qg4 Nd7 6 Nf3 Ne7 7 Bg5 h6 8 Bxe7 Qxe7
   d1) 9 Bd4? a5 10 c3 axb4 11 cxb4 b6 12 c6 Qxb4+ 13 Qxb4 Bxb4+ 14 Nbd2 Ne5 with Black on top. (Khalifman)
   d2) 9 Ne3 Qxc5 10 0-0-0 a6 11 Kb1 Nb6 12 Nd4 Bd7 13 h4 0-0-0 14 Rh3 Kb8 15 f4 Rc8 16 h5 Rg8= Tal-Botvinnik (6) 1961 World Title Match.

4 Bd3 Bxd3

Not 4...Bg6? 5 e6! (deadly!)

a) Short and snappy was 5...fxe6 6 Bxg6+ hxg6 7 Qd3 Kf7 8 Nf3 1-0. Koltanowski-Allies, 40 board exhibition, Ghirardelli Square, San Francisco 1968. “The variation has provided me a living.” - Koltanowski

b) 5...Bxd3 6 exf7+ with a win in prospect.

c) 5...Qd6 6 exf7+ Bxf7 7 Nf3 Nd7 8 0-0 with an invasion coming on the “e”-file. Richter - Engels, Wiesbaden 1924.

Suspect (but clever) is David Bronstein’s 4...e6?! 5 Bxf5 exf5 6 Ne2 Na6 7 0-0 Ne7 8 b3! Ne7 9 Ba3 Vassiltschuk - Bronstein, Moscow 1961. (Black still has “squirming chances” here, there is still a game to play. e.g. 9...Qd7 and 10...0-0-0 - Acers)

5 Qxd3 e6

Mandatory. A very serious error frequently played here is 5...Qb6? or 5...Qa5+ 6 Nc3 Qa6? Both permit (once more) e6! with a powerful surprise - the center positional sacrifice for White.

E.g. (after 6...Qa6) 7 e6 Qxd3 8 exf7+ Kxf7 9 cxd3 e6 10 f4 ± (Ufimtsev - Ravkin, Russia 1961) “The ties that bind.” - Acers.
6 Nc3 Qb6* 7 Nge2 c5

It is now considered dangerous to allow White’s pieces to occupy the center, according to an original analysis by Nimzovich. Safer is 7...Qa6! 8 Nf4 Qxd3 9 Nxd3 Nd7 10 Be3 Ne7 11 f4 Nf5 12 Bf2 h5 13 Ke2 b6 14 b4 a5 15 a3 with parity. (Boleslavsky; Suetin 1983).

Ed. - However, the nasty 8 Qh3 c5? 9 Nxd5! trap has snared many: *(Note also that 6...Qa5 7 Nge2 Qa6 8 Qh3 simply transposes.)

Now 9...Qa5+ allows 10 Qc3 Qxc3+ 11 Ndxc3, while 9...exd5 10 Qc8+ Ke7 11 Qxc5+ Ke8 12 Qc8+ Ke7 13 Bd2 ends it. Or 8...Nd7 9 0-0 c5 10 Be3 Ne7 11 dxc5! Ne6 (11...Nxe5 12 b4 +) 12 a3 Ncxe5 13 b4, White dominates. Sax-Arlandi, Baden 1999. Best is 9...Ne7.

8 dxc5 Bxc5 9 0-0 Ne7 10 Na4

Potent here is a (formerly dismissed) gambit 10 b4!? Qxb4 11 Nb5! Na6 12 Ba3 Qa5 13 Bxc5 Nxc5 14 Nd6+: a) 14...Kf8? 15 Qf3 with a mushrooming attack b) 14...Kd7 15 Qg3 Rhg8 16 c4! with a direct assault along the central files - Khalifman, 1997, improving on Alekhine’s 16 Nxf7? Nf5!

10...Qc6 11 Nxe5 Qxe5 12 Be3 Qc7 13 f4 Nf5

J. R. Capablanca

New York, 1927.
6-player GM tournament
White should now continue:
14 Bf2 h5 15 Rac1 Nc6 16 c4! (Alekhine)
The Black position is under siege.
- White is better.

A. Nimzovich
Black has three main responses
A. 3...Bg4  B. 3...Nf6  C. 3...dxe4

A. 3...Bg4

The most severe test. Black does not permit White’s Knight to go to the center first, making possible removal of the pin with no concessions. 3...dxe4 4 Nxe4 Bg4 5 h3 Bh5 6 Ng3! with the better game for White - Variation “C”

4 d4

Offering a gambit - White avoids the “automatic development machine” which forces a well prepared Black defender to make good moves after 4 h3 Bh5! 5 g4 Bg6 6 exd5 cxd5 7 Bh5+ Nc6 8 g4 Bg6 9 Ne5 Re8 10 d4 e6 11 h4 f6! 12 Nxe6 hxg6 13 Qd3 Kf7 with a defensible position Ljubojevic-Salov, Linares 1991.

(Ed. - 5 d4 will likely transpose into the main line with 5...e6).
Quite playable also is 4 Be2 (Dr. Minev) e6 5 0-0 Nf6 6 h3 dxe4 7 h×g4 exf3 8 B×f3 B×d6 9 d4 Nbd7 10 g5 Nd5 11 Ne4 Bc7 12 g3 - Acers; White has slightly better prospects...

Prudent. Tigran Petrosian in a 1955 game with Boris Spassky, refused to accept the gambit after 4...d×e4 5 N×e4 e6 6 Bd3 Nf6 with equal chances... or 5...B×f3 6 Q×f3 Q×d4 7 Bd3 a lead in development backed up by Grandmaster Spassky's lethal active play, Land of Oz imagination, the Bishop pair - a mechanical attack by Be3 and 0-0 would have offered serious compensation, both players likely to be "home before the dinner hour".

5 h3 Bh5 6 Be2 Nf6 7 exd5 Bxf3 8 B×f3

White has a small advantage:

\[
\text{8...N\text{xd}5 9 Ne4;} \\
\text{8...e\text{xd}5 9 0-0 Be7 10 Re1 0-0 11 Bg5 Nbd7 12 Qd3 with greater board room, and a lead in development (Acers).}
\]
28 Caro-Kann Defense, 1 e4 c6 2 Nf3 d5 3 Nc3 (Second Game)

B. 3...Nf6 4 e5 Ne4

Black plays for an equal share of the center. Again, a perilous trap for Black is 4...Nfd7 5 e6! fxe6 6 d4 e5 7 dxe5 e6 8 Bf4 ("overprotecting" the center) Be7 9 Ng5! Bxg5 10 Qh5 + regaining the piece while commanding the board. (Boleslavsky).

5 Ne2!

Black now will lose time and space protecting his Knight at e4.
The idea is 6 d3 Nc5 7 b4 and a strong center for the first player.

5...Qb6

Only the threat of checkmate protects the Knight at e4.

6 d4 c5

Black must act - alternatives would allow Nf4, c3, Bd3, Qe2 - undermining the stranded Knight - later.

7 dxc5! Nxc5

If 7...Qxc5 8 Ned4 Nc6 9 Bb5! Bd7 10 0-0 Nxe5 11 Nxe5 Bxb5 12 Nxb5 Qxb5 13 Re1+
(threat: 14 c4)
Nezhmetdinov-Kamyshov, Russia 1950.

- Again undermines the hapless Knight. Black now offers a gambit pawn.
8 Nf4 e6 9 Be2 Be7

10 0-0 0-0 11 c4! dxc4 12 Bxc4 Nc6 13 Qe2
(Analysis by Bagirov). White stands very well with completed development coming... 14 Be3 and 15 Rab1 menacing b4 is one idea to further grip the Black squares. Far more important - White’s edge is easy to handle in practical play.

C. 3...dxe4 4 Nxe4 Bg4

Players all over the world must decide here - 4...Nf6 is perfectly good in theory. Practice might be:

a) 5 Nxf6
   a1) 5...exf6 6 Bc4 Be6! 7 Qe2 Qd6! 8 0-0 Be7 9 Re1 Bxc4 10 Qxc4 0-0 (Acers), or
   a2) 5...gxf6 6 Bc4 Rg8 7 0-0 Bg4 8 Kh1 e6 9 h3 Bh5 10 Qe2 Qd6 with equal chances in a good struggle. Tatai-Dueckstein, Zurich 1975.

b) 5 Ng3 (“passing”) White intends 6 Bc4, 6 b3 (a queenside fianchetto), or simply 6 d4 awaiting the opponent’s defense before placing both Bishops in play. Acers favors the latter. “Never force your opponent’s play unnecessarily - give choices whenever possible.”

Other alternates to 4...Bg4 include:

a) 4...Bf5 5 Ng3 Bg4 6 Be4 e6 7 h3 Bxf3 8 Qxf3 Nd7 9 Qe2 Ng6 10 0-0 Be7 11 c3! White is freer, packed, ready to travel. Tompa-Petkevich, Lodz 1979.
b) 4...Nd7 5 Bc4 Ngf6 6 Neg5! e6 7 Qe2, where:
   b1) 7...h6? 8 Nxf7! wins (weak e6)
   b2) 7...Nb6? 8 Ne5! wins (weak f7)
   b3) 7...Nd5 8 d4 h6 9 Ne4 Be7 10 0-0 +
White is still better, Black lacks room. (Analysis by Teshkovsky)

5 h3

Smyslov employed the quite good 5 Bc4 e6 6 c3 Nd7 7 d4 Ngf6
8 Ng3 Qc7 9 h3 Bxf3 10 Qxf3 Bd6=
Smyslov-Makaganov, Russia 1939.

5...Bh5

White gets considerable chances to control play after 5...Bxf3
e.g. 6 Qxf3 Nd7:

Little known, little used, but very strong for White is 9 c3 Bd6
10 d4 0-0 11 Bg5 Nbd7 12 0-0 Qa5 13 h4! +
with a simple advantage, serious long term pressure for White.
Boleslavsky-Panov, Russia 1943.
9...Nbd7 10 Re1 Qc7 11 d4 0-0-0

12 a4! c5 13 a5 a6 ± A. Zaitsev-D. Bronstein, Moscow 1968.

With no more than direct common sense development of his pieces, White has maintained the initiative.

Bagirov now suggests 14 Bf4! Bd6 15 Bxd6 Qxd6 16 dxc5 (Opening the highway to the Black King) Qxc5 17 Bfl! with a coming pawn storm on the Queen’s wing - 18 b4! is threatened immediately.
~ Pirc-Ufimtsev Defense ~

1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 g6

First Game 4 f4 Bg7 5 e5
Second Game 4 Bg5
Third Game 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 Be2
Fourth Game 4 f3

White seeks an immediate spacial advantage in the endgame according to world class player Grandmaster David Bronstein - the original plan.

Black’s prospects have brightened considerably since 1966: “After the energetic continuation 4 f4, it is doubtful Black can equalize” - Pachman.

In a truly “memorable game” Fischer (White) played 4 f4 Bg7 5 Nf3. First, there followed:

a) 5...0-0 6 Bd3 Bg4?! 7 h3 Bxf3 8 Qxf3 Nc6 9 Be3 Fischer-Benko, US Championship 1963. Supplemental Game #2

Next came the immediate counterplay by Fischer, playing Black vs. Spassky.

b) 5...e5 postponing castling to destroy White’s direct attack:
b1) 6 \textit{dxc5} Qa5 7 Bd3 Qxc5 8 Qe2 0-0 9 Be3 Qa5 10 0-0 Bg4
- Supplemental Game #3, Spassky-Fischer (17), Reykjavik 1972.

Sixteen years later the Black counterplay emerged as if from Aladdin’s lamp, Seattle’s Yasser Seirawan shook the Chess World with Black’s main defense:

b2) 6 Bb5+ Bd7 7 e5 Ng4 8 e6 fxe6! 9 Ng5 (given as a forced win by the chess handbooks) Bxb5 10 Nxe6 (diagram):

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

10...Bxd4!!

b2a) 11 Nxd8 whereupon Seirawan forced a draw by perpetual check 11...Bf2+
12 Kd2 Be3+ 13 Ke1 Bf2+

Black deftly parries other attacks nicely...

b2b) 11 Nxb5 Qa5+ 12 c3 Bf2+ 13 Kd2 Be3+ 14 Ke2 Qa4+
15 Kb1 Qe4+ with most satisfactory play for Black in the Encyclopedic analysis by Lev Alburt and Alexander Chernin \textit{The Pirc Alert}. Indeed, even 15...Qxd1 16 Rxd1 Bxc1 held a draw in the ending (Werner - Belikov, Cappelle Grande 2001).

5...dxe5

Almost always played. Many players overlook the dangerous spatial edge White maintains. 5...Nfd7 keeps the position tense after 6 Nf3 0-0 or 6...c5 7 exd6 (Acers) or 7 dxc5 dxe5 when Black must be prepared for a difficult struggle. (Alburt, Chernin)
There is, finally, the pawn sacrifice to destroy Black’s easy development (5 e5 Nfd7) 6 Nf3 c5 7 e6 fxe6 8 Ng5 Nf6 9 dxc5 Nc6 10 cxd6 exd6 (Nunn); or Black’s counter sacrifice 7 exd6 0-0 when White accepts the gambit with 8 dxe7 or decline - 8 Be3 exd6 9 Qd2 Nc6 10 0-0-0 Qa5 11 Kb1 Nf6 with equal prospects. (Rakic-Petronic, Yugoslavia 1993).

6 dxe5 Qxd1 7 Kxd1 Ng4
“The ending is definitely in White’s favor, but it is hard to win.”
- Bernard “Zuk the Book” Zuckerman.

Several successful endgame paths have been demonstrated:

A. 8 Ke1
B. 8 Nd5!

Indeed this is a lifetime competitive weapon, ideal for forced time controls.

The small edge can be ominous on both the clock and the board. White’s ideas are:
After 8 Ke1 (Line A), to play 9 h3 Nh6 10 g4 ± or
After 8 Nd5 (Line B), to play 9 Nxc7 with crushing endgame play, following the slightest error. White stands better.

A. 8 Ke1

presenting simple problems - White takes over.
1) 8...f6 9 h3 Nh6 10 Nd5
2) 8...Nc6 9 h3 Nh6 10 Nd5 ± Lukin - Tseitlin, Russia 1972.
3) 8...h5 9 Nd5 Kd8 10 Nf3 c6 11 Ne3 f6 12 h3 Nh6 13 Bd3 Nf5 14 Nxf5 gxf5 15 e6! + Poljak - Bondarevsky, Russia 1944.
4) 8...c6 (Played in desperation to prevent the direct invasion at d5)
   9 h3 Nh6 10 g4 f6 11 exf6 exf6 12 Bc4 f5 13 g5 Nf7 14 Nf3 Nd6 15 Bb3 Kd7 16 h4! Kc7 17 h5 “with an edge for White” - Nunn The Pirc Defense.
5) 8...0-0? 9 Nd5 wins a pawn.


B. 8 Nd5!

The second blow. World Championship contender Nigel Short (England) once found this spirited attack difficult to handle as Black, versus Czech theory wizard, Grandmaster Vlastimil Hort, Amsterdam 1982 8...Kd8 9 Ke1 c6 10 Nc3 f6 11 h3 Nh6 12 Nf3 Nf7 13 Bc4 Rf8 14 Rf1 Kc7 15 Rf2 Na6 16 Be3 (diagram)

with an advantage in space and development. White is more comfortable. - Supplemental Game #4.
Second Game

4 Bg5

“Real tiger of the Pirc - the system with Bg5 is a serious enemy of the Pirc”. Alburt/Chernin.

Employed by a young Fischer.

“Certainly the most aggressive continuation.” - John Grefe (Former U.S. Champion).

Indeed, with mechanical development Black quickly falls into difficulties.

Another “Bishop’s Attack”, though rarely employed, is:

\[4 \text{ Bc4 Bg7 5 Qe2! c6?} 6 \text{ e5 dxe5} 7 \text{ dxe5 Nd5} 8 \text{ Bd2! Be6 9 0-0-0 Nd7 10 f4 N7b6 11 Bb3 a5 12 a3 Qe8 13 Nf3} \]


White operates with the idea of 14 Ne4 (with the eviction notice c2-c4 later, and 14 h3-g4-Ng5 etc. as well). Alburt/Chernin confirm this in The Pirc Alert - the manoeuvre 13...Nxc3 14 Bxc3 Bxb3 15 cxb3 Qg4 16 g3 0-0 is answered by the clever 17 Rdg1! with a serious assault of the Black King in mind - h3-g4 later.

4...Bg7 5 Qd2 h6

Weakening, this may be necessary for Black. Far too slow and very dangerous is the commonly played waiting plan of ...0-0 and ...c6:

a) 5...0-0 6 0-0-0 (winding up!) c6 7 f3 b5 8 g4 b4 9 Nce2 Qa5 10 Kb1 Be6 11 Nc1 Nbd7 12 h4 \( \pm \) with unhidden intentions.

b) 5...Nbd7 6 0-0-0 (Parma) also with the idea of “visiting” the enemy monarch immediately.
The position is remarkably difficult for Black already and a 15-year-old Fischer already knew it. Passive play loses. He was prepared for 6...c6 7 0-0-0 (winding up!) b5 8 e5! b4 9 exf6 bxc3 10 Qxc3 Bxf6 11 Nf3 c5 12 Be5!! ±

Continuing the pursuit of the Bishop, begun on move 5. “Having said A...” but it is now established that the pair of Bishops is not worth, in practice, the loss of time and weak kingside pawns.

Of equal merit:

a) 8...Nd7 9 Be4 Nxd5 10 hxg3 Nb6 11 Bb3 with a serious attack. Hardicsay-Grunwald, Hungary 1981.

b) 8...Nc6 9 Bb5 Bd7 10 Nge2 Nxe4 11 h4 g5 12 Bxg5 Bxg5 13 f4! e6 14 d5 Bd7 15 dxe6 fxe6 16 e5! ± Smyslov-Kuzmin, Russia 1951. One-half century later, Pirc specialists Alburt/Chernin favor 10...e6 with blockade.
Many years later Fischer confirmed moves were “transposed” here - Grandmaster Edmar Mednis played 9...b5 which permitted the win of a pawn with 10 Nxb5! (10...cxb5 11 Bd5) that Fischer overlooked. It was pointed out by Mednis after. “It’s things like this you remember best.” - Fischer.

10 Bb3 b5 11 Kb1 Nd7 12 f4

+ with a very powerful attack. - Supplemental Game #5, US Championship 1957.
Third Game

4 Nf3 The Browne-Spassky Classical “Modern” System.

“White is slightly better” - L. Portisch.

4...Bg7 5 Be2 0-0 6 0-0 Bg4 7 Be3 Nc6 8 Qd2 e5

The “key” position of the Modern-Classical attack of the Pirc-Ufimtsev Defense.

White has two well traveled roads:

A. 9 dxe5 = B. 9 d5 ±

American Grandmaster Patrick Wolff displayed the iron defense for Black after:

A. 9 dxe5 dxe5

10 Rad1 Qc8 11 Qc1 Rd8 12 Rxd8+ “Indeed, many tournament games end in a draw in this variation. The most reliable way for Black is capturing with the Knight” - Alburt/Chernin The Pirc Alert.

12...Nxd8 13 Rd1 (or 13 Nxe5=) Ne6 14 h3 Bxf3 15 Bxf3 e6 16 Ne2 Qc7 17 c3 a5 18 Qc2 Bf8= Kaidanov-Wolff, US 1990.

B. 9 d5 Ne7 10 Rad1 Bd7
Here is the latest try. Considered poor is 10...Ne8 11 Ne1! Be2 12 Qe2 f5 13 f4 exf4 14 Bxf4 h6 15 Bc1 Nf6 16 Nd3 Nh5 17 e5! dxe5 18 Nxe5 Kh7 19 Rfe1 Nc8 20 g4! ± E. Geller - Savon, Russia 1975.

11 Ne1 b5 12 Nd3 Qb8 13 f3 a5!?

(A theoretical prescription. 13...b4 14 Nb1 a5 is necessary here - Acers)

14 b4!

± A novelty found at the board by San Francisco International Master John Donaldson (Linsberg, Kansas 2001). “Freezes” Black’s entire Queen’s wing and led to:

14...c6 15 dxc6 Bxc6 16 bxa5

With the following variations:
1) 16...Rxa5 17 Nb4 Rd8 18 Bg5 “gives a white grip on d5” - Donaldson, Chess Life April 2002.
2) 16...b4 17 Nb1 d5 Donaldson - Ryan Porter, Kansas 2001 (18 Qxb4! dxe4 19 fxe4 Qxb4 20 Nxb4 Bxe4 21 Bc5 Rfe8 22 Bb5 - Donaldson) “Here 22...Reb8 23 a4 is a cold-stone win” - Acers.
Fourth Game

4 f3 Kasparov
“Vacation” System.

(By Transposition)
This became known all over the globe - Employed in the Kasparov
Immortal Game versus Bulgaria’s top player, GM Veselin Topalov,
Wijk Aan Zee 1999.

4...Bg7 5 Be3 c6 6 Qd2 b5

Black understandably avoids giving the highest rated player in
world chess history the King’s address by 6...0-0. Hemmed in, with
a loss of time (4 f3) White has no advantage. Kasparov obeyed
Capablanca’s maxim: Pieces that have no function should be
exchanged off the chess table.

7 Bh6 Bxh6 8 Qxh6 Nbd7

Now: a) 9 Bd3 e5 10 dxe5 dxe5
11 0-0-0 Qe7 12 Nge2 a6 13
Kb1 Bb7 14 Nc1 Nc5 15 Nb3
Nxb3 16 axb3 0-0-0=
Kupreichik-Razuvaev,
Russia 1962.

b) 9 Nge2 Bb7 10 a3 e5 11 0-0-0
Qe7 12 Kb1 a6 13 Nc1 0-0-0 14
Nb3 exd4! 15 Rxd4 e5 16 Rd1
Nb6= Kasparov-Topalov see

Supplemental Game #6 for the notable conclusion.
The "Fianchetto" and Flank Defenses permit White a dangerous, unhindered hand in the center while presenting new, often slippery complications for both players with the clock-a-ticking. Provided with rapid development and more space, White takes the advantage. Notable here is Anthony J. Miles (1955-2001) - the first official British Grandmaster. His use of the Queen’s Fianchetto Defense highlighted new resources at the board - defeating even the World Champion of the day, Anatoly Karpov with 1...a6 “The St. George Attack”.

A. King’s Fianchetto (Robatsch Defense) 1 e4 g6  
B. Queen’s Fianchetto (Owen’s Defense) 1 e4 b6  
C. Hypermodern Flank (St. George Attack) 1 e4 a6

**A. 1 e4 g6 2 d4 Bg7**

A1) 3 e5!? First Game  
A2) 3 c3  Second Game

**A1. 3 e5**

An all-purpose move versus Flank Fianchetto openings - played with mixed results by Steinitz.

3...d6 4 exd6 cxd6 5 Nf3 Nh6 6 Bc4 d5 7 Bb5+ Bd7

Naturally not 7...Nc6 8 Ne5 Bxe5? 9 Bxh6.

8 Bxd7+ Nxd7 9 0-0 0-0 10 Re1 Nf5 11 c3 e6 12 Bf4 Qb6 13 Qb3 Rfc8 14 Qxb6 Nxb6 15 Na3 Bf8 - the game is equal.

Sharper variations are:

a) 3...d5 4 Nd2 dxe4 5 Nxe4 Qd5?! 5 Bd3 Ne6 6 Ne2 e5 7 0-0 f5 8 Nd2 Qf7 9 Be4 Be6 10 Qb3 ±
Torre-Barlov, Zagreb 1987, or

4 exd5 Qxd5 5 Be2! (Nunn) with a good attack
Supplemental Game #7.

b) 3...c5 (dangerous, but probably playable)
b1) 4 dxc5 Qc7 5 Be3 Na6:
b1a) 6 Bd4 Nf6 7 f3 Rb8
Stein-Lein, Russia 1960.
b1b) 6 Nd2 Nf6 7 f3 Bb7 8 Ne2 ± (Nunn)
b2) 4 Nf3 cxd4 (4...Qa5 5 Nbd2 cxd4 6 Nb3 holds the two pawn center.) 5 cxd4 d5 6 exd5 Nf6 7 Bb5+ ±

With the formidable center, White has a dangerous initiative which even world class players found difficult to meet for many years. Attempts include 4...Nd7 waiting, 4...e5?! piercing the center at all costs, 4...c5? undermining the center pawns immediately, and 4...c6. In turn:

4...Nd7 5 Nf3 e5 6 Bc4 Qe7 7 0-0 Ngf6 8 fxe5 dxe5 9 b3 0-0
10 Ba3 c5 Huebner-Suttles, Palma de Mallorca, 1970.

(11 Nxe5! Nxe5 12 Bxc5 ± Huebner)
4...e5?! 5 dxe5 Qh4 (5...dxe5 6 Qxd8+ Kxd8 7 fxe5 Nc6 8 Bg5 Ke8 9 Na3 Bd7 10 Nf3 Nxe5 11 Bf4 ± Ree-Hartoch, Bad Pyrmont 1969)

6 g3 Qe7 7 exd6 Qxe4+ 8 Qe2 Qxe2+ 9 Nxe2! cxd6 10 Na3 Be6 (10...Bd7 11Bg2 Bc6 12 0-0 ± Gufeld) 11 Nb5 Kd7 12 f5! gxf5 13 Bf4 Nf6 14 Nxd6 Nd5 15 0-0-0 Ke7 16 Bg2 ± White’s endgame is ideal. Portisch-Suttles, Sweden 1970.

4...c5? 5 dxc5 dxc5 6 Qxd8+ Kxd8 7 Be3 ±; 7 Bc4 ±

4...c6 5 Nf3 Bg4 6 Be3 d5 7 e5 Nh6 8 h3 Bxf3 9 Qxf3 f6 10 Bd3 ± L. Pachman, 1966.

4...Ng6 5 e5 dxe5

On 5...Nd5 6 Nf3 0-0 and now:

a) 7 Be4 Nb6 8 Bb3 dxe5 9 fxe5 c5 10 dxc5 Qxd1 11 Kxd1 N6d7 12 e6 Nxc5 13 exf7+ Kh8 14 Bc4 Nc6= (Ivkov).

b) 7 Bd3 c5 8 Be4 Nc7 9 dxc5 dxe5 10 Qxd8 Rxd8 (Lehmann-Ivkov, Palma de Mallorca, 1968)

11 Nxe5! Bxe5 12 fxe5 Nd7 13 c6 bxc6 14 Bxc6 15 0-0! Ne6 16 Bxd7 Rxd7 17 Na3 ± (Hort, Pribyl) with a great endgame advantage.
6 fxe5 Nd5 7 Nf3 0-0 8 Bc4

Black is in peril. With no more than natural moves, White has constructed an attacking middlegame.

Black must already consider emergency measures:

8...c5! surrendering a pawn for counterplay.

9 dxc5 Be6! 10 Qd4! Nc6 11 Qe4 Na5 12 Be2

a) Lein-S. Mohr, New York 1990 continued 12...Bf5 13 Qh4
   Nc6 14 0-0 Ne5 15 Nxe5 Bxe5 16 Bh6 Kg7 17 Bxg7
   Kxg7 18 Rd1 e6 19 Qd4+ Kg8 20 Bf3 Qg5 ±

b) Grandmaster Hort suggests 12...Qc7 13 Ng5 Qxe5 14 Qxe5 Bxe5
   15 Nxe6 fxe6 as safest. And if the second player does not
   know all of this? Well...

8...Bg4 9 0-0 e6 10 Qb3! Bxf3 11 Rxf3

White avoids the intermezzo 11 Qxb7 Bxg2! with complications.

11...Nb6 12 Be2 Qd5 (12...N8d7!? - T. Petrosian comes into
   consideration) 13 Be3 Qxb3 14 axb3 ± White has a great advantage
   in the endgame. Bronstein-Nikolaevsky, Russian Championship
   Tbilisi 1966 - Supplemental Game #8.
B. 1 e4 b6 2 d4 Bb7 (Owens-Miles Defense)

White has a great advantage in the center, playing sensibly to deny counterplay. The chess world has watched in astonishment as other continuations, analyzed to even clear “wins” are ignored by serious professionals in world rated play. Chief among the “bandits” was British Grandmaster A.J. Miles who dared everyone to try alternatives (Yes, you hear properly - not “drag racing” in distant hills, not prize fighting or professional wrestling, this is Manolete in the bull ring - Here we have a deadly game of “theoretical chicken” that is ferocious, fully understood by all...)

You think the books are correct... Son, I AM the book!

Fair enough, but there is an important refinement to incorporate. First, the theory of this line as it stands:

3 Bd3 f5?! (Considered a forced loss by published theory - but in the murderous clock-a-ticking play, how many virtuosi will be able to confidently perform the coming orchestration?) White moves to attack Black’s King, “winning” 4 exf5 Bxg2 5 Qh5+ g6 6 fxg6 Bg7 with wild complications.

Also safe is 3 f3 d5 4 e5 Qd7 5 Be3 (5 c3 Ba6 = Matulovic-Sahovic, 1977 5...e6 6 f4 c5 7 c3 ±).
The voice of theory speaks:
7 Qf5! wins (Broeder-Wegener, Correspondence 1982).

White avoids 7 gxh7+ Kf8 and 8 Ne2 with the idea of Nf4, or 8 Nf3 with the idea of 8...Bxh1 9 Ne5! Bxe5 10 dxe5 winning.

The Black King is home alone.

Instead, 7 Qf5! attacks - 7...Nf6 8 Bh6!! Bxh6 9 gxh7 (threatens to regain the Bishop with 10 Qg6) and now:

a) 9...Bc1 10 Qg6+ Kf8 11 Qxg2 Bxb2 12 Ne2! “with a win” - Den Broeder
b) 9...Bxh1 10 Qg6+ Kf8 11 Qxh6+ Kf7 12 Nh3! Qf8 13 Bg6+ Ke6 14 Qf4 d5 15 Bf5 Kf7 16 Ng5+ Ke6 17 Qxc7 1-0, Broeder-Wegener, Mailgame, 1982.

Several years before, a thunderstruck Grandmaster Walter Browne, Six-time U.S. Champion, looked up to see Miles (Black) enter his refined take on this “death valley” through his own back door: 1 d4 e6 2 c4 b6 3 e4 Bb7 4 Bd3 f5 when a familiar run of tactics ensued (only with c4 and ...e6 added, giving Miles’s King elbowroom):

5 exf5 Bxg2 6 Qh5+ g6 7 fxg6 Bg7 8 gxh7+ Kf8 9 Ne2 Bxh1 10 Bg5 Nf6 11 Qh4 “Shots Fired, Men Down! All units report...”
a) The 1978 encounter went 11...Nc6 12 Nf4 Kf7 13 Bg6+ Ke7 14 Nh5 Qf8 15 Nd2 e5 16 0-0-0 Nxd4 17 Rxl ±

b) In 1999, both men revisited the scene: 11...Qc7 12 Nf4 Qf7 13 Ng6+ Ke8 14 Ne5 Qf8 15 Nc3 d6 16 0-0-0 dxe5 17 dxe5 Ke7 18 Rxl Nbd7 19 Re1 Nxe5 20 Rxe5 Kd7 21 Qh3 Re8 22 Bg6 Re7 23 Kb1 Ke8
and Miles weathered the storm to eventually draw.
On 3...e6:

a) 4 dxc5 bxc5 5 Bc4; or 4 d5 ± - Acers.

b) 4 Nf3 cxd4 5 Nxd4 d6 6 Bg5! Nd7 and now two plans are possible:

b1) 7 Nd5 a6 8 Qf3 Qe8 9 Nf5 g6! 10 Ndxe7!! Bxe7
11 Ng7+ Kf8 12 Ne6+ with a lovely draw by perpetual check, Michalchishin-Psakhis, Russia, 1978. (White could have played 9 0-0-0 ± Bozic/Molerovic)

b2) 7 Be4 a6 8 Qe2 b5 9 Bd5 Qe8 10 0-0 Nf6 11 Rad1 ± Panchenko - Psakhis, Russia 1978.

4 a3 Nf6 5 Bd3 d5
5...c5 (to undermine White’s center with ...c4) 6 Nf3 c4 7 Bxc4 Nxe4 8 Nxe4 Bxe4 9 Qe2 Bb7 10 Bd5 Qc8 11 0-0 0-0 with White better. Ciocaltea-Nikolic, Romania 1980.

6 e5 Nfd7 7 Nce2 Ba6 8 Nf4!

8...Bxd3 9 Qxd3 c5 10 c3 Qe8 11 Nge2 Ne6 12 0-0 Na5 13 Qh3 menacing 14 Nxe6 - removing all the pawns around the Black King. White’s bind is complete. Total control of the center permits a decisive attack on the King’s wing. Kovacevic-Cebalo, Zagreb 1979. Black’s entire pawn mass disappears (13...Be7 14 b4 Nb3 15 Rb1 c4 16 Nxe6!

- A. Matanovic’s stock “demolition sacrifice” wins).
C. 1 e4 a6

The Classic Hypermodern Flank Attack with which Miles once defeated a World Champion - Anatoly Karpov.

It is representative of all sideboard “pass” variations -

White takes over...

But must be careful!

2 d4 b5

The “Hypermodern” idea... a center pawn for a flank pawn - Black invites the premature 3 a4 Bb7 4 axb5 Bxe4 5 bxa6 Bb7! =. Analysis by Nunn (NCO).

3 Bd3 Bb7 4 Nf3 e6 5 Qe2 Nf6 6 a4 c5
7 dxc5 Bxc5 8 Nbd2 b4 9 e5 Nd5 10 Ne4 Be7 11 Bg5 ± (diagram)

V. Kozlov

Highlighting White’s central plus - the d6 square - threatens 12 Nd6+ winning immediately.

A. Volovich

(A. Volovich - V. Kozlov, Russia 1987).
Also see Karpov-Miles, Skara 1980, Supplemental Game #9.)
The "danger variation" - already provoking White's forward march - 2 e5. Black seeks to undermine the advanced center phalanx, fearing nothing. Analyzed by J.B. Allgaier (1763-1823) - the defense really arrived with A.A. Alekhine (1921) amidst the "Hypermodern Era". Today, White is forewarned, practices safety first. White often strives to establish a simple two pawn center with positional advantages one can actually see - more room to operate.

A rare guest in top flight professional chess, Alekhine's Defense lives in the shadows. - the ideal surprise weapon.

From the "Immortal Thirteenth" 1972 world title game won by Fischer (worth millions to him ultimately) to the $400,000 knockout FIDE prize decisive game in Moscow 2002 - won by R. Ponomariov - the Alekhine's Defense has proven a welcome, thrilling, surprise guest in world title play. White has the advantage in this opening. That is certain. Employed for one-half century by Korchnoi, on the principle that it leads to a fight while "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip"...the Alekhine is rarely seen in top tourneys today. Americans remember that (even as a teenager) Six-Time US Champion Walter Browne effortlessly achieved a winning position versus Fischer - held to a draw by Fischer's iron will plus Browne's failure to "take out life insurance" in the endgame - placing a rook behind Fischer's "harmless, distant passed pawn".

In this true "hypermodern" opening Black encourages White to advance, hoping to undermine White's camp 'overextended' in the center of the chess board.
2 e5 Nd5

3 c4 Alekhine’s System

3 Nc3 Keres “Primitive” System
(3 Bc4 Yates “Primitive” Game)

3 d4 d6 4 Bc4 Nb6 5 e6!? Acers-Mueller System

3 d4 d6 4 f4 J. Nunn Attack

3 d4 d6 4 Nf3 “Modern” System

A very dangerous continuation initially thought to allow easy equality for Black - 5...Nxc3 (?) being the common retort.

A. 5...Nxc3 B. 5...e6

“A. 5...Nxc3 6 dxc3 d6 7 Bg5!

“Very unpleasant” - Marovic, Subic - *King Pawn Openings.*

“Casts doubt” on equality for Black - Pachman, *Semi-Open Games.*
Also 7 Bc4 presents many problems (Alekhine-Fine, Pasadena 1932 - Supplemental Game #10) i.e. 7...dxe5? 8 Bxf7+.

7...dxe5 8 Qb3

Black finds it difficult to answer the twin threats 9 Bc4 and 9 Rd1:

a) 8...Be6 9 Qxb7 Nd7 10 b4 ± with a powerful pawn majority in the endgame. Matsukevic-Bodishko, Russia 1958.

b) 8...h6? 9 Bc4 1-0 Acers-Buining, New Orleans, 1963. (9 Rd1 first is even stronger - Acers)

8...Qd7

9 Rd1 Qf5 10 Be4! Nc6 11 Bd5 h6 12 Qb5! Qg6 13 Nf3! a6

13...hxg5 14 Nxe5 Qf6 15 Nxc6 wins (Pachman)

14 Qa4 Bd7 15 Be3 White controls the board. Poletaev-Rakno, Correspondence 1948.
Alekhine’s Defense 2 e5 Nd5 3 c4 Nb6 4 c5 (First Game)

Black could support the Knight at move 5 with ...e6 or ...c6, White replying 6 Bc4 in both cases...

B. 5...e6 6 Bc4 Nxc3

7 dxc3 Nc6

Note that after 7...d5 8 cxd6 cxd6 9 Nf3 Nc6 10 Bf4 d5 11 Bd3 Be7 12 0-0 and White has the better game - A. Suetin, 1983.

8 Bf4 Qh4

White will answer the pawn grab 8...Bxc5 with 9 Qg4! holding the initiative on the king’s wing.
  a) 9...0-0? 10 Bh6 +--;
  b) 9...g5! - Vasiukov-Korchnoi, Leningrad 1953
Supplemental Game #11.

9 g3 Qe7 10 b4 g5 11 Be3 Nxe5 12 Bd4 Bg7

13 Be2 d6 14 cxd6 cxd6 15 h4 Bd7 16 hxg5! Qxg5 17 Rh5 Qg6 18 Nh3! with attack and greater board room.
White may keep the tension with Yates’s 3 Be4 Nb6 4 Bb3 with spirited play:
a) 4...Nc6?! 5 d4 ± - Acers.
b) 4...c5:
b1) 5 Qe2 Nc6 6 Nf3 d5 7 exd6 e6 8 Nf3 Bxd6 Yates-Rubinstein, Dresden 1926. According to Pachman Black is slightly better. (Now 9 a4 or 9 Na3 lead to a tense struggle. - Acers)
b2) 5 d3 (Trifunovic) Ne6 6 Nf3 d5 7 exd6 e6! 8 Nc3 Bxd6 9 Ne4 Be7 10 Be3! Nd5! 11 0-0

(Not 11 Bxc5? Bxc5 12 Nxc5 Qa5+ winning a piece in broad daylight - Trifunovic) 11...Nxe3 12 fxe3 0-0 with equal chances - Trifunovic.
Alekhine’s Defense 1 e4 Nf6 2 e5 Nd5 3 Nc3 (Second Game) 55

3...Nxc3 4 dxc3 d6

Weaker is 4...d5 5 e4!

a) 5...Be6 6 Nf3 dxe4 7 Qxd8+ Kxd8 8 Ng5 Bd5
   9 e6! Bxe6 10 Nxe6 ±

b) 5...d4 6 f4 ± Ghizdavu-Torre, Nice 1972.

Black may also delay counterattack in the center with
4...g6  5 Nf3 Bg7 6 Bf4 d6 7 Qd2 Nc6 8 0-0-0 Bg4 with
chances for both sides - Bannik-Korchnoi, Russia 1954.

Black now faces two serious continuations on 5 Be4:
Black must avoid 5...Nc6 6 Nf3 dxe5 7 Qe2! e6 8 Nxe5
Nxe5 9 Qxe5 Bd7 10 Bf4 Qf6 11 Bf4 Qg6 12 Qf3 0-0-0
13 Ba6! c6 14 Bd3 ± with White advantage.
Basman-Smyslov, Olympiad 1968.

Best was 5...e6! 6 Nf3 dxe5 7 Qxd8+ Kxd8 8 Nxe5 which
transposes into the text line.

5 Nf3 dxe5

Very difficult for Black is the move almost always played by the
unprepared defenders: 5...Nc6?! 6 Bb5! For example: 6...a6
(diagram):

7...Nxe5 8 Nxe5 dxe5 9 Qxe5 e6
10 Bc4 Qb8 11 Qe4 e6 12 Bg5!
with a powerful direct attack.
Keres-L. Schmidt, Zurich 1961 -
Supplemental Game #12.

Much later
7...a6! 8 Be4 e6 9 Bf4 dxe5 10
Nxe5 Bd6 11 Bg3 Nxe5 12 Bxe5
Bxe5 13 Qe5 Qf6 held.
56 Alekhine’s Defense 1 e4 Nf6 2 e5 Nd5 3 Nc3 (Second Game)

6 Qxd8+ Kxd8 7 Nxe5 Ke8

Time to take account of matters. Black has an extra pawn on the kingside. His ideal plan is to exchange all the pieces and advance the e-pawn to victory.

White has an opposite view. - His great lead in development with much more room to maneuver will lead to easy blockade of the e-pawn.

A peculiar feature of the position is that (both) players in analysis later forget that the Black pieces lost the right to castle - even in professional play this has occurred!

One continuation was 8 Be3 Nd7 9 Nf3 e5 10 0-0-0 f6 11 Nd2 Bc5 12 Bxe5 Nxe5 13 Be4 with equality.
Listengarten-Bagirov, Russia 1974.

8 Bc4 e6 9 Be3 Nd7
(Safer may be 9...Bd6 10 Nd3 Bd7 with ...Bc6 next - A. Suetin)

10 Nd3! Bd6 11 0-0-0

Now Black must play solidly:

a) 11...Ke7? 12 Rhe1 b6 13 Bg5+ Nf6 14 f4! Re8 15 Bd5 Rb8 16 Ne5! with very strong threats for White.

b) 11...Nb6 12 Bb3 Bd7 with balanced opportunities.
Third Game

1 e4 Nf6 2 e5 Nd5 3 d4 d6 4 Bc4 Nb6

Less good is 4...e6 5 Nf3 Be7 6 0-0 Ne6 7 Re1 0-0 8 Nc3 Nxc3 9 bxc3 d5 10 Bd3 Nc5 11 Nd2 ±
Canal-Gruenfeld, Carlsbad 1929.

5 e6!? Acers-Mueller Attack
to weaken the e6 square - White offers a temporary Bishop sacrifice. The second player's pawn structure is also a serious concern in the subsequent endgame.

5...Nxc4

5...fxe6? 6 Bd3 with a menacing storm brewing.
5...Bxe6 6 Bxe6 fxe6 7 Nf3 ± followed by 8 0-0, Qe2, Re1 and attack on the weak e6 pawn.

6 exf7+ Kxf7

Also very interesting is 6...Kd7? 7 Qg4+:

a) 7...e6 8 d5 Qe7 9 Qxc4 exd5+ 10 Qe2 Qxf7 11 Nf3 ± with the better endgame - Acers;

b) 7...Kc6? 8 d5+ Kc5 (8...Kxd5 9 Ne3+ Kc5 10 b4+ Kxb4 11 Ba3+ Kxc3 12 Ne2+ - mate in one.) 9 b4+ will end the game promptly.

7 Qf3+

Bad is 7 Qh5+ g6 8 Qd5+ Be6.
7...Ke8 8 Qh5+ g6 9 Qb5+ Qd7!

10 Qxc4 Qe6+ 11 Qxe6 Bxe6 (analysis) evaluated by H. Mueller as “Clear edge for Black, with the better endgame.”

Acers: I do not agree. 12 Ne2 Bg7 13 Nd2! Nc6 14 c3 gives mutual chances. Simply 15 0-0 and 16 Re1 holds the better pawn structure for the moment.

This variation is an ideal surprise weapon in today’s new style multi-million dollar Grand Prix faster-the-better tournaments... forced play, no talking, no leaving the board ever during play. Many opponents are and will continue to be thunderstruck by the 5 e6!? surprise, and consume much time finding a satisfactory reply.

Fourth Game

4 f4 - GM John Nunn’s “English” Variation.

With this potent pawn chain, White will penalize inaction with a rapid, decisive build up- Pc2-c3, Ng1-f3, Bf1-d3, 0-0 - to strike effortlessly all over the board.

Simple chess - Nunn will play his pieces later for all out attack as the defense appears before the pawn phalanx. “If it flies, it dies.”

4...dxe5

Black must act immediately. Passive is a) 4...g6 5 c3 Nb6 6 Bd3.

In the game Nunn-Tomaszewski, Hradec Kralove, 1979,
Alekhine’s Defense 3 d4 d6 4 f4 (Fourth Game) 59

![Chess Diagram]

Tomaszewski

This led to 6...Be6 7 Nf3 Qd7 8 0-0 d5 9 Nh4 Bg4 10 Qe1 c6 11 Be3 (diagram) with a clear spatial edge.

J. Nunn

b) 4...Bf5 5 Nf3 e6 was possible. Still, White has at his disposal an energetic reply: 6 Bd3 Bxd3 7 Qxd3 Be7 8 0-0 (Or 8 a3 followed by 9 c4 and Nc3) Ne6 (Gutman-Palatnik, Vilnius 1979). Here White has 9 Qe4! followed by 10 c4 and d4-d5, maintaining the initiative - after Suetin.

5 fxe5 c5

It was weaker to wait - 5...Bf5 6 Nf3 c5, then 7 Bb5+ Nc6 8 c4 Nc7 9 0-0 e6 10 Bxc6+ bxc6 11 Qa4 Qd7 12 Be3 - the White chances are better.

6 Bb5+ Bd7 7 Bxd7+ Qxd7 8 Nf3

White has the free play, controlling the black squares.
In the game Vitolinsh-Bagirov, Frunze, 1979, there followed 8...cxd4 9 Qxd4 e6 10 0-0 h6 11 a3 Qc6 (Simpler is 11...Nc6) 12 Qd3 Nd7 13 c4 N5b6 14 Nbd2 a5 15 b3 Be7 16 Bb2 Ne5 17 Qe2 0-0 18 Nd4 - White has the better game.
Alekhine's Defense 3 d4 d6 4 Nf3 (Fifth Game)

Fifth Game

4 Nf3 "Modern" Attack, Karpov-Ponomariov Variation

The "pressure forever" system that eighteen year old R. Ponomariov employed to win the $400,000 First Prize - World Knockout (FIDE) Championship, Moscow 2002. It holds the draw - and the initiative.

4...Ne6

After other moves Black also drifts into a slightly inferior position without real counterplay.

a) 4...dxe5?! 5 Nxe5 g6 (Definitely not 5...Nd7? 6 Nxf7! with an attack that at least draws by force.) whereupon White with 6 Qf3 or 6 c4 Nb6 7 Ne3 Bg7 8 Be3 0-0 9 Re1 has a light bind. (NCO - Nunn’s Chess Openings)

b) 4...g6

b1) 5 Be4 Spassky-Fischer (13) Reykjavic, 1972
   - Supplemental Game #13.

b2) 5 Be2 Browne-Fischer, Rovins/Zagreb, 1970
   - Supplemental Game #14.

c) 4...Bg4 Black relies on development. 5 Be2:

   c1) 5...c6 6 Ng5! Bxe2 7 Qxe2
       White is more comfortable.

   c2) 5...e6 6 0-0 Be7 7 c4 Nb6 8 Ne3 0-0 9 Be3 d5 10 c5!
       Bxf3 11 gxf3 Nc8 12 f4 with a good "squeeze" position for White - yet nothing definite on the scoreboard.
Alekhine’s Defense 3 d4 d6 4 Nf3 (Fifth Game)

5 c4 Nb6 6 e6!

This sound pawn sacrifice was played by Christoffel vs. Larsen, Zurich 1961. After 6...fxe6 White got down to the serious business of attack, now - not later - 7 h4?!

Probably Ivanchuk did not expect this electricity from

Grandmaster Ruslan Ponomariov, two games ahead with one half point required for a world title. The Czech theory wizard L. Pachman analyzed this in 1966, finding equality for Black. But of course - a draw costs Mr. Ivanchuk $400,000...

6...fxe6 7 Ne3

The modern modern. Believe it or not - right out of Nunn’s Chess Openings (NCO) - the leading one volume opening encyclopedia. White has a bind, Black must break out with no counterplay, and exchange pieces to draw. The highest rated woman player in history, Judit Polgar, played instead 7 Ng5, and after g6 8 d5!

- a real pawn sacrifice for pressure in the center ensued. 8...exd5 9 exd5 Ne5 10 f4 Nf7 11 Bb5 Bd7 12 Ne6 Qe8 13 Bxd7 Qxd7 14 Nc3 c6 15 0-0 = - J. Polgar-Orev, Varna 1988.

That was then, this is now...

7...g6 8 Be3! Bg7 9 h4 0-0 10 h5

Ponomariov has full compensation for the sacrificed pawn - he shatters Black’s kingside pawns to boot.

He intends simply 11 hxg6 hxg6 12 Bd3, so the King’s pawn structure must be reinforced.
10...e5

(Looking for complications following 11 hgx6 hxg6 12 Bd3 Bf5. There is no tomorrow.)

11 d5 Nd4 (diagram)

Analyzing during the game, I tried to complicate for Ivanchuk at all costs with 11...Na5(?)
12 Bxb6 axb6 13 b4 e4 14 Nxe4 Bxa1 15 Qxa1 Nb3 16 Qb2 Bf5 17 h6 Rf7 18 Nf5 and wins - Acers.

12 Nxd4 exd4 13 Bxd4 g5?

Purposely avoiding 13...Bxd4 14 Qxd4 e5! 15 dxe6 Qf6 with a draw imminent - Evgeny Atarov (New In Chess Magazine)

14 Bxg7 Kxg7 15 h6+

Hoping for the instant win 15...Kh8? 16 Qd4+ e5 17 dxe6+ Qf6 18 e7! (overworked Queen) and White wins a whole rook or mates.

15...Kg8 16 Qd2 e5 17 Rh5 g4 18 Qg5+

Exchanging Queens to reach an easily won endgame.

18...Qxg5 19 Rg5+ Kh8 20 Rg7!
I can still hear it, in 1956... “Young man - my rook on the seventh rank is like a vacuum cleaner.” - A.L. McAuley, first officially rated chess master in New Orleans history.

20...Rf6

On 20...c6 21 dxc6 bxc6 22 Rd1 Rf6 23 c5! breaks through.

21 Rxc7 Rxh6 22 b4

White will win after 22...Bf5 23 c5 Nd7 24 Nb5 - but agreed drawn, Ponomariov winning $400,000.
Once forecast as a “perfectly playable” career defense by leading American Journalist and Grandmaster Larry Evans (The Opening for You), the Scandinavian (or Center Counter Defense) has spent several decades since building up respectability. All major variations today defy outright refutation - and indeed appear quite playable, and with today’s time controls - “It’s on!” High water marks for the Scandinavian came with “dead lost” positions for White “achieved” by GMs Anand, Kasparov- even Modern Chess Openings theorist and several time US Champion, Nick de Firmian. Analysis by Germany’s Matthias Wahls, Gary Lane (England), Ian Rogers (Australia), John Emms (U.K.) and, above all, David Bronstein of Russia paved the red hot Scandinavian comeback. Then the U.S. Master Selby Anderson added considerable defensive fuel with feisty defense by ...Nf6 and ...Bg4 immediately (the Portuguese Variation)... not even retaking the pawn at d5.

First Game 2 exd5 Qxd5
Anderssen Center Counter

Second Game 2 exd5 Nf6
Frank J. Marshall Counter Attack

First Game

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5
Anderssen Center Counter

After 2...Qxd5, White has tried many interesting assaults. After 3 Ne3:

a) 3...Qa5 4 d4 Nf6 5 Nf3 c6! 6 Ne5 Be6 7 Bd3 Nbd7 8 f4 g6 9 0-0 Bg7 10 Kh1 Bf5! 11 Bc4?! e6 12 Be2 h5 13 Be3 Rd8 14 Bg1 0-0
Scandinavian Defense 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 (First Game)

(Also 14...Nxe5! 15 fxe5 Ng4  
with threats: ...Nxe5, ...c5 - Acers)

15 Bf3 Nd5 (Also 15...c5! 16 Qe2 (Kasparov) Qb4  
J. Emms, The Scandinavian.) 16 Nxd5 exd5 17 Bf2

Qc7 18 Rc1 f6 19 Nd3 Rfe8 20 b3 Nb6 21 a4 Ne8
22 e4 Qf7 23 a5 Bf8 24 cxd5 exd5 25 Bh4 Nd6
26 a6 b6 27 Ne5?! Qe6 28 g4! hgx4 29 Nxd4 Bg7  
(29...Be7 ℄ Kasparov) 30 Rc7 Kasparov-Anand,
Twin Towers World Match, 1995. (diagram)

Despite missing earlier chances, Anand still had Kasparov under
great pressure. Black could now continue 30...Bxg4
31 Bxg4 f5!

32 Bh4 Qe4+ 34 Kg1

Nf5 35 Bf2 Bxd4 invading:

(37 Qxg4? Bxf2+ 38 Rxf2 Qe1+  
39 Rf1 Qxf1+ wins  
via Knight’s fork.)

b) 3...Qd8 “The Opening of the Future” - Leonid Shamkovich.

4 d4 g6 5 Bf4 Nf6 Also quite playable is 5...Nh6 to put
pressure on the d-pawn with ...Bg7 and ...Nf5. On
Fischer’s suggestion 6 Be5 “messing up Black’s pawns”
6...f6 and 6...Rg8 are both perfectly O.K. for Black
(Evans). “A great fight ensues with good chances for
both players.” - Acers.

6 Qd2 Bg7 7 0-0-0 L. Evans: “Black’s position is
‘perfectly playable’, there is no reason for despair.”

7...c6 8 Bh6 (Fischer-Robatsch, Olympiad, 1962).

Black should now play 8...Bxh6 9 Qxh6 Bf5 (Fischer).

c) 3...Qd6! 4 d4 Nf6 5 Nf3 a6 6 Be3 e6 7 Qd2 Be7 8 Bd3 0-0
9 0-0-0 h5 10 Ng5 Bb7 11 Bf4 Qd8 12 h4 Nb7
Opening the g-file by capturing the pawn is just too dangerous. Unnecessary for parity.) 13 Qe2 b4 14 Nce4 Nxe4 15 Nxe4 Nf6 16 Be5 Nxe4 17 Bxe4 Bxe4 18 Qxe4 Bd6 19 Qg4 Bxe5 20 dxe5 Qe7 21 Qc4 a5 22 Rd4 Rad8 23 Rhd1 Rxd4 24 Rxd4 h5 = N. deFirmian - R. Dzindzichashvili, U.S. Championship, 1998.

The Single Pawn System. White does not permit play against the Queen’s wing, and omits 3 Nc3

If instead 3...Nc6, White can test Black with:

A. The Acers Gambit System: 4 Ne3?! Qxd4 5 Be3 (diagram)

a) 5...Qxd1+? 6 Rxd1 + Acers - Repass, New Orleans, 1963. Black must defend against 7 Nb5 and 7 Nd5.

b) 5...Qe5? 6 Nf3 Qh5? 7 Nd5 +- , or 6...Qa5 7 a3 +- 

c) 5...Qb4 6 a3 Qxb2 7 Nb5 +- 

d) 5...Qd8 6 Qxd8+ Kxd8 7 0-0-0+ Bd7 (7...Ke8? 8 Nb5 +- ) 8 Nf3 e6 ⊕ Acers-Repass, New Orleans 1964.

e) 5...Qd7! ⊕ rarely played but best.
Black maintains an extra pawn - (Chesslab).
B. Or White may opt for the solid 4 Nf3 Bg4 5 Be2 0-0-0 (5...Bxf3 6 Bxf3 Qxd4?? walks into Bxc6+ winning the Q.) 6 c4:

1) 6...Qh5 7 Be3 Nf6 8 Nbd2 e5 9 d5 Nd4 led to mass exchanges with White a pawn ahead after 10 Nxd4 exd4 11 Bxg4 Nxc4 12 Bxd4 Bb4 13 h3 Bxd2+ 14 Kxd2 Qg5+ 15 Kc3 Ne5 Morozevich-I. Rogers, Germany 1998.

2) 6...Qf5 7 Be3 Nf6 (diagram)

a) 8 Ne3 e6 9 Qa4 Bxf3 10 Bxf3 Nxd4 11 Bxd4 Rxd4 12 Qxa7 Qe5+ 13 Ne2 Rxc4 14 Qxb7+ Kd7 15 Rd1+ Bd6 where White chose to push the initiative through the endgame: 16 Rxd6+! Qxd6 17 Qb5+ Rc6 18 0-0 Qe5 19 Rd1+ Nd5 20 Bxd5 Qxb5 21 Bxc6 Kxe6 22 Nd4+ Kc5 23 Nxb5 Kxb5 24 Rd7 ± Ziatdinov-Shabalov, Toronto 1998.

b) 8 Nbd2 e5 9 d5 Nb4 10 Rc1 Nxa2 allowed an attack up the a-file that later proved too strong. 11 Ra1 Nb4 12 0-0 a6 13 Ra4 Nd3 14 Bxd3 Qxd3 15 Qa1 Rhe8 16 b4 Bxf3 17 Nxf3 Qxc4 18 Rc1 Qxd5 19 Ra5 Qd3 20 b5 ± Sax-Waitzkin, Pula Open 1997.

4 Nf3

Unsatisfactory was 4 dxe5 Qxd1+ 5 Kxd1 Ne6 with very good counterplay for Black. DeFirmian-Granda Zuniga, Amsterdam 1996.

Examples:
68 Scandinavian Defense 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 (First Game)

6 Bb5 Bd7 7 Bxc6 Bxc6 8 Nf3 Bxf3 9 gxf3 0-0-0+ 10 Ke2 Re8 11 f4 f6 regains the pawn - Emms.

6 Nf3 Bg4 7 Bf4 Nge7 8 Bb5 0-0-0+ 9 Nbd2 Bxf3+ 10 gxf3 Nxe5! 11 Bxe5 Rd5 Orel-Marinsek, Bled 1993.

6 Nf3 Bg4 7 Bf4 Nge7 8 Bb5 0-0-0+ 9 Nbd2 Bxf3+ 10 gxf3 Nxe5! 11 Bxe5 Rd5 Orel-Marinsek, Bled 1993.

4...exd4

Not 4...e4? 5 Ne5 ± with 6 Bc4 coming.

(Ed. - 4...Bg4 5 Be2 exd4 is answered with 6 0-0 followed by taking on d4 - e.g. 6...c5 7 Nxd4! with discovered attack on g4.)

5 Nxd4 Nf6

A common error is 5...Bc5? 6 Be3 and 7 Nc3 nets the initiative.

6 Nc3 Bb4 7 Qe2+! Qe4 8 Bd2 Qxe2+ 9 Bxe2 c6 10 0-0-0 0-0 11 a3 Ba5 12 h3 Nbd7 13 g4 Rd8 14 Nb3 Bc7 15 f4 Nb6 16 f5 ± Sevillano-Wahls, Biel 1993.

White has more space in the endgame and a lead in development.
Second Game

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Nf6
Marshall Counter Attack

3 d4 Nxd5

Or 3...Bg4 (S. Anderson) 4 Nf3 Qxd5 5 Be2 Nc6 6 h3 Bxf3 7 Bxf3 Qd7 8 c3 0-0-0 9 0-0 e5 10 Qb3! exd4 11 cxd4 Nd5 12 Nc3 Ndb4 13 Bxc6 Nxc6 14 Be3 with an attack on the c-file. (14 d5 ± - Acers)

4 Nf3 Bg4

In recent theoretical developments of this line, Black has explored moves which delay counterplay until the position has evolved a bit:

a) 4...Bf5 5 Nh4!? Bg6 6 Nd2 e6 7 Nxe6 hxg6 8 Nf3 Nd7 9 g3 c6 10 Bg2 Be7 11 0-0 0-0 12 c4 ± Rowson-Arkell, Match 1996, Edinburgh Scotland.

b) 4...g6 5 Be2 Bg7 6 0-0 0-0 7 Re1:

b1) 7...c6 8 Na3 Qc7 9 c3 Nd7 10 Ne4 c5 11 Bf1 exd4 12 Nxd4 Nf6 13 Ne5 Rd8 14 Qf3 Hebden-Hodgson, London 1991.

b2) 7...e5 8 dxec5! Na6 9 Bxa6 bxax 10 N1d2 Qc7 11 Nb3 Bb7 12 Rb1 e5 13 Bd2 Rae8 14 c4 Ne7 15 Ba5 Qb8 16 Bc3 Ne6 17 Nbd2 f5 18 b4 with a strong pawn plus and position for White. Campora-Maliutin, Candus 1992. (NCO)
5 Be2 e6 6 0-0 Nc6

Or 6...Be7 7 Ne5! Bxe2 8 Qxe2 0-0 9 Rd1 Nd7 10 c4 N5f6 11 Bf4 c6 12 Nc3 Re8

13 Rd3 - White stands well and will have developed his entire army after Rad1 Leko-Kamsky, Groningen 1995.

7 c4 Nb6 8 Nc3 Be7 9 d5 exd5 10 exd5 Nb4

11 Qd4! Bxf3 12 Bxf3

White may also capture the pawn 12 Qxg7 Bf6 13 Bb5+ c6 14 Re1+ Penrose-Goldenberg, Mailgame 1991. (NCO)

12...0-0 13 Qd1 White will return the center pawn but keep the Bishop pair with the better endgame. Black’s Knights do not work well.
This dangerous counterattack seeks to apply piece pressure in the center. A hallmark of the strong American Chess Master Miles Ardaman, it has defeated many world “Top 100” players who carelessly dealt with GM Anthony Miles, Bent Larsen and other Black defenders. White will invite Black into classical lines covered in Volume I, or establish a three pawn center with c2-c3.

**First Game**

1 e4 Nc6 2 Nf3

Prudence is the word.

White avoids Black’s counterplay at its most dangerous with 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 (Keres) or 3 e5

Other moves are:

a) 2...e5 - See Volume I.

b) 2...d5 3 exd5 Qxd5 4 Nc3 Qd6! (Acers) which is by no means a losing proposition for the second player. “If left unattended, Black intends a full service hotel with all the amenities at board central - with ...e5, ...Bg4, ...0-0-0.” - Acers. The standard reply by legendary AVRO 1938 super tourney co-winner Reuben Fine deals with this: 5 Bb5! e5? 6 Qe2 f6 7 d4Bg4 8 dxe5 Bxf3 9 Qxf3! with superior play for White (Acers). However, 5...Bg4 (Vlassov, World Internet Champion) opens up the serious possibility of never worrying about the knight at c6, capturing with the b-pawn after castling queenside... and playing ...e5 anyway. The effect on chess by the “Three Theoretical Titans” (TTT) of Texas is everywhere apparent in this variation... Masters
Douglas Root, S. Anderson and Ardaman have for two decades adopted the policy of examining all chess lines.

~ If it flies - it dies! ~

The voice of authority is trusted but verified. Andersen answers 1 e4 with d5 2 exd5 Nf6 intending to play ...Bg4 as soon as possible, not to regain the center pawn. He published a theory book all over the world about just this, and he has scored against Grandmasters. Ardaman also scored heavily against top players with 1 e4 Nc6 2 d4 d5 and other ideas, and he is just getting started.

And Root... well... the “TTT” leader of the pack played:

c) 2...f5 stunning system players here. Grandmaster Liberzon could not believe his eyes at Lone Pine (1979). 3 exf5 d5 4 d4

Acers is having none of this (4 d4), and recommends instead - 4 Nh4 - following GM Evans’s Law:

“Steal a Pawn Forever” (exf5)

4...Nf6 5 Be2! e5 6 Bh5+ with a safe pawn plus and heading south across the border.

4...Bxf5 5 Bf4 e6 6 Bb5 Bd6
7 Bg3 Nge7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Nh4
Ng6 10 Nxg6 Bxg6
11 c3 (diagram)

....when Black is still fighting with the suggested 11...Ne7

(T. Harding - Nimzowitch Defense)

d) 2...g6 3 d4 Bg7 4 d5 Ne5 5 Nxe5 Bxe5 6 Nc3 leaves White with solid opening play (Grefe-Coudari, USA 1970).

6 f4 (Harding) is even stronger.
Nimzovich Defense 1 e4 Nc6 2 Nf3 (First Game)

| 3 d4 Nf6 |

Also playable is 3...Bg4 4 Bb5 a6 5 Bxc6 bxc6 6 h3 Bh5 7 Ne3 Nf6 8Bg5! Rb8 9 Bxf6 gxf6 10 Rb1 ± Leko-Teske, Linz 1995.

| 4 c3 Bg4 |

Alternatives include:

a) 4...Nxe4? 5 d5! winning a Knight and the game.

b) 4...g6 (S. Cvetkovic)

c) 4...a6 5 Bf4 Bg4 6 Be2 Bxf3 7 Bxf3 e5 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 Qxd8+ Rxd8 10 Bg5 Be7 Preismann-Dragis, Genf 1991 is equal.

A try is 5 d5!? with an edge (Gufeld)

d) 4...e5 6 Nbd2 or 6 d5.

| 5 Nbd2 |

White also enjoys a clear positional edge on:

| a) 5 Be2 Bxf3 6 Bxf3 e5 7 0-0 Be7 8 g3 0-0 9Bg2 Qd7 10 d5 Nb8 11 c4 Kuzmin-Shinavi, Moscow 1991. |

b) 5 Bb5 a6 6 Ba4 b5 7 Bc2 e5 8 d5 Na5 9 Nbd2 c5 10 b3 g6 11 h3 Bd7 12 a4 Nh5 13 b4 Ivkov-Knaak, Amsterdam 1974. |

| 5...e6 |

5...e5 6 Bb5 with a good grip on the center (Gufeld).
6 Bd3

Once again, other choices here are also pleasant for White:

a) 6 h3 Bh5 7 Qb3 Qc8 8 Bd3 Be7 9 0-0 Bg6 10 Re1 a6 11 Qc2 Yudasin-Minasian, Oviedo, 1993.

b) 6 Qb3 Qc8 7 Bd3 Be7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Re1 e5 10 Bb5 Nd7 11 h3 Bh5 12 Qa4 P. Popovic-Cvetkovic, Yugoslavia 1992.

6...d5

7 e5 Nd7 8 0-0 f6 9 exf6 Qxf6 10 h3 Bh5 11 Qb3 0-0-0 12 Bb5 Ndb8 13 Qa4 Bd6 14 b4!

Tilburg 1993. White is well placed to attack on the Queen’s wing. - Supplemental Game #15.
Introduction
It happened all over the world. Shanghai, Paris, New York. World tournament play that was no accident. Develop right now. Garry Kasparov faced the whole chess world with Rossolimo's idea... play Bb5 no matter what, play for keeps. No free ride for Black defenders, no entering their "pet" defenses ever.

The Week in Chess (TWIC), the leading chess newspaper, flatly labels "The Rossolimo Attack" on the Internet, a neon anvil assuring that the Grandmaster will forever emerge from gray shadows, the unkind fate of the destitute pioneer filled with arrows.

After 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 Nicholas Rossolimo nodded toward Aron Nimzovich, refusing to exchange the center d-pawn for Black's self blocking, impotent c-file wing pawn, (Game #2) leaving Black helpless to create counterplay. The Estonian Great Paul Keres lost a sparkling miniature here (Game #3). Even Garry Kasparov, furious at being effortlessly held to a draw four times in a row with the Black pieces, postmarked the post-mortem with a bitter "It's a Draw."

White plays 3 Bb5 ("The Sicilian Ruy Lopez") and immediately becomes the "uncooperative opponent." Never is the defender permitted to uncork one "prepared" defense after another. Instead, often at sea, dazed, Black defends a subtle positional attack, with a potent one-move knockout punch when the defender tarries too long at the barn.

An echo, the most brilliant game I ever witnessed, L. Evans's smoking victory over W. Browne (Game #4) during the "American Tournament of the Century" - Reno, Nevada 1970. Amidst Bisguier, Browne, "Searching for Bobby Fischer" Pandolfini, Fischer's manager Edmondson, Bills, tourney director Koltanowski, and titanic teacher/publisher/master K.R. Smith... while San Francisco chess giant Addison (drew two of his last three games versus Fischer) was telephoning in at a crisp clip... Evans defeated not only Browne but me as well. Later that evening - replaying his earlier win, Evans asked me four times, "Now, what's the move?" and four times I was dead wrong. Let the record stand.

Same face, different place... Stunning, a career crown jewel for "Mr. Six-Time" US Champion Browne, a brilliancy versus M. Quinteros (Argentina) employing the very same attack. (Game #5) "I could not believe my eyes as Quinteros left his King alone while gallivanting all over the place." -- Browne. Stop. We must remember the winner of sixty international tournaments... Bent "The Great Dane" Larsen... He wrote that after 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 could be a minor
error, exchanging a great center pawn for a pawn on the wing, providing Black with the only possible counterplay. There's more. White may develop now, prepare a pawn center with c2-c3 and only later d2-d4.

Continue on...

Organizers of a multi-million dollar trade junket (U.S. vs. China, 2001-2004 Team chess matches) could not afford a coming disgrace. In no uncertain words, *America's Foundation for Chess* in Seattle passed the word. In Shanghai (2002) the top tournament chess fighter, A. Goldin, was suddenly declared a true American in world record time, shoved to Board One for Team USA versus China's world top 15 player Ye "I Play for the Money, Honey" Jianchuan. This permitted a lethal hunter on the lower boards, Joel Benjamin, the veteran of immense pedigree who had played every single US Championship ever held for decades. A deep theorist, trying always to keep his play "fresh" - Benjamin uncorked the Bb5 Sicilian versus Ni Hua, a US Chess Team destroyer. Adrift, Black achieved nothing, lining up Queen and Bishop on a blocked diagonal. Benjamin opened a kingside file, blowing aside Black's defense. *(Game #6)* This was the real world.

Kasparov employed 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+! against a 100 nation team via the Internet. The "MSN Game Page" hosted the colossal duel: Kasparov versus the Rest of the World (ROW) Team. Three million "hits" by avid Internet watchers. Make a move! Early on, the astonished World Team correctly followed the pied-pipress, teenie-bopper Irina Krush (New York) with an obscure Dutch (Grandmaster Sosonko) counter gambit, rather than face a light bind, a colorless long defense versus the Rossolimo Attack - Moscow Variation. Results were fiery. Play lasted for months *(Game #7).* Then came THE game, in a match between Team Russia and a star team from the rest of the world:

**Game #1. V. Akopian (World) vs. G. Kasparov (Russia), Moscow 2002.**

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 e6 4 0-0 Nge7 5 b3 a6 6 Bxc6 Nxc6 "The capture of the Knight at c6 by White is a relatively recent development." - S. Rublevsky.

11 Na3 e5 12 Nc2 Be7 13 Ne3 0-0 14 d3 Qe8
15 Rb1 Rxb1 16 Qb1 Bd8 17 Nd2 g6 18 Nd5 f5 19 exf5 gxf5 (19...Bxf5 20 Ne4) 20 f4! Rf7
Eight Game Survey 1 e4 c5

21 Qe1! Putting pressure on e5, eyeing 22 Nf3, while Black’s King lives in a windy city. 21...Rg7 22 Nf3 ± Qg6 23 g3 Rf7 24 fxe5 f4 25 exd6 (diagram)

Under seige, Kasparov now played the most helpful fxg3 and resigned immediately, not waiting to face 26 Qe8+ Rf8 27 Qxf8+! Kxf8 28 Ne5+ Kg8 29 Nxg6 regaining the Queen with interest. One idea is 29...gxh2+ 30 Kxh2 hxg6 31 Bf6 Ba5 32 Ne7+ Nxe7 33 dxe7 Bd7 34 Be5 threatening mate in two, along with rapid promotion of the powerful advanced e-pawn.

This extraordinary effort by Akopian (Armenia) naturally brought renewed worldwide attention to Rossolimo’s 3 Bb5 Anti-Sicilian (see also Vasiukov-Van Wely, Game #8). It is quite often successful in curbing Black’s counter initiative. There is also the modern delay in advancing the d-pawn while preparing this advance with c2-c3.

Flip a coin. 3 Bb5 provides a lifetime hit, stab, probe main line opening attack; a “win-mill” that is often a tragic, unexplored swamp for the defender:

Game #2. Rossolimo vs. Romanenko, Bad Gastein 1948. First Brilliancy Prize 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 g6 4 0-0 Bg7 5 Re1 Nf6 6 Nc3 Nbd7 7 e5! Nxe5 8 d3 Nxb5 9 Nxb5 a6 10 Nd6+! (diagram)

A wonderful combination begins.

10...exd6 11 Bg5! + - Qa5 12 exd6+ Kf8

13 Re8+!! Kxe8 14 Qe2+ Kf8 15 Be7+!! Ke8

16 Bd8+!! Kxd8 17 Ng5 Black resigns.

Theme: Overworked Piece. Black can defend e7 or f7, but not both.


1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 e5 Ng4 5 Bxe6 dxe6 6 0-0 g6 7 Re1 Bg7 8 h3 Nh6 9 Nc3 b6? (9...Nf5, 9...0-0) 10 d4! exd4 11 Nxd4 c5? (11...Bd7 12 e6; 11...Qc7 12...e6; 11...Qd7 12 Qf3! 11...Bb7)

12 Ne6!! (diagram) Qd7

12...Qxd1 13 Rxd1 Bd7 14 Nb5+!

13 Nxe7!! Kxe7 (13...Qxd1 14 Rxd1 Kxe7

15 Bg5+ Ke6 16 Rd6+ Kf5 17 f4 intending

18 Bxh6 Bxh6 19 Rf6 mate - Kholmov)
14 Bxh6! Bxh6 15 Qf3 Bg7 16 Nd5+! (Planning 17 Nf6!; 16 Qxa8? Bb7
17 Qxa7 Qc6 18 f3 Ra8 =) Kd8 17 Rad1 Bb7 (17...Qb7 18 e6!! - Kholmov)
18 Qb5 +- Be6 19 Nxb6! axb6 20 Qxf7 Bxe5 21 Rxd7 Bxd7 22 Rxe5 Kc7
23 Re7 Rad8 24 a4! g5 25 Qd5 Rhe8 26 Rxd7 g4 27 a5 gxh3 28 axb6+ Kxb6
29 Rxd7 Black resigns.

Game #4. L. Evans vs. W. Browne, Reno, Nevada, 1970

"The most brilliant game I ever witnessed." - Acers.
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Bd7 4 Bxd7+ Qxd7 5 0-0
"The first time I've ever used this variation." - L. Evans.
Nc6 6 d4 cxd4 7 Nxd4 g6 ("I caught you.")
- Evans. "I know it." - Browne... 7...Nf6 immediately prevents the advance of the c-pawn with a bind.)
8 c4! Nf6 9 Ne3 Nxd4 10 Qxd4
Bg7 11 b3 0-0 12 Bb2 Qe6? (12...Ne8 fights back)
13 Nxd5 ± (diagram) Rfc8
(13...Ne8 14 Qd2 Bxb5 15 Qxb5 Qxe4? 16 Rae1 +-) 14 f4! Ne8 15 Qf2 Bxb5 16 Qxe2 Ne7
17 f5! Qd7 18 Ne3 f6 19 Rad1 Qe6 (19...b5
20 e5! ± - Acers) 20 Nd5 Nxd5 21 exd5 Qd7
(21...Qc5+ 22 Kh1 g5 23 Qc2 Rc7 24 h4! ± - Acers) 22 fxg6 hxg6 23 Rde1 Kf7
24 Re6 (Intending 25 Rxf6+! exf6 26 Qxf6+ Kg8 27 Re7 +-) Rf8 25 g4! Kg7
(25...g5 26 Rxf6+ exf6 27 Qxf6+ Kg8 28 Qxg5+ Qg7 29 Rg6 +-) 26 g5 Qd8
27 Rf1 Qb6 (27...Rf7 28 Rxe7 +-) 28 Kh1 Rae8 29 gxf6+ Kh7 30 Rxe7+
Rxe7 31 fxe7 Re8 32 Qf6 Black resigns.

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 g6 4 0-0 Bg7 5 Rel Nf6 6 e5!
(Threat: 12 Nxd6) Qd7 (11...e6 12 Nf5 ++)
12 Bf4 e5 (diagram)
13 Bxe5! dxe5 14 Rxe5+ Be7 15 Rd5! Qe8
16 Nf5 Kf8 17 Nxe7 Kxe7 18 Re5+
Black resigns.

Game #6. J. Benjamin (USA) vs. N. Hua (China), Shanghai 2002.
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Ne6 3 Bb5 g6 4 0-0 Bg7 5 Rel Nf6 6 e5!
The "Rock-in-the-Throat pawn structure that Joel Benjamin is both familiar and successful with." - Jennifer Shahade (Chess Life)
Nd5 7 Ne3 Nc7 8 Bxc6 dxc6
9 Ne4! Ne6 10 d3 0-0 11 Be3 b6 12 Qd2 Nd4 13 Nxd4 cxd4 14 Bb6 c5 15 Qf4
Bb7 16 Bxg7 Kxg7 17 b3 Qd5 (An illusion. Black’s Queen and Bishop are but tall pawns, sealed, lost - Acers) 18 Qg3 Rad8 19 Re2 f5 (waiting permits 20 f4
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Bd7 4 Bxd7+ Qxd7 5 c4 Nc6 6 Nc3 Nf6 7 0-0 g6 8 d4 cxd4 9 Nxd4 Bd7 10 Nde2 Qe6 11 Nd5 Qxe2 12 Nc7+ Kd8 13 Nxa8

Qxe4 14 Nb6+ axb6 15 Nc3 (diagram)
See notes to Sicilian Third Game analysis for opening coverage. Ra8 16 a4 Ne4 17 Nxe4 Rxe4 18 Qb3 f5 19 Bg5 Qb4 20 Qf7 Be5 21 h3 Rxa4 22 Bxa4 Qxe4 23 Bh6 Bxb2 24 Qxb6 Qe4 25 Qf7 Bd6 26 Qe8! f4 27 Qf7 Be5 28 h4 b5 29 h5 Qe4 30 Qf5+ (If White wants to win, he can't avoid the exchange of queens, but naturally he doesn't unite Black's pawns. -Stohl) Qe6 31 Qxe6+ Kxe6 32 g4 fxg4 33 g5
e6! 38 b6 Ne7 39 Rb1 e5 40 Be3 Ke4 41 Bxd4 cxd4 42 Kg2 h6 43 Kg3 Ke3 44
h7 Ng6 45 Ke4 Lc2 46 Re1 d3 47 Kf5 b1(Q) 48 Rxb1 Kxb1 49 Kxg6 d2 50 h8(Q) d1(Q) 51 Qh7 b5?! 52 Kf6+ Kb2 53 Qh7+ Ka1 54 Qf5+ b4 55 Qxb4 Qf3+ 56 Kg7 d5 57 Qd4+ Kb1 58 g6 Qe4 (58...Qf5!) 59 Qg1+ Kb2 60 Qf2+! Kc1 61 Kf6 d4 62 g7 Black resigns.

Game #8. E. Vasiukov vs. L. van Wely, Moscow 2002, Aeroflot International, Round Brilliant Prize. 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Qxd4 Ne6 5 Bb5 Bd7 [White is ahead after 5...Qa5+ 6 Nc3 Qxb5 7 Nxb5 Nxd4 8 N3xd4. I also found 7 Qxg2! (Yakima, 1972) Qxb2! 8 Qxf8+ Kxf8 9 Bxb2 + Acers] 6 Bxc6 bxc6 7

Qxc6 8 Bg5 e6 9 0-0-0 Be7 10 Re1 0-0 11 Kb1 Qa5 12 Qd2 Qa6 13 Nd4 Rfc8 14 f4! h6 15 h4! (diagram) Qe4 16 g4! Kf8 17 f5 hxg5 18 hxg5 Nd7 19 fx6 Ne5 20 Rh1 fx6 21 b3! Qb4 22 Rh8+ Kb7 23 Qf4+ Bf6 24 Rh7! Kg8 25 gx6! Kh7 26 Qg5! Rc7 27 Nxe6 Ra8 28 fxa8 Kg7 29 Rh1 Be4 30 Rh6 Kf7 31 Nxe7 Qxe3 32 Qe8(+) 1-0.
The Sicilian Defense has been assayed by nearly every 20th Century player of consequence, and shows no signs of slowing. In some of the lines below, there are echoes of Volume I, whether it’s the Italian c3/d4 pawn center or the Bc4 development. From this familiar starting point, a newer approach, Bb5 will be considered, and given a distinctly American interpretation.

First Game
2 Bc4 Acers System

Second Game 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bc4
Peter Leko Attack

Third Game
2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ - Moscow (Kasparov vs. World) Attack

Fourth Game 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 - The Rossolimo Attack

Fifth Game 2 Nf3 a6/e6/g6 3 c3
Advanced Alapin Sveshnikov Attack

First Game

2 Bc4 - The “Primitive” Acers System

a) 2...b6? 3 Bxf7+ 1-0 Acers-Repass, New Orleans, 1963.
b) 2...a6 3 d3 h5? 4 Bxf7+ 1-0

Acers-Buining, New Orleans 1964.
3...e6 4 Nf3 d5 5 exd5 exd5 6 Be2 = Acers-Wills,
New Orleans 1963.
3...Ne6 4 a4 =.
c) 2...d6 3 d3 Ne6 4 Nf3 Nf6 5 c3 Bg4? 6 Qb3+

d) 2...d6 3 Nf3 see Second Game.
e) 2...Nf6 3 e5 with interesting play, or 3 d3 = (Acers)
The Sicilian Defense, 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bc4 (Second Game) 81

Second Game

2 Nf3 d6 3 Bc4 - The Peter Leko Attack

a) 3...e6 4 0-0 Nf6 5 Re1 Be7 6 c3 0-0 7 Bb3 b5 8 d4 cxd4 9 exd4 Bb7 10 Bc2 b4 11 Nbd2 Qc7 12 e5 dxe5 13 dxe5 Nfd7 14 Ne4 Rc8 15 Bd3 Ne5 (Kovalev-Ilinic, Belgrade, 1998)

16 Nxe5 Qxe5 17 Ng5 Qd5 18 Bxh7+ Kh8 19 Be4 Qxd1 20 Rxd1 Bxe4 21 Nxe4 Nc6 22 Nd6= (Ilinic, Informator)

b) 3...Nf6 4 Qe2 Nc6 5 h3 e6 6 Bb3 Be7 7 c3 b6 8 0-0 0-0 9 Rd1 a5 10 d4 cxd4 11 cxd4 a4 12 Be4 d5 13 exd5 Nxd5 with equal prospects. Leko-Romero, Leon 1994.

3...Nf6 4 d3 Nc6

a) 5 c3 e6 6 Bb3 Be7 7 0-0

a1) 7...0-0 8 Re1 b6 9 Nbd2 Ba6 10 Nf1 Ne5 11 Bc2 Re8 (Waitzkin-Browne, US 1995) 12 d4 = White executes the center expansion idea à la Sveshnikov (see Fifth Game for comparison).

a2) 7...d5 8 Qe2 0-0 9 e5 Nd7 10 c4! Nb6 11 Nc3 Kh8 12 Bf4 Ne6 13 Rad1 Nd4 14 Nxd4 cxd4 15 Nb1 a5 16 Bg3 Bd7 17 Nd2 with more board room for White. (Yudashin-Golod, Israel 1999).

b) 5 0-0 Nc6 6 Bb5+ Bd7 7 Bxd7+ Qxd7 8 e5! dxe5 9 Nxe5 Qd5 10 Bf4 Re8 11 Nc3 ± (Yudashin - 5...e6; 5...g6 Informator.)
c) 5 Nbd2 g6 6 a3 Bg7 7 0-0 0-0 8 Ba2 b5 9 Re1 Rb8 10 c3 a5 11
d4 cxd4 12 exd4 Qb6 13 Nf1 Bg4 14 Be3 Bxf3 15 gxf3
Qb7= (Informator: with equal chances,
Adams-Khalifman, Archaus 1997)
16 Ng3 with the idea of f4-f5 ± - Acers.

On 5...Na5 6 Ba4+ Bd7 7 c3 Bxa4 8 Qxa4+ Nc6 9 0-0
with a small advantage - Yudashin.

6 0-0 Bg7 7 Nbd2 0-0 8 0-0 Bd7 7 c3 Bxa4 8 Qxa4+ Nc6 9 0-0
with a small advantage - Yudashin.

6...Bg7 7 Nbd2 0-0 8 0-0 b6 9 Re1 Ba6 10 Nf1 Ne5

11 Be2 Nfd7 12 Bg5 h6 13 Bh4 ±
White is better.

Things got even better later.
Adams-Gelfand, Linares 1997 - Supplemental Game #16
The Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ (Third Game)

Third Game

2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+

The Moscow (Kasparov versus The World) Attack.
The final evolution of the American style. Indeed, a “hammer” solution of chess openings. “To help your pieces so they can help you.” - Paul Morphy.

The American Chess Play Style

captured by Richard Reti in Masters of the Chessboard is utilitarian:
Get right down to business.

First was the Massachusetts colossus Harry Nelson Pillsbury (1872-1906) who effortlessly played twenty opponents blindfolded, his common sense play quite lethal:

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Be7
5 e3 0-0 6 Nf3 b6 7 Bd3 Bb7 8 cxd5 exd5 9 Ne5! Nb7 10 f4! c5 11 0-0 c4? 12 Bc2 a6
13 Qf3! b5 14 Qh3! g6 15 f5 b4 16 fxg6 hxg6 17 Qh4! hxg5 18 Bxg5 Qxg5 19 Rf6+ a5 20 Rf1 Ra6 21 Bxg6! fxg6 22 Rxf8+ Bxf8

(diagram) whereupon White announced forced mate in six.


Next was the most important American chess theorist ever, Frank J. Marshall (1877-1944). “He played chess like an Apache.” - James Schroeder (US Chess Critic, Journalist, Master Player).

Direct counter, making the pieces dance was the hallmark of the quite lucrative Marshall professional career - a boon for chess patrons as well.

(1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nf6?! 3 exd5 Nxd5 4 e4?! Nf6! 5 Nc3 e5!)

Alekhine-Marshall, Baden Baden 1925) Marshall’s even more momentous dash of genius was the most durable chess creation ever: The Marshall Counterattack in the Ruy Lopez. 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 (Built upon Morphy’s eternal discovery, 3...a6!) 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bh3 0-0 8 c3 d5! (The initial surprise Marshall unearthed) 9 exd5 Nxd5 10 Nxe5 Nxe5 11 Rxe5 when both 11...Nf6 and 11...c6! 12 d4 Bd6 13 Re1 Qh5 offer dangerous over-the-board chances for Black counterplay.

(Capablanca-Marshall, New York 1918).
One half century later, the Marshall variation twice cost a World Champion, R. J. Fischer victory in the Piatagorsky Tournament, Santa Monica 1966, when both Jan Hein Donner (Holland) and Boris Spassky (Russia) scored with Marshall’s wonder work. To this day, Marshall’s counterattack is unrefuted, carefully avoided on important occasions by Garry Kasparov, the highest rated player of all time. English Number One, World Class Top-10 GM Michael Adams fears no evil, coldly offers the gambit, dares opponents to do anything about Black’s well placed pieces, powerful piece/pawn coordination.

The American style goes on - legendary Mexican Grandmaster Carlos Torre (Believe it or not - Louisiana State Champion, 1919) got right down to business with: 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 Bg5! (The Torre Attack) versus Emanuel Lasker at Moscow, 1925, winning a truly shocking “windmill” game, then disappearing from the world chess stage.

The chess world became aware of the “Fischer-Sozin” Attack (1958) 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Be4 - No waiting here, Black looks into “the eye of the tiger” - now. Fischer against a giant in U.S. chess history - a most notable moment occurred after 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Ne6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 g6 5 Ne3 (The American style - never c4 blocking pieces) Bg7 6 Be3 Nf6 7 Bc4 (Fischer’s “all purpose” Sicilian Attack) 0-0 8 Bb3! Na5? 9 e5! Ne8? 10 Bxf7+!!

A “book trap”, prepared analysis, just another handy plus, development, simple chess right now. (Black will lose the Queen after 10...Rx7 11 Ne6, or the King after 10...Kxf7 11 Ne6 Kxe6 12 Qd5+ Kf5 13 g4+ Kxg4 14 Rg1+).

Finally, GM Walter Browne’s 1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Ne3 g6 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 Be2 0-0 6 0-0 Bg7 7 Be3 Nc6 8 Qd2! - see the Pirc Defense chapter for the current state of the American style analysis in this variation.
A. 3...Nc6  B. 3...Bd7  C. 3...Nd7

The theory of the “Moscow - Kasparov vs. World” attack aims to deny all the usual counterplay along the “c” file by refusing to allow the exchange of a center pawn at d2 for the wing pawn at ...c5, unless it is replaced by another white pawn at d4. The winner of sixty international tournament first prizes, Bent Larsen (Denmark). “The Giant Dane” - was the first modern to seriously question 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 - White is better unquestionably, but Black has been granted the open c-file and lost a center pawn for a flank pawn. Far more important, Black’s “pet variation” counterplay is invited.

A. 3...Nc6 (diagram) 4 0-0

Very dangerous also is simply 4 Bxc6 bxc6 5 0-0 when the Black pawns are permanently weak.

White possesses a serious lead in development to boot. Black can hold, but care iis required:

a) 5...Bg4 6 d3

a1) 6...e5 7 Nbd2 Nf6 8 h3 Bh5 9 c3 Be7 10 Re1 0-0 11 Nf1 Ne8 12 g4 Bg6 13 Ng3 Ne7 14 d4 cxd4 15 cxd4 f6 16 Be3 ± Nevednichy-Babula, Krymica, 1998.

a2) 6...Nf6 7 c3 Nd7 8 Be3 Qb8 9 N1d2! (A powerful gambit by Rublevsky) 9...Qxb2 10 d4! cxd4 11 cxd4 g6 12 Qa4 Qb5 13 Qa3 Nb6 14 Rfc1Bg7 15 Rab1 Qa4 16 Qxa4 Nxa4 17 Rxc6 Rc8 18 d5! ± Rublevsky-Ivanchuk, Poland 1998.

b) 5...e5 6 Re1 Nf6 7 c3 Be7 8 d4 cxd4 9 cxd4 Qc7 10 Nc3 0-0 11 h3 Rb8 12 Qc2 Be6 13 h3 Rfc8 14 Bb2 ± Thipsay-Prasad, India 1992.
The Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+

Third Game

4...Bd7 5 c3 Nf6 6 Re1 a6 7 Bf1!

In the last official world rated game of his life, Mikhail Tal tried
7 Ba4 e4! 8 d4 exd3 9 Bg5 e6 10 Qxd3 Be7 11 Bxf6 gxf6
12 Bxc6 Bxc6 13 c4 0-0 14 Nc3 Kh8 15 Rad1 Rg8 16 Qe3 Qf8
GM Akopian now recommends 18 Nxc6 Rxc6 19 b3 =.

7...Bg4 8 d3

British GM Dan King came up with a try for initiative: 8 h3 Bxf3 9
Qxf3 g6 10 Qd1 Bh6! 11 a4 0-0 12 Na3 Rb8 13 Ne5 14 b4 cxb4
15 cxb4 d5 16 b5! King-Sadler, London 1991. Black should play
to hold: 16...Nd4 17 Nxd4 exd4 18 d3 Bxc1 (King - Informator).

8...e6

Black was also under long term pressure after 8...g6 9 Nbd2 Bg7 10
h3 Bxf3 11 Nxf3 0-0 12 d4 exd4 13 cxd4 Rc8 14 Qb3 Re7 15 Bf4!
Adams-Tiviakov, Groningen, 1997 - Supplemental Game #17

9 Nbd2 Be7 10 h3 Bh5 11 g4Bg6 12 Nh4 d5 13 f4

Position after 13 f4

13...dxe4 14 dxe4 Nd7!

Now 15 Nxg6 hxg6 16 Nf3 Qc7
17 Qe2 0-0-0 18 Bd2 e5 19 f5 gxf5
20 exf5 with good chances for
both players.

Arkhipov-Dokhoian, Munster 1993 - (Dokhoian, Informator).
B. 3...Bd7

“The B52 Bomber” - Acers. (Ed. - “B52” is the E.C.O. code)

4 Bxd7 Qxd7

4...Nxd7 is a popular alternative, and has been the subject of several important contests: 5 0-0 Ngf6 6 Qe2 e6. Now:

a) 7 b3 (diagram) has been played by GM Michael Adams with success:

a1) 7...Be7 8 Bb2 0-0 9 c4 a6 10 d4 cxd4 11 Nxd4 Rc8 12 Nc3 Qa5 13 Rad1 Qh5 14 f3 Rfe8 15 Kh1 Bf8 16 Qe1 Qa5 17 f4 e5 18 fxe5 Qxe5 19 Qf2 Adams-Kengis, Shalernes Skakklub 1997, or

11...Qb6! 12 Nc2 Rac8 13 Ne3 Rfe8 14 Kh1 Qc5 15 Rac1 Qh5 16 Qxh5 Nxh5 17 g3 Adams-Tiviakov, New York 1994.

a2) The counterintuitive 7...g6!? (Psakhis) aims to “defang” the Bb2. It is not too late now for 8 c3 Bg7 9 d4, where White has the extra option of playing Ba3. Ivanchuk-Kasparov, Las Palmas 1996 continued routinely 8 Bb2 Bg7 9 d4 cxd4 10 Bxd4 0-0 11 Rd1 b5!? 12 Qxb5 (12 e5 dxe5 13 Nxe5 Nxe5 14 Bxe5 Qb6= Psakhis) Nxe4 13 Qe2 d5 14 c4 Rc8 15 Bxg7 Kxg7 16 Qb2+ Qf6 17 Qxf6+ Ndxf6 and the game was soon Drawn (½-½, 23)

b) 7 c3 Be7 8 d4 here also has merit, when both players can look forward to “Opening Knight” manoevers:

b1) 8...0-0 9 e5 Ne8 10 dxe5 Nxe5 11 c4 dxe5 12 Nxe5 Qd4 13 Nc3 Bd6 14 Nf3 Qd3∞ Wahls-Groszpeter, Munich 1989.
b2) 8...cxd4 9 cxd4 d5 10 e5 Ne4 11 Ne1 Qb6 12 Be3 f6 13 f3 Ng5 14 Nd3 Nf7 15 Nc3 0-0 Rfe1 ± Chekhov-Ftacnik, Bundesliga 1992.

5 0-0

World Champion Kasparov could have offered a remarkable gambit hereabouts, which Argentine GM Miguel Quinteros captured all over the world in 1974: 5 c4 Qg4?! 6 0-0 Qxe4 7 d4!

Browne-Quinteros, Wijk Aan Zee, 1974 - Survey Game #5.

b2) 8...Qg4 9 Na3 a6 10 c5! dxc5 11 Nc4 Qg6 12 Nfe5 Qf5 13 g4! Qf6 14 Bg5!! Qxg5 15 Qf3! when Black will never make it out of the opening alive. (Analysis: Peptan and Stoica, Easy Guide to Bb5 Sicilian - by S. Pedersen). White threatens 16 Qxf7, 16 Qxb7 and (finally) 16 Nd6+ opening all highways to the “home alone” Black monarch. - Acers. Or 9...Nc6 10 Nb5 0-0-0 11 h3 Qd7 12 Nfd4 ± (Peptan, Stoica; Pedersen, Acers).

(Avoids 5...Nf6? 6 e5! - Acers)
The Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+

Third Game

89

Also 6 d4 L. Evans-Browne, Reno USA 1970 - Survey Game #4.

6 c4!

Black threatens 10..Nxe4 winning a pawn while destroying White’s center hotel, i.e. 10 f3?? Nxe4 -- (Stohl, Informator).

6...Nf6 7 Nc3 g6 8 d4 cxd4 9 Nxd4 Bg7

10 N4e2! Qe6!

(diagram)

A suggestion of the New York teenage International Master Irina Krush, chief adviser to the World Internet Team, based on the long forgotten games of GM Sosonko of Holland, and others.

All other quiet continuations lead to a light bind and cramped play for the defender. Virtually a certain loss for the worldwide consulting Internet team that requires “sign posts”. Irina’s move is a bid to take the initiative, which Kasparov is unable to trump, nor should he have tried... Black destroys White’s center and is more than willing to sacrifice a Rook for a Knight, with dynamic chances and full compensation. (A very Kasparov-like conception!)

11 Nd5?

With the benefit of history, “all can be wise”. GM Stohl showed White’s proper course at Batumi, 1999: 11 Qb3! 0-0!

12 Nf4 (12 Qxb7? Rfc8 ⊥) Qe8 13 Nfd5 e6 14 Nxf6 Bxf6 15 Bh6 Rd8 16 Rac1 Ne5 (Damljanovic-Stohl) when the problem-like move 17 Qd1! (Stohl) holds the Black counterplay nicely:
90 The Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ (Third Game)

a) 17...Nxc4? 18 b3 Nb6 19 Nd5 wins the Queen or Bishop.
b) 17...Qxc4? 18 Nd5 +- ditto.
c) 17...a6 18 b3 Qc6 = (Stohl / Informator)

11...Qxe4 12 Nc7+ Kd7 13 Nxa8 Qxc4 14 Nb6 axb6

†. Black controls the board... for sixty days.
- see Survey Game #7 for the complete game.

C. 3...Nd7

Kasparov’s “Tight” Variation.

4 d4 Nf6
C1. 5 0-0.
C2. 5 Nc3.

Black plays to win at all costs, “discombobulating” his pieces.
Vasily Ivanchuk (White) defeated Kasparov with a direct attack gambit variation at

Alexei Shirov played “holding the center”, also obtaining a good
position for White at Linares three years later.

C1. 5 0-0 cxd4

Kasparov rejects the dangerous gambit 5...Nxe4?! 6 Qe2 Nf6
7 dxc5 dxc5 8 Bg5! Bonchev-Nicevski, Sofia 1976
(8...e6 9 Rd1 Be7 10 Ne5 †)
The Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ (Third Game)

6 Qxd4 a6

Crammed is 6...e5 7 Qd3 h6 8 c4 ± Hug-Kavalek, World Team Olympiad, Haifa 1976.

7 Bxd7+ Bxd7 8Bg5! h6?!

8...e6 9 Nbd2 Rc8 is far safer - Ivanchuk / Informator.

9 Bxf6 gxf6 10 c4! e6 11 Nc3 Rc8 12 Kh1 h5 13 a4 h4 14 h3 Be7 15 b4 a5 16 b5 Qc7 17 Nd2 Qc5 18 Qd3 Rg8 19 Rae1 Qg5 20 Rg1 Qf4 (20...b6 (Ivanchuk) may be necessary to blockade) 21 Rf1 b6 22 Ne2 Qh6 23 c5! Rxc5 24 Nc4 ± White's powerful knight invades the queen's wing, obtaining a pawn majority for the endgame. - Ivanchuk-Kasparov, Linares 1991 Supplemental Game #19.

C2. 5 Nc3 cxd4

6 Qxd4 e5 7 Qd3 h6 8 Be3 Be7 9 Bc4 a6 10 0-0 Qc7 11 Nh4 g6 12 g3 b5 13 Bd5 Bb7 (diagram)

M. Suba

...with mutual chances.

T. Stanciu

Romania 1985.
The year, 1971. I saw Grandmaster and “Opening Theoretician” Rossolimo only once in my lifetime - for little more than a glance. Bruce “Searching for Bobby Fischer” Pandolfini was graciously walking me all over New York to must-visit chess haunts. On the Greenwich Village sidewalk, Mr. Pandolfini gestured to his left as we passed a cafe-Laundromat. “That’s Rossolimo”. Above his head was a clothespin with the dangling arrow and note...

Chess Grandmaster - $8 an hour

I nodded politely and continued on my way... this exact position was on the board a precious ten seconds in time. Rossolimo died in a tragic fall from a building, slipping on wintry ice after giving a private chess lesson deep into the night. If only I had stopped, spent a little more time... strangely, in flash color, I still remember GM Rossolimo pulling at his shirt sleeve to expose his watch, noting the time for the game just beginning...

3...g6

Chess genius Rossolimo also devised strategy for alternatives:

a) 3...a6?!
   4 Bxc6 dxc6 5 d3 Qc7 6 a4 a5 7 Nbd2 e5 8 Ne4 Bd6
   9 0-0 Bg4 10 h3 Bxf3 11 Qxf3 Ne7 12 Qg3 Ng6 13 Ne3 ±
   (Glek - Modern Chess Opening Encyclopedia - (Kalichenko))
b) 3...Nd4 4 Nxd4 cxd4 5 0-0 ± or 5 c4! a6 6 Ba4 e5 7 0-0 Qa5
   8 d3 b5 9 Bb3 Nf6 10 f4 ± with a real attack in view.
   R. Garcia-Cafure, Argentina 1974 - MCOE - Kalichenko.

c) 3...Qb6 4 Nc3 e6 5 0-0 Nge7 6 Re1 a6 7 Bxc6 Nxc6 8 d3 Be7
   9 Nd5! ± Khalifman-Kovalev, Borzhomi 1984.

d) 3...Nf6 4 Qe2 g6 5 Nc3 Bg7 6 e5! Ng4 7 Bxc6 dxc6 8 h3 Nh6
   9 g4 0-0 10 d3 f5 11 g5 Nf7 12 Bf4 Be6 13 h4 ± Glek; Kalichenko, or 4 e5 - see Kholmov-Keres, Tbilisi 1959, Game Survey #3

e) 3...Qc7 4 0-0 Nf6 5 Re1 e6 6 c3! Be7 7 d4 cxd4 8 exd4 d5 9 e5
   Ne4 10 Nbd2 Nxd2 11 Bxd2 Bd7 12 Rc1 with advantage.

f) 3...e6 :
   f1) 4 Bxc6 bxc6 5 0-0 with careful play required to stay afloat:
      5...Ne7 6 Re1 Ng6 7 c3 Be7 8 d4 0-0 9 Be3 d5 10 Qc2
      Huebner-Sveshnikov, Munich 1992. Also 9 Nbd2 - Glek.
   f2) 4 0-0 Nge7 5 Re1 a6 6 Bxc6 Nxc6 7 d4 cxd4 8 Nxd4 d6
      9 Nxc6 bxc6 10 Qg4! e5 11 Qg3 Be6 12 b3 f6 13 f4! Kf7
      Glek-Ruzale, Minsk, 1986. 14 c4 ± - Glek (MCOE).

An early game went 4 0-0 Bg7 5 Re1 Nf6 6 Nc3 Nd4 7 e5!
   see Rossolimo-Romanenko, Bad Gastein 1948, Survey Game #2.
   or 6 e5! Nd5 7 Nc3, as in Benjamin-Hua, Shanghai 2002,
   Survey Game #6.

4...bxc6

4...dxc6 5 h3 Bg7 6 d3 e5 7 Be3 Qe7 8 Nbd2 Nf6 9 a3 a5 10 Nc4
   Nd7 11 0-0 a4 12 Qd2 0-0 13 b4 axb3 14 cxb3 ± Analysis by Glek.
   - White intends queenside invasion with b3-b4 soon.

5 0-0 Bg7 6 Re1
Alternatives are difficult:

a) 6...Nd5 7 e4 c5 8 c4! dxe4 9 Qxd4 a6

   a1) 10...0-0 11 Qh4 d6 12 Bh6 Ne6 13 Nc3 Kasparov-Salov, Dortmund 1992.

   a2) 10...Ne6 11 Qh4 h6 12 Nc3 d6 13 Rd1 Bb7 14 Bc4 c5 15 exd6 exd6 16 Ng3 0-0 17 Rxd6 Qb8 Rd2 ± - Kharlov (MCOE).

b) 6.Nh6 7 c3 0-0 8 d4 cxd4 9 exd4 d6 10 Nc3 f6 11 b3 Nf7 12 Bb2 Qa5 13 Qc2 Bd7 14 Nd2 Rac8 15 Ne4 Qa6 16 Rad1 ± with total development and more space for White.

Illescas-Kramnik, Spain 1993.

7 b4! (Fischer)

- an extraordinary gambit which can not be easily accepted. Fischer invented it while collecting three million US dollars in cash during his 30 game match versus Spassky (1992). "Fischer never saw a check - we took three million dollars in two suitcases right to his hotel room, put them on a bed and left!" - Jezdimir Vlasiljevic (Tycoon, Match Sponsor).

Also possible is the perfectly good 7 c3 Ne7 8 d4 exd4 9 cxd4 exd4 10 Nxd4 0-0 11 Ne3 Bb7 12 Bg5! h6 13 Bh4 g5 14 Bg3 d5 15 exd5 Nxd5 16 Ne4! ± with definite superiority for White.


7...cxb4 8 a3! c5 9 axb4 cxb4 10 d4 exd4 11 Bb2

White has formidable compensation for two pawns - with interest...
Quick development, a direct attacking plan and the better pawn structure.

11...d6 12 Nxd4

Fischer's threat: 13 Nc6 Bxb2 14 Nxd8 Bxa1 15 Nxf7! wins - Acers.

12...Qd7 13 Nd2 (diagram)

White has a serious initiative, although Dutch Number One Grandmaster Jan Timman believes Black can hold with 13...Ne7 (Informator).

Also quite satisfactory but "wild west" was Spassky's continuation:

13...Bb7?! 14 Nc4! Nh6 15 Nf5!! Bxb2

16 Nxd6+ Kf8 17 Nhx6 f6
"Of course" 17...Bxa1 was better (Forcing Fischer to "prove" the attack: 18 Qxa1 Qxd6 19 Qxh8+ Ke7 20 Qxh7 Qe6) - Timman.

18 Ndf7! Qxd1 19 Raxd1 Ke7 20 Nhx8 Bxh8 21 Nf5+!!
- (back again) Fischer winning the endgame with wonderful style.
- petite small combinations.

Supplemental Game #20.
Fifth Game

2 Nf3 The Alapin-Sveshnikov Attacking Complex

A. 2...a6 3 c3
B. 2...e6 3 c3
C. 2...g6 3 c3
D. 2...Nf6 3 e5 Nd5 4 c3

The Advanced Modern Evgeny Sveshnikov System (c3)
When the Rossolimo-Moscow Variations are not allowed by Black...

A. 2...a6

The O’Kelly Sicilian Variation
- Advanced Modern Alapin-Sveshnikov Attack.

3 c3

Modest, prudent, yet poisonous in its possibilities.
The “all purpose” attacking system of Semyon Alapin (1856-1923), who competed with success in world class tournaments. White builds a center with c3 and d4 no matter what against the Sicilian Defense. As 2...a6 is not significant in center affairs, White has gained a move on the 2 c3 Alapin-Sveshnikov. This attack was re-tooled beyond belief by Grandmaster Sveshnikov who scored seventy four percent (74%) of all possible points with it during fifty years of international play. - “Making a good living for me and my family.” - Sveshnikov (Kasparovchess.com).
The Sicilian Defense 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 other moves (Fifth Game)  97

3...Nf6

3...d6 4 d4 Qc7 5 Bd3 Bg4 6 0-0 e6 7 h3 Bh5 8 Re1 Nd7 9 Nbd2
Nf6 10 Nf1 Be7 11 Ng3 Bg6 12 d5 ±
Parma-Korchnoi, Belgrade 1964.

4 e5 Nd5 5 d4 cxd4 6 Bc4! Nb6 7 Bb3 d5

8 exd6 e6 9 Qxd4 Qxd6 10 Qe4
N8d7 11 Bc2 Nf6 12 Qe2 Nbd7 13 0-0 Be7

(Position After 7...d5)
White has the edge ±
14 Nbd2 Qc7 15 Ne4 Nxe4 16
Qxe4 Nf6 17 Qe2 Bd6 18 Rd1 ±
(MCOE).

B.  2...e6

3 c3 d5 4 exd5 exd5 5 d4 Ne6 6 Bb5 Bd6 7 0-0 Nge7 8 dxc5 Bxc5
9 Nbd2 Bg4 10 Qa4 Bh5 11 Qh4 Bg6 12 Nb3 Bb6 13 Nfd4 ± with

C.  2...g6

3 c3 Bg7 4 d4 cxd4 5 cxd4 d6 6 Nc3 ± Leading in development,
White has the classic center control with open lines needed for
advantage. Black plays from afar.

D.  2...Nf6

The Rubinstein Variation.
4 c3 (Akers) with possible transposition into the main line
Sveshnikov Sicilian - 4...e6 5 d4 cxd4 6 cxd4 (diagram)

a) 6...d6 7 Nc3 Nxc3 8 bxc3 Nc6
9 Bf4 dxe5 10 Bxe5 Nxe5 11 Nxe5
Bd6 12 Bb5+ Kf8 13 Qe2 ±
Sveshnikov-Alburt, Russia 1968,
or
b) 6...b6 7 Nc3 Bb7 8 Bd3 Be7 9
0-0 0-0 10 Qe2 f5 11 Bd2 a6 12
Be4 Nxc3 13 bxc3 b5 14 Bd3 Ba3
15 Rfb1! ±

4...e6
4... Nxc3?! 5 dxc3 Nc6 6 Bf4 e6 7 Qe2! Qc7 8 Qe3 b6 9 0-0-0 Bb7
10 Bd3 h6 11 Nd2 d5 12 exd6 Bxd6 13 Bxd6 Qxd6 14 Nc4 Qc7 15
Be4 Rd8 16 Rx8 Nxd8 17 Rd1 0-0 18 Ne5! Bxe4
19 Qxe4 f6 20 Ng6 Re8 21 h4 ±

5 Ne4!

5...f5 6 exf6 Nxf6 7 Nxf6+ Qxf6 8 d4 cxd4 9 Nxd4 Nc6 10 Be3 d5
11 c3 a6 12 Be2 Bd6 13 0-0 0-0
(Dolmatov-Pribyl, Tallinn 1985)
Here Dolmatov recommends 14 Nc2 ± with a small positional edge.

5...Nc6 6 c4! Nbd4 7 a3 Qa5 8 Na3 d5 9 exd6 Bxd6 10 d3 Ne5 11
Ng5! Be7 12 f4! Nec6 13 Be3 Nd4 14 Bxd4! cxd4 15 axb4 Qxb4
16 Ra4 Qxb2 17 Ne2 Bd7 18 Ra1 with a small plus as Black’s
Supplemental Games

#1 Fischer, Robert James - Larsen, Bent
Candidates, Denver (1), 1971

#2 Fischer, Robert James - Benko, Pal
US Championship, New York 1963

#3 Spassky, Boris V - Fischer, Robert James
World Championship, Reykjavik (17), 1972

#4 Hort,Vlastimil - Short, Nigel D
Amsterdam, 1982
#5 Fischer, Robert James - Mednis, Edmar John
US Championship, New York 1957
1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Bg5 Bg7 5.Qd2 h6 6.Bf4 c6 7.0-0-0 Qa5 8.Kb1 g5
34.Qg4+ Ke7 35.Rf2 Re8 36.Qg5+ Kd7 37.Rf7+ Ke8 38.Qf5+ Kb8 39.Qd7 1-0

#6 Kasparov, Garry - Topalov, Veselin
Hoogovens Wijk aan Zee, 1999
Kxa5 27.b4+ Ka4 28.Qc3 Qxa5 29.Ra7 Bb7 30.Rxb7 Qc4 31.Qxf6 Bxa3
32.Qxa6+ Kxb4 33.c3+ Kxc3 34.Qa1+ Kd2 35.Qb2+ Kd1 36.Bf1 Rd2 37.Rd7
Rxd7 38.Bxe4 bxc 39.Qxe8 Rd3 40.Qa8 c3 41.Qa4+ Ke1 42.f4 f5 43.Kc1 Rd2
44.Qa7 1-0

#7 Kovacevic, Vlatko - Massana, Jorge
Manila Olympiad, 1992
1.d4 g6 2.e4 Bg7 3.c3 d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.Be2 Nf6 6.Bf3 Qd8 7.Ne2 0-0 8.0-0-0 c6
Na6 27.Bd6 Ne7 28.Bxe7 Qxe7 29.Qxf6+ Qg7 30.Qxg7+ Kxg7 31.b4 Rc8
32.Re7+ Kf6 33.Rxe7 Rxe6 34.Rxa7 1-0

#8 Bronstein, David I - Nikolaevsky, Yuri V
34th Russian Championship, Tbilisi, 1966
1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6 3.c3 Bg7 4.e4 Nf6 5.Bg5 d5 6.Bf4 c6 7.0-0-0 Qa5 8.Bc4 Bg4
27.Rxa7 Rd7 28.Bc8 Re7 29.Bg5 f6 30.Bc3 Ne6 31.Rb7 h6 32.b4 f5 33.b5 Nd8
40.Kf1 1-0
#9 Karpov, Anatoly - Miles, Anthony J
Skara, 1980


#10 Alekhine, Alexander - Fine, Reuben
Pasadena, 1932


#11 Vasiukov, Evgeni - Korchnoi, Viktor
Russian Championship, Leningrad, 1953


#12 Keres, Paul - Schmid, Lothar
Zurich, 1961

#13 Spassky, Boris V - Fischer, Robert James  
World Championship, Reykjavik (13) 1972  
el4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 g6 5.Be4 Nb6 6.Bb3 Bg7 7.Nbd2 0–0 8.h3 a5  
9.a4 dxe5 10.dxe5 Na6 11.0–0 Ne5 12.Qe2 Qe8 13.Ne4 Nb4a4 14.Bxa4 Nxa4  
Qd7 22.Rad1 Re8! 23.f4 Bf5 24.Qe3 Bxe5 25.Qxe5 Qe2 26.Nc2 c6 32.g5 hxg5 33.fxg5 f5  
34.Bg3 Kf7 35.Ne5+ Nxe5 36.Nxe5 b5 37.Rf1 Rh8 38.Bf6 a3 39.Rf4 a2 40.Bc4  
Bxe4 41.d7 Bd5 42.Kg3 Ra7+ 43.c3 Rb8 44.Rd4 e5 45.Rh8+ Ke6 46.Re7+  
Kd6 47.Rd3 c5 48.Rd1 Rxe5 49.Kc1 Kxd7 50.Rxe5+ Kc6 51.Rd6+ Kb7  
52.Re7+ Ka6 53.Rf7 Rd2 Rxe5 b4 54.Rad2 Kb5 55.Rb4 a4 56.Bc3 b3+ 57.Ra1 Qxh5  
58.g6 h4 59.g7 h3 60.Bg7 Rg8 61.Bf8 h2 62.Kc2 Ke6 63.Rd1 b3+ 64.Kc3 h1Q  
Kd5 71.Be5 Rxg7 72.Rxe4 Rd7 73.Rd4+ Kf1 74.Bd4 f2 0–1

#14 Browne, Walter - Fischer, Robert James  
Rovins/Zagreb, 1970  
el.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 g6 5.Be2Bg7 6.c4 Nb6 7.exd6 exd6 8.Nc3 0–0  
9.0–0 Ne6 10.Be3 Bg4 11.b3 d5 12.c5 Ne8 13.h3 Bxh3 14.Bxh3 e5 15.Qd2 Ne7  
f4 23.Be1 Ra6 24.Bb2 f3 25.g3 Qf5 26.Qxf5 gxf5 27.Rad1 Nxb4 28.Rf1 e4  
29.a3 Ne6 30.Rxe6 fxg3 31.Bxg3 gf2+ 32.Kxf2 Kh8 33.Re3 b4 34.axb4 Nxb4  
35.Bxf3 Ra2 36.Rb3 Nc6 37.Kg3 Rg8 38.Kf4 Rb8+ 39.Ke4 Rf7 40.Bg4 Re7+  
41.Kd3 Ra4 42.Ra1 Rxd4+ 43.Bxd4 Bxd4 44.Ra8+ Kg7 45.Rb5 Bf2 46.Bf5  
Ne5+ 47.Kc3 Be1+ 48.Kd4 Ne6+ 49.Ke4 Bb4 50.Bc8 Nd8 51.Ra2 Rc7 52.Bg4  
Be7 53.Kd5 Ne6 54.Rad2 Nbd8 55.Bb1 Bf8 56.Rb2 Be7 57.Qg2 Kh8 58.Ra2  
Kg7 59.Ra8 Bh4 60.Rb8 Rf7 61.Rb2 Kh6 62.Rb6+ Kg7 63.Rb3 h5 64.Be8 Be7  
65.Rb5 Rf3 66.Bxb7 Rxb7 67.g6 Rc3 68.Ra8 h4 69.Ra4 h3 70.Re4 h2 71.Rb1  
Rxc4 72.Kxc4 Bb6 73.Kd5 Bg3 74.Bf8 Kf7 75.Bb3 Ke7 76.Re1 Rf6 77.Ra1  
Ke7 78.Rf1 Ne7 79.Bg2 Ng5 80.Kc5 Ne6+ 81.Kb6 Be7+ 82.Kb7 Bb6 83.Bd5  
Ne5+ 84.Kb6 Na4+ 85.Ka5 Ne5 86.Kb5 Kd8 87.Rf7 Ke8 88.c7 Nd7 89.Kc6  
h1Q 90.Bxh1 Ne5+ 91.Kb6 Be5+ 92.Kc5 Nxf7 93.Kb6 Nd6 94.Bd5 Kd7  
#15 Yudasin, Leonid - Minasian, Artashes
Tilburg rapid, 1993
33.Kh2 Bxb7 34.Qxb7+ Kd8 35.Qxb8+ Ke7 36.Qc7+ Kf8 37.Qc8+ Kf7
38.Qxe6+ Qxe6 39.Nxe6 Kxe6 40.Rc2 h4 41.c5 Kd7 42.e6+ Ke7 43.Re5 Ra1
44.Rxg5 Kxe6 45.Rg4 Rxa2 46.Rxh4 1-0

#16 Adams, Michael - Gelfand, Boris
Linares, 1997
15.Qd1 Ne6 16.Nc3 Qd7 17.f4 f5 18.exf5 gxf5 19.Qh5 e6 20.g4 Bb7 21.gxf5
exf5 22.d4 Nxd4 23.exd4 Bxd4 24.Qg6+ Qg7 25.Qxg7+ Kxg7 26.Rd1 Be4
33.Kf3 h5 34.f5+ Kf6 35.h4 Rg8 36.Bf4 Rae8 37.Ne4+ Rxe4 38.Kxe4 Rd4
39.Kf3 Rxb4 40.Rh1 e2 41.Rde1 1-0

#17 Adams, Michael - Tiviakov, Sergei
Groningen, 1997
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Ne6 4.0-0 Bdx6 5.Re1 Nf6 6.c3 a6 7.Bf1 Bg4 8.d3 g6
33.Re7 f5 34.Rdd7 Bg5 35.Ng6+ 1-0
#18 Ostojic, Predrag - Quinteros, Miguel Angel
Torremolinos, 1974
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Bd7 4.Bxd7+ Qxd7 5.c4 Qg4 6.0-0 Qxe4 7.d4 Nf6
Kb8 32.Re8+ Kb7 33.Re7+ Kb8 34.Ke3 h5 35.h3 h4 36.Rh7 a6 37.Rxh4 axb5
38.Rh8+ Kb7 39.Rxa8 Kxa8 40.cxb5 e4 41.a4 Kb7 42.g4 Rd5 43.h4 1-0

#19 Ivanchuk, Vassily - Kasparov, Garry
Linares, 1991
a5 16.b5 Qc7 17.Nd2 Qe5 18.Qd3 Rg8 19.Rae1 Qg5 20.Rg1 Qf4 21.Re1 b6
22.Ne2 Qh6 23.d5 Rxh5 24.Qe4 Kg7 25.f4 Fe8 26.f5 f5 27.exh5 Rfx5 28.Rc1
Kg7 29.g4 Rc5 30.Rxc5 dxe5 31.Nc6 Bf8 32.Qd8 Qg6 33.f5 Qh6 34.g5 Qh5
35.Rg4 exf5 36.Nf4 Qh8 37.Qf6+ Kh7 38.Rxf4 1-0

#20 Fischer, Robert James - Spassky, Boris V
St Stefan/Belgrade, (11) 1992
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Ne6 3.Bb5 g6 4.Bxc6 bxc6 5.0-0 Bg7 6.Re1 e5 7.b4 cxb4 8.a3 e5
Rxh8 21.Nf5+ gxh5 22.exf5+ Be6 23.f4 Re8 24.fxe5 Rxc2 25.e6 Bc6 26.Rc1
Rxc1 27.Rxc1 Kd6 28.Rd1+ Ke5 29.e7 a5 30.Rc1 Bd7 31.Re5+ Kd4 32.Rxa5
b3 33.Ra7 Ra8 34.Rb7 Rc3 35.Kf2 b2 36.Kc3 Bf7 37.g4 Ke2 38.Kd4 b1Q
39.Rxb1 Kxb1 40.Kc5 Ke2 41.Kd6 1-0
APPENDIX

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(U.S.) Chess Digest. Toll free 1-800-462-3548

Open Games, Ludek Pachman. Spring 1965.
Theorie der Schach Eröffnungen, Dr. Max Euwe, V. 11-12, Offene Spiele 2-3, Verlag, 1968.
Moi 60 Pamiatninik Parti (Fischer). Physicultura and Sport, 1972.
From Steinitz to Fischer, Dr. Max Euwe. Chess Informant, 1976.
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Nunn’s Chess Openings. Dr. John Nunn, Editor. Everyman, 1999.