ATTACKING THE ENGLISH/RETI

Alexander Delchev
Semko Semkov
Attacking The English/Reti
A Black Repertoire with 1...e5/1...d5

Alexander Delchev
Semko Semkov

Chess Stars
www.chess-stars.com
Contents

Bibliography 4
Introduction 5

The English Opening
1. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 f6 3.g2 c6 9
2. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 44
3. 1.c4 e5 2.c3 f6 3.g3 c6 61
4. 1.c4 e5 2.c3 f6 3.f3 c6 73
5. 1.c4 e5 2.c3 f6 3.f3 c6 4.e3 85
6. 3.f3 c6 4.g3 b4 5.d5 101
7. 3.f3 c6 4.g3 b4 5.g2 115
8. Rare Second Moves 133

The Reti
9. 1.f3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4 145
10. 1.f3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.e3 159
11. 1.f3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.g3 175
12. 1.f3 d5 2.g3 c6 193
13. The King’s Indian Set-up 215
14. g3 223

Index of Variations
Bibliography

Books
The Modern Reti, Alexander Delchev, Chess Stars 2012
The English Opening Volume 1, Mihail Marin, Quality Chess 2009
Mastering the Chess Openings Volume 3, John Watson, Gambit 2008
The English Opening, Zenon Franco, Gambit 2006
How to play the English Opening, Anatoly Karpov, Batsford 2007

Periodicals
Chess Informant
New in Chess

Internet resources
Databases
The Week In Chess (www.theweekinchess.com)
10 Days (www.Chessmix.com)
Chess Publishing (www.chesspublishing.com)
Chess Today (www.chesstoday.net)
Introduction

This book aims to offer an active Black repertoire against The English Opening 1.c4, the Reti 1.Qf3, and their siblings that arise after 1.g3. More importantly, we try to offer not only variations, but also a *philosophy* of how to treat such openings.

A century ago they called them simply “irregular”. Since then, nobody has revoked the importance of the centre, but nowadays we are so swept off by the torrents of variations the engines provide that we tend to forget conventional wisdom.

Our reasoning is simple: if White gave us a chance, we should seize central space; if he played passively, we should advance. Our goal is to reach an ideal pawn centre:

1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 3.g2 d5 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.d4 e4;

1.g3 e5 2.Qg2 d5 3.d3 Qf6 4.Qf3 Qd6 5.0-0 0-0;

We apply the same approach to the Reti:

1.Qf3 d5 2.c4 d4! and if 3.b4 f6! 4.e3 e5

You may find old books or annotated games that criticize Black’s set-up on the first diagram. All the better for you – this book will arm you with an innovative approach and thorough original analysis.
which often refutes widely accepted assessments. Many of our main lines are nearly unexplored and they are blank spots in theory.

Chapter 1 offers a repertoire based on 1.c4 e5 2.g3?! 为企业 3.g2 c6!.

Chapter 2 presents an independent alternative repertoire based on 1.c4 e5 2.g3?! c6!?. We explain the pros and cons of the two move orders in the correspondent “Main Ideas” chapters. Both are of equal worth and claim the initiative since the first moves. We have not tried to find equalizers. On the contrary, we believe that Black has all the reasons to fight for an initiative so we chose enterprising lines, often connected with pawn sacrifices. We discovered amazing variety of positions where Black can give up one of his central pawns to get a strong attack in return.

Chapters 6 and 7 deal with a more restrictive approach from White: 1.c4 e5 2.d3! 为企业 3.d3! 为企业 4.g3. This is played “by the ABC-book” and we have little ground for an early activity here. Still, we chose the most active options after the move 4...b4. We do not cover lines with 4...d5 at all. Especially interesting is the line 5.g2 0-0 6.0-0 e4 7.g5 企业家 8.bxc3 企业家 9.f3.

This position has been in the limelight ever since the K-K match in 1987 and it seems that it is hyper topical again. We analyse both 9...e3!? and 9...exf3 in order to give you alternatives.

I have always been eager to find an exploitative strategy against passive opening play. I have started with the set-up d5-e6. My idea was to advance slowly, gradually rolling the pawns into the enemy territory. The following game illustrates the zest of this strategy:

Sveshnikov-Semkov
Albena, 1987

1.g3 d5 2.d3 f3 e6 3.g2 d6 4.0-0 e7 5.c4 c6 6.b3 e5 7.b2 f6
8.c3 a6 9.d4 e4 10.e1 f5 11.f3
This book presents a refined and more aggressive version of the above strategy. We emphasized on piece play, regarding the pawn centre as a mean and not as a goal. We can always sacrifice it in order to get to the enemy king.

Finally, I should mention the line 1.\hspace{1pt}d3 d5 2.g3 c6 3.c4 \hspace{1pt}g4 – Chapter 12.

It falls out of our general line of preparing \hspace{1pt}e5, but it is the best way of meeting White's move order according to Delchev.

The book is written in first person, but it is a collaborative work. Every line has been checked and discussed by both authors.

Semko Semkov
June 2016
Chapter 1. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 \( \triangle f6 \) 3.\( \triangle g2 \) c6

Main Ideas

This is the most important chapter of our book. It presents a sharp attacking repertoire against White’s popular approach in the English Opening lately:

1.c4 e5 2.g3

By delaying \( \triangle c3 \), White leaves himself more options against the Reversed Sicilian set-up when Black plays an early \...d7-d5. For instance, after 2...\( \triangle f6 \) 3.\( \triangle g2 \) d5 4.cxd5 \( \triangle x d5 \) 5.\( \triangle f3 \) \( \triangle c6 \) 6.0-0 \( \triangle b6 \) 7.d3 \( \triangle e7 \), 8.\( \triangle b d2 \) is preferred over 8.\( \triangle c3 \).

Another point against 2.\( \triangle c3 \) is the line 2...\( \triangle f6 \) 3.\( \triangle c3 \) c6 4.d4 exd4 5.\( \triangle x d4 \) d5 6.\( \triangle g2 \) \( \triangle e6 \) when 7.\( \triangle f3 \) would face 7...\( \triangle x c4 \). Stayed the knight on b1, White would have had a4, \( \triangle b d2 \) while from c3 it cannot re-capture the sacrificed pawn.

These two examples reveal the reason behind 2.g3. However, flexibility always comes at a cost. In our case, White does not actively attack the centre.

I adhere to the classical school of chess. I believe in quick development and central strategy. A sequence of moves like 1.c4 e5! 2.g3?! defies my understanding of the game. When I see the diagram position, I think we should immediately switch to “punishing mode” and try to take over the initiative! The most consistent retort, in my opinion, is to occupy the centre by \...c6 and \...d5.

The big question is should we insert 2...\( \triangle f6 \) 3.\( \triangle c3 \) and only then 3...c6, or answer 2...c6. Both move orders are possible and have their own specifics. I discuss them in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 which propose two alternative, albeit similar, repertoires against White’s fianchetto. Chapter 3 covers 2.\( \triangle c3 \) \( \triangle f6 \) 3.\( \triangle g2 \) c6.

2...\( \triangle f6 \) 3.\( \triangle g2 \) c6!
White has three major plans from here:

1. **White attacks the d5-pawn.**

The tactical background of our set-up was shown in the game Petersons-Tal, Riga 1958: 4.\(\text{dxc3 d5}\) 5.\(\text{cxd5 cxd5}\) 6.\(\text{b3 c6}\)!

Now 7.\(\text{xd5 d4}\) 8.\(\text{xf6+ xf6}\) (or 8...\(\text{gxf6}\)), guarantees Black a lasting initiative for the pawn.

![Diagram 1](image1)

He puts a rook on c8 and the threat of ...\(\text{c2+}\) forces the enemy to lose his castling rights.

Throughout this chapter, we’ll often see Black sacrificing a pawn for the initiative. That is not a speculative approach to the game aimed at fishing in muddy waters. It stems from purely positional factors. White has neglected basic laws of chess and we got the chance of taking the centre. He might win a pawn in some lines, but that would give us a lead in development. Thus we would transfer our static edge (pawn centre) into a dynamic advantage – active pieces.

![Diagram 2](image2)

The critical line is 9.\(\text{b5}\) when we shed in a pawn – 9...0-0!? 10.\(\text{xd5 h6}\) 11.\(\text{xf6+ xf6}\) 12.\(\text{xf6 xf6}\) 13.e3 a6!

![Diagram 3](image3)

Now 14.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{b4+}\), 14.\(\text{e2 b4+}\) and 14.\(\text{b3 e6}\) 15.\(\text{d1 b4+}\) leave White’s king in the centre, so 14.\(\text{a5}\) looks best – 14...\(\text{g4}\) 15.\(\text{h3 e6}\) 16.\(\text{e2 e7}\) 17.\(\text{a3 f5}\) 18.0-0 \(\text{c4}\) 19.\(\text{d2 f7}\) 20.\(\text{fc1 ad8}\)!

![Diagram 4](image4)

The core of my repertoire is the line 4.\(\text{d4 e4}\)! 5.\(\text{c3 d5}\) 6.\(\text{g5 bd7}\) 7.\(\text{cxd5 cxd5}\) 8.\(\text{b3 d6}\)!

This position is nearly unexplored.
Black controls the centre. **Game 3** Hessenius-Grebenshchikov, ICCF 2014, shows his main plan – ...g5, ...h6-h5-h4, but he should proceed carefully to forestall counterplay with d4-d5 or f2-f3.

2. White attacks the e4-pawn.

4.d4 e4! 5.\(\text{dxc3}\) d5 6.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{bd7}\) 7.\(\text{cxd5}\) cxd5 8.f3

We’ll meet this break-through in various settings – without \(\text{g5}\), without \(\text{g2}\) (in the chapters to follow), with \(\text{h3}\), with c4-c6 pawn still on the board. The general rule is not to take on f3! There are exceptions where ...\(\text{exf3}\) equalizes, but commonly we should either hold the e4-pawn, or sacrifice it. For that aim, we should prepare to kill the main e4-attacker with 8...\(\text{b4}\), e.g. 9.\(\text{h3}\) 0-0 10.\(\text{fxe4}\) \(\text{dxe4}\) 11.0-0 \(\text{xc3}\) 12.\(\text{bxc3}\) h6 13.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 14.\(\text{c4}\)

White is unable to preserve his beautiful pawn centre after 14...\(\text{e6}\). After moving one of the pawns, his dark squares will become sensitive. If White attacked our e4-pawn before castling, we could leave it and take over the initiative: 11.\(\text{f2}\) h6 12.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 13.\(\text{fxe4}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 14.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{e8}\) 15.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{h3}\)

You can get this position via various move orders. It is promising for Black.

If White does not attack d5 early, his only plausible plan remains f3-f3. We’ll meet it with ...\(\text{b4}\), but then we have a choice:

1. To transpose to the above-mentioned examples by allowing \(\text{g5}\).

2. To prevent the pin with ...h6: 6.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{b4}\)? 7.\(\text{cxd5}\) cxd5 8.\(\text{f3}\) h6 9.0-0 0-0 10.\(\text{fxe4}\)
Chapter 1

10...\texttt{\textajxc} \texttt{\textac}11.bxc3 \texttt{\textah}3! 12.\texttt{\textah}3 \texttt{\textaxe}4. I analyse this position in Chapter 2, \texttt{\textb{Game 5 Nailer-Delchev, Ordu 2016.}}

3. White does not play d4.

4.\texttt{\textaf}f3 e4 5.\texttt{\textad}d4 \texttt{\textab}6!

This rare move is the best way of obtaining active play. I do not like the common 5...d5 in view of 6.d3! The queen move pushes back White’s only active piece. Our idea is to grab as much space as possible and use it to attack the enemy. We often sacrifice a pawn to activate our forces more quickly:

6.\texttt{\textab}b3 a5 7.a4 (7.d3 a4 8.\texttt{\textae}3 \texttt{\textwd}8!) 7...\texttt{\textab}4 8.\texttt{\textac}3?!

8...0-0! 9.\texttt{\textaxe}4 \texttt{\textaxe}4 10.\texttt{\textaxe}4 d5 11.cxd5 \texttt{\textah}3 with a rout.

Here are more examples:

\textbf{Attacking guide}

In the main line when White takes the d5-pawn, we aim for this attacking scheme:

26.g4 f4!! (26...\texttt{\textab}b3 27.\texttt{\textwd}2 \texttt{\textac}4=) 27.\texttt{\textaxe}4 \texttt{\textab}8 28.\texttt{\textad}xg5 \texttt{\textwc}7 29.e4 f3=.

If White does not take on d5, but decides to complete development first, we could offer b7 instead:

12...\texttt{\textae}6! 13.\texttt{\textwa}b7 h5!

Our dominance in the centre justifies such sharp onslaughts. White’s queen is far from the kingside and he lacks any counterplay.

We often do not defend our central pawns, but sacrifice them for activity. The following diagram is after the moves 4.e4 d5! 5.exd5 cxd5 6.cxd5 \texttt{\textaxd}5 7.\texttt{\textaf}3 \texttt{\textac}6 8.0-0 \texttt{\textac}5 9.\texttt{\textae}1
1.c4 e5 2.g3 f6 3.g2 c6

9...0-0! 10.xe5 db4↑.

As a rule, if White takes the e4-pawn before having castled, we can keep his king in the centre with ...h3. Then his defence is not trivial:

12...d7! Then we simply put our rooks on the central files.

We could even castle long in some positions with an open centre:

4.f3 e4 5.d4 w6 6.c2 d5 7.c3 dxc4 8.0-0 e6 9.xe4 xe4 10.xe4 d7

11.xg2 (11.e3 h5) 11...0-0 12.b3 h5.

Or 4.f3 e4 5.d4 w6 6.e3 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.0-0 g4 9.f3 exf3 10.xf3 h3 11.g2 xg2 12.xg2 c6 13.c3

13...0-0-0!? Theoretical status

The set-up with ...c6 is not in the limelight of modern theory. Your opponents will often think that you chose a second-rate line and they will tend to underestimate Black’s threats.

Mihail Marin recommends in The English Opening Volume 1 4.d4 e4 5.c3 d5 6.g5 bd7 7.cxd5 cxd5 w3, and ommits 8...d6! altogether.

John Watson in Mastering the Chess Openings Volume 3 does not even mention 1.c4 e5 2.g3 f6 3.g2 c6 4.d4 e4 (there is only a note on 4...b4+).

I found a fleeting remark about the sequence 1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 3.d4
e4 4.\(\mathcal{c}3\). He points out that 4...d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.\(\mathcal{b}3\) \(\mathcal{c}6\)! is good for Black and concludes: “So perhaps 4 ...d5 is a satisfactory move after all.” That’s all.

I could not find anything in *The English Opening* by Zenon Franco.

**Conclusion**

In my own tournament and blitz practice I observe that White does not know what to do against the ...c6 set-up. My opponents confidently play 4.d4 e4 5.\(\mathcal{c}3\) d5 and then start improvising. It is really rare to take over the psychological initiative so early in the opening with Black!

My analyses will probably boost the popularity of this line so we could expect many important games in near future. To ensure the longevity of my idea, I propose a twin back-up repertoire in Chapter 2, based on the slightly altered move order 1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6. It is up to you to decide which one you like more.
Chapter 1. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 \textit{gf6} 3.\textit{g2} c6

\textbf{Step by Step}

1.c4 e5 2.g3 \textit{gf6} 3.\textit{g2}

The rare move order 3.\textit{c3} transposes to Chapter 3 after 3...c6.

3...c6!

A. 4.\textit{c3}; B. 4.\textit{f3}; C. 4.d4

Exotic alternatives are:

4.\textit{a4} is a clumsy attempt to prevent ...d5 which does not actually stop it as 4...d5 5.cxd5 b5 6.\textit{b3} \textit{x}xd5 7.\textit{c3} \textit{e}6 is equal. A more ambitious approach is to prepare quick castling with 4...\textit{e}7! when 5.\textit{f3} e4 6.d4 0-0 7.0-0 d5 is rather pleasant for Black. Playing in gambit style is also possible: 4...\textit{c5} 5.b4 (5.\textit{c3} 0-0 6.b4 \textit{e}7 7.\textit{b3}?! could be punished by 7...a5 8.b5 a4 9.\textit{x}xa4 d5 10.cxd5 \textit{x}xd5\uparrow) 5...\textit{e}7

6.\textit{b2} d5 7.cxd5 \textit{x}xd5 8.\textit{xe}5 0-0 9.a3 \textit{d}7 10.\textit{b}2 a5\uparrow.

4.d3 d5 5.cxd5

5.\textit{d2} \textit{c}5! was in Black's favour in Bilek-Portisch, Teeside 1972. The game went on 6.cxd5 cxd5 7.\textit{b}3 \textit{b}6 (7...\textit{d}6!) 8.\textit{f3} \textit{c}6 9.0-0 0-0 10.\textit{g}5 \textit{h}6 11.\textit{xf}6

5.\textit{f3} dxc4 (or 5...\textit{d}6) 6.0-0 (6.\textit{c}3 \textit{c}7 7.dxc4 \textit{e}6=) 6...\textit{d}6 7.dxc4 0-0 8.\textit{c}3 \textit{h}6=.

5...cxd5

6.\textit{f3}

6.\textit{c}3 d4 (6...\textit{c}6 keeps the centre fluid) 7.\textit{e}4 \textit{xe}4 8.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}7 – see line A, 6.d3.

6...\textit{c}6 7.0-0 \textit{e}7 8.\textit{g}5 0-0 9.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}6 and Black easily held the centre in Mamedov-Rublevsky, Khandy-Mansiysk 2010.

4.e4 does not prevent 4...d5!. 

15
Chapter 1

4...\textit{\textbf{c}}c5 5.\textit{\textbf{c}}c3 d6 keeps more tension, but it offers White a free hand on the kingside – 6.\textit{\textbf{g}}e2 (The passive 6.h3 passes the initiative to Black after 6...b5) 6...0-0 7.0-0 \textit{\textbf{g}}4 8.h3, intending \textit{\textbf{h}}h2, f4.

5.exd5 cxd5 6.cxd5 \textit{\textbf{a}}xd5 and the game is level – 7.\textit{\textbf{f}}3 \textit{\textbf{c}}6 8.0-0 \textit{\textbf{c}}5 9.\textit{\textbf{x}}e5 (9.\textit{\textbf{e}}1 0-0! 10.\textit{\textbf{x}}e5 \textit{\textbf{d}}b4) 9...\textit{\textbf{x}}e5 10.d4 \textit{\textbf{g}}4 11.\textit{\textbf{a}}4+ \textit{\textbf{d}}7=.

The gambit 6...\textit{\textbf{g}}4!? keeps the fight on. For instance:

7.\textit{\textbf{a}}4+ \textit{\textbf{b}}d7 8.\textit{\textbf{c}}3 \textit{\textbf{d}}6 9.\textit{\textbf{g}}e2 0-0 10.d4 a6 11.h3 \textit{\textbf{h}}5∞.

7.\textit{\textbf{b}}3 \textit{\textbf{b}}d7 8.\textit{\textbf{f}}3 \textit{\textbf{e}}4 9.0-0 \textit{\textbf{d}}6 10.\textit{\textbf{g}}5 \textit{\textbf{c}}5 11.\textit{\textbf{w}}c2 \textit{\textbf{c}}8 12.\textit{\textbf{c}}3 0-0

White should lose a tempo on 9.\textit{\textbf{g}}2 (9.d2 \textit{\textbf{a}}6 10.\textit{\textbf{c}}1 0-0 does not change things much.) 9...0-0 10.\textit{\textbf{f}}3 \textit{\textbf{c}}6 11.0-0 \textit{\textbf{e}}6 12.\textit{\textbf{d}}2 \textit{f}6 13.\textit{\textbf{a}}4 \textit{\textbf{b}}6 14.\textit{\textbf{f}}b1, Georgievski-Sofrevski, Skopje 1976, when 14...a5?! starts an offensive on the queenside where Black is clearly stronger.

6...\textit{\textbf{c}}6 7.\textit{\textbf{x}}d5 \textit{\textbf{d}}4 8.\textit{\textbf{xf}}6+

8.\textit{\textbf{c}}4 \textit{\textbf{xd}}5 9.\textit{\textbf{xd}}5 \textit{b}5 gives Black a strong attack. The main line of my analysis runs 10.\textit{\textbf{xf}}7+ \textit{\textbf{e}}7 11.\textit{\textbf{d}}5 \textit{\textbf{c}}2+ 12.\textit{\textbf{d}}1 \textit{\textbf{x}}a1 13.\textit{\textbf{x}}a8 \textit{\textbf{c}}7 14.\textit{\textbf{e}}4 \textit{\textbf{xf}}7 15.\textit{\textbf{b}}1 \textit{\textbf{b}}7 16.\textit{\textbf{f}}3 \textit{\textbf{e}}7 17.\textit{\textbf{x}}a1 \textit{\textbf{e}}4 18.\textit{\textbf{d}}3 \textit{\textbf{d}}8 19.\textit{\textbf{g}}5+ \textit{\textbf{x}}g5 20.\textit{\textbf{g}}xg5 \textit{\textbf{xh}}1 21.\textit{\textbf{xd}}8 \textit{\textbf{w}}xd8=.

8...\textit{\textbf{xf}}6

Black has excellent counterplay:
13.f3 exf3 14.\textit{\textbf{d}}4 \textit{\textbf{b}}6 15.\textit{\textbf{x}}f3 \textit{\textbf{f}}4, or 13.b4 \textit{\textbf{c}}d3 14.\textit{\textbf{b}}1 \textit{\textbf{e}}8 15.\textit{\textbf{g}}xe4 \textit{\textbf{xe}}4 16.\textit{\textbf{x}}e4 \textit{\textbf{f}}4! 17.\textit{\textbf{x}}b2 \textit{\textbf{g}}5=.

A. 4.\textit{\textbf{c}}3 \textit{\textbf{d}}5 5.\textit{\textbf{xd}}5

5.d4 e4 transposes to line C.

5...\textit{\textbf{cxd}}5 6.\textit{\textbf{b}}3

6.d3 is a passive move. According to our general strategy, we should gain even more space with 6...d4 7.\textit{\textbf{e}}4 \textit{\textbf{xe}}4 (7...\textit{\textbf{d}}5 8.\textit{\textbf{b}}3=) 8.\textit{\textbf{xe}}4 \textit{\textbf{e}}7.

Practice has proved that Black's initiative more than compensates for the missing pawn. Computer analysis suggests that play is roughly balanced, but over the board Black's task is easier since he owns the initiative. In many lines White must find series of only moves just to stay in the game.
I must add that 8...\textit{\textbf{g}}6!? 9.\textit{\textbf{d}}1 \textit{\textbf{c}}7 10.\textit{\textbf{f}}1 \textit{\textbf{e}}6 (or 10...\textit{\textbf{c}}2 11.\textit{\textbf{b}}1 \textit{\textbf{e}}6)
is also good and Black's play is quite similar to 8...\(\text{xf6}\).
I will consider from here: A1. 9.\(\text{w}d1\) and A2. 9.\(\text{w}d3\).

A1. 9.\(\text{w}d1\) \(\text{xf5}\) 10.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{e}8\) 11.\(\text{g}f1\) \(\text{c}5\)

A2. 9.\(\text{w}d3\) \(\text{e}7\)

9...\(\text{xf5}\) is more popular. Its only drawback is that after 10.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{xe}4\) 11.\(\text{w}xe4\) \(\text{e}8\) 12.\(\text{g}f1\) \(\text{w}e6\) 13.\(\text{g}f3\) \(\text{xf3}\) 14.\(\text{exf3}\) \(\text{c}5\) 15.\(\text{g}g2=\) White's king finds a safe haven too easily.

Perhaps the most challenging option is 9...\(\text{d}7!\), if you do not mind positions with 2-3 pawns down for a great compensation. Then:
10.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 11.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{b}5\) 12.\(\text{w}e4\) \(\text{c}6\) is clearly sad for White so he should take the second pawn:
10.\(\text{xb}7\) \(\text{b}8\) 11.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{xb}7\) 12.\(\text{x}d4\)

12...\(\text{wa}6!\) 13.\(\text{exd}4\) \(\text{xd}3\) + 14.\(\text{xe}2\)
(or 14.\(\text{xe}1\) exd4 15.\(\text{xe}2\) 0-0—)
14...\(\text{xd}4\) 15.\(\text{xf}3\) \(\text{c}2\) 16.\(\text{g}g2\) \(\text{xe}2\) 17.\(\text{xe}2\) \(\text{xe}2\) 18.\(\text{c}2\) 0-0
12...\(\text{\#b4!}\)
Following the same ultra-aggressive tactic. 12...\(\text{\#d6}\) 13.\(\text{\#b3}\) \(\text{\#xd3}\) 14.exd3 is "only" equal.
13.\(\text{\#c2}\) \(\text{\#c6}\) 14.f3
White can castle, but it is unclear how he could complete development after 14.0-0 \(\text{\#h3}\) 15.\(\text{\#f3}\) \(\text{\#c4}\) 16.\(\text{\#e3}\) \(\text{\#c5}\) 17.\(\text{\#d4}\) 18.\(\text{\#c3}\) \(\text{\#b6}\) 19.\(\text{\#d1}\) 0-0↑.
14...\(\text{\#c4}\) 15.\(\text{\#d1}\) e4 16.\(\text{\#xe4}\) \(\text{\#xe4}\) 17.\(\text{\#f1}\) \(\text{\#c5}\) 18.b4 \(\text{\#e7}\)
Black needs two tempi to castle. Then his attack on the enemy king could quickly become irresistible. White may grab a third pawn, but that would not help his defence. For instance:

a) 19.\(\text{\#c3}\) \(\text{\#g6}\) 20.d3 \(\text{\#e6}\) 21.\(\text{\#d4}\) \(\text{\#b6}\) 22.\(\text{\#c7}\) \(\text{\#d6}↑\);

b) 19.a4 0-0 20.b5 \(\text{\#b7}\) 21.\(\text{\#b2}\) \(\text{\#g5}\) 22.h4 \(\text{\#h6}↑\).

10.\(\text{\#e3}\) \(\text{\#c6}\) 11.\(\text{\#e4}\)

11.\(\text{\#e2}\) \(\text{\#b4}\) 12.\(\text{\#b1}\) \(\text{\#a6}\) 13.\(\text{\#e4}\) f5 leaves White with horrible holes on the light squares – 14.a3 \(\text{\#xe4}\) 15.axb4 \(\text{\#c4}\) 16.b3 \(\text{\#f7}\) 17.\(\text{\#xe4}\) 0-0.

The pawn structure is the same as in the Mora gambit and Black's idea as are similar. He has full compensation thanks to his better development and potential pressure along the c- and d-files. Possible continuations are:

a) 11...\(\text{\#e6}\) 12.\(\text{\#e2}\) \(\text{\#d8}\) 13.\(\text{\#b5}\) \(\text{\#d7}\);

b) 11...\(\text{\#b4}\) 12.\(\text{\#b5}+\) \(\text{\#d7}\) 13.\(\text{\#xb7}\) \(\text{\#d8}\) 14.a3 \(\text{\#c2}+\) 15.\(\text{\#xc2}\) \(\text{\#c6}\) 16.\(\text{\#c7}\) (16.\(\text{\#xa7}\) \(\text{\#xh1}\) 17.\(\text{\#a4}+\) \(\text{\#f8}↑\)) 16...\(\text{\#xh1}\) 17.\(\text{\#a4}+\) \(\text{\#f8}\) with irrational play.

c) 11...\(\text{\#g6}↑\)? 12.\(\text{\#e2}\) (12.a3 0-0 13.b4 \(\text{\#d8}\) 14.\(\text{\#b1}\) \(\text{\#d6}\) 15.\(\text{\#e2}\) \(\text{\#h3}\) 16.f4 \(\text{\#f6}\) 17.\(\text{\#e2}\) \(\text{\#e6}↑\)) 12...0-0 13.0-0 \(\text{\#b4}\) 14.\(\text{\#b1}\) \(\text{\#a6}\) 15.\(\text{\#c3}\) \(\text{\#h3}\) 16.\(\text{\#d1}\) f5 17.\(\text{\#f3}\) \(\text{\#f6}↑\).

B. 4.\(\text{\#f3}\) e4 5.\(\text{\#d4}\)

5...\(\text{\#b6}\)!

5...d5 is ten times more frequent, but I do not like 6.d3!
6.cxd5 \(\text{\#xd5}\) 7.\(\text{\#c2}\) \(\text{\#h5}\) is comfortable for Black: 8.h3 (8.\(\text{\#c3}\) \(\text{\#h3}\)) 8.h4 \(\text{\#f5}\) 9.\(\text{\#c3}\) \(\text{\#a6}\) 10.a3 \(\text{\#c5}\) 11.\(\text{\#e3}\) \(\text{\#e6}\) 8...\(\text{\#g6}\) 9.\(\text{\#c3}\) \(\text{\#d6}\) (The email game Utesch-Schuster, ICCF 2007, went through sharp complica-
1.\(\text{c4} \text{e5}\) 2.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{\text{f6}}\) 3.\(\text{\text{g2}}\) \(\text{c6}\)

... 

... 

9...\(\text{\text{dxc4}}\) 10.\(\text{\text{dxc4}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{e7}}}\) (10...\(\text{\text{\text{wxd2}}\}) 11.\(\text{\text{d1xd2}}\) \(\text{e3}\) 12.\(\text{\text{fxe3}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{bd7}}}\}) 13.\(\text{h3}\) 11.\(\text{\text{c3}}\) 0-0 occurred in Giri-Balogh, Germany 2015. White chose to prevent ...\(\text{e3}\) by 12.\(\text{\text{\text{we3}}}\) \(\text{\text{e8}}\) and the queenless midlegame was roughly equal – 13.\(\text{\text{wc5}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{a6}}}\}}\) 14.\(\text{\text{\text{xe7}}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{xe7}}}\}}\). More challenging is 12.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d1}}}\}}\), intending 12...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{a6}}}\}}\) 13.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{d}}}\}}\).

6...\(\text{\text{\text{b4}}}\) 7.\(\text{\text{c3}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{we7}}}\) 8.0-0 \(\text{dxc4}\) was already really grim for Black in Gajewski-Erdos, Dresden 2016 – 9.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{xe4}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{xe4}}}\}}\) 10.\(\text{\text{\text{dxe4}}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{c5}}}\}}\) 11.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}\}}\) 0-0 12.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{c2}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{xd4}}}\}}\) 13.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{d3}}}\}}\) 14.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{e6}}}\}}\) when 15.f4! \(\text{f6}\) 16.e5 fxe5 17.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{e4}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{c6}}}\}}\) 18.f5 \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{f7}}}\}}\) 19.h4 would have promised a strong attack, e.g. 19...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{d4}}}\}}\) 20.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{g5}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{c7}}}\}}\) 21.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{e3}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{c6}}}\}}\) 22.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{d1}}}\}}\) \(\text{h6}\) 23.f6 hxg5 24.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{f3}}}\}}\).

7.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{xd5}}}\}}\!) and Black’s pawn centre is busted.

The queen sortie aims to reject the d4-knight to a passive position.

6.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{c2}}}\}}\).

6.e3 \(\text{d5}\)

6...\(\text{\text{\text{\text{c5}}}\}}\) 7.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{b3}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{e7}}}\}}\) pushes back the centralised knight, but at the cost of a passive bishop. It would stand better on d6. Still, 8.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{c3}}}\}}\) \(\text{d5}\) 9.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{cxd5}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{d5}}}\}}\}) 10.0-0 0-0 11.d3 was not too impressive, Thiede-H.Stefansson, blitz, Berlin 2015.

7.\(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{xd5}}}\}}\) \(\text{\text{\text{\text{\text{cxd5}}}\}}\).

8.0-0
Chapter 1

8.f3  $\textit{\&c6}$ 9.$\textit{\&xc6}$ exf3 10.$\textit{\&xf3}$ bxc6 11.0-0, Skembris-Balaban, Neustadt an der Weinstrasse 2015. Black has an attack after 11...\textit{\&a6} 12.$\textit{\&f2}$ \textit{\&d6} or 11...h5 12.b3 \textit{\&a6} 13.\textit{\&e1} h4.

8...$\textit{\&g4}$! Weakens White's king.

8...$\textit{\&c6}$ 9.$\textit{\&c3}$!? (9.d3 $\textit{\&g4}$=) is not really dangerous, but it gives White an initiative. The point is that 9...$\textit{\&g4}$ fails to 10.$\textit{\&xd5}$, and 9...$\textit{\&xd4}$ 10.exd4 $\textit{\&xd4}$ 11.d3 $\textit{\&xd3}$ 12.$\textit{\&b3}$ requires precision from Black: 12...\textit{\&c5}! 13.\textit{\&d1} \textit{\&a6} 14.$\textit{\&f1}$ $\textit{\&b6}$ (14...\textit{\&a5}=) 15.\textit{\&b5}+ $\textit{\&f8}$ 16.\textit{\&a4} $\textit{\&c7}$ 17.\textit{\&g5} $\textit{\&e6}$ 18.\textit{\&ac1} b6 19.$\textit{\&c3}$ a6 20.\textit{\&e2}$ \textit{\&e7}$=.

9.f3 (9.$\textit{\&b3}$ $\textit{\&xb3}$) 9...exf3

10.$\textit{\&xf3}$

10.$\textit{\&xf3}$ $\textit{\&c6}$ 11.d4 $\textit{\&e7}$ 12.$\textit{\&c3}$ 0-0 13.\textit{\&c2} g6 14.$\textit{\&e5}$ $\textit{\&e6}$=.

10...\textit{\&h3} 11.\textit{\&g2} $\textit{\&xg2}$ 12.$\textit{\&xg2}$ $\textit{\&c6}$ 13.$\textit{\&c3}$

It looks that Black's king is in danger since if it castled short, $\textit{\&xf6}$ or $\textit{\&f5}$ would be serious threats. However, Black can hide his king on the opposite flank or even take on d4:

a) 13...0-0-0!? 14.\textit{\&b3} $\textit{\&xb3}$ 15.axb3 $\textit{\&c5}$ (or 15...$\textit{\&b8}$=) 16.$\textit{\&xc6}$ bxc6 17.d4 $\textit{\&b6}$=.

b) 13...$\textit{\&xd4}$ 14.exd4 $\textit{\&e7}$ 15.$\textit{\&e1}$ $\textit{\&d8}$ 16.d3 $\textit{\&d7}$ 17.$\textit{\&b3}$ $\textit{\&d8}$=.

6.$\textit{\&b3}$ a5 disturbs White's development. 7.a4

The point is that 7.d4 a4 8.c5 could be met by 8...\textit{\&a7} 9.$\textit{\&c3}$ d5 10.cxd6 $\textit{\&xd6}$=.

7.d3 a4 8.$\textit{\&c2}$ d5 (8...\textit{\&e3}?? curiously loses to 8...c5 9.$\textit{\&c2}$ $\textit{\&xb2}$ and the lone queen suddenly inflicts serious damage upon White's queenside.) 8...d5

9.cxd5 (9.dxe4 dxe4! 10.$\textit{\&xe4}$ $\textit{\&xe4}$ 11.$\textit{\&xe4}$ $\textit{\&h3}$=) 9...$\textit{\&xd3}$ 10.dxc6 (10.0-0 cxd5 11.exd3 $\textit{\&e7}$ 12.$\textit{\&c3}$ $\textit{\&a5}$) 10...$\textit{\&xc6}$ 11.exd3 (11.0-0 dxe2 12.$\textit{\&xe2}$+ $\textit{\&e6}$=) 11...$\textit{\&g4}$ is balanced, e.g. 12.\textit{\&f3} $\textit{\&b4}$+ 13.$\textit{\&c3}$ 0-0 14.0-0 $\textit{\&fd8}$ 15.a3 $\textit{\&xc3}$ 16.bxc3 $\textit{\&c5}$.

7...$\textit{\&b4}$

7...\textit{\&a6} 8.0-0 $\textit{\&c5}$ is also balanced.
8.0-0
8...0-0 9...c3 ...xe4 10...xe3 d5 11.cxd5 ...h3 spells a quick rout.
8...0-0 9...c3 ...e8 10.d3 exd3 11...xd3 ...f8. The full control of the queenside dark squares makes Black's game somewhat preferable.

6...d5 7...cxd5

7.d3 exd3 8...exd3 ...g4 provokes ugly moves from White.
7...c3 dxc4 8.0-0 ...e6 9...xe4 ...xe4 10...xe4 ...d7 is interesting. (The quiet 10...e7 is also playable.)

Now 11.d4 cxd3 12...xd3 ...f6 13...e3 ...c5 14.d4 ...e4 15...xc4 ...d8 16...d4 ...xd4 17...xd4 ...d2 is equal.

11...g2 begs for 11...0-0-0 12.b3 h5 13...xc4 h4 with active play.
11...e3 h5! 12...c2 ...c5 13.b4 cxb3 14.axb3 h4 was pleasant for Black and he went on to win in Gabuzyan-Istratescu, Legnica 2013.

7...cxd5 8.0-0 (8.d3 ...c6 transposes) 8...d6 9...d3 ...e7

9...e6 10...c3 ...d8 11.b4! assures White of some pressure after 11...

C. 4.d4 e4!
Marin considers also 4...exd4 which looks somewhat ridiculous after ...c6. I have much more ambitious plans for the opening!

5.Δc3

White can play 5.d5 himself. Then the question is whether to trade on d5 immediately.

5...cxd5 6.cxd5 Δb4+ 7.Δd2 Δe7 8.Δxb4! (8.a3 Δxd2+ 9.Δxd2 0-0 10.d6 Δe5 11.Δc4 Δb5 12.Δc1 b6 looks attractive for Black.) 8...Δxb4+ 9.Δd2 Δxd5 10.a3 Δxd2+ 11.Δxd2 f5 12.Δc4 0-0 13.Δd1 Δf6 14.Δd6 Δc6 15.f3 gives White compensation. Black still has enough counterplay with 15...b6 16.fxe4 fxe4 17.Δxe4 Δg4 18.Δf3 Δe3 19.Δd3 Δc4.

5...Δb4+ 6.Δd2 Δe7 may be more accurate.

Now 7.Δxb4 Δxb4+ 8.Δd2 Δxc4 does not work so White plays:

7.Δc3 0-0

It makes sense to define the centre with 7...cxd5!? 8.Δxd5 Δxd5 9.cxd5 0-0.

8.a3 Δxc3 9.Δxc3 cxd5 10.cxd5 d6 11.Δh3 Δf5=.

5.Δg5 d5 6.Δxf6 Δxf6 7.cxd5

Or 7.e3 Δb4+.

7.a3 allows, besides the symmetrical 7...Δe6 8.Δc3 Δd7, 7...dxc4!? with double-edged play. For instance: 8.Δc3 e3 9.fxe3 g6 10.Δf3 Δh6∞ or 8.Δxe4 Δd7 9.Δg2 Δb6, followed up by ...g6∞.

7...Δb4+! 8.Δc3 cxd5 9.e3 Δxc3+ 10.bxc3 Δc6 11.Δb3 (11.Δc1 b5) 11...Δd7 was fine for Black in Suba-Llorente Zaro, La Roda 2009.

5...d5 6.Δg5

6.cxd5 cxd5 defines the centre a bit early.

In some variations Black gets the c6-square for his knight as in the line 7.Δb3 h6 8.Δf4 Δc6. Or 7.f3 Δb4 8.Δh3 exf3 9.exf3 0-0 10.0-0 h6 followed by ...Δc6.

7.Δg5 Δbd7 should transpose to the main line.

6.Δh3 h6!? leaves White with the only possible plan of undermining the centre with 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.f3 (or 8.0-0 Δc6 9.f3 exf3).

If White has traded his dark-squared
bishop on f6, we could let him take on e4, but here best is to aim for the symmetrical pawn structure – 8...
exf3 9.exf3 d6! 10.0-0 0-0 11.f4 c6 when 12.bxd5 cxd5 13.bxc6 a1h3 g3 14.hxg3 xd5 15.e3 f5 is at least equal as White’s bishop pair is passive.

It is more challenging to save ...h6:
6...b4!? 7.cxd5
If White delays this exchange with 7.0-0 0-0 8.g5, he should also reckon with 8...xc3 9.bxc3 dxc4∞ (although 9...bd7! is fine for Black).
7.cxd5 8.0-0 0-0 9.b3 (9.f3 h6 is covered in Chapter 2, Game 5 Nailer-Delchev, Ordu 2016) 9...xc3 10.bxc3

10...e8!?
T.L.Petrosian-Hovhannisyan, Dubai 2012, saw 10...h6!? 11.f3 exf3 12.exf3 c6 when 13.g4 a5 14.b2 e8 15.g5?! hxg5 16.xg5 b6 gave Black the better pawn structure.
11.g5 (11.f3 e3!) 11...bd7 12.f3 h6†.

The above-mentioned game Nailer-Delchev shows that we could combine both ...b4 and ...h6 – 6.cxd5 cxd5 7.h3 h6 8.0-0 b4 9.f3 0-0 – see Chapter 2, line B3.

6...bd7

The game Svane-Jakovenko, Cal­
ta 2015, saw the plan with ...e7:
6.cxd5 cxd5 7.g5 e7 8.e3 c6 9.ge2 d7 10.xe7 xe7 11.0-0 which looks passive, but resilient.

6...b4 is a simple and good alterna­tive. After 7.cxd5 cxd5
It is not practical to elaborate on the intermezzo 7...xc3+ since White could sidestep this move order by 6.cxd5 xc3 7.g5.

White has three main continuations:

a) 8.c1 bd7!
Marin considers only 8...0-0 9.h3 bd7 10.0-0, when 10...xc3 11.xc3 h6 12.f4! allows White to preserve his bishop, and 10...b6 11.f4 xc3 12.xc3 h6 13.xf6 xf6 14.f3, exploiting the clumsy placement of the f6-queen. It is essential to define the fate of White’s g5-bishop before castling.
9.h3 h6!
Chapter 1

Now 10.\texttt{xf}6 only helps Black to develop – 10...\texttt{xc}3+ 11.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{xf}6 12.0-0 0-0 13.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{f}5 14.\texttt{fc}1 \texttt{d}7!. The main motif in this position is the lack of prospects before the f3-knight. 15.\texttt{f}4 g5 16.\texttt{c}7 \texttt{ac}8! 17.\texttt{xb}7 gxf4++, Migot-Demuth, Belfort 2012.

10.\texttt{d}2

10.\texttt{f}4 takes this square from the f3-knight. 10...0-0 11.0-0 [11.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{xc}3+ 12.\texttt{xc}3 (12.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{b}6=) 12...\texttt{b}8=] 11...\texttt{b}6 12.\texttt{b}3 (12.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{g}4) 12...\texttt{xc}3 13.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{f}5.

10...\texttt{xc}3 11.\texttt{xc}3

11.\texttt{xc}3 would weaken e3 (after f3-f3) and it also blocks the c-file – 11...0-0 12.0-0 \texttt{e}8 13.f3 a5 14.\texttt{f}2 \texttt{b}6 15.fxe4 dxe4, when White could maintain the balance with 16.d5.

11...0-0 12.0-0

I have been following the game Eljanov-Edouard, Istanbul 2012. Edouard suggests here the manoeuvre 12...\texttt{d}7-b8-c6=, but the move he actually played is more challenging.

12...\texttt{b}6 13.\texttt{c}2

Edouard gives 13.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{xd}4 14.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{xd}1 15.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{d}8 16.\texttt{f}4 b6 17.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{xd}5 18.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{b}7 19.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{f}8=.

13...\texttt{e}8!=

This move prepares \texttt{f}8 thus solving the problem with the development of the c8-bishop. The stem game saw 13...\texttt{xd}4?! 14.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{e}5 when 15.\texttt{e}3! \texttt{d}8 16.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{e}7 17.\texttt{c}7 \texttt{e}8 18.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{b}6 19.\texttt{x}b6 axb6 20.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{xd}5 21.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{e}6 22.\texttt{d}1 f5 would have been slightly better for White.

b) 8.f3 should be ignored by Black – 8...\texttt{bd}7 9.fxe4 dxe4 10.\texttt{h}3 h6 11.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xc}3+ 12.bxc3 \texttt{xf}6 leads to a typical position with mutual chances. It is considered in line C1.

c) 8.\texttt{b}3 is best met by 8...\texttt{xc}3+ 9.\texttt{xc}3

9.bxc3 \texttt{bd}7 10.\texttt{h}3 h6 is pleasant for Black (10...0-0 11.\texttt{f}4 h6 12.h4!? \texttt{e}8 is also possible).

9...0-0 10.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{bd}7 (10...\texttt{f}5 11.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xf}6 12.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{d}8 deserves attention) 11.0-0 h6 12.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{e}8 13.\texttt{ac}1 was tested in two games.
Simplest is 13...\( \text{b}8 \), but sending the knight to the kingside after 13...\( \text{e}7 \) (or 13...\( \text{f}8 \)) 14.f3 \( \text{f}8 \), intending 15.fxe4 \( \text{x}h3 \) 16.\( \text{h}3 \) \( \text{xe}4 \), is also fine.

**7.cxd5**

After 7.\( \text{h}3 \), 7...h6 8.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.0-0 \( \text{d}6 \) equalizes as 11.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 12.\( \text{xb}7 \) 0-0 would be dubious for White. However, Black may also consider 7...dxc4!? with asymmetrical double-edged position, for instance: 8.\( \text{xe}4 \) h6 9.\( \text{xf}6+ \) \( \text{x}f6 \) 10.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{b}4+ \) 11.\( \text{d}2 \) a5 12.a3 \( \text{xd}2+ \) 13.\( \text{xd}2 \) 0-0. White’s centre is not mobile since his pieces are passive.

**7...cxd5**

C1. 8.f3; C2. 8.e3, C3. 8.\( \text{b}3 \)

I mentioned 8.\( \text{h}3 \) h6 9.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 10.0-0 \( \text{d}6 \) above.

8.\( \text{a}4 \) aims to drag Black’s queen to b6, which is the natural place for the d7-knight. After 8...\( \text{b}6 \) 9.\( \text{d}2 \) (9.0-0-0 is clearly dubious - 9...\( \text{b}4 \) 10.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 11.\( \text{b}1 \) 0-0) 9...\( \text{e}7 \), White fails to win the d5-pawn:

10.g4 h6 11.h4 \( \text{cc}6 \);
10.f3 e3 (the thematic sacrifice 10...0-0 is also okay) 11.\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{xb}2 \);
10.\( \text{h}3 \) 0-0 11.\( \text{f}4 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 12.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 13.a4 a5 - White’s activity is tamed and it is Black’s turn to reject the enemy pieces with ...g5.

C1. 8.f3

This breakthrough does not fit well with \( \text{g}5 \). Black’s most consistent retort would be: 8...\( \text{b}6 \), pinpointing the weaknesses on b2 and d4. However, it only weakens d5. Play is balanced after 9.fxe4 \( \text{xe}4 \) 10.\( \text{h}3 \) h6 11.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 12.\( \text{d}3 \), for example: 12.f5 13.\( \text{f}4 \) \( \text{xc}3+ \) 14.bxc3 \( \text{c}6 \) 15.c4! dxc4 16.\( \text{xe}4 \).
Chapter 1

Mastrovasilis chose against Donchenko, Legnica 2013, to define the fate of the g5-bishop with:

8...h6 and got the slightly better game after 9.\textit{f}4?! \textit{b}4 10.\textit{b}3 \textit{e}7 11.\textit{d}2 when best was 11...a5 12.a3 \textit{xc}3 13.\textit{xc}3 0-0. In this sharp position tempi are more important than the bishop pair so White should better play 9.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 10.\textit{xe}4 12.0-0-0

White would have been better stayed his knight on e3 instead of h3. From there it would protect c4 and cover g4. In the diagram position, White is unable to preserve his beautiful pawn centre after:

14...\textit{e}6

White should decide what concession to make as 15.\textit{c}1 \textit{c}8 gives only a short respite:

15.d5 \textit{b}6+ takes over the initiative after either 16.\textit{h}1 \textit{g}4 17.\textit{f}2 \textit{ac}8 18.\textit{b}1 \textit{c}5, or 16.\textit{f}2 \textit{f}5.

15.c5 offers the d5-square and defines a target which could be immediately attacked with 15...b6.

To sum up, White’s kingside and especially the e3-square are chronically weak.

b) 11...h6!? 12.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 13.\textit{f}2 (13.\textit{c}1 \textit{g}4 14.\textit{d}2 \textit{f}5) 13...\textit{xc}3 14.\textit{bxc}3 \textit{d}5 15.\textit{ac}1 \textit{f}5.

Another consistent approach is to start the fight for e4 with:

8...\textit{b}4 9.\textit{h}3 (for 9.\textit{c}1 – see Game 4 Troyke-Delchev, Wunsiedel 2016) 9...0-0 10.\textit{xe}4 \textit{dxe}4 11.\textit{f}2

11.0-0 offers Black a choice:

a) It is unnecessary to rush with 11...\textit{xc}3 although 12.\textit{bxc}3 h6 is also possible – 13.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 14.c4

b) 11...h6! 12.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 13.\textit{f}xe4 \textit{xe}4 14.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}8 15.\textit{d}3 \textit{h}3

White must find a series of strong moves to stay in the game. He cannot castle in view of 16.0-0-0? \textit{c}8 17.\textit{b}1 \textit{xc}3 18.\textit{bxc}3 \textit{a}5.

Perhaps best defence is 16.a3 \textit{a}5
17.b4 \textit{b}6 18.\textit{d}1 a5 19.b5 \textit{e}7 20.\textit{h}7+ \textit{h}8 21.\textit{d}5 \textit{e}6 22.\textit{xb}6 \textit{xb}6 23.\textit{e}4, but Black still retains a pull after 23...\textit{e}7 24.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}6.

\textbf{C2. 8.e3 h6}

Markowski-B. Socko, Warsaw 2014, saw 8...\textit{d}6 9.\textit{ge}2 0-0 10.\textit{b}3 \textit{h}6 11.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 12.0-0= The point is that after 11.\textit{f}4 Black could easily defend d5 with 11...\textit{b}6. Therefore, critical should be 9.\textit{a}4 when the only reasonable answer 9...\textit{b}6 takes away b6 from the d7-knight. Then 10.\textit{ge}2 0-0 11.\textit{c}1 \textit{h}6 12.\textit{f}4! gives White some initiative, for instance: 12...\textit{d}8 13.0-0 \textit{xf}4 14.\textit{xf}4 \textit{f}8 15.\textit{f}3.

Black's problems ensued from the bishop staying on d6. 8...\textit{d}6 is good to 8.\textit{b}3, but slightly inferior to 8.e3.

Since White's eight move is not threatening anything yet, let's define the plans of the enemy dark-squared bishop. The game Adams-Bogner, Germany 2013, went:

9.\textit{f}4

At some point White will have to part with his bishop via \textit{f}4-e5-f6, but he hopes that ...g5 could be a weakness. 9.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 10.\textit{ge}2 obviously has no venom as Black can choose between 10...\textit{g}4, 10...\textit{d}6 and the passive, but solid 10...\textit{d}7 heading for c6.

9...\textit{b}4 10.\textit{ge}2 \textit{g}5 11.\textit{e}5 \textit{e}7 12.0-0 0-0

I like Black's position. 13.\textit{b}3 \textit{xe}5 14.\textit{dxe}5 \textit{xc}3 15.\textit{exf}6 \textit{xf}6 16.\textit{xd}5 \textit{e}8 is fine for him. Even better is 13.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6. Adams tried to keep the bishop, but:

13.\textit{c}7

was dubious in view of 13...\textit{b}6 14.\textit{a}4 \textit{b}7 15.\textit{ac}1 \textit{fc}8. Instead Bogner opted for 13...\textit{b}8 14.\textit{xb}8 (14.\textit{e}5!) 14...\textit{xb}8 15.a3 \textit{d}6 16.\textit{b}3 \textit{g}4 17.\textit{h}1?! when simplest would have been 17...\textit{e}6.

\textbf{C3. 8.\textit{b}3 \textit{ad}6!}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
This move holds the position. It improves on 8...h6?! 9.\( \textit{\&f4} \textit{g5} \) 10.\( \textit{\&e5} \textit{\&g7} \) when White has several good options. For instance: 11.h4 \( \textit{\&xe5} \textit{12.hxg5} \textit{hxg5} \) 13.\( \textit{\&xh8}+ \textit{\&xh8} \) 14.\( \textit{dx e5} \textit{\&g4} \) 15.\( \textit{\&xd5} \textit{\&b6} \) 16.\( \textit{\&b5+} \textit{\&xb5} \) 17.\( \textit{\&xb5} \textit{\&xe5} \) 18.\( \textit{\&xe4} \textit{\&d7} \) 19.\( \textit{\&c3} \textit{\&f6} \) 20.\( \textit{\&d3} \textit{g4} \) 21.e3\( \textit{\&}.\)

Let's consider now: C31. 9.\( \textit{\&b5}; \textit{C32.} \) 9.f3; \textit{C33.} 9.e3.

Practice has also seen:
9.\( \textit{\&h3} \textit{h6} \) 10.\( \textit{\&f4}, \) Lederer-Mikhaillevski, Beersheba 2014 (10.\( \textit{\&xf6} \textit{\&xf6} \) 11.0-0 \( \textit{\&e6}! \) 12.\( \textit{\&xb7} \) 0-0\( \textit{\&}.\) 10...\( \textit{\&xf4} \) 11.\( \textit{\&xf4} \textit{\&b6} \) 12.a4 a5=.

C31. 9.\( \textit{\&b5} \) 0-0?!?

9...\( \textit{\&b6} \) was introduced in the correspondence game Flatz-Tyutlenko, ICCF 2012, which showed that Black easily defends the endgame after 10.\( \textit{\&xf6} \textit{gxf6} \) 11.\( \textit{\&h3} \textit{\&xb5} \) 12.\( \textit{\&xb5} \textit{\&e7} \) 13.\( \textit{\&xd6} \textit{\&xd6} \). The game went on 14.\( \textit{\&d4} \textit{\&b6} \) 15.\( \textit{\&c1} \textit{\&e6} \) 16.b3 a5 17.a4 (17.f3 f5) 17...\( \textit{\&ac8} \) 18.\( \textit{\&d2} \textit{\&d7} \) 19.e3 \( \textit{\&b8} \) draw. I propose a more enterprising gambit approach which sets practical problems to White.

10.\( \textit{\&xd5} \textit{h6} \)

If Black changes the move order with 10...a6 11.\( \textit{\&a4} \textit{h6} \) 12.\( \textit{\&xf6} \textit{\&xf6} \) 13.\( \textit{\&xf6}+ \textit{\&xf6} \), d4 is protected and White can eat a second pawn - 14.\( \textit{\&xe4} \textit{\&e7} \) 15.\( \textit{\&d5} \textit{\&f5} \) 16.\( \textit{\&b3} \textit{\&fd8} \) 17.\( \textit{\&f1} \textit{\&ac8} \) 18.\( \textit{\&xb7} \textit{\&c7} \) 19.\( \textit{\&b3} \textit{\&c2} \) 20.\( \textit{\&f3} \textit{\&h7} \) 21.h4\( \textit{\&}.\)

The \( \textit{\&b5} \) controls the fifth rank and two important squares on the queenside - b4 and c4.

14.\( \textit{\&a5} \)

If White allows a check from b4, he will be unable to connect his rooks anymore:
14.\( \textit{\&d5} \textit{\&b4+} \) 15.\( \textit{\&f1} \textit{\&e8} \) 16.\( \textit{\&e2} \textit{\&d2} \) 17.\( \textit{\&b3} \textit{\&e6} \) 18.d5 when Black can force a draw with 18...\( \textit{\&xd5} \) 19.\( \textit{\&xd5} \textit{\&xe3} \) 20.f4 exf3 21.\( \textit{\&xf3} \textit{\&ad8} \) 22.\( \textit{\&xb7} \textit{\&d7} \) 23.\( \textit{\&c6} \textit{\&e6} \) 24.\( \textit{\&c8+} \textit{\&d8} \) 25.\( \textit{\&b7} \textit{\&d7} \) 26.\( \textit{\&c8+} \) or keep the tension with 18...\( \textit{\&d7} ?! \) 19.\( \textit{\&g1} \textit{\&ac8} \).

14.\( \textit{\&e2} \textit{\&b4+} \) 15.\( \textit{\&f1} \textit{\&e7} \) 16.\( \textit{\&d1} \textit{f5} \) 17.\( \textit{\&e2} \textit{\&e6} \) 18.\( \textit{\&g1} \textit{\&d6} \) 19.\( \textit{\&a3} \textit{\&ac8} \) 20.\( \textit{\&f1} \textit{\&f7} \). This position resembles the main line. Black can attack on both flanks - with ...g5 or ...b5.

Black also has clear counterplay after 14.\( \textit{\&b3} \textit{\&e6} \) 15.\( \textit{\&d1} \textit{\&b4+} \) 16.\( \textit{\&f1} \textit{\&c4+} \) 17.\( \textit{\&e2} \textit{\&d3} \) 18.a3 \( \textit{\&ac8} \) 19.\( \textit{\&c1} \textit{\&c2} \) 20.\( \textit{\&f4} \textit{\&d6} \) 21.\( \textit{\&xd3} \textit{exd3} \) 22.\( \textit{\&f3} \textit{\&f5} \).
14...\textit{g}4 15.h3

The e4-pawn is immune due to the double hit 15.\textit{xe}4?? \textit{e}7. 15.\textit{e}2 loses the right to castle owing to 15...\textit{f}3.

15.\textit{wd}2 is solid, but rather passive. Black can follow up with natural moves like 15...\textit{ac}8 16.\textit{e}2 \textit{xe}2 17.\textit{xe}2 \textit{b}4+ 18.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}6 19.a3 \textit{d}6 20.h4 f5 21.\textit{h}3 \textit{f}7 22.\textit{g}2 \textit{fc}7 23.\textit{ad}1 g6 24.\textit{d}2 \textit{g}7 25.\textit{f}1 \textit{g}5± keeping pressure.

15...\textit{e}6 16.\textit{e}2

16.\textit{xe}4 may lead to a draw after 16...\textit{e}7 17.a3 \textit{c}4 18.\textit{f}3 \textit{xg}3 19.\textit{c}3 \textit{h}4 20.\textit{xc}4 with repetition of moves – 20...\textit{xe}3+ 21.\textit{e}2 \textit{xd}4 22.\textit{d}1 \textit{b}6 23.\textit{f}1 \textit{fe}8 24.\textit{c}2 \textit{ac}8 25.\textit{d}2 \textit{cd}8 26.\textit{c}2.

16...\textit{e}7 17.a3 f5

A critical position for the gambit 9...0-0. My analysis convinced me that it is balanced, but Black retains the initiative in all the lines. His main task is to deprive the enemy of counterplay based on d4-d5 or f2-f4. Then he can launch a march of the h-pawn up to h4, preparing it with ...g7-g5 first. Let's go further:

18.0-0

18.\textit{c}1 b5 19.0-0 \textit{c}4 20.\textit{d}2 is similar.

Although Black can already start his kingside offensive with 20...g5, I would recommend to improve our heavy pieces first. White does not have any threats so there is no need to rush. Why give him chances to alter the course of the game with 21.\textit{xc}4 \textit{bxc}4 22.\textit{c}1. 20...h5 21.h4 g5 is also premature in view of 22.b3! \textit{xb}3 23.\textit{hxg}5 \textit{xb}5 24.\textit{c}6+ \textit{d}8 25.\textit{f}4. It is better to play first: 20...\textit{f}7

21.\textit{c}2

Alternatively:

21.\textit{fe}1 unpins the knight and threatens to meet 21...g5 by 22.d5! \textit{ad}8 23.\textit{d}4 so we should anticipate this idea with 21...\textit{ad}8 22.\textit{c}3 \textit{b}3.

21.\textit{fd}1 \textit{ad}8! 22.\textit{f}1 g5 23.\textit{e}1 \textit{g}6 24.\textit{h}1 \textit{h}8.

21.\textit{h}2 g5 22.\textit{g}1 is a passive waiting stand. We can display
activity with 22...h8 23.Qc3 Qae8 24.Qd1

24...h5 25.Qh1 h4 26.g4 f4!! (26...Qb3 27.Qe2 Qc4=) 27.Qxe4 Qb8 28.Qxg5 Qc7 29.e4 f3=. It may be even stronger for Black to improve the placement of his king before pushing ...h4. For example, ...Qh8-h7-h6 looks promising.

21...g5 22.Qc1 Qad8 (22...Qae8 is also possible, of course). Now everything is ready for ...h5, and ...f4 can also become an option after ...Qh8, ...Qg6. White's only counterplay is 23.Qxc4 bxc4 24.Qc3 with mutual chances, for instance: 24...Qb8 25.g4 fxg4 26.hxg4 Qxd4! 27.exd4 Qf4 28.Qc2 Qxc1 29.Qxc1 Qxf2+ 30.Qh1e3=.

Compared to 18.Qc1, White's knight is unpinned. That enables ideas with d4-d5 so we should address this threat with:

20...Qad8!=

Black's main plan is 20...g5 intending ...h5. It is effective against passive play as convincingly shown by Game 3 Hessenius-Grebenshchikov, ICCF 2014. However, it is still premature since White could counter-attack with:

21.d5! Qd3 22.Qd4 f4 23.Qe6 when White's knight proves to be very powerful:

 Compared to 18.Qc1, White's knight is unpinned. That enables ideas with d4-d5 so we should address this threat with:

20...Qad8!=

Black's main plan is 20...g5 intending ...h5. It is effective against passive play as convincingly shown by Game 3 Hessenius-Grebenshchikov, ICCF 2014. However, it is still premature since White could counter-attack with:

21.d5! Qd3 22.Qd4 f4 23.Qe6 when White's knight proves to be very powerful:


After the text, White should be accurate in order to keep the balance. He can only wait. On the other hand, it is not easy to break through his ditches:

a) 21.Qf4 Qh7 22.Qe2 g5 23.Qc2 Qb3 24.Qc3 Qh8 25.Qac1 Qd5

b) 21.Qc3 Qb3 22.Qe2 (22.Qe1 g5 23.Qe2 Qc4 24.Qc3 Qb3) 22...g5 23.Qc3 Qh8 24.Qac1 Qd5 25.Qc2.

c) 21.Qh1 g5 22.Qg1 b5 23.Qc3 Qb3 24.Qe1 Qh8 25.Qc1 Qde8.
1.c4 e5 2.g3 d6 f6 3.g2 c6

d) 21.c2 g5 22.ac1 b3 23.c3 d5 24.f1!

Preparing to meet 24...h5 by 25.f4!

24.b4 h5 25.h1 h4 26.g1 hxg3 27.fxg3 c4 would give Black a tangible initiative.

24...b5 25.c2

After 25.f4 exf3 26.xf3 xf3 27.xf3 we have the strong resource 27...h5! 28.g2 b4 (to drag the rook to a vulnerable square) 29.c6 g4 30.hxg4 fxg4 31.xf8+ xf8 32.g1 with a drawish position although the fight might heat up after 32...d5 (32...f1=) 33.exd6!? (33. d3=) 33...xd6 34.d3 bxa3 35.bxa3 ef3∞.

25.c4 26.e1 (26.f4 gxf4) 26...h5 intending ...h4 at an opportunity.

C32. 9.f3 h6 10.d2

White can also take on e4 after 10.xf6 xf6 11.fxe4 dxe4 12.xe4 xe4 13.xe4, but Black’s compensation is more than enough. He castles and follows up with ...e6, ...b6. If White prevents it with 14.d5, then the queen finds another nice place – 14...a5! (14...a5+ 15.f2 d7 16.a4 was unclear in


10...0-0 11.fxe4 dxe4 12.xe4 xe4 13.xe4 d6 14.g2 e6

White is doomed to a passive defence, see game 1 Lechtynsky-Mastrovislis, Germany 2013.

C33. 9.e3 h6 10.xf6

10.xf4 xf4 11.gxf4 b6 left White with a chronically weak kingside in Ledger-Shaw, Hinckley Island 2015.

10...xf6 11.ge2 0-0!? 11...

It is not absolutely necessary to defend the b7-pawn although 11...b8 12.0-0 e6 is possible. Then 13.f3 0-0 14.fxe4 dxe4
is balanced – see game 2 Gagare-Dragun, Pune 2014.

12.0-0 $e6! 13.$xb7h5!

Black has more than adequate compensation for the pawn. His dominance in the centre is a sound ground for a kingside attack. Black’s idea is simple – to trade h-pawns and bring a heavy piece in the vicinity of the enemy king. He can combine this with a chase of the queen.

14.h4

Perhaps White should seek a way to equalize. For instance:

14.$fc1 h4 15.$a6 $b8 16.$c2 $c8 17.$xa7 $b7 is a draw.

14.$f4 $xf4 15.gxf4 $b8 16.$xa7 $c8 is at least a draw – 17.$a5 $h3.

14...a5 15.$ab1 $b8 16.$c6 $g4

Perhaps a computer could save White’s game, but in practice his task would be difficult. The engines recommend here the strange waiting move 17.$a6 (17.$xd5 $xg3; 17.$a4 g5!), but then Black could activate his last passive piece with 17...$e8!. It can go to c7 via e7, or to the kingside via e6.

18.$c6 $b6 19.$a4 g5 20.hxg5 h4 21.gxh4? is lethal due to 21...$h2+ 22.$h1 $g7!.

18.$fc1 is more logical, but 18...$f6 would force 19.$f1.

However, Black can continue the attack with:

18...$c8 19.$c6 $b7 20.$b5 $e6.

Black’s main threat is seen from the line 21.$xd5 $a6! 22.$xa6 $xg3, and 21.$f4 $xf4 22.exf4 is not helpful either – 22...e3 23.f3 $f2 24.$f1 $a6.
Chapter 1. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 ♜f6 3.♘g2 c6

Annotated Games

1. Lechtynsky – Mastrovasilis
   Germany 2013

1.c4 e5 2.g3 ♜f6 3.♘g2 c6 4.d4 e4 5.♗c3 d5 6.♗g5 ♗bd7 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.♗b3 ♗d6 9.f3 h6 10.♗d2

You might ask where is Black’s compensation here? The answer is simple – White’s kingside is weakened and he is lagging behind in development. Black simply puts his bishop on d5 and his rooks on open files and starts looking around for the harvest. For example: 15.♗a4 ♗e8 16.♗f3 ♘d5 17.e3 ♘g4.
White logically decides to keep his queen closer to his central pawns, but on d3 it will be a prey for the light-squared bishop.

15...♗b6?!

Black trades his strong initiative for a mere pawn.
15...♗c8! was much more unpleasant: 16.b3 ♗e8 17.♗f3 ♘d5

Now 18.0-0 loses by force after 18...♗e4 19.♗b5 a6 20.♗a5 ♘c7 21.♗b4 a5 22.♗b5 (22.♗a4 ♘c6)

10...0-0!

Black will obtain an excellent compensation for the pawn. Perhaps White should restrain his appetite and complete development with 11.♗h3 ♘b6 12.0-0=. However, first players often think that Black’s set-up is dubious and greedily eat poisoned pawns, assuming that his material advantage is a natural result of their opening “advantage”. Thus wrong assessments lead to wrong decisions.

22...\textbf{xf3}. More stubborn is 18.e3 \textbf{e}e4 19.\textbf{e}e2 \textbf{xc}2\textipa{+}. The a2-pawn will soon fall.
After 15...\textbf{xc}8 White could also grab a second pawn: 16.\textbf{xb}7 \textbf{xb}8 17.\textbf{g}g2 \textbf{wd}7 (threatening ...\textbf{f}5) 18.b3 \textbf{f}f5 19.\textbf{wc}4 \textbf{fc}8

![Chessboard image]

Black's rooks are so strong that he could even trade queens after 20.\textbf{wa}4 \textbf{xa}4 (20...\textbf{e}7!−+) 21.bxa4 \textbf{b}2 22.\textbf{f}f3 \textbf{g}4\textipa{+}. His pressure will cost White more than two pawns.

16.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{xb}2 17.0-0 \textbf{fc}8 18.\textbf{fb}1 \textbf{c}2 19.\textbf{e}1 \textbf{xd}3=

![Chessboard image]

20.\textbf{xd}3

20.exd3 was easier to hold. The pawns may be doubled, but they keep the black pieces at bay. The position after 20.exd3 \textbf{ab}8 21.\textbf{xb}7 \textbf{xc}7 22.\textbf{xf}3 \textbf{xb}1 23.\textbf{xb}1 \textbf{xa}2 24.\textbf{a}1 \textbf{d}5 25.\textbf{a}5 is a draw.

20...\textbf{ec}2 21.\textbf{f}4 \textbf{d}8!?

A good try. It does not change the evaluation, but faces the opponent with practical problems. 21...\textbf{xf}4 22.\textbf{xf}4 \textbf{xa}2 23.\textbf{xb}7 \textbf{g}5 24.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{ex}e2 25.\textbf{b}2 \textbf{xb}2 26.\textbf{xb}2 \textbf{d}5 27.\textbf{c}4! eliminates all the pawns.

22.\textbf{xb}7 a5 23.\textbf{a}7 \textbf{g}5 24.\textbf{xd}6 \textbf{xd}6 25.\textbf{c}5 \textbf{c}4

![Chessboard image]

26.\textbf{xa}5

The endgame is drawn, but White still has to find a couple of precise moves. 26.\textbf{b}3 was safe enough.

26...\textbf{xd}4 27.a4? (27.\textbf{a}4! =) 27... \textbf{ex}e2 28.\textbf{f}1 \textbf{ed}2 29.\textbf{c}1 \textbf{d}1 0-1

2. Gagare – Dragun
Wch U20 Pune 14.10.2014

1.c4 e5 2.g3 \textbf{f}6 3.\textbf{g}2 c6 4.d4 e4 5.\textbf{c}3 d5 6.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{bd}7 7.\textbf{xd}5 \textbf{xd}5 8.\textbf{b}3 \textbf{d}6 9.e3 \textbf{h}6 10.\textbf{xf}6 \textbf{xf}6 11.\textbf{ge}2
11...\textit{b}8

11...0-0!? 12.0-0 \textit{e}6! 13.\textit{xb}7 \textit{h}5! is a sharper approach.

12.0-0 \textit{e}6 13.f3

This is undoubtedly the most principled way. 13.\textit{b}5 is just a blunt struggle for the draw, although Black retains some active options after 13...a6 14.\textit{xd}6+ \textit{xd}6 15.\textit{fc}1 0-0 16.a3 \textit{g}4 17.\textit{f}1 \textit{g}5.

13...0-0 14.fxe4 dxe4 15.\textit{c}2

The e4-pawn looks very weak, but it is still alive and it considerably hampers White’s play. It turns out that c2 is the only good retreat of the queen since 15.\textit{d}1 allows a crucial tempo for 15...\textit{g}4 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{f}5 17.h3 \textit{h}5 when Black consolidates his space advantage.
15.d5 is also dubious because it offers a nice square to the d6-bishop - 15...\textit{g}4 16.\textit{d}4 \textit{e}8 17.\textit{f}2 \textit{e}5.

15...\textit{c}8 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}7

A critical moment of the game. First of all, White should discard:

17.\textit{xe}4? \textit{xe}4 18.\textit{xe}4 \textit{h}3 19.\textit{g}2 \textit{g}2 20.\textit{g}2 \textit{w}4+ 21.\textit{g}1 \textit{c}2.

It is more difficult to assess 17.\textit{xe}4. In practice, White probably does not even consider such a move seriously because the bishop pair after 17...\textit{xe}4 18.\textit{xe}4 \textit{b}4 will be a generator of constant threats throughout the game. Objectively, however, the position is rather unclear.

Another attractive option for Black is 17...b5!? 18.\textit{g}2 \textit{b}4 19.\textit{d}1 \textit{d}5

Black has full compensation for the pawn, but it would be difficult to break through the enemy centre.

We see that both captures on e4 offer Black a lasting initiative. On the other hand, any delay would give him time to bolster it up. I think that the best practical approach would be to immediately sacrifice the ex-
change – 17.\textit{\$1}\textit{xf6} \textit{\$1}xf6 18.\textit{\$2}xe4 \textit{\$2}e7 19.\textit{\$2}xd6 \textit{\$2}xd6 20.\textit{\$3}xb7 \textit{\$3}b8 21.\textit{\$4}g2.

From a formal standpoint, this is not even a sacrifice since White gets two pawns. The resulting position is balanced. More importantly, it is easy to play with White who could just stay, hiding behind his pawn shield.

Gagare obviously missed the importance of the moment and made a trivial move which turns the tables in Black’s favour.

17.\textit{\$1}acl?! \textit{\$4}c4 18.a3

It is already late for an exchange sac – 18.\textit{\$5}f5 \textit{\$5}fd8 19.\textit{\$5}cf1 \textit{\$1}b4 20.\textit{\$5}xf6 gxf6 21.\textit{\$5}f2 \textit{\$6}xa2\textit{\$5}.

18...\textit{\$4}b5 19.\textit{\$1}b3

A purely defensive move, taking g4 under control. 19.\textit{\$5}f5 g6 20.\textit{\$5}f2 \textit{\$4}g4 21.\textit{\$5}ff1 f5 would be clearly better for Black.

19...\textit{\$5}c7 20.\textit{\$5}f2 \textit{\$5}a5! 21.a4 \textit{\$5}b4 22.\textit{\$4}b5 \textit{\$4}xb5 23.axb5 \textit{\$4}b8 24.\textit{\$5}xc7 \textit{\$5}xc7 25.\textit{\$5}f5 a4—+

White has kept the material balance, but his pieces are totally un-coordinated and he is unable to stop the distant passer on the queenside:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ccc}
26.\textit{\$6}c1 \textit{\$6}b3 27.\textit{\$5}e2 \textit{\$5}c2 28.\textit{\$5}xc2 \textit{\$5}xc2 \textit{\$5}bxc2 29.\textit{\$6}c1 a3 30.\textit{\$5}b3 a2 31.\textit{\$5}xa2 \textit{\$5}a8 32.\textit{\$5}c1 \textit{\$5}a1 33.\textit{\$5}f1 \textit{\$5}a3 34.\textit{\$5}e2 \textit{\$5}xf1+ 35.\textit{\$5}xf1 \textit{\$5}d5 36.\textit{\$5}b6 \textit{\$5}xb6 37.\textit{\$5}f5 \textit{\$5}d5 38.\textit{\$5}xe4 \textit{\$5}xe3+ 39.\textit{\$5}f2 \textit{\$5}c1=\textit{\$5} 40.\textit{\$5}xc1 \textit{\$5}xc1 41.\textit{\$5}b4 \textit{\$5}f8 42.\textit{\$5}b5 \textit{\$5}c4 43.\textit{\$5}e2 \textit{\$5}e7 44.\textit{\$5}d3 \textit{\$5}b6 45.\textit{\$5}c6 \textit{\$5}f5 46.\textit{\$5}h3 \textit{\$5}d6 47.\textit{\$5}g4 \textit{\$5}f4 48.\textit{\$5}e4 \textit{\$5}g5 49.\textit{\$5}f5 \textit{\$5}e3 50.\textit{\$5}f3 \textit{\$5}c4 51.\textit{\$5}b6 \textit{\$5}d2 52.\textit{\$5}b7 \textit{\$5}c7 53.\textit{\$5}d5 \textit{\$5}xd4 0-1
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

---

3. Hessenius – Grebenshchikov
Rochade-25/TT ICCF 2014

1.\textit{\$1}c4 \textit{\$1}e5 2.g3 \textit{\$1}f6 3.\textit{\$2}g2 \textit{\$2}c6 4.d4 \textit{\$2}e4 5.\textit{\$2}c3 \textit{\$2}d5 6.\textit{\$3}xd5 \textit{\$3}xd5 7.\textit{\$5}bd7 8.\textit{\$5}b3 \textit{\$5}d6 9.\textit{\$5}b5

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ccc}
26.\textit{\$6}c1 \textit{\$6}b3 27.\textit{\$5}e2 \textit{\$5}c2 28.\textit{\$5}xc2 \textit{\$5}xc2 29.\textit{\$6}c1 a3 30.\textit{\$5}b3 a2 31.\textit{\$5}xa2 \textit{\$5}a8 32.\textit{\$5}c1 \textit{\$5}a1 33.\textit{\$5}f1 \textit{\$5}a3 34.\textit{\$5}e2 \textit{\$5}xf1+ 35.\textit{\$5}xf1 \textit{\$5}d5 36.\textit{\$5}b6 \textit{\$5}xb6 37.\textit{\$5}f5 \textit{\$5}d5 38.\textit{\$5}xe4 \textit{\$5}xe3+ 39.\textit{\$5}f2 \textit{\$5}c1=\textit{\$5} 40.\textit{\$5}xc1 \textit{\$5}xc1 41.\textit{\$5}b4 \textit{\$5}f8 42.\textit{\$5}b5 \textit{\$5}c4 43.\textit{\$5}e2 \textit{\$5}e7 44.\textit{\$5}d3 \textit{\$5}b6 45.\textit{\$5}c6 \textit{\$5}f5 46.\textit{\$5}h3 \textit{\$5}d6 47.\textit{\$5}g4 \textit{\$5}f4 48.\textit{\$5}e4 \textit{\$5}g5 49.\textit{\$5}f5 \textit{\$5}e3 50.\textit{\$5}f3 \textit{\$5}c4 51.\textit{\$5}b6 \textit{\$5}d2 52.\textit{\$5}b7 \textit{\$5}c7 53.\textit{\$5}d5 \textit{\$5}xd4 0-1
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
9...0-0! 10.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xd5 h6 11.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xf6+ \(\text{\(D\)}\)xf6 12.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xf6 \(\text{\(W\)}\)xf6 13.e3 a6 14.\(\text{\(W\)}\)a5 \(\text{\(D\)}\)g4 15.h3 \(\text{\(W\)}\)e6 16.\(\text{\(D\)}\)e2 \(\text{\(W\)}\)e7 17.a3 f5 18.\(\text{\(W\)}\)d2 \(\text{\(D\)}\)c4 19.0-0 \(\text{\(W\)}\)f7 20.\(\text{\(W\)}\)fc1

20...g5

This is premature due to 21.d5! with counterplay. However, the game is a good example of Black's plan against passive defence. Even in an email game White fails to hold.

21.\(\text{\(W\)}\)f1 \(\text{\(W\)}\)ae8 22.\(\text{\(D\)}\)c3 \(\text{\(D\)}\)d5 23.\(\text{\(D\)}\)g2 h5!

The h-pawn is Black's most dangerous resource. The break ...f5-f4 is rarely effective. Note that ...h6-h5-h4 should be prepared first with ...g5 as otherwise White will meet ...h5 by h4 and it will be difficult to break through.

24.\(\text{\(W\)}\)f1

24...\(\text{\(D\)}\)h8!

In some lines the king would be safer on h6, but Black must be constantly on guard for f3 or f4. For instance, after 24...\(\text{\(D\)}\)h7 25.f4 exf3 26.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xf3 \(\text{\(D\)}\)xf3 27.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xf3 h4 28.\(\text{\(W\)}\)d3, the king is obviously on the wrong square.

Besides, White should have played 25.f3 in all events, because it is his only defence against the imminent attack. Perhaps White got scared by variations like 24...\(\text{\(D\)}\)h8 25.f3! exf3 26.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xf3 h4 27.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xd5 \(\text{\(W\)}\)xd5

28.gxh4?! f4! 29.exf4 gxf4 with a strong attack, but the tactical trick: 28.\(\text{\(W\)}\)d1! h\(\text{x}g3\)!! 29.\(\text{\(D\)}\)xg3!= saves the day. Instead, 28...f4! keeps the fire on.
25. h1?! h4 26. f1 g8 27. g1 c4 28. f2

28... xe2

Removing the last defender of g3. The opposite-coloured bishops attack is now decisive.

29. xe2 g4 30. f1 h7 31. c2 gxh3 32. c4 g5 33. b3 h5 34. d1 g6 35. c1 g7 36. e2 hxg3 37. fxg3 xg3 38. d5 g4 39. cf1 h8 40. c2 d6 41. exg4 fxg4

The ending is won since White is unable to prevent the invasion of Black's rook on the second rank:

42. xe4 xe4+ 43. xe4 g3 44. e1 f8 0-1

4. Troyke – Delchev
Wunsiedel 06.05.2016

1. g3 e5 2. c4 f6 3. g2 c6 4. d4 e4 5. c3 d5 6. cxd5 cxd5 7. g5 bd7 8. f3 b4 9. c1

An ambitious idea. White would like to recapture on c3 by rook, but it costs a tempo. Alternatives are 9. fxe4 and 9. f3.

9... 0-0 10. fxe4

If White delays this exchange too much, we could take by piece on e4 – 10. h3 h6 11. xf6 xf6 12. 0-0 e8 13. fxe4 xc3 14. xc3 xh3 15. xh3 xe4.

10... dxe4 11. e3

I expected 11. xe4 h6 12. xf6 xf6 13. g2 e8
and suddenly White faces difficult problems.

11...\textit{\textbackslash wa}5 12.\textit{\textbackslash xf}6 \textit{\textbackslash xc}3+

This intermediate move spoils White's plans to connect the knights. I did not like 12...\textit{\textbackslash xf}6 13.\textit{\textbackslash ge}2 \textit{\textbackslash xa}2 14.0-0 with compensation, but Black is not obliged to take the pawn. Instead, the new 13...\textit{\textbackslash g}4! assures him of a clear edge.

13.\textit{\textbackslash exc}3

13.bxc3 \textit{\textbackslash xf}6 14.\textit{\textbackslash de}2 is grim for White. I could either eat the a2-pawn or achieve the thematic ...f5 after 14...\textit{\textbackslash e}6 15.0-0 \textit{\textbackslash g}4 16.\textit{\textbackslash d}2 f5.

13...\textit{\textbackslash xf}6 14.\textit{\textbackslash d}2

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

Or 14.\textit{\textbackslash de}2 \textit{\textbackslash g}4 15.0-0 \textit{\textbackslash xa}2. After 14.\textit{\textbackslash d}2 I decided that my play should be rewarded and snapped the pawn.

14...\textit{\textbackslash xa}2 15.\textit{\textbackslash de}2 \textit{\textbackslash d}5?

It all had been fine, but this move is a terrible blunder. 15...\textit{\textbackslash g}4 16.0-0 \textit{\textbackslash xe}2 17.\textit{\textbackslash xe}2 \textit{\textbackslash e}6 was a healthy pawn up and better pieces – 18.\textit{\textbackslash c}7 \textit{\textbackslash ab}8 19.\textit{\textbackslash fc}1 \textit{\textbackslash d}5.

16.\textit{\textbackslash a}3 \textit{\textbackslash c}4

At the last moment I saw that there is 16...\textit{\textbackslash b}1+ would lose to 17.\textit{\textbackslash f}2. (I only considered 17.\textit{\textbackslash c}1 \textit{\textbackslash b}6). Now the game starts again and White's bad bishop suddenly breaks loose.

17.\textit{\textbackslash xe}4 \textit{\textbackslash e}8 (17...\textit{\textbackslash f}6! 18.\textit{\textbackslash g}2 \textit{\textbackslash g}4) 18.\textit{\textbackslash d}3 \textit{\textbackslash c}6 19.\textit{\textbackslash e}4 \textit{\textbackslash f}6 20.\textit{\textbackslash c}3 \textit{\textbackslash b}6!

I was afraid to enter the endgame after 20...\textit{\textbackslash xe}4 21.\textit{\textbackslash xc}6 \textit{\textbackslash xd}2 22.\textit{\textbackslash xc}8 \textit{\textbackslash axc}8 23.\textit{\textbackslash xd}2 in view of the enemy passed pawn.

21.\textit{\textbackslash e}5 \textit{\textbackslash d}5 22.\textit{\textbackslash c}5 \textit{\textbackslash e}6

22...\textit{\textbackslash b}4 23.0-0 \textit{\textbackslash xd}3 24.\textit{\textbackslash xd}3 \textit{\textbackslash e}6 is roughly equal.

23.0-0 \textit{\textbackslash ad}8 24.\textit{\textbackslash fc}1 \textit{\textbackslash a}6

24...\textit{\textbackslash b}4 equalized, but I wanted to keep the queens in order to exploit the weakened white king.

25.\textit{\textbackslash e}4 \textit{\textbackslash d}7= 26.\textit{\textbackslash xd}5 \textit{\textbackslash xd}5 27.\textit{\textbackslash f}4

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board2.png}
\end{center}

27...\textit{\textbackslash dd}8?

Following the same course of keep-
ing more pieces on the board, but I lack space so I had to seek exchanges. Correct was 27...\texttt{Exc5} 28.\texttt{Exc5} \texttt{d8} (28...\texttt{b3} 29.d5) 29.\texttt{c3} \texttt{h6}. After my mistake my opponent could have impose a total domination in the centre with 28.d5 \texttt{f5} 29.\texttt{c3}. Fortunately, he preferred the “solid”:

28.\texttt{f2}?! \texttt{b3} 29.\texttt{c3} \texttt{a5} (29...\texttt{b4}!) 30.\texttt{e3}?

White misses the trick 30.d5! \texttt{xe5}? 31.\texttt{c8}!. I would have to answer 30...\texttt{a4} 31.\texttt{d4} \texttt{h6} 32.d6\texttt{±}.

30...\texttt{a4} 31.\texttt{h4} \texttt{f6}

At last I got serious counterplay!

\texttt{32.d3} \texttt{e6} (32...\texttt{a2}+\texttt{)} 33.\texttt{c7} \texttt{g4}

33...\texttt{f5} 34.\texttt{xb7} \texttt{d5} 35.\texttt{a7} \texttt{h3} gave more chances.

34.\texttt{xb7} \texttt{d5} (34...\texttt{xd4=}) 35.\texttt{f2} \texttt{f5} 36.\texttt{a7} \texttt{d7} 37.\texttt{xd7} \texttt{xd7}
38.\texttt{f4} fxe5 39.dxe5 \texttt{f8}

40.\texttt{e3}?

White finally breaks down and lets my queen in.

40...\texttt{a8} 41.e6 \texttt{d5} 42.f1 \texttt{d1+} 0-1 (43.\texttt{e1} \texttt{g2}+)
Chapter 2.  1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6

Main Ideas

This chapter presents an alternative repertoire with 1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6. It is completely independent of Chapter 1 and formally, you could skip it (and vice versa!). However, you would improve your understanding if you studied both. It is instructive to observe the impact of the different move order on the plans in positions with an identical pawn structure. To facilitate comparisons, I will consider the same three major plans I focused on in Chapter 1:

1. White attacks the d5-pawn.

3.d4 e4 4.\texttt{c3} d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.\texttt{b3}. The same method of Chapter 1 is effective here: 6...\texttt{c6}! 7.\texttt{x}d5 \texttt{x}d5 8.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd4} and Black achieves comfortable equality.

The big difference is when White continue development with 5.\texttt{g2}. Now we could use the fact that our knight is not on f6 and it cannot be pinned by \texttt{g5}. A logical answer is:

5...\texttt{b4}?

6.cxd5 cxd5 7.\texttt{h3} \texttt{h6} and White should switch to the plan with the break-through f2-f3.

7...\texttt{f6} is also possible – 8.0-0 0-0 9.\texttt{g5} \texttt{xc3} 10.bxc3 \texttt{bd7} 11.f3 \texttt{h6}
Chapter 2

12...xf6 13...xf6 13...xe4 14...d3 
xf3 with the better pawn structure, Alvarado Díaz-Ramiro Ovejero, Vecindario 2013.

**Pros and cons:** We can prevent the pin ²g5 with ...h6, but that involves ...b4, beginning the battle for e4. Play is more positional than in Chapter 1 and Black does not need to sacrifice a pawn. The choice is a matter of taste.

2. White attacks the e4-pawn.

3.d4 e4 4...c3 d5 5...h3 h6 (5...f6!? is also possible) 6.cxd5 cxd5 7...g2 ...f6 8.0-0 b4! 9.f3 0-0! is a critical position which could arise via several move orders. I analyse it in Game 5 Nailer-Delchev, Ordu 2016.

The point is to take on e4 by piece: 10.fxe4 ...xc3 11.bxc3 ²xh3! 12...xh3 ...xe4∞. Next, we connect the knights with ...b8-d7-f6 and impose a light-square blockade on the centre.

**Pros and cons:** The play is identical with Chapter 1.

3. **White does not play d4.**

3...f3 e4 4...d4 ²b6!

It may seem that 4...d5 is stronger than in Chapter 1. Indeed, after 5.d3, we could already take 5...exd3 (with ²g2 ²f6 inserted, White had the unpleasant intermezzo 7.cxd5!). Still, 6...xd3 dxc4 7...xc4 is pleasant for White due to his pawn majority in the centre. So we adopt the same tactic of repelling the d4-knight from its active stand. Only 5...b3 is of independent significance when 5...a5 is not effective in view of 6.d3 a4 7...d2 exd3 8...g2 with an initiative.

5...f6

6.d3 (6...g2 a5 – see Chapter 1, line B, and 6...c3 a5 – Chapter 3, line A1.) 6...g4! 7.e3

7.d4 d5 8.cxd5 cxd5 9...c3 leads to a familiar pawn structure:
Since White will attack e4, we forestall it with 9...\textit{b}4 10.\textit{g}2 0-0 11.0-0 \textit{xc}3 12.bxc3 \textit{d}7.0.
7...\textit{d}5 8.cxd5 (8.\textit{g}2 \textit{de}5) 8...cxd5 9.\textit{c}3 \textit{b}4!? 10.\textit{g}2 0-0!

The best way to fight for the initiative. Once again we can sacrifice the e4-pawn and obtain lasting pressure in return. I have analysed deeply the consequences. It would be unnecessary to repeat here the details from the Step by Step chapter so I will only note that after 11.\textit{dx}e4 \textit{dxe}4 12.\textit{xe}4 \textit{f}6 13.\textit{g}2 \textit{g}4 14.\textit{c}2 \textit{a}6, the weak light squares cause White constant trouble although a computer should be able to hold on.

\textbf{Pros and cons:} The play may take original turn after 5.\textit{b}3 \textit{f}6 6.d3 \textit{g}4!, but it depends only on White since he could also transpose to Chapter 1 with 6.\textit{g}2. On the other hand, Black also has the additional option 4...\textit{d}5 5.d3 exd3 which is not too ambitious, but offers easy development.

\textbf{Conclusion}

2...\textit{c}6 is worth considering, especially if you want to avoid the pin from g5. The trade-off is that without a dark-squared bishop (which should go to b4), Black has more modest attacking resources.
Chapter 2. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6

Step by Step

1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6

A. 3.\(\texttt{\textbf{f}3}\); B. 3.d4

3.\(\texttt{c}3\) d5 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.d4 e4 is covered in Line B. and 3...\(\texttt{\textbf{f}6}\) is considered in Chapter 3.

3.\(\texttt{g}2\) d5 should transpose to line B (3...\(\texttt{f}6\) is the subject of Chapter 1).

I did not face any problems after 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.d4 e4 6.f3 \(\texttt{\textbf{b}6}\) !? We should not try to transpose to Chapter 1 or 3 with 4...\(\texttt{f}6\), hoping to see 5.\(\texttt{\textbf{g}2}\) or 5.\(\texttt{c}3\), since White has a better move order: 5.d3 when 5...exd3 6.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}d}3\) d5 7.\(\texttt{\textbf{g}2}\) dxc4 8.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}c}4\) is pleasant for White due to his pawn majority in the centre – 8...\(\texttt{\textbf{b}d}7\) 9.0-0 \(\texttt{\textbf{b}6}\) 10.\(\texttt{\textbf{d}3}\) \(\texttt{\textbf{c}5}\) 11.\(\texttt{\textbf{d}1}\) 0-0 12.\(\texttt{\textbf{c}3}\) h6 13.e4.

4...d5 is a popular move, but it offers White some initiative. For instance:

5.d3 poses a problem – 5...\(\texttt{f}6\)

6.\(\texttt{\textbf{g}2}\) throws us out of the repertoire from Chapter 1. Besides, I do not like this position anyway. Remains:

5...\(\texttt{c}5\) 6.\(\texttt{b}3\)

6.dxe4 dxe4 7.\(\texttt{\textbf{e}3}\) \(\texttt{f}6\) 8.\(\texttt{c}3\)

\(\texttt{e}7\) (8...0-0 9.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}c}6\) 9.h3 0-0 is roughly equal – 10.\(\texttt{\textbf{c}2}\) \(\texttt{d}8\)

11.\(\texttt{d}1\) \(\texttt{a}6\) 12.\(\texttt{g}2\) \(\texttt{e}5\) 13.\(\texttt{b}3\)

\(\texttt{d}1+\) 14.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}d}1\) \(\texttt{e}3\) 15.\(\texttt{\textbf{e}3}\)

\(\texttt{d}7\) 16.0-0 c5 17.\(\texttt{\textbf{d}2}\) \(\texttt{c}6\).

6.\(\texttt{\textbf{b}4}+\) 7.\(\texttt{d}2\) \(\texttt{\textbf{x}d}2+\) 8.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}d}2\) exd3 9.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}d}3\) dxc4 10.\(\texttt{\textbf{x}c}4\) \(\texttt{f}6\) 11.\(\texttt{\textbf{g}2}\)

0-0 12.0-0
I prefer to avoid such positions with a mobile pawn centre for the enemy.

Note that lately Black is also experiencing problems after 4...d5 5.cxd5 Qxd5 6.Qc2


6...Qf6 7.Qc3! (7.Qg2 is mentioned on page 18.) 7...Qh5

Perhaps 7...Qe5! 8.Qg2 Qe7 will replace 7...Qh5 in future.

8.Qe3

8.h3 prevents ...Qh3, but weakens g3. After 8...Qg6 9.Qg2 Qd6 10.Qe3 0-0 11.Qc2 Qe8, the threat ...Qxg3 will be a constant concern for White.

8...Qc5 9.Qc2

I analyse this position in detail in the annotations to Game 5 Anand-Adams, Shamkir 2015. In my opinion, best practical chances offers the pawn sacrifice 9...0-0!?

5.Qb3

5.e3 Qf6 6.Qg2 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.d3 (8.0-0 Qg4 – see Chapter 1, line B) 8...Qc6 9.dxe4 dxe4 10.Qc3 Qb4 is covered in Chapter 3, line A2.

5.Qc2 d5 should also transpose to the corresponding chapters.

5...Qf6

The method from Chapter 1, 5...a5, is not effective here in view of 6.d3 a4 7.Qd2 exd3 8.Qg2 with an initiative.

6.d3

Practice has only seen 6.Qg2 a5 – see Chapter 1, line B, and 6.Qc3 a5 – see Chapter 3, line A1. The text, however, is the sternest test of Black's plan. It demands from Black ingenious play:
6...\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{g}4!}

Or 6...\textgreek{exd}3 7.\textgreek{wx}d3 d5 8.\textgreek{g}2.

7.e3

7.d4 d5 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.\textgreek{c}c3 transposes to a position which has occurred in a few games via a different move order. I analysed this pawn structure in the previous chapter. White's most dangerous plan is based on f3 when we commonly trade our dark-squared bishop for the c3-knight and hold e4. The placement of the king's knight on b3 does not change the evaluation:

\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{a}) 9...\textgreek{b}4 10.\textgreek{g}2 0-0 11.0-0 \textgreek{xc}3 12.bxc3 \textgreek{d}7}

The idea of this move is to meet 13.f3 \textgreek{g}f6 14.\textgreek{g}5 by 14...h6. Alternatively, 14.fxe4 \textgreek{x}e4 15.c4 dxc4 is balanced. More aspiring is to keep the blockade on e4 with 15...\textgreek{e}8!? 16.cxd5 \textgreek{g}6 17.\textgreek{d}3 \textgreek{df}6.

If White postpones the break in the centre, we can transfer the knight to e6:

13.a4 \textgreek{c}6 14.a5 \textgreek{e}8 15.\textgreek{f}4 h6 16.\textgreek{c}2 \textgreek{f}8=.

\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{b}) 9...\textgreek{e}6?! may be objectively a decent option, but I would not recommend to enter OTB the position after 10.f3 \textgreek{f}6 11.fxe4 \textgreek{x}e4 12.\textgreek{g}2 \textgreek{b}4 13.0-0 (13.\textgreek{d}2 \textgreek{x}d2 14.\textgreek{wx}d2 \textgreek{d}7 15.0-0 0-0 16.\textgreek{g}5 \textgreek{xc}3 17.bxc3 \textgreek{e}ac8 18.\textgreek{e}ac1 f5?) 13...\textgreek{xc}3 14.bxc3 \textgreek{xc}3 15.\textgreek{b}1 \textgreek{d}7 16.\textgreek{a}3 \textgreek{a}6 17.e4! 17.\textgreek{c}5 \textgreek{a}4 (threatening ...\textgreek{xc}5) 18.\textgreek{d}6 \textgreek{a}6 is a draw. 17...dxe4 18.d5 \textgreek{xa}3 19.dxe6 fxe6}

Black is holding here, but only if he calculates like a computer.

\textcolor{red}{\textgreek{7}d5 8.cxd5 (8.\textgreek{g}2 \textgreek{e}5) 8...cxd5 9.\textgreek{c}c3}

9.\textgreek{g}2 offers Black more chances to develop the initiative — 9...\textgreek{c}6 10.\textgreek{c}c3

10.dxe4 dxe4 11.\textgreek{xe}4 \textgreek{f}6 12.\textgreek{g}2 \textgreek{g}4 13.f3 \textgreek{e}6 14.0-0\textgreek{e} is a worse version of the main line.

10.d6 11.0-0 f5 12.dxe4 dxe4 13.\textgreek{d}5 \textgreek{d}8 14.\textgreek{f}4 \textgreek{c}4 15.\textgreek{xe}4 fxe4 16.\textgreek{xc}4 \textgreek{x}f1 17.\textgreek{xf}1 \textgreek{d}7 18.\textgreek{e}6 \textgreek{d}8 19.\textgreek{bd}4 \textgreek{xe}6 20.\textgreek{xe}6 \textgreek{c}8 whereas White can force a draw with 21.\textgreek{xe}4 \textgreek{d}1+ 22.\textgreek{g}2 \textgreek{xc}1 23.\textgreek{xc}1 \textgreek{xc}1 24.\textgreek{x}g7+ \textgreek{f}7 25.\textgreek{e}6 \textgreek{e}7 26.\textgreek{f}5+ \textgreek{e}8 27.\textgreek{g}7+ \textgreek{d}8 28.\textgreek{e}6+ \textgreek{e}8.
9...\(\text{b4}!\)!

The email game Portych-Cárdenas Huaman, ICCF 2011, saw 9...\(\text{f6}\) 10.\(\text{c2}\)

The queen would be vulnerable on d2 as seen from the line 10.\(\text{d2 f3}\) 11.\(\text{g1 c6}\) 12.\(\text{xd5}\) (12.\(\text{h3 g5}\) 13.\(\text{xd5 exd3}\) 14.\(\text{c7+ d8}\) 15.\(\text{xa8 b4}\) 12...exd3 13.\(\text{g2 ge5}\) 14.\(\text{f1 h3}\) 15.\(\text{c7+ d8}\) 16.\(\text{hxh3 xc7t}\).)

10...\(\text{b4}\) exd3 11...\(\text{b4}\) 12.\(\text{h3 exd3}\) 13.\(\text{xd3 e5}\) 14.\(\text{d2 xd3+}\) 15.\(\text{xd3 xc3}\) 16.\(\text{xc3 0-0}\) is also somewhat better for White although his winning chances in an endgame would be very slim due to the opposite-coloured bishop, e.g. 17.\(\text{d1 d8}\) 18.\(\text{d4 e4}\).

12.\(\text{xd3 c6}\) 13.\(\text{d4 xd4}\) 14.exd4 \(\text{b4}\) 15.\(\text{e2+ xe2+}\) when instead of 16.\(\text{xe2 f6}\) 17.f3 \(\text{e6}\) 18.f2 a6 19.a4 \(\text{d7}\) 20.e3 0-0 21.\(\text{c5 xc5}\) 22.dxc5 d4 23.\(\text{xd4 fe8}\) 24.c6 bxc6 25.\(\text{gd1 f8}\) 26.a3 c5 27.c3 c4 28.e1 draw, White would retain a slight pull in the endgame with 16.\(\text{xe2! e6}\) 17.\(\text{f3 f6}\) 18.\(\text{b5}\).

10.\(\text{g2}\)

The correspondence game Puttl-Lovelock, New Zealand 2003, saw 10.\(\text{d2 f6}\) 11.f4 \(\text{xf3}\) 12.\(\text{xd5 xd2+}\) 13.\(\text{xd2 f2+}\) (13...\(\text{d6}\)? 14.\(\text{e4 e6=}\) 14.\(\text{e2 d6}\) 15.\(\text{c3}\) 15.e4 gives Black time to castle - 15...0-0 16.\(\text{h3 e5}\) 17.d4 \(\text{g6}\) 18.\(\text{xf2 f5t}\).

Now instead of 15...0-0? 16.\(\text{c7}\), Black seizes the initiative with: 15...\(\text{a6!}\) 16.\(\text{xg7 xd5}\) 17.\(\text{xh8+ e7}\) 18.e4 \(\text{h5}\) 19.\(\text{g7 f6+}\) 20.\(\text{xf2 g4}\) 21.e5 \(\text{e8}\) 22.\(\text{h8 d8}\) and White must find only moves.

10...0-0

Only 10...\(\text{fxe}\) 11.0-0 0-0 has been tried so far in two old correspondence games. White has the more active pieces after 12.dxe4 \(\text{xc3}\) 13.bxc3 dxe4 14.\(\text{c2 e8}\) 15.\(\text{c}.\)

11.dxe4

After 11.0-0, the original queen lift \(\text{d8-b6-h6}\) allows us to put pressure on the enemy king - 11...\(\text{h6}\) 12.\(\text{f6}\) 13.dxe4 \(\text{xc3}\) 14.bxc3 dxe4 15.h4\(\infty\).
Chapter 2

11.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{d}8\) 12.\(\text{dxe4}\) \(\text{dxe4}\) 13.\(\text{cxe4}\) \(\text{f6}\) 14.\(\text{g2}\) \(\text{g4}\) 15.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{a}6\) is similar to the main line.

Black has full compensation for the pawn. An illustrative line is:

16.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{e}6\) 17.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{c}6!\) 18.\(\text{xb4}\) \(\text{xb4}\) 19.\(\text{b1}\) \(\text{d}3\) 20.\(\text{d4}\) \(\text{xd4}\) 21.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{c}2+\) 22.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{b3}\) 23.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{xd4}\).

It is undoubtedly easier to play this position with Black.

11...\(\text{dxe4}\) 12.\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{f6}\) 13.\(\text{g2}\) \(\text{g4}\)

Black’s active pieces fully compensate the missing pawn. The point of his counterplay are the weak light squares \(\text{d3}\) and \(\text{c4}\), and split queenside pawns (after ...\(\text{xc3}\)). The further play is not forced so I will try to illustrate several key points.

I have analysed two possible approaches from here:

**A1. 14.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{e}6\) 15.0-0 \(\text{c}6\)**

Decent alternatives are:

15...\(\text{c}4\) 16.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{c}6\) 17.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{ad8}\) 18.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{b}5\) 19.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{a}6\) 20.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{e}7\) 21.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{xf1}\) 22.\(\text{xf1}\) \(\text{d}3\) 23.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{fd8}\) 24.\(\text{xd3}\) \(\text{xd3}\).

15...\(\text{d}8\) 16.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{c}6\) 17.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{a}6\) 18.\(\text{xa6}\) \(\text{bxa6}\).

16.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{b}5\) 17.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{xd4}\) 18.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{ad8}\) 19.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{e}7\) 20.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{d}5\) 21.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{b}6\)

Black is threatening 22...\(\text{f4}\) and 22...\(\text{f6}\). 22.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) is not too helpful. Perhaps White should seek a draw with 22.\(\text{a4}\), but Black could deviate from repetition by 22...\(\text{c}6\).

**A2. 14.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{a}6\) 15.\(\text{d}2\)**

15.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{e}6\) 16.\(\text{d4}\) (16.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{c}6\) is similar to A1.) 16...\(\text{c}4\) 17.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{c}8\) 18.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{xf1}\) 19.\(\text{xf1}\) \(\text{c}6\) 20.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{d5}\) 21.\(\text{de2}\) \(\text{xc3}\) 22.\(\text{bxc3}\) \(\text{c}5\).
1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6

Black has a long-term compensation due to his better pawn structure. He does not need to rush since the weak a- and c-pawns will not run away. White can push e4, a4, ëb1, but that's all. For his part, Black can double his rooks on the d-file or place them on d8 and c8:

a) 23...b1 ëe5 24...d4 h6
   Alternatively:
   24...d8 25...e2 ëc4 26...g2 ëac8=.
   24...c4 25.e4 ëd8 26...g2 ëd7.
   25...e2 ëc4 26.e4 ëc7=.

b) 23.a4 ëe5 24...g2 ëd8 25.e4 ëxd1 26...xd1 ëd3 (26...c4=) 27...a3 ëxa3 28...xa3 ëd8 29...d4 ëe5=.

15...bd7 16.a3 ëxc3 17...xc3 ëac8 18...d4 ëc5 19.h3 ëh5
20...f1 ëd6 21...c4 ëg6 22...e2 ëfe4 23...b4 ëfe8∞

White is unable to keep the extra pawn – 24.g4 ëxf2 or 24.0-0 ëxg3.

B. 3.d4 e4 4...c3

After 4.d5, we should not linger too much with ...cxd5 since we can miss the moment as in the game Hellbing-Dutra Neto, IECG email 2004: 4...b4+ 5.d2 ëe7 6...c3 ëf6 7...h3 0-0 8...g2 d6?! (correct was 8...cxd5! 9.cxd5 d6 10...xe4 ëxh3 11...xf6+ ëxf6 12...xh3 ëxb2 13...xb4 ëxb4+ 14...d2 ëxd2+ 15...xd2 ëa6 16.e4 ëc5 17...he1 ëe8 draw, Lukesova-Vegilek, ICCF email 2010) 9...xe4 ëxh3 10...xf6+ ëxf6 11...xh3 ëxb2 12...c1 cxd5 13...c2! (this intermezzo punishes Black's tactic) 13...xd2+ 14...xd2+. Perhaps the most challenging is:

4...cxd5 5.cxd5 ëf6 6...g2
6...c3 ëb4 7...d2 0-0= 8...g2 ëe8 9...h3 d6 10.0-0 ëf5 11...f4
g5 12...h3 h6+, Schrancz-Schuster, LSS email 2009.
6...b4+ 7...d2 ëe7 8.a3 ëxd2+ 9...xd2 0-0

10...e5 11...c4 ëb5 12...c1 b6∞.

4...h3 d5 5...c3 h6! transposes to 5...h3.
Chapter 2

4...d5

may be playable, but Black lacks an active plan. He should transfer his bishop to b6 via e7-d6-c7, e.g. 12...@f5 13.@c1 &d6!.

8.0-0 &ge7 9.@f4 0-0 10.f3 f5 11.@b3 @xc3 12.@xc3 @d6 13.@c5 @xc5 14.dxc5 g5 15.@h5 h6 16.b3± Markowski-Krasenkow, Warsaw 2010.

6...@c6! 7.@xd5 @xd5 8.@xd5 @xd4 9.@c7+

Now 17...@c8 keeps the material balance due to the idea ...&d6, e.g. 18.@h3 g5 19.@e5 g4+.

17...@c2 is also interesting – 18.@xc2 @c8 19.@b1 @a5 20.@e5 @xc7 21.@xf6+ @xf6 22.@xe4 @b6 23.@xb7 @c4. Black is two pawns behind, but his raging bishops will easily regain them.

9...@d8 10.@xa8 @c2+ 11.@d1 @xa1

The stem game De Bari-Penafiel Lopez, ICCF 2009, continued
1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6

12.f4 e6 13.b3 \(\text{\textdaggerdbl}}x\text{\textdagger}b3\) 14.axb3 \(\text{\textdaggerdbl}}x\text{\textdagger}b3+) 15.c1 \(\text{\textdagger}a3+\) 16.b1 e7 17.e3 g5 18.xg5 d7 19.h3+ e6 20.xe6+ xe6 21.xe7 xe7 22.e2 xxa8 and White was happy to draw this endgame.

B2. 5.g2 b4!?

5...d6 transposes to Chapter 1. The text is the only reasonable way to rip dividends from 2...c6.

6.f3

6.d2 xc3 7.bxc3 f6! 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.h3 0-0

12.xf6


b) 7.f3 f6 8.g5 0-0 9.fxe4 dxe4 10.e3

Black can now reach a better version of line B3 after 10...h6 since White has spent a tempo on the useless d2. The game A.Larsen-Konstantinov, ICCF 2013, went further 11.0-0 e8 12.c1 bd7 13.xh6?! gxh6 14.xh6 f8 15.g5+ (15.fxe4 xe4) 15..g6 16.f4 exf3 17.xg6 h7+. Besides, he could discard ...h6 at all and aspire to the advantage with:

10.e8 11.0-0 e3!? 12.e1 c6 (or 12..h5!). The e3-pawn splits the board, hindering White's communication.

6.cxd5 cxd5 branches to:

a) 7.h3 f6 (7...h6 is line B3) 8.0-0 0-0 9.g5 xc3 10.bxc3 bd7 11.f3 h6

Black can now reach a better version of line B3 after 10...h6
Black has enough compensation following 10.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}8

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board}
\caption{Chessboard configuration after 10.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}8}
\end{figure}

11.\textit{g}2 \textit{a}5 12.\textit{f}3 \textit{xc}3+ 13.\textit{bxc}3 \textit{xc}3+ 14.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}3 15.\textit{f}4 \textit{c}3+ 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}3 17.\textit{f}4 \textit{c}3+ 18.\textit{d}2 draw, Kerr-Schramm, ICCF 2010.

10...\textit{h}6 11.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 12.\textit{ge}2 \textit{g}4\$0, B.Damljanovic-Komarov, Le Port Marly 2009.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board2}
\caption{Chessboard configuration after 10...\textit{h}6 11.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 12.\textit{ge}2 \textit{g}4\$0}
\end{figure}

6...\textit{gf}6 7.\textit{g}5

Perhaps it was time to include 7.cxd5 cxd5 because after the text, Black could exchange on f3 and grab the c4-pawn with unclear consequences.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board3}
\caption{Chessboard configuration after 7.\textit{gf}6 7.\textit{g}5}
\end{figure}

7...0-0!? 7...\textit{bd}7 transposes to Chapter 1/

line C1, but this move is unnecessary here.

8.\textit{fxe}4 \textit{dxe}4 9.\textit{h}3

9.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}8 10.\textit{g}2 \textit{bd}7 11.\textit{f}3 \textit{h}6 leads to an interesting position with mutual chances. For example:

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board4}
\caption{Chessboard configuration after 9.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}8 10.\textit{g}2 \textit{bd}7 11.\textit{f}3 \textit{h}6}
\end{figure}

12.\textit{c}1 \textit{e}4 13.\textit{b}3 \textit{a}5 14.\textit{d}2 \textit{xd}2 15.\textit{xd}2 \textit{f}6 – the pressure along the e-file promises Black a lasting initiative.

9.\textit{b}3 \textit{a}5 10.\textit{a}3 \textit{e}7 11.\textit{d}1 \textit{g}4 12.\textit{xe}7 \textit{xe}7 13.\textit{xe}4 \textit{a}4 14.\textit{w}c3 \textit{f}5 is double-edged.

9...\textit{bd}7

9...\textit{h}6 10.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 11.\textit{f}2 \textit{d}8 12.\textit{e}3 \textit{g}5 13.\textit{c}1 \textit{f}5 also deserves attention.

10.0-0 \textit{xc}3 11.\textit{bxc}3 \textit{h}6 12.\textit{xf}6

White’s bishop does not have good prospects after 12.\textit{c}1 \textit{b}6.

12...\textit{xf}6 13.\textit{f}2 \textit{e}8\$

Black has a target on c4. He could attack it with ...\textit{w}e6, ...\textit{b}6, ...\textit{a}6.
**B3. 5.\(\text{h}3\) \text{h}6**

This move secures the d5-pawn, but it slows down development. More challenging is:

5...\(\text{f}6!?\) 6.\(\text{cxd5}\) \(\text{cxd5}\) 7.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{b}4\)

8.\(\text{xf6}\)

Alternatively:

8.\(\text{a}4+\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.e3 \(\text{h}6\) 10.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 11.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{d}6\) 12.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{e}7\) 13.\(\text{b}5+\) \(\text{f}8\) 14.h4 \(\text{g}6=\);

8.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{bd}7\) 9.e3 \(\text{h}6\) 10.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xc}3+\) 11.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{xf}6\) 12.\(\text{f}4\) 0-0=;

8.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{xc}3+\) 9.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{bd}7\) 10.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{xf}3\) 11.\(\text{xf}3\) \(\text{h}6\) 12.\(\text{xf}6\) \(\text{xf}6\) 13.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{g}5\), Mercadal Benejam-Joppich, ICCF 2015.

8...\(\text{xf}6\) 9.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{d}6\)

Black has saved the d5-pawn and should gradually level the game:

10.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{e}6\) 11.\(\text{c}1\) 0-0 12.e3 \(\text{c}6\) 13.a3 \(\text{xc}3+\) 14.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{f}8\) 15.e2 (15.\(\text{xe}6\) \(\text{xe}6\)) 15...\(\text{a}5\) 16.\(\text{b}4\)

\(\text{xb}4\) 17.\(\text{xb}4\) \(\text{xe}3\) 18.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{f}4\) 19.\(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{dxc}4\) 20.\(\text{d}6\) \(\text{fxe}6\) 21.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{a}5=\).

5...\(\text{b}4!?\) 6.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{f}6\) transposes to Chapter 1, Line C, but White has also:

6.\(\text{a}4\)

6.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{a}5\) is similar, only the b-pawn is not hanging. Black was fine after 7.\(\text{cxd5}\) \(\text{cxd5}\) 8...a3 (8.\(\text{g}5?!\) \(\text{f}6\)) 8...\(\text{xc}3+\) 9.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{a}4\) 10.\(\text{b}5+\) \(\text{c}6\), Klekowski-Navara, Hockenheim 2015. The d5-pawn could be defended by ...\(\text{e}a5\).

6...\(\text{a}5\) 7.\(\text{cxd5}\) \(\text{b}5\) 8.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{cxd5}\),

when 9.e3 could be met by the sharp

9...\(\text{f}6\) 10.\(\text{xb}5+\) \(\text{d}7\) 11.\(\text{xd}7+\) \(\text{xd}7\) with compensation for the pawn – White cannot castle safely due to the weak h3-square.

**6.\(\text{cxd5}\) \(\text{cxd5}\) 7.\(\text{g}2\)**

7.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{f}6\) 8.\(\text{b}3\) (8.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{g}5?!\)) is another version of the pawn sac 8...\(\text{c}6\)! with an initiative – 9.\(\text{fxd5}\) \(\text{xd}5\) 10.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 11.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}4\) 12.\(\text{c}7+\) \(\text{d}8\) 13.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{c}2+\) 14.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{xa}1\) 15.\(\text{xa}8\) \(\text{e}6=\), Tikkanen-Grandelius, Malmoe 2013.

7...\(\text{f}6\) 8.0-0 \(\text{b}4!\) 9.\(\text{f}3\)

53
Chapter 2

9...0-0!

It is always better to avoid the symmetrical pawn structure after 9...exf3 10.exf3 which might be boring to defend. Besides, the computer claims that 9...exf3 is a tactical mistake in view of 10.\texttt{Exf3! 0-0? 11.Exf6!} or 10...\texttt{Exc3 11.Ee3+!}\texttt{Exe6 12.bxc3 0-0 13.d4} when 13...\texttt{Exf5 14.Ee5 and 13...}\texttt{Ed7 14.EXe6 are slightly better for White.}

After the text Black holds the critical square e4 and has full-fledged play. See \textbf{Game 6} Nailer-Delchev, Ordu 2016.
Chapter 2. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6

Annotated Games

5. Anand (2791) – Adams (2745)
Shamkir 24.04.2015

1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 3.Bf3 e4 4.d4 d5 5.cxd5 Bxd5 6.Bc2 Bf6 7.Bc3 Bh5 (7...Be5!)
8.Bb3 a6

9...exd3

This move saves the e4-pawn, but Black remains without an active plan. Instead I recommend:

Let's ponder over this position. White cannot castle short since 14.Gg2 Bh5 15.0-0 would drop the e2-pawn.

Trading queens by 14.Bh4?! is always dubious since White's queenside will be left to the mercy of Black's overwhelming forces. That reduces his options down to long castling, but then the extra pawn will be of no significance since the kings will be on stake:
17.0-0-0 defines White's castling position too early – 17...Bb4
18.Bb1 a5

17...Bd6 18.Be4 (18.Bh4 Bh4 19.gxh4 Bh4) Now simplest is:


10.fxe3

In a later game Kovalenko chose 10.dxe3 whereas Black failed to find an adequate set-up:
10...\( \text{\$f5} \)

Perhaps it is better to keep the queen in the centre, e.g. 10...\( \text{\$e5} \) 11.b3 0-0 12.\( \text{\$b2} \) \( \text{\$f5} \) 13.\( \text{\$g2} \) \( \text{\$a6} \) 14.\( \text{\$d1} \) \( \text{\$b4} \) 15.\( \text{\$c1} \) \( \text{\$e7} \) 16.0-0 \( \text{\$fd8} \)

As long as the g2-bishop is out of play, Black is safe.
11.\( \text{\$g2} \) \( \text{\$g6?} \) (11...\( \text{\$a6} \) 12.h3 0-0 13.a3 \( \text{\$c7} \) 14.b3 \( \text{\$cd5} \) 15.\( \text{\$b2} \) \( \text{\$g6} \) 16.0-0 \( \text{\$fe8} \) 12.b3 (12.\( \text{\$b3} \) b6 13.\( \text{\$a3} \)±) 12...\( \text{\$bd7} \) 13.\( \text{\$a3} \) c5 14.\( \text{\$d1} \)±, Kovalenko-Petursson, Berlin 2015.

10...\( \text{\$e5} \) 11.\( \text{\$g2} \) \( \text{\$f5} \) 12.0-0 0-0 13.b3

In Littke-Kolek, ICCF 2011, White shifted the focus to the queenside with 13.b4!? \( \text{\$bd7} \) 14.\( \text{\$b2} \) \( \text{\$e6} \) 15.b5 15.\( \text{\$xf5} \) \( \text{\$xf5} \) 16.\( \text{\$xe4} \) is also possible, but the pawn on b4 could give Black a lever for counterplay.
15...\( \text{\$ac8} \) 16.\( \text{\$b3} \) \( \text{\$fd8} \) 17.\( \text{\$ac1} \) \( \text{\$c5} \) 18.\( \text{\$xe6} \) \( \text{\$xe6} \) 19.\( \text{\$c2} \) \( \text{\$d7} \) 20.bxc6 \( \text{\$xc6} \) 21.\( \text{\$b1} \) \( \text{\$a4} \) 22.\( \text{\$cc1} \) \( \text{\$fd7} \) 23.\( \text{\$d4} \) b6 24.\( \text{\$c3} \) \( \text{\$c6} \) 25.\( \text{\$c2} \) with tangible pressure.

13...\( \text{\$bd7} \) 14.\( \text{\$b2} \) \( \text{\$e6} \)

15.\( \text{\$xf5}! \) \( \text{\$xf5} \) 16.\( \text{\$xe4} \)

Anand demonstrates one of White's main ideas in this line of the English – a kingside attack exploiting the open f-file. The computers "believe" that the game is roughly even, but this impression is rather deceiving. In fact, we have a typical example of modern top-level approach to the opening. White does not risk anything as he does not have any weaknesses while Black must defend accurately. Even strongest players like Adams often fail to hold on in such fluid positions without clear reference points. Black's difficulties ensue from the lack of concrete variations. For instance, he must now decide where to put the queen. The natural 16...\( \text{\$e6} \) 17.\( \text{\$xf6+} \) \( \text{\$xf6} \) 18.\( \text{\$f1} \) \( \text{\$d5} \) (preventing \( \text{\$f4} \)) 19.\( \text{\$e4} \) \( \text{\$h6} \) 20.\( \text{\$c4} \) a5 21.\( \text{\$a3} \) \( \text{\$ae8} \) 22.\( \text{\$d3} \) \( \text{\$e6} \) does not solve his problems as White preserves many attacking resources, like 23.\( \text{\$f5} \)± threatening h4, \( \text{\$g5} \) or \( \text{\$g4} \), \( \text{\$h5} \). Adams takes the brave decision to allow doubled pawns.

16...\( \text{\$g6} \) 17.\( \text{\$f1} \) \( \text{\$e8} \) 18.\( \text{\$xf6} \) \( \text{\$xf6} \) 19.\( \text{\$xf6+} \) \( \text{\$xf6} \) 20.e4 \( \text{\$ad8} \)
21.\textit{\textbf{B}}f4 \textit{\textbf{B}}h5 22.d3 \textit{\textbf{Be}}5 23.\textit{\textbf{B}}h3 \textit{\textbf{Bg}}7 24.\textit{\textbf{B}}g2

24...\textit{\textbf{h}}5

This move looks like a blunder, but things are not that simple. Apparently, Adams thought that passive waiting would not be safe. After the obvious 24...\textit{\textbf{B}}d4 25.\textit{\textbf{B}}g4+ \textit{\textbf{B}}h8 26.\textit{\textbf{B}}c1 \textit{\textbf{B}}g8 27.\textit{\textbf{B}}h4, Black begins to experience difficulties in finding good moves. For instance, 27.a5 28.\textit{\textbf{B}}f5 \textit{\textbf{Bg}}7 29.\textit{\textbf{B}}d2 a4 simply loses a pawn to 30.bxa4 \textit{\textbf{B}}xa4 31.\textit{\textbf{B}}b2 \textit{\textbf{B}}d4 32.\textit{\textbf{B}}xb7.

Let’s analyse another stand: 27.c5 28.\textit{\textbf{B}}f5 \textit{\textbf{Bg}}7. Now 29.\textit{\textbf{B}}f3 b6 30.\textit{\textbf{B}}h6 does not win in view of 30...\textit{\textbf{Ba}}1 31.\textit{\textbf{B}}g2 \textit{\textbf{B}}b2, but White has a cunning idea – to put his queen behind the rook, e.g. 29.\textit{\textbf{B}}h5! b6 30.\textit{\textbf{B}}f1 \textit{\textbf{Be}}8 31.\textit{\textbf{B}}f4 \textit{\textbf{Ba}}1+ 32.\textit{\textbf{B}}f2 \textit{\textbf{B}}d4+ 33.\textit{\textbf{B}}f3 \textit{\textbf{Ba}}1 34.\textit{\textbf{B}}h4.

There is no perpetual check so 34...\textit{\textbf{B}}g8 is the only move. In this line White wins the h-pawn without having to trade any piece. The bottom line is that Black’s defence is not trivial at all. Adams’ decision might be the right approach, but he shaped it wrongly.

25.\textit{\textbf{B}}f5 \textit{\textbf{B}}d4 26.\textit{\textbf{B}}xh5 \textit{\textbf{Be}}3

26...\textit{\textbf{B}}e5 deserved attention, and only after 27.\textit{\textbf{B}}f5, 27...\textit{\textbf{Be}}3. The point is that the f-file is plugged by the f5-bishop and 28.\textit{\textbf{B}}h4 \textit{\textbf{B}}h8 29.\textit{\textbf{B}}f4?? would lose to 29...\textit{\textbf{B}}c5 30.\textit{\textbf{B}}b2 \textit{\textbf{Ec}}1. Thus Black would have traded rooks with excellent chances to draw. It seems that Adams wanted to preserve more tension and was actually playing for a win!

27.\textit{\textbf{B}}h4 \textit{\textbf{Be}}5 28.\textit{\textbf{B}}f4 \textit{\textbf{Bc}}5 29.\textit{\textbf{B}}b2 \textit{\textbf{Bd}}6 30.\textit{\textbf{B}}f1

30...a5

The game is balanced, e.g. 30...\textit{\textbf{B}}d4 31.\textit{\textbf{B}}b1 \textit{\textbf{Bc}}3 32.\textit{\textbf{B}}g4.

31.\textit{\textbf{B}}f5 \textit{\textbf{Bb}}5 32.\textit{\textbf{B}}h4 \textit{\textbf{Bd}}8?

This is Black’s only mistake in the game. Perhaps he was planning
...£d8-a8 followed up by ...a4, but this idea misses a tactical hit. 32...b4 was more precise. It would have fixed a possible target for Black's rooks on a2.

33.a3 b4 34.axb4 axb4

35.â€6!

White succeeds in transferring his passive bishop to c4 and the game is suddenly over.

35...£c3 36.£c4 £a8 37.£f5 £a7 38.£f3 £c5 39.£d2 £d6 40.£e3 £a5 41.£f2 £c2 42.g4 £d7 43.£g3 £c5 44.g5 fxg5 45.£xf7+ £xf7 46.£xf7 £xf7 47.£f3+ £g7 48.h5 £a5 49.£f2 £b2 50.h6+ £g6 51.h7 1-0

6. Nailer – Delchev
Ordu 17.04.2016

1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 3.d4 e4 4.â€c3 d5 5.â€g2 £f6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.â€h3 h6 8.0-0 £b4 9.f3 0-0!

(see next diagram)

10.£f2?!

10.fxe4 was more principled. Then 10...£xc3 11.bxc3 £xh3! (11...dxe4?! released the central blockade in Wiedenkeller-Carlsson, Sweden 2014 – 12.c4 b6 13.d5=) 12.£xh3 £xe4 13.£d3 is the critical test of this line.

10...exf3 11.£xf3?!

11.exf3 was roughly equal – 11...â€c6 12.£d3 £a5 13.â€e3 £e8 14.£f2 £f5.

11...â€c6 12.e3?
A horrible positional mistake which leaves the c1-bishop completely useless. 12...f4, having in mind g3-g4-g5, was a must.

12...f5 13.d3 xc3 14.bxc3 e4

A triumph of my light-squared strategy.

15.c5 xf3 16.xf3 b6 17.d3 a5 18.e5 c8 19.a3 e8 20.b4 c4 21.xc4 xc4 22.ae1 d7 23.f5 e6 24.g4 e4 0-1

The material is still even, but the computer evaluates the final position at -3.60 due to the threat 25...a5!
Chapter 3. 1.c4 e5 2.\bc3 \bf6 3.g3 c6

Main Ideas

1.c4 e5 2.\bc3 \bf6 3.g3 c6

The move \bc3 has a stronger influence on the centre than \bg2, but it throws White off his repertoire with 2.g3. As I explained in Chapter 1, in many lines the knight is not well placed on c3. The stats show that in the following sequence of moves: 1.c4 e5 2.g3 \bf6, 3.\bc3 is ten times (!) less frequent than 3.\bg2. I will not elaborate further on the best way of exploiting White’s knight early sortie since that is often a matter of taste or fashion. Instead let’s see how it compares to the previous two chapters if we insist on 3...c6.

1. White attacks the d5-pawn.

This approach directly transposes to Chapter 1, line C, after 4.\bg2 d5 5.d4 e4 and to Chapter 1, line A, after 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.\bb3 \bc6.

2. White attacks the e4-pawn.

4.d4 e4 5.\bg5 cuts our choice down to 5...\ba4 in view of 5...d5? 6.cxd5 cxd5 7.\xf6.

After 6.\bb3 \ba6 7.\bg2 h6 8.\xf6 \xf6 9.e3 \xc3+ 10.\xc3 d5 11.cxd5 cxd5,

Black does not have serious problems, but he lacks any target. I propose to adopt the more enterprising scheme with an isolated pawn: 4...\exd4 5.\wxd4 d5.
I recommend to take on d4 only in this particular case when White has already committed his knight to c3. This detail forces him to exchange on d5 (unless he wants to sac the c4-pawn) which gives us a nice tempo after ...\(\text{d}c6\). This tempo considerably alters White's common plans against an IQP. The immediate results of it are:

1. White cannot comfortably develop his c1-bishop to g5 due to the hit on b2: 6.\(\text{g}g5\) \(\text{e}7\) 7.\(\text{c}xd5\) \(\text{c}xd5\) 8.\(\text{g}2\) (8.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{b}6\)!) 8...\(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{b}6\)!

Or 6.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{e}6\) 7.\(\text{c}xd5\) \(\text{c}xd5\) 8.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{b}6\)! with complications which may lead to a draw.

2. If we do not fear the pin from g5, we can find an active stand for our bishop on \(c5\): 6.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{e}6\) 7.\(\text{c}xd5\) \(\text{c}xd5\) 8.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{c}5\)

\begin{center}
\[
\text{(Diagram)}
\end{center}

10.0-0 0-0

3. The bishop on c5 deprives White of \(\text{e}3\), \(\text{d}4\), so he must look for nontrivial ways of completing his development. Whatever he does, we must aim for activity, even at the price of a pawn, e.g. 11.\(\text{b}5\) (11.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{h}6\)) 11...\(\text{b}6\)! 12.\(\text{x}b6\) \(\text{a}6\) 13.\(\text{g}5\)

\begin{center}
\[
\text{(Diagram)}
\end{center}

3. White does not play d4.

4.\(\text{f}3\) \(e4\) 5.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{b}6\)!

\begin{center}
\[
\text{(Diagram)}
\end{center}

As you see, our retort is the same. Most of the lines may transpose to Chapter 1, line B2. In the rest of them, the placement of the knight on c3 is more likely in our favour because we can get in ...d4 with a tem-
1.c4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.g3 c6

po: 6.b3 a5! 7.d3 a4 8.d2 exd3 9.g2 d5!

Note also the plan 6.e3 d5 7.c2 d7 8.a3

10.0-0 (10.exd3 g4; 10.cxd5 cxd5 11.0-0 g4) 10...d4 11.ce4 xxe4 12.xe4 e7 13.xx3 f5!? 14.g5 0-0 with mutual chances.

Do not allow the idea b2-b4+c4-c5. We can forestall it with 8...c5! 9.de2 dxc4 10.xe4 xxe4 11.xe4+ e6 12.xe6+ fxe6=.
Chapter 3. 1.c4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.g3 c6

Step by Step

1.c4 e5 2.d3 d6 3.g3 c6

A. 4.df3; B. 4.d4

4.d2 d5 5.d4 (5.cxd5 cxd5 6.db3 dc6 is covered in Chapter 1, line A)
5...e4 transpose to Chapter 1, line C.

A. 4.df3 e4 5.d4

5.dg5 presents a tempo for the useful prophylactic move ...h6 - 5...d5 6.cxd5 cxd5 7.d3 h6 8.db3 db4 9.db2 exd3+.

5...db6!

This is my standard recommendation against db4. It is always good to repel the active knight from the centre. Most of the lines may transpose to Chapter 1, line B2.

5...d5 6.cxd5 dc5 looks also logical, but then 7.db3 db6 8.db2 cxd5 9.d3 e3 10.dbxe3 is sharp, but favourable to White. If we leave the d4-knight in piece for a while, we'll not be able to shift it later at all, e.g. 6.cxd5 7.d3 dc5 8.dxe4 dxe4 9.db3.

A1. 6.db3; A2. 6.e3

6.db2 d5 7.cxd5 (7.db2 dxc4) 7...cxd5 8.db2 db7 9.db2 db6 10...db8 0-0 is covered in Chapter 1, line B2.

A1. 6.db3 a5! 7.d3

We can meet 7.a4 by 7...db6 or 7...db4 as in Chapter 1. Enterprising alternatives are 7...d5 8.cxd5 dbxd5!? 9.dbxe4 db6 and 8...db4!? 9.db3 db5.

7...a4 8.db2 cxd3 9.db2
Or 9.exd3 c5↑.

9...d5 10.0-0

10.exd3 cxd3 11.dxc4 could be countered by 11...a6!? 12.a3 dxc4 13.dxc4 a5 14.dxc4 f5 15.c3 cxd3 16.cxd3 d4 with compensation, for instance: 17.f1 b4 18.cxd3 xd3+ 19.e2 0-0-0=.

10...d4 11.0-0 dxe4 12.axe4 e7 13.wal3

13...f5!? As usual, the space advantage assures Black of good chances, but he must stay active. Instead in Yudin-Jumabayev, Tomsk 2013, was 13...c5?! 14.e3 c6 15.exd4 cxd4 when 16.f4 0-0 17.fc1, intending c5, would have forced 17...a5 with a tenable, but passive position.

The text might look as a weakness, but it drives back the e4-knight before it had the chance to go to d6.

14.g5 0-0 15.f3 f6 16.c2 (defending b2) 16...a6!

Again, it is better to sac a pawn, than to play 16...c5?! 17.e1 and the knight is heading for d5 via f4.

17.exd3

17.f4 b4 18.d2 c5 is already fine so White has to accept the gift.

17...e8 18.b3 xb3 19.axb3 d7

Black has full compensation for the pawn. For instance:

20.e1 c5 21.xa8 xa8 22.b4 b3 23.d2 xc1 24.xc1 a2 25.b1 e6; 20.d1 c5 21.xa8 xa8 22.cxd4 xd4 23.xd4 a1; 20.g5 xg5 21.xg5 e2.

A2. 6.e3 d5 7.cxd5

7.b3 dxc4 8.bxc4 xxb3 9.xb3 a6 10.f3 exf3 11.xf3 b4 12.a3 xc3 13.bxc3 c5 14.c2 e6 15.b1 0-0-0 was in Black's favour, Granda Zuniga-Jumabayev, Pavlodar 2015.

7.c2 d7 8.a3 would have been promising for White if he secured the d4-knight with b2-b4+c4-c5.
However, 8...c5! throws a spanner into the works — 9.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}de2} \text{ dxc4} \) 10.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}xe4} \text{ \textit{x}e4} \) 11.\( \text{\textit{\text{w}}xe4+} \text{ \textit{w}e6=} \). Black is safe without queens. An illustrative line runs 12.\( \text{\textit{\text{w}}xe6+} \text{ \textit{x}e6} \) 13.\( \text{\textit{\text{f}}f4} \text{ g5} \) 14.\( \text{\textit{\text{h}}h3} \text{ g4!?} \) (14...\textit{h}6=) 15.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}f4} \text{ \textit{x}c6} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g1} \text{ \textit{d}d7} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xc4} \text{ \textit{e}e5} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\text{e}}e2} \text{ \textit{f}f7} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{b}b3} \text{ \textit{f}f3=} \) with a pretty position.

7...cxd5 8.d3 \( \text{\textit{\text{d}}c6} \) 9.dxe4 dxe4

Fans of isolated pawns could consider 9...\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xe4} \) 10.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d3} \text{ \textit{f}f6} \) 11.0-0 \( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g7} \) 12.\( \text{\textit{\text{a}}a4} \text{ \textit{d}d8} \), but I would take White after 13.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xc6} \text{ \textit{b}x{}c6} \) 14.b3.

10.\( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g2} \) \( \text{\textit{b}b4} \)

11.0-0 \( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xc3} \) 12.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xc3} \) 0-0 13.\( \text{\textit{\text{c}}c2} \) \( \text{\textit{c}c5} \)

Black’s pieces are well placed. He is not afraid of 14.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xe4} \text{ \textit{x}e4} \) 15.\( \text{\textit{\text{w}}xe4} \). That capture would be dubious since the opposite coloured bishops are clearly in his favour after 15...\( \text{\textit{\text{h}}h3} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{\text{f}}fd1} \text{ \textit{x}e8} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\text{h}}h4} \text{ \textit{\text{x}}d4} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\text{c}}xd4} \text{ \textit{f}f5} \).

Instead, White can open his bishop with 14.\( \text{\textit{\text{b}}b2} \text{ \textit{e}e5} \) 15.c4 \( \text{\textit{\text{x}}c4=} \).

\textbf{B. 4.d4 exd4}

4...e4 is more consistent with our opening strategy, but the specific move order (\( \text{\textit{\text{c}}c3} \) instead of \( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g2} \)) throws us out of Black’s most active schemes. After 5.\( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g5} \), we cannot follow up with:

5...d5? 6.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xd5} \text{ \textit{cxd5}} \) due to 7.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xf6} \). That is not a tragedy since we can resort to the development with:

5...\( \text{\textit{\text{b}}b4} \). Play may continue 6.\( \text{\textit{\text{w}}b3} \text{ \textit{a}a6} \) 7.\( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g2} \text{ h6} \) 8.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xf6} \text{ \textit{w}xf6} \) 9.e3 \( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xc3} \) + 10.\( \text{\textit{\text{w}}c3} \text{ d5} \) 11.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}d5} \text{ \textit{cxd5}} \)

\begin{center}
\textbf{Diagram 10.4.4.7}
\end{center}

Black should not have problems to hold this position, but the lack of the dark-squared bishops deprives him of active plans:

12.\( \text{\textit{\text{e}}e2} \)

12.\( \text{\textit{\text{b}}b3} \text{ \textit{b}b6} \) (12...\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d6} \)) 13.\( \text{\textit{\text{w}}xb6} \text{ axb6} \) is a draw endgame, e.g.

14.\( \text{\textit{\text{e}}e2} \text{ \textit{b}b4} \) 15.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d2} \text{ \textit{d}d3} \) 16.\( \text{\textit{\text{c}}c3} \text{ \textit{e}e6} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\text{f}}f3} \text{ \textit{\text{x}}b2} \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\text{f}}xe4} \text{ \textit{d}xe4} \)

19.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xe4} \text{ \textit{a}a3} \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\text{h}}hc1} \text{ \textit{c}c4=} \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d3} \text{ \textit{d}d6} \) 22.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d5} \text{ \textit{d}d7} \) 23.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d4} \text{ \textit{\text{x}}xc3} \) 24.\( \text{\textit{\text{e}}xc3} \text{ \textit{b}b5=} \) 25.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d3} \text{ \textit{\text{x}}xc3} \) 26.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xc3} \text{ \textit{e}e7} \) 27.\( \text{\textit{\text{b}}b1=} \text{ \textit{\text{e}e8}+} \) 28.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d4} \text{ \textit{a}a8} \) 29.\( \text{\textit{\text{x}}xb6} \text{ \textit{a}a4=} \) 30.\( \text{\textit{\text{d}}d3} \text{ \textit{\text{x}}xa2} \) 31.\( \text{\textit{\text{e}}xb7} \text{ \textit{d}d6} \) 32.\( \text{\textit{h}}h4 \) f5 33.\( \text{\textit{\text{f}}f3} \text{ \textit{a}a3=} \).

12...\( \text{\textit{\text{g}}g4} \) 13.\( \text{\textit{\text{f}}f4} \)
White should not forget that Black can castle long – 13...\textit{b}b3 0-0-0.
13...\textit{d}d6 14.h3 \textit{f}f5 15.a3 (15.\textit{a}a5 \textit{b}b4) 15...\textit{g}5 16.\textit{e}e2 0-0 17.\textit{b}b3 \textit{c}c7 18.\textit{c}c3 \textit{f}fc8 19.\textit{f}f1 a5 20.\textit{e}e2 b5

White cannot break through Black's defenceline – 21.h4 \textit{g}7 22.\textit{f}f1.\textit{d}d7 23.hxg5 hxg5 24.\textit{g}2 \textit{h}h8 25.\textit{x}xh8 \textit{x}xh8 26.\textit{h}h1 \textit{x}xh1 27.\textit{x}xh1=.

It is a matter of taste, but I prefer active and more complex play. By taking on \textit{d}4, we accept an isolated central pawn which, however, will be quite mobile as White cannot comfortably blockade it.

5.\textit{x}xd4 \textit{d}5

6.\textit{g}5 could be met by 6...\textit{e}7 7.\textit{c}xd5 \textit{c}xd5 8.\textit{g}2 \textit{c}6 9.\textit{a}a4 0-0, but the temporary weakness of \textit{b}2 hints at more challenging ideas as 9...\textit{b}b6! 10.\textit{b}b5 0-0. The same attack is possible after 8.\textit{f}3 (instead of 8.\textit{g}2) – 8...\textit{c}6 9.\textit{a}a4 \textit{b}b6!? 10.\textit{b}b5 0-0 11.\textit{g}2 d4=.

6...\textit{e}6 7.\textit{c}xd5

If the knight were still on \textit{b}1, White might have hoped for some edge with quick kingside development and castling. The point is that when Black takes on \textit{c}4, White can regain the sacrificed pawn by \textit{b}d2. In the diagram position, that course is impossible and 7.\textit{f}3 dxc4 8.\textit{x}xd8+ \textit{x}xd8 leaves White struggling to equalize. For instance, 9.\textit{g}5 \textit{b}d7 (9...\textit{d}6!?) 10.\textit{e}xe6 \textit{fxe}6 11.\textit{h}h3? \textit{e}7 was outright bad for him in the blitz game Ovetchkin-Volkov, playchess.com 2006. Thus White is forced to let our knight to \textit{c}6 with a tempo.

7...\textit{c}xd5 8.\textit{f}3

8.\textit{g}5 is a principled move. After 8...\textit{c}6 9.\textit{a}a4, Black must immediately hit \textit{b}2 with 9...\textit{b}b6!

We should not allow White to torture us in a typical IQP position following 9...\textit{e}7 10.e3. Practice has seen 9...\textit{b}4, but 10.e3 \textit{h}6 11.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 12.\textit{ge}2 0-0 13.0-0 \textit{xc}3 14.\textit{ge}2 is obviously pleasant for White.
10.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6. Perhaps White should force a draw here with:
move, and it is well scoring at that. Its idea is to kill the dark-squared bishop after 11...\texttt{b6} 12.\texttt{d4}. Of course, we should keep it:
11...\texttt{b6}! 12.\texttt{xb6}
12.\texttt{d3} gives us a tempo – 12...\texttt{b4} 13.\texttt{d1} (or 13.\texttt{b1} \texttt{e4} 14.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{dxe4} 15.\texttt{c5} \texttt{f5}=) 13...\texttt{e4} 14.\texttt{e3} \texttt{ac8}!? (conceding to trade the bishop in return for full control of the c-file) 15.\texttt{a4} \texttt{a6} 16.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{bxc5} 17.\texttt{d4} \texttt{fc8}.
12.\texttt{e3} \texttt{g4} is also satisfactory.
12...\texttt{xb6} 13.\texttt{d5}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{Now it is turn to preserve the light-squared bishop: 13...\texttt{g4} 14.h3 \texttt{h5} 15.g4 \texttt{g6} 16.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 17.\texttt{xd5}. White has won a pawn, but all his pieces are uncoordinated – 17...\texttt{f8} 18.e3 \texttt{h6} 19.\texttt{f3} \texttt{ed8} 20.\texttt{b3} \texttt{e4}\#.}

11.\texttt{g5} could be put to the test with 11...\texttt{h6}
I do not see any compelling reason to precipitate the exchange so 11...\texttt{c8}!? should be at least as good as 11...h6.
12.\texttt{xe6} \texttt{xe6} 13.\texttt{e4}
White was too passive after 13.a3 \texttt{e8} (13...\texttt{e5}?) 14.e3 \texttt{e7} 15.\texttt{d2} \texttt{e5} 16.\texttt{ad1}?! \texttt{f7} Jones-Edouard, London 2014.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{8...\texttt{c6} 9.\texttt{a4} \texttt{c5}}

With an isolated pawn, we should aim to place our pieces on their most active places so I did not consider 9...\texttt{e7} at all. 9...\texttt{b4} deserves attention, but 10.\texttt{e5} underlines its shaky state.

10.0-0 0-0

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

11.\texttt{g5}

11.\texttt{b5} is the second most popular
13...\textit{\textit{g}4} 14.exd5 \textit{\textit{x}f}2 15.\textit{x}f2 \textit{\textit{x}f}2 with a perpetual.

\textbf{11...h6 12.\textit{\textit{x}f}6 \textit{\textit{x}f}6}

This position resembles the Tarrasch, but Black is a tempo up since White's queen landed on a4 via the triangle d1-d4-a4. Besides, this square, as a rule, belongs to the c3-knight to chase the active c5-bishop. In the Tarrasch White occasionally employs the plan with \textit{\textit{g}5}, but connects it with the idea of forcing \textit{...d5-d4} which plugs the black dark-squared bishop. In the diagram position Black is not obliged to comply. As a result, he preserves active pieces and excellent chances. See \textbf{Game 7} Neiksans-Kovalenko, Riga 2014.
Chapter 3. 1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♧f6 3.g3 c6

Annotated Games

7. Neiksans – Kovalenko
Riga 2014

1.c4 e5 2.g3 ♧f6 3.g2 c6 4.d4 exd4 5.♗xd4 d5 6.cxd5 cxd5 7.♗f3 ♤c6 8.♖a4 ♦c5 9.0-0 0-0
10.♗g5 ♤h6 11.♗f6 ♤xf6 12.♗c3 ♤e6

13.♗fd1

The blockading plan 13.♗e1 ♤ad8 14.♗c1 ♤fe8 15.♗d3 is not effective since we are not obliged to push ...d4 – 15...♗b6 16.♗f4 ♤e5.

13.♗ad1 looks strange as the queen’s rook would be more useful on c1. Black can follow the same plan as in the game – 13...♗fd8 and if 14♗b5 ♤e7 15.♖a4 ♤d6 16.♗d4 ♤xd4 17.♗xd4 ♤a6 18.♗b6 ♤e5 19.♗d3 ♤ac8 20.♗fd1, Dvirnyy-Van den Heever, Tromso 2014, 20...♗c4 21.♗e3 ♤xg3 leads to a drawish endgame. Therefore, we could first retreat the bishop – 20...♗f6!, followed up by ...♕c4.

13...♗fd8 14.♗ac1

14.e3 does not really blockade the isolated pawn as we could always exchange it with ...d4. More interesting is:

14...♗b6 15.♗d2 ♤ac8 16.♗ad1 d4 17.♗xd4 ♤xd4 18.exd4 ♤c4 19.♗c2 ♤xd4 20.♗xb7

Black enjoys very active pieces – 20...♗g4 21.♗e1 g6 22.♗b3 ♤e6↑.

14...♗ac8 15.♗b5 ♤e5! 16.♗xb7

It suddenly transpires that 16.♗xe5
\( \text{xf}2+ \) and 16.\( \text{d}a4 \text{d}7 17.\text{w}b3\text{xa}4 18.\text{w}xa4 \text{c}4 \) lose a pawn so White decides to grab one himself. However, Black’s initiative now becomes overwhelming.

16...\( \text{gg}4 \) 17.\( \text{ff}1 \)

A natural human move which guarantees Black a strong initiative. Only a computer could calculate that 17...\( \text{b}b6! \) threatening ...\( \text{d}4 \), is even more awkward for White.

17...\( \text{xf}2+ \)

A further attack on \( \text{e}2 \) (after some preparation), will decide the game. The text is mistake because White could trade his bishop by 27.\( \text{ff}3= \).

26...\( \text{e}6? \)

A critical moment. The winning shaping of this idea was 26...\( \text{dd}1+! \) 27.\( \text{ff}1 \text{h}7!! \) and only after 28.\( \text{h}3 \) (28.\( \text{w}xf7 \) loses to 28...\( \text{w}c5 \)), 28...\( \text{e}3+ \) 29.\( \text{ff}2 \text{e}6! \) 30.\( \text{w}a7 \text{c}5 \) (the fight is for the g1-a7 diagonal) 31.\( \text{w}a4 \text{c}2 \) 32.\( \text{w}d1 \text{w}e3+ \) and White is tide up and down.

27.\( \text{w}a7?! \text{c}5 \) 28.\( \text{w}b8+ \text{c}8 \) 29.\( \text{w}a7 \text{c}2 \) 30.\( \text{w}d1 \text{c}4 \) 31.\( \text{w}e7 \text{a}5 \) 32.\( \text{h}3 \text{b}6+ \) 33.e3 \( \text{e}6 \) 34.\( \text{xe}6 \text{xe}3+ \) 35.\( \text{g}2 \text{e}2+ \) 36.\( \text{h}3 \text{xe}6+ \) 37.\( \text{xe}6 \text{fxe}6 \) 38.\( \text{xc}1 \text{f}8= \) 39.\( \text{xc}2 \text{xf}3 \) 40.a4 \( \text{a}3 \) 41.\( \text{c}8+ \text{f}7 \) 42.\( \text{a}8 \text{a}2 \) 43.a5 h5 44.a6 e5 45.g4 \( \text{a}3+ \) 46.\( \text{h}4 \text{hxg}4 \) 47.\( \text{xe}4 \text{g}6 \) 48.a7 e4 49.\( \text{f}4 \text{e}3 \) 50.\( \text{f}3 \text{h}7 \) 51.\( \text{e}2 \) g5 52.h3 \( \text{g}7 \) 53.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{h}7 \) 54.\( \text{e}2 \) g7 55.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{h}7 \) 56.\( \text{e}2 \) Draw.
In this chapter we begin to investigate White's most challenging system: 1.c4 e5 2.d3 f6 3.f3 c6

White's quick development is much more restrictive than the slow g3. It does not leave us time to build a pawn centre with ...c6. Of course, we could play ...d5 without other preparation, but the Reversed Sicilian is not a subject of this book. Fortunately, we have other ways to fight for the centre, based on ...b4. In chapter 4 I analyse four rare White options while the main line 4.g3 is considered in Chapters 6 and 7.

4.d4 exd4 5.cxd4 b4 6.g5 h6 7.h4 xc3+ 8.bxc3 0-0 is easy to play and does not require any special knowledge.

We meet 4.d3 with 4...b4, too.

5.d2 0-0 6.g3 a5

Our next moves should be prophylactic - we hinder White's advance on the queenside and keep our bishop.

7.g2 d6 8.0-0 h6 9.a3 c5

Let's take stock. White's play until this moment was mostly preventive. He avoided sharp lines, did not give us a chance to double his pawns, and kept control of the centre. Black, for his part, developed comfortably, but he lacks an active plan. He should manoeuvre carefully to neutralise White’s advance on the queenside. It would be useful to trade a pair of knights – with d5xd5 or with ...c6-d4xf3. Galanov-Eckhardt, corr. 2011, went 10.e3 f5 11.c2 e8 12.h4 h7
4.e4 does not fit in with $\text{c}f3$ when White cannot develop his king's knight on e2. I suggest 4... $\text{b}4$ intending to take on c3 after 5.d3 d6 6.a3 $\text{x}c3+$ 7.bxc3 h6 8.g3 0-0 9.$\text{g}2$

The thematic way of obtaining counterplay in this structure is 9...a6!? followed up by ...b5.

6.$\text{e}2$ does not seem any better – Black was fine after 6...g4 7.0-0 $\text{xf}3$ 8.$\text{xf}3$ 0-0 9.$\text{g}5$ h6 10.$\text{xf}6$ $\text{xf}6$ 11.$\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ – see Game 8 Edouard-Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2015.

In the light of the above examples, 4.a3!? looks more than logical and I used this move myself. However, we have a trump up our sleeve: 4...e4!? 5.$\text{g}5$ e7 6.d3 exd3 7.$\text{xd}3$

It turns out that Black can fianchetto the bishop with 7...g6!? 8.$\text{f}3$ $\text{g}7$ 9.$\text{g}5$ d6! since 10.$\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ is okay.

White is unable to capitalise on the pin.
Chapter 4. 1.c4 e5 2.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{c}3 \textit{\textsc{f}6}}} \) 3.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{f}3 \textit{\textsc{c}6}}} \)

Step by Step

1.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{c}4 \textit{\textsc{e}5}}} \) 2.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{c}3 \textit{\textsc{f}6}}} \)

2...\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{b}4}} \) 3.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{d}5}} \) is another popular option.
The King's Indian structure 2...d6 3.d4 exd4 4.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{x}d}4 \textit{\textsc{c}6}} \) 5.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{d}2 \textit{\textsc{g}6}}} \) does not appeal to me. White has a space advantage after 6.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{g}3 \textit{\textsc{g}7}}} \) 7.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{g}2 \textit{\textsc{f}6}} \textit{\textsc{b}3} \textit{\textsc{g}0}} \) 9.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{b}2 \textit{\textsc{a}5}}} \) 10.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{f}3 \textit{\textsc{e}8}}} \) 11.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{d}2 \textit{\textsc{d}7}}} \) 13.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{a}d}1 \textit{\textsc{c}8}} \) 14.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{f}e}1 \textit{\textsc{e}5}} \) 15.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{f}3 \textit{\textsc{xf}3}+}} \) 16.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{xf}3 \textit{\textsc{c}6}}} \) 17.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{d}5 \textit{\textsc{xd}5}}} \) 18.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{c}5}} \).

3.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{f}3 \textit{\textsc{c}6}}} \)

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

A. 4.d4; B. 4.a3; C. 4.d3; D. 4.e4.

4.e3 is the subject of our next chapter while 4.g3 is considered in Chapters 6 and 7.

A. 4.d4 exd4 5.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{xd}4 \textit{\textsc{b}4}}} \)

\[ \text{Diagram} \]

Black's task is easy. He will damage the enemy pawn structure with ...\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{xc}3}} \) and will aim to trade some minor pieces.

6.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{g}5 \textit{\textsc{h}6}}} \) 7.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{h}4 \textit{\textsc{xc}3}+}} \) 8.bxc3 0-0

It is also possible to play 8...\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{e}5}} \) immediately – 9.f4 \(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{g}6}} \) 10.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{xf}6 \textit{\textsc{xf}6}}} \) 11.g3 \(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{f}8}} \) 12.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{g}2 \textit{\textsc{e}6}}} \) 13.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{d}2 \textit{\textsc{d}0}} \textit{\textsc{c}5}} 15.\(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{b}3 \textit{\textsc{d}6}}} \). Still, it looks more clever to wait for e3 before shifting the knight to e5.

9.e3

After 9.f3 \(\textsf{\textit{\textsc{e}8}} \) White cannot play e4
anyway due to the hit on e4 – 10.e4 ∆xe4 or 10.∆f2 d6 11.e4 ∆xe4.

9...∆e5 10.∆e2 ∆g6 11.∆xf6 ∆xf6 12.0-0 d6 13.∆b1 ∆e5

Black’s knight returns to the queenside via d7-c5 to underline the biggest flaw of doubled pawns - the weakness of the square before them. White is already on the defensive.

B. 4.a3

I used to play this move ten years ago in order to prevent 4...∆b4. Black has a wide choice.

4...d5 leads to the Sicilian Reversed.

4...g6 5.g3 ∆g7 6.g2 0-0 7.0-0 d6 8.d3 is a closed system where the opponents attack on the opposite flanks. White’s typical play may be illustrated with the following line: 8...∆d4 9.∆d2 c6 10.b4 ∆e6 11.∆b2 Wd7 12.e3 ∆f5 13.∆e4 ∆xe4 14.∆xe4 Wd7 15.a4 ∆h6 16.b5 f5 17.e2 ∆g8 18.∆b1 d5 19.bxc6 bxc6 20.a5=. The presence of the a-pawns gives White a target. That explains the popularity of 8...a5!?

with mutual chances after 9.∆b1 ∆d4 or 9...∆e8 10.∆g5 h6 11.∆xf6 ∆xf6 12.b4 axb4 13.axb4 ∆g7 14.b5 ∆e7 15.∆c2 c6.

My only objection against this setup is that the English adepts usually have plenty of experience with this plan. We can surprise them with the poorly explored:

4...e4!? 5.∆g5 Wd7 6.d3 exd3

My game Delchev-Papa, Zuerich 2002, went on 7.e4 h6 8.∆f3 d5 9.cxd5 ∆xe4 10.∆e3 ∆xc3 11.bxc3 ∆e5 12.∆xd3 ∆xd3+ 13.∆xd3 Wd8 14.0-0

Here my opponent chose a passive stand with 14...∆e7 15.c4 c5? (15...0-0 16.∆fe1 ∆e8 is roughly equal) 16.∆f4 0-0 17.∆d2 with a clear edge. More natural is:

14...∆d6 15.c4 b6 16.∆fe1 0-0 17.∆d4 ∆e8=. The a3-pawn might hang in some lines.

In my next game I tried to improve with:

7.∆xd3

The idea is to meet 7...∆e5 by 8.∆c2 d6 9.e4 h6 10.∆f3 ∆xf3 + 11.gxf3=. 
White’s powerful centre assures him of the edge.

7...g6 8.df3 ag7 9.ag5 d6!

9...de5 10.xe5 wxe5 11.f4 gave me an initiative against Peranic in 2003.

10.d5 wd8

It transpires that White cannot convert the pin of the f6-knight into even the slightest advantage! For instance:
11.wf4+ (11.wc3 de5) 11...de6 12.g3 0-0 13.hd1 a8 (13...h6 is also possible) 14.wf4 a6 15.xd8 xf4 16.xc7 xd5 17.cxd5 ag4! 18.xg2 xf3 19.xf3 d4 with a level endgame. Black can either regain the pawn, or enter a curious rook endgame after 20.0-0 de5 (20...b5 21.a5 b6=) 21.a5 b6 22.b4 xf3+ 23.exf3 a5 24.c3 xc3 25.bxc3 a8=.

C. 4.d3 db4

4...d5 is also possible – 5.cxd5 db5 6.g3 db4
6...de7 is the standard approach.
7.d2 de6 8.g2 f6 9.0-0 0-0

10.a3
10.de4 xd2 11.wxd2 b6 12.ac1 wd7=.
10...xc3 11.bxc3 xc5=.

5.d2 0-0

White’s set-up is innocuous, but not without venom. He avoids doubled pawns while making normal developing moves. That discourages aggressive plans with long castling as in the line 4.e3 db4 5.wc2 xc3 6.wxg7+ wg7 7.a3 b5 8.cxb5 axb5 9.wb3 db6 10.d3, where Black’s huge lead in development enables 10...ef5 11.de2 0-0-0.

6.g3
6.e3 is less challenging and it gives Black a wide choice. The most na-
tural answer is \(6...d5\) 7.cxd5 \(\text{exd}5\) 8.\(\text{exe}2\)

8.\(\text{wxc}2\) \(\text{exc}3\) 9.\(\text{exxc}3\) \(\text{d}6\) (or 9... \(\text{we}77\)) is balanced.

8...\(\text{exe}3\)

8...\(\text{exe}6\) 9.0-0 \(\text{exe}77\)? 10.a3 a5 is a curious way to get the Scheveningen with two tempi down! Nevertheless, this is the most challenging line and the top players gladly take it in order to ensure more action. Black's stand in the centre is so solid that he can afford the frivolity of playing like that. I assume that Sicilian adepts will know what to do in this structure (of course, they should forget about the sharpest options), and the others will opt for simpler approaches which involve piece exchanges.

9.\(\text{exe}3\) \(\text{exe}3\) 10.bxc3

[Diagram]

Black's next moves are easy – he puts his rooks on the central files and protects the b-pawn with ...b6. The only question is where to put the queen – ...\(\text{we}77\) is safe as Black's pieces stay compact, but ...\(\text{wfe}6\)-g6 is more active. Possible continuations are:

10.\(\text{wxf}5\) 11.d4 \(\text{wfe}7\) 12.0-0 \(\text{ead}8\)
13.\(\text{wbb}3\) e4 14.\(\text{dd}2\) \(\text{dd}6\) 15.g3 draw,

Ghaem Maghami-Ramesh, Dubai 2006;
10...\(\text{wxe}7\) 11.d4 \(\text{dd}7\) 12.0-0 \(\text{ead}8\)
13.\(\text{wxc}2\) \(\text{wfe}8\) 14.\(\text{wab}1\) b6 15.\(\text{wbb}5\) e4
16.\(\text{dd}2\) \(\text{da}5\) 17.\(\text{exxd}7\) \(\text{exxd}7\) 18.\(\text{wxa}4\) \(\text{exxd}6\) =, Timofeev-Najer, Dagomys 2010;
10...\(\text{wff}6\) 11.0-0 \(\text{wgg}6\) 12.\(\text{wle}1\) \(\text{h}3\)
13.g3 \(\text{ead}8\) 14.d4 b6 15.\(\text{wbb}1\) e4
16.\(\text{dd}2\) \(\text{da}5\).

6...a5!? \(\text{wxc}3\) 7.\(\text{exe}3\) e4 8.\(\text{exe}3\) d6 is consistent, but the threat ...g5 can be ignored – 9.\(\text{exe}2\)! when 9...g5 fails to 10.\(\text{wxc}1\). Black can revive the threat with 9...\(\text{wfe}7\) to force play – 10.\(\text{wxf}6\) \(\text{wxf}6\) 11.\(\text{exe}4\) \(\text{wxb}2\) 12.0-0 \(\text{exd}4\) 13.e1 with a tangled position. Still, White's position is more flexible due to the pawn majority in the centre.

6...\(\text{wfe}8\) 7.\(\text{h}2\) \(\text{exe}3\) 8.\(\text{exe}3\) d5 9.cxd5 \(\text{exxd}5\) is a viable alternative:

a) 10.0-0

[Diagram]

10.\(\text{exe}3\)

Closing the c-file. Romanishin played 10...\(\text{b}8\)!? first, intending 11.\(\text{exe}3\) \(\text{exe}3\) 12.bxc3 b6. Critical for his idea is 11.\(\text{exe}2\)! when Black can opt for a solid stand
in the centre with \ldots \texttt{d}d6, \ldots \texttt{f}6, \ldots \texttt{e}6.

11.bxc3 \texttt{xb}8 12.\texttt{wc}2

In the event of 12.\texttt{d}d2, simplest looks 12...\texttt{d}a5 (12...\texttt{d}7?!) aiming for a Maroczy structure with \ldots \texttt{c}5 – 13.\texttt{wc}2 \texttt{c}5 14.\texttt{b}b3 \texttt{xb}3 15.axb3 a5 16.b4 axb4 17.cx\texttt{b}4 cxb4=.

12...\texttt{e}6 13.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{d}7 14.\texttt{b}b3 \texttt{b}6 15.\texttt{ad}1 \texttt{h}3 16.e4 \texttt{xe}2 17.x\texttt{g}2=, Ignatov-Mahling, ICCF 2006.

b) 10.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{d}d4 11.0-0 \texttt{c}6=.

6...\texttt{d}d4?! 7.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{xf}3+ 8.\texttt{xd}3 is =/±.

My recommendation keeps more tension in the centre. More importantly, White's plan is not so clear as in the open Sicilian structures. The pawn move preserves the bishop in the event of 7.a3 \texttt{c}5 8.\texttt{a}a4.

7.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{d}6 8.0-0 \texttt{h}6

9.e3 \texttt{f}5 10.\texttt{we}2 occurred in Laznicka-Topalov, Novy Bor 2013. (10.\texttt{c}c2 \texttt{xc}3 11.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{xb}4 evens the game outright.) After 10...\texttt{e}8 11.\texttt{fd}1 e4 12.dxe4 \texttt{xe}4 13.\texttt{ac}1 simplest would be 13...\texttt{xd}2=.

9...\texttt{c}5 10.e3 \texttt{f}5

Two correspondence games saw 10...\texttt{e}6 11.\texttt{wc}2 \texttt{d}7 12.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{b}6 (12...\texttt{h}3 13.f4) 13.\texttt{a}a4 \texttt{a}7 14.b4 \texttt{h}3 15.b5 \texttt{e}7 16.\texttt{ab}1 d5 17.c5 \texttt{xe}2 18.\texttt{xe}2 \texttt{e}8 19.\texttt{xa}5 c6 20.bxc6 \texttt{xc}6 21.\texttt{b}4. Although Black drew, I do not see any reason to give the enemy an initiative. It is better to open the centre with \ldots \texttt{e}4 and display activity on the kingside. The text is the most logical step in that direction.

11.\texttt{c}c2 \texttt{e}8 12.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{h}7 13.b3!

Many correspondence games feature 13.\texttt{fd}1, but this move takes away the only natural retreat square for the c2-queen. That could be underlined with 13...\texttt{g}5!? 14.\texttt{f}3 e4 15.dxe4 \texttt{xe}4 16.\texttt{a}4 f5 with counterplay, e.g. 17.\texttt{b}5 f4 or 17.\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{e}7.
Chapter 4

After 13.b3!, Black does not have a clear plan since 13...g5?! 14.f3 e4 15.dxe4 dxe4 16.d1 f5 17.a2 would neutralise his temporary activity. Instead he should embark on manoeuvring.

Galanov-Eckhardt, corr. 2011 went 13...d7 14.c1

14.fd1 g4 revives the break ...e4, for instance, 15.c1 e4. White could repel the quen with 15.h3 d7, but the h3-pawn would be a good target. Black can then transfer his c6-knight to g5 via d8-e6 – 16.c1 (preparing b1) 16...d8 17.b1 e6 18.b4 (18.xb7?! ab8 19.g2 g5 20.g4 xg4!) 18...b6 19.e4 dxe4 20.dxe4 e7 21.f5 f8 with complex play.

14...ab8 15.d1 b6 16.b1 e7 17.f3 f5 18.e4 e6 19.b4,

when 19...axb4 20.axb4 dxe4 would have been roughly equal.

D. 4.e4 b4

This is a solid approach which allows both sides to demonstrate their positional understanding. On the opposite, 4...c5!? 5.xe5!
the same structure after 4.e3 \b4 5.\c2 \xc3 6.bxc3, see Chapter 5 line B.

Carlsen chose against Ghaem in Berlin 2015, 6...\c5 7.b4 \b6 8.\a4 \g4 9.\xb6 axb6 10.\b2 (10.\e2 0-0 11.\b2 \e7 12.0-0 \g6=) 10...\xf3 11.\xf3 \d7 aiming for ...\d7-f8-e6. Critical for his idea would be 12.\g3! \f6 13.\e2 \f8 14.f4! \e6 15.f5 with a space advantage.

7.bxc3 \h6

I'm not too sure that we need this prophylaxis. The plan with 7...a6 is also effective without it. 8.g3 0-0 9.\g2 a6!? (this is always good against the setup with \g2) 10.\b1

6.g3 is strategically similar to the main line as both allow the exchange ...\c8-g4xf3 – 6...\g4 7.h3 \xf3 8.\xf3 \d4 9.\d1 \c6 10.\g2. Black has two possible plans now – either to stay passive on the queenside with 10...a5 11.0-0 \c5, or to prepare ...b5 with 10...a6 11.0-0 \c5 12.\b1 b5.

In his rapid match against Karpov in Cap d'Agde 2015, Edouard firstly tried 6.h3 a6 7.\e2 \c5 8.0-0 0-0 9.\e3, but 9...\d4 turned out to be balanced:

10.a3 \h6 11.b4 \xf3+ 12.\xf3 \xe3 13.fxe3 \e6 14.\e2 b6 15.a4 \c5=.

In the next match game, Edouard opted for 6.\e2.

6...\g4 7.0-0 \xf3 8.\xf3 0-0 9.\g5 \h6 10.\xf6 \xf6 11.\d5 \d8

White's bishop does not have any prospects. See Game 8 Edouard-Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2015.
Chapter 4. 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.f3 c6

Annotated Games

8. Edouard – Karpov
Cap d’Agde 2015

1.c4 g6 2.Nc3 e5 3.Nf3 c6
4.e4 Bb4 5.d3 d6 6.Ne2 Ng4
7.0-0 Ne3 8.Nxf3 0-0 9.Ng5 h6
10.Nxf6

10.Nh4 Nc5 11.Nd5 g5 is hardly any better.

10...Nxf6 11.Nd5 Bd8

We see the biggest flaw of the scheme with e4 – the d4-square and the dark squares in general are weak. If we compare the two bishops, White has played against the textbook. The central pawns on light squares are a long-term factor in Black’s favour. Accordingly, his game is already more pleasant. I would think of changing the pawn structure in the centre with 12.d4 exd4 13.a3 Nc5 14.b4 b6 15.Nh5

The threat f4 would offer White counterplay, but it is Black to move and he retains an advantage by returning the pawn with 15...Ng5! 16.Nxb6 axb6 17.Bxd4 Bf6 18.Bd1 a4. The pressure along the a-file binds the white pieces. Besides the a3-pawn, c4 is also weak, e.g. 19.Ne2 Nfa8 20.Bc3 Ng6 21.Bb3 Qf4 22.g4 Ne6 23.Kf4 a3 c5.

Alternatively, 12.a3 Nc5 13.b4 Bb6 14.a4 a5 15.Nxb6 cxb6 also leaves Black with a superior knight vs. a bad bishop.

12.Bb3 a5 13.a3 Qd4 14.Bd1 Nc5 15.Bg4 a4

I’m not sure about this move. It is strategically “correct”, but the a4-pawn will be weak. That will face Black with technical problems. 15...c6 16.Nc3 g6 was less committal.
16.\texttt{h1} c6 17.\texttt{c3} \texttt{a5}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\texttt{c1} & \texttt{c2} & \texttt{c3} & \texttt{c4} & \texttt{c5} & \texttt{c6} & \texttt{c7} & \texttt{c8} \\
\hline
\texttt{h1} & \texttt{h2} & \texttt{h3} & \texttt{h4} & \texttt{h5} & \texttt{h6} & \texttt{h7} & \texttt{h8} \\
\hline
\texttt{a1} & \texttt{a2} & \texttt{a3} & \texttt{a4} & \texttt{a5} & \texttt{a6} & \texttt{a7} & \texttt{a8} \\
\hline
\texttt{b1} & \texttt{b2} & \texttt{b3} & \texttt{b4} & \texttt{b5} & \texttt{b6} & \texttt{b7} & \texttt{b8} \\
\hline
\texttt{g1} & \texttt{g2} & \texttt{g3} & \texttt{g4} & \texttt{g5} & \texttt{g6} & \texttt{g7} & \texttt{g8} \\
\hline
\texttt{f1} & \texttt{f2} & \texttt{f3} & \texttt{f4} & \texttt{f5} & \texttt{f6} & \texttt{f7} & \texttt{f8} \\
\hline
\texttt{e1} & \texttt{e2} & \texttt{e3} & \texttt{e4} & \texttt{e5} & \texttt{e6} & \texttt{e7} & \texttt{e8} \\
\hline
\texttt{d1} & \texttt{d2} & \texttt{d3} & \texttt{d4} & \texttt{d5} & \texttt{d6} & \texttt{d7} & \texttt{d8} \\
\hline
\texttt{e8} & \texttt{e7} & \texttt{e6} & \texttt{e5} & \texttt{e4} & \texttt{e3} & \texttt{e2} & \texttt{e1} \\
\hline
\texttt{f8} & \texttt{f7} & \texttt{f6} & \texttt{f5} & \texttt{f4} & \texttt{f3} & \texttt{f2} & \texttt{f1} \\
\hline
\texttt{g8} & \texttt{g7} & \texttt{g6} & \texttt{g5} & \texttt{g4} & \texttt{g3} & \texttt{g2} & \texttt{g1} \\
\hline
\texttt{h8} & \texttt{h7} & \texttt{h6} & \texttt{h5} & \texttt{h4} & \texttt{h3} & \texttt{h2} & \texttt{h1} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

18.f4?

It is understandable that White wants to show some activity, but this move only weakens the kingside dark squares. Besides, it is a tactical mistake which both opponents fail to spot in a rapid game – 18...\texttt{b3}! 19.\texttt{b1} \texttt{xa3}! wins a pawn since 20.\texttt{xa4}? loses to 20...\texttt{d2}.

18...\texttt{exf4}? 19.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{b3} 20.\texttt{b1} \texttt{d4} 21.\texttt{f5} \texttt{e5}+

21...\texttt{d5} 22.\texttt{cxd5} \texttt{xc3} 23.\texttt{bxc3} \texttt{xc3} 24.\texttt{e1} \texttt{xe1}+ 25.\texttt{xe1} \texttt{d4} simplifies to a better endgame, but Karpov prefers to improve his pieces before forcing the play.

22.\texttt{e2} \texttt{b6} 23.\texttt{c3} \texttt{g6} 24.\texttt{f1} h5! 25.\texttt{xh5}?

Edouard obviously hated his position if he went for this desperate attempt to complicate things. The calm retreat 25.\texttt{h3} would have passed the ball into Black’s court. Although he is clearly better, he lacks a clear plan how to improve further.

25...\texttt{gxh5} 26.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{a5} 27.\texttt{c5}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\texttt{c1} & \texttt{c2} & \texttt{c3} & \texttt{c4} & \texttt{c5} & \texttt{c6} & \texttt{c7} & \texttt{c8} \\
\hline
\texttt{h1} & \texttt{h2} & \texttt{h3} & \texttt{h4} & \texttt{h5} & \texttt{h6} & \texttt{h7} & \texttt{h8} \\
\hline
\texttt{a1} & \texttt{a2} & \texttt{a3} & \texttt{a4} & \texttt{a5} & \texttt{a6} & \texttt{a7} & \texttt{a8} \\
\hline
\texttt{b1} & \texttt{b2} & \texttt{b3} & \texttt{b4} & \texttt{b5} & \texttt{b6} & \texttt{b7} & \texttt{b8} \\
\hline
\texttt{g1} & \texttt{g2} & \texttt{g3} & \texttt{g4} & \texttt{g5} & \texttt{g6} & \texttt{g7} & \texttt{g8} \\
\hline
\texttt{f1} & \texttt{f2} & \texttt{f3} & \texttt{f4} & \texttt{f5} & \texttt{f6} & \texttt{f7} & \texttt{f8} \\
\hline
\texttt{e1} & \texttt{e2} & \texttt{e3} & \texttt{e4} & \texttt{e5} & \texttt{e6} & \texttt{e7} & \texttt{e8} \\
\hline
\texttt{d1} & \texttt{d2} & \texttt{d3} & \texttt{d4} & \texttt{d5} & \texttt{d6} & \texttt{d7} & \texttt{d8} \\
\hline
\texttt{e8} & \texttt{e7} & \texttt{e6} & \texttt{e5} & \texttt{e4} & \texttt{e3} & \texttt{e2} & \texttt{e1} \\
\hline
\texttt{f8} & \texttt{f7} & \texttt{f6} & \texttt{f5} & \texttt{f4} & \texttt{f3} & \texttt{f2} & \texttt{f1} \\
\hline
\texttt{g8} & \texttt{g7} & \texttt{g6} & \texttt{g5} & \texttt{g4} & \texttt{g3} & \texttt{g2} & \texttt{g1} \\
\hline
\texttt{h8} & \texttt{h7} & \texttt{h6} & \texttt{h5} & \texttt{h4} & \texttt{h3} & \texttt{h2} & \texttt{h1} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

27...\texttt{xc5}?

White’s bold play is suddenly rewarded. Black would keep an extra piece with 27...\texttt{g7}! 28.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{d8}!.

28.\texttt{f5} \texttt{d4} 29.\texttt{b1} \texttt{g7} 30.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{xa5} 31.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{xd3} 32.\texttt{d1}?

The last mistake. 32.\texttt{f5} b5 was only slightly better for Black.

32...\texttt{c2} 33.\texttt{f1} \texttt{xb2} 34.\texttt{e5} \texttt{xe5} 35.\texttt{e4} \texttt{e2} 36.\texttt{e1} \texttt{c4} 37.\texttt{d2} \texttt{we6} 38.\texttt{g5} \texttt{wh6} 39.\texttt{h3} \texttt{f6} 40.\texttt{e4} \texttt{xd2} 41.\texttt{xd2} \texttt{c3} 42.\texttt{e2} \texttt{xd2} 43.\texttt{xd2} d5 44.\texttt{g1} \texttt{e8} 45.\texttt{f2} \texttt{e4} 0-1
Chapter 5. 1.c4 e5 2.\(\text{\texttie}c3\) \(\text{\textit{f}}f6\) 3.\(\text{\textit{f}}f3\) \(\text{\texttie}c6\) 4.e3 \(\text{\textit{b}}4\)

Main Ideas

1.c4 e5 2.\(\text{\texttie}c3\) \(\text{\textit{f}}f6\) 3.\(\text{\textit{f}}f3\) \(\text{\texttie}c6\) 4.e3 \(\text{\textit{b}}4\)

The knight on f3 naturally attracts the e5-pawn to go to e4. For instance, 5.\(\text{\texttie}d5\) stumbles into 5...e4. White commonly answers 5.\(\text{\textit{c}}c2\), reviving the threat \(\text{\texttie}d5\). I suggest to remove it altogether with 5...\(\text{\texttie}xc3\).

A. 6.\(\text{\textit{x}}c3\) preserves the pawn formation flexible, but will cost a tempo after ...d5. 6...\(\text{\textit{e}}7\). If White now wants to play a true Sicilian Reversed, he must spend another tempo on 7.a3 since 7.\(\text{\textit{e}}2\) d5 8.cxd5 \(\text{\texttie}xd5\) 9.\(\text{\textit{b}}3\) \(\text{\textit{b}}6\) 10.d3 allows the promising combination 10...\(\text{\textit{e}}6\) 11.\(\text{\textit{c}}2\) \(\text{\textit{b}}4\) 12.\(\text{\textit{b}}1\) \(\text{\textit{f}}5\) 13.a3 \(\text{\texttie}xd3+!\) 14.\(\text{\textit{xd3}}\) \(\text{\textit{xd3}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{xd3}}\) e4. 7...d5 8.cxd5 \(\text{\textit{xd5}}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{b}}3\) (9.\(\text{\textit{c}}2\) e4) 9...\(\text{\textit{b}}6\) 10.d3.

Here the common equalizer is the plan with short castling, but I think that White has spent too many tempi on ambling around with the queen and we should make him pay. So: 10...\(\text{\textit{f}}5\)! 11.\(\text{\textit{e}}2\) 0-0-0!

I'm sure your opponents will not like this. White has to spend yet another tempo to free the lane for the b-pawn while Black's play is easy and effective. He hits the d3-pawn with ...\(\text{\textit{d}}6\), \(\text{\textit{hd8}}\) to force the ugly \(\text{\textit{e}}1\), and then changes the direction of his main strike towards the kingside with ...g5, ...\(\text{\textit{h}}6\).

If White plays d4 early, the centre is eliminated and Black's game is easy due to his better development. Here are several ways that lead to the same pawn structure:

7.d4 exd4 8.\(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) \(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) 0-0 (9...c5=) 10.\(\text{\textit{e}}2\) \(\text{\textit{d8}}=\).

7.a3 d5 8.d4 exd4 9.\(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) \(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) 10.\(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) 0-0 11.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\)
11...c5 12.\(\text{Wh}4\) dxc4 13.\(\text{Qxc}4\) \(\text{Ke}6\)=.

7.\(\text{Ke}2\) d5 8.d4 exd4 9.\(\text{Qxd}4\) \(\text{Qxd}4\) 10.\(\text{Wh}4\) 0-0

Black often includes ...c5, but I prefer to gain the tempo by taking with a rook on d5 – 11.cxd5 \(\text{Qd}8\) 12.\(\text{Wh}4\) \(\text{Qxd}5\)=.

\textbf{B. 6.bxc3}

This recapture makes sense only in conjunction with e4, but that means White will present us with a clear tempo.

6.bxc3 0-0 7.e4 d6

White puts his hope in f2-f4, but we can easily hinder this idea. For instance:

8.\(\text{Ke}2\) \(\text{Qh}5\) 9.d4 \(\text{Qf}6\)

10.d5 (10.g3 exd4) 10...\(\text{Qa}5\) 11.g3 b6 planning ...\(\text{Qa}5\)-b7-c5 or ...c7-c6.

8.g3 \(\text{Qh}8\) 9.d3 \(\text{Qg}8\) – see \textbf{game 11} Suba-Delchev, Albacete 2004.

Another thematic plan against the fianchetto is 8...\(\text{Qd}7\) 9.\(\text{Kg}2\) \(\text{Qc}5\) 10.\(\text{Kh}4\) a6 11.0-0 b5 \(\text{\(\_\_\_\_\)}\).
Step by Step

1. c4 e5 2. dc3 df6 3. df3 dc6 4. e3

White displays an intention to contest actively the centre with d4. We should refrain from 4...d5 5.cxd5 de5 as 6.db5 dexc3 7.bxc3 de6 8.d4 exd4 9.cxd4 0-0 10.0-0 is obviously pleasant for the first player.

4...ed7 5.d4 exd4 is a decent option, but I will focus on the more challenging continuation:

4...db4 5. de2

5.db5 allows 5...e4 6.db4 6.db1 practically reverses the roles and Black is already ahead in development – 6...0-0 7.a3 de6 (aiming to lead the other

bishop out to b7 or a6) 8.de2 de5 9.cxd5 de5 10.de3 f5 11.d3 de3+ 12.xe3 exd3 13.bxc6 b6 14.0-0 a5.

6.xb4 7.db4 c5 8.db5 (8.db2 de3+) 8...d5 9.a3 db3+ 10.xe3 exd3 11.cxd5 xdx5 with a striking spatial advantage.

5.d4 exd4 6.exd4 d5 cannot be of any concern for Black. Play typically continues with 7.a3 dbxc3+ 8.bxc3 0-0 9.de2 dxh4=.

5...dbxc3
Chapter 5

A. 6.\textit{\textit{xc}3 e7}

A1. 7.a3; A2. 7.e2

7.d4 exd4 8.e4xd4 d4 9.\textit{xc}xd4 defines the centre too early – see \textbf{Game 9} Mastrovasilis-Hracek, Istanbul 2003.

A1. 7.a3 d5 8.cxd5

8.d4 exd4 9.e4xd4 d4 10.\textit{xc}xd4 0-0 is completely balanced. See \textbf{Game 10} Onischuk-Shirov, New Delhi/Teheran 2000.

8...\textit{xd}5 9.e2

9.c2 lets in 9...e4 when 10.e5 loses to 10...exf3.

9...\textit{b}6 10.d3

10...f5!?

Almost everybody opts for short castling with 10...0-0 11.e2 a5 12.d2 a4 13.\textit{c}2 e6 14.e1. Black stands perfectly well here, but he does not have a clear plan. Of course, he controls the centre, but he should basically wait and try to keep the grip. It is difficult to find the best moves in such circumstances. On the opposite, White’s setup is flexible and his play on the queenside and in the centre is not too committal.

I recommend to set concrete problems to the opponent by castling long and hitting his weak point at d3.

Note that the Najdorf-style attack 10...g4 11.e2 0-0-0 12.c2 f5 seems rather impotent and the counter-attack with 13.b4 has more chances to succeed.

Finally, 10...g5?! has not been tested, but it makes sense exactly in this moment – when we have not committed our king to the queenside yet. The position after 11.c2 g4 12.d2 f5 13.b4 a6 is difficult to evaluate.

We can still castle short or even leave the king in the centre – 14.e2 f4.
15.\texttt{\texttt{b}3} \texttt{f}8. This plan is very sharp and double-edged though. I do not see any reason to prefer it over the text or the more tested 10...0-0.

\textbf{11.\texttt{e}2 0-0-0 12.0-0 \texttt{b}8!?}

12...\texttt{g}5 looks out of step as it is commonly effective in conjunction with ...\texttt{f}7-\texttt{f}5, where Black's bishop is currently residing. White would lead the race after 13.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{g}4 14.\texttt{c}2 h5 15.b4→.

12...\texttt{d}6!? is perhaps the most straightforward continuation. It prepares ...\texttt{h}d8 or ...\texttt{g}6. White must quickly display activity with 13.a4

\begin{center}
\texttt{Xu,Jun-Atalik, Moscow 2001, saw 13.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{h}d8 14.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{xb}4 15.\texttt{xb}4 when 15...\texttt{d}5 (15...\texttt{b}8=) 16.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{b}6 takes over the initiative.}
\end{center}

13...\texttt{a}5

13...\texttt{h}d8 14.a5 \texttt{d}7 15.a6 b6 16.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{c}5 is a more complex alternative. Then 17.b4 \texttt{xd}3 18.b5 e4 19.\texttt{xd}3 \texttt{xd}3 20.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{exf}3 leads to perpetual check. Of course, Black can switch plans with 16...\texttt{g}6 17.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{h}4, with mutual chances.

14.e4 \texttt{g}4 15.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{xf}3 16.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{d}4 17.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{xd}4 18.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{b}8 19.\texttt{xa}5 \texttt{hd}8 20.\texttt{fc}1 (20.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{b}4 21.\texttt{fc}1 \texttt{dd}4) 20...\texttt{f}6= is comfortable for Black.

12...\texttt{e}4!? is the other logical follow-up to 10...\texttt{f}5. It aims to open the centre and capitalise on Black's better development. The point is that after 13.dxe4 \texttt{xe}4,
the f3-knight would have to go to the passive square e1. Therefore, a useful waiting move like 12...\texttt{b}8?! is a clever way of fighting for an advantage.

13.\texttt{d}2

In the normal Najdorf, Black often uses the a-pawn for ramming the enemy castling position. The only drawback of this plan is that the pawn structure after 13.a4?! a5 (13...\texttt{d}7 14.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{f}6\texttt{\textsubscript{a}0}) is not flexible and that limits the options of both sides. Most endgames will be better for Black so White should quickly complete development with 14.e4 \texttt{g}4 15.\texttt{e}3 whereas the forced line 15...\texttt{x}f3 16.\texttt{x}f3 \texttt{d}4 17.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{x}f3+ 18.gxf3 \texttt{d}6 is balanced. White will evacuate his king via f1.

13.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{d}6 14.\texttt{e}4 offers Black attacking prospects after 14...\texttt{g}6/h6.

13...\texttt{g}5

Black exploits the fact that 14.\texttt{c}3 would drop the d3-pawn.

14.e4

A critical line is 14.\texttt{fc}1 \texttt{g}4 15.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{h}5 16.a4 \texttt{e}6 17.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{d}5 18.a5 \texttt{a}6

Commonly, the exchange sacrifice should provide a lasting initiative, but the very clumsy placement of the e1-knight reduces White's attacking potential – 19.\texttt{xc}6 (19.b4 \texttt{a}7) 19...\texttt{xc}6 20.d4 exd4 21.exd4 \texttt{b}4 and he is still to prove that he has adequate compensation.

Another attempt to generate counterplay is 14.d4 exd4 15.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{e}4 16.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{xd}4 17.exd4 \texttt{a}6 18.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{w}f6 19.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{he}8\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}.

14...\texttt{e}6 15.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{f}6 16.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{g}4 17.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{d}4 18.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{xd}4

White is in a positional bind, but the following break gives him some counterplay:

19.f4! \texttt{gd}3 20.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{d}6=
Perhaps White should opt for the exchange sacrifice with 16.a4 \textit{f7} 17.\textit{xc6} \textit{bxc6} 18.a5=.

\textbf{8...exd4 9.\textit{xd4} \textit{xd4} 10.\textit{xd4} 0-0}

10...c5 was automatically played in all the games, but I prefer to activate a rook rather than a pawn. To be fair, the pawn attack is also sufficient for equality – 11.\textit{h4} \textit{e6} 12.0-0 \textit{xc4} 13.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 14.\textit{xc4} 0-0 15.\textit{xd1} \textit{ad8}=

\textbf{11.\textit{cxd5} \textit{d8} 12.\textit{h4}}

After 12.0-0, we could also recapture 12...\textit{xd5} 13.b3 c5=.

\textbf{12...\textit{xd5} 13.0-0}

We can use the tempo we saved on \(...c5\) to trade bishops:

\textbf{13...\textit{f5} 14.\textit{f3} \textit{d3}}

The activity of Black’s heavy pieces balances the strong enemy bishop. We can even safely allow doubled pawns on the f-file.
B. 6.bxc3 0-0 7.e4

White does not gain anything from delaying this move. After 7.\( \text{e}2 \) d6 8.0-0 e4 9.\( \text{e}1 \) \( f5 \), his dark-squared bishop is a poor sight.

7...d6

8.\( \text{e}2 \)

The older line 8.g3 offers Black an additional plan, based on the break ...b7-b5. Of course, it should be combined with ...f5. It seems that Black is fine regardless of the retreat square the f6-knight chooses:

a) 9.0-0 \( \text{g}6 \) 10.d3 \( \text{e}8 \) 11.\( \text{e}1 \) h6 12.\( \text{d}2 \) \( h7 \) 13.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{f}4 \)

8...\( \text{h}5 \)

This is more forcing than 8...\( \text{e}7 \) which aims for a dark-squared strategy on the kingside:

14.\( \text{g}3 \)

Or 14.\( \text{xf}4 \) \( \text{xf}4 \) 15.d4 \( \text{g}5 \) 16.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 17.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{h}3 \) 18.\( \text{f}1 \) b6 19.c5 dxc5 20.dxc5 \( \text{g}5 \).

b) 9.d4 \( \text{g}6 \) 10.0-0 \( \text{e}7 \) 11.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{e}8 \)

White’s setup with d4 is more active than in the previous example and it would be a mistake to follow in the same fashion. For instance, Bocharov-Matlaakov, Tyumen 2012 saw 11...h6 12.\( \text{e}1 \) \( h7 \) when 13.c5 would be strong as 13...dxc5 14.\( \text{xe}5 \) favours White. It is better to deprive the enemy of this resource.

12.\( \text{e}1 \) h6 13.\( \text{d}2 \) c5.

9.d4 \( \text{f}6 \)

Again the most straightforward move – we attack d4.

9...exd4 allows 10.\( \text{xd}4 \)
Or 10.cxd4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}f6 11.0-0 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}f4}}
12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}xf4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}xf4 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{}}ae1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}g4}}
14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}b2=.
10...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}f6 11.0-0\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{o}}}} Diamant-Molner, Phoenix 2015.

10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}5}

10.g3 exd4 11.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}xd4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}xd4 12.cxd4
\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}xd4 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}b2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}}c5 14.0-0 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}f6
15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}xf6 gxf6 16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}fd1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}e8 17.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}d5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}}c6

Computer analysis proves that White has nothing more than a draw after 18.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}d2 (18.f4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}b6+) 18...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}e5.

10...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}}a5 11.g3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}}b6
This move does not intend ...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}}a6, it only clamps on c5 and prepares ...	extit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}}}a5-b7-c5 or ...	extit{\textbf{c}}7-c6 – for instance:
12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}e3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}}g4! 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}d2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}xe2 14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}xe2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}}6.
The radical solution 12.c5 dxc5 13.c4 does not really change Black’s plan – 13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}}g4!.
The only challenging continuation is:

12.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}}g5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}}g6 (12...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}}}6!?∞) 13.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}}h4

13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}f5 14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{w}}}xf5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{x}}}xf5 15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}}d1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}}f6
16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}}}h5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}}e8
White’s initiative has come to an end while the defects of his pawn structure remain. An interesting fight is ahead.
Chapter 5. 1.c4 e5 2.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 3.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 4.e3

Annotated Games

9. Mastrovasilis – Hracek, EU-ch Istanbul 01.06.2003

1.c4 \( \text{f6} \) 2.\( \text{c3} \) e5 3.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 4.e3 \( \text{b4} \) 5.\( \text{c2} \) \text{xc3} 6.\( \text{xc3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 7.d4

7...exd4

Kiril Georgiev successfully defends 7...d6 which keeps more tension – 8.d5 \( \text{b8} \) 9.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{f5} \). It is unclear how White could extract value from his spatial advantage.

8.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 9.\( \text{xd4} \) c5

Black could play ...c5 later or even omit it. Bandza-Z.Polgar, Wiesbaden 1994, saw 9...0-0 10.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{d8} \) 11.0-0 \( \text{c5} \) 12.\( \text{h4} \) d5 13.cxd5 \( \text{xd5} \) 14.\( \text{xe7} \) \text{xe7} 15.e4 \( \text{e6} \) 16.\( \text{e3} \) b6
Black has active pieces and a pawn majority 3:2 on the queenside. That should allow him to neutralise the bishop pair. He should aim to trade one of them, for instance, 13.a3 \textit{\texttt{b6}} 14.e4 \textit{\texttt{e6}}.

13.\textit{\texttt{d2 e6}} 14.0-0-0

Naturally, White wants to have his king closer to the enemy's potential passers, but he underestimates Black's threats. A curious alternative was 14.\textit{\texttt{ac1 ac8}} 15.e4 \textit{\texttt{b4}} 16.a3 \textit{\texttt{a2}}! followed up by ...c5-c4-c3=.

14...\textit{\texttt{ac8}} 15.\textit{\texttt{e2 b4}} 16.\textit{\texttt{xb4}}?

16.a3 \textit{\texttt{c6}} 17.\textit{\texttt{c3 f6}} was about equal. Black's plan is to push ...b7-b5-b4.

16...\textit{\texttt{cxb4+}} 17.\textit{\texttt{b1 b3}}! 18.\textit{\texttt{axb3 xb3}} 19.\textit{\texttt{ac1 hd8}} 20.\textit{\texttt{xc8 xc8}}

21.\textit{\texttt{d3}}?!

White has a small problem – he cannot trade rooks with 21.\textit{\texttt{xc1}}?? due to 21...\textit{\texttt{a2+}}. Perhaps he should have addressed it urgently with 21.\textit{\texttt{d1 d5}} 22.f3 a5 23.\textit{\texttt{e1}} intending \textit{\texttt{e2. d3}} is a step in the wrong direction.

21...\textit{\texttt{a5}} 22.h4 \textit{\texttt{h6}} 23.e4 \textit{\texttt{a4}} 24.\textit{\texttt{f3}}?!

White does not realise that he cannot survive with his king caged in. The rest is pathetic.

24...\textit{\texttt{g5}} 25.hxg5 hxg5 26.\textit{\texttt{g3 c5}} 27.\textit{\texttt{g4 e6}} 28.\textit{\texttt{g3 b5}} 29.\textit{\texttt{c2 d6}} 30.\textit{\texttt{d3+ e5}} 31.\textit{\texttt{d8 c8}} 32.\textit{\texttt{d1 xc2}} 0-1

10. Onischuk – Shirov
New Delhi/Teheran 2000

1.\textit{\texttt{c4}} e5 2.\textit{\texttt{c3 f6}} 3.\textit{\texttt{f3 c6}} 4.e3 \textit{\texttt{b4}} 5.\textit{\texttt{c2 xc3}} 6.\textit{\texttt{xc3 e7}} 7.a3 d5 8.d4 \textit{\texttt{exd4}} 9.\textit{\texttt{xd4 xd4}} 10.\textit{\texttt{xd4 0-0}}

11.\textit{\texttt{c5}}

Black has discarded 10...\textit{\texttt{c5}} in favour of the plan with ...\textit{\texttt{d8}}. White accepts the challenge and seizes space on the queenside. This game shows a convincing plan for Black – he arranges an exchange of the bishops via \textit{\texttt{a6}}. A more cunning version of this idea is 11.\textit{\texttt{d2}} intending 11...\textit{\texttt{d8}} 12.\textit{\texttt{b4}}
\begin{verbatim}
\texttt{we8 13.c5, but Black could switch to 11...c5 12.h4 dxc4 13.xc4 \texttt{e6=}. 11.b4?! is worse, on account of 11...dxc4 12.xc4 \texttt{d8} 13.\texttt{f4} a5.}

\texttt{11...b6 12.b4 bxc5 13.bxc5 \texttt{e6} 14.d3 a6 15.c2}

15.0-0 is positionally harmless since White would not be able to generate any threat in near future.

\texttt{15...c6}

Black had to decide what pawn setup to oppose against the enemy bishop pair. One possible stand was 15...\texttt{d7} 16.b2 \texttt{f6}, then ...\texttt{c6}. Amore active version of it is 15...g4 16.f3 \texttt{e5} 17.b2 \texttt{f6} 18.f2, Belozerov-Korchnoi, Smolensk 2000, 18...\texttt{c4}, aiming for ...\texttt{e7}, ...\texttt{c6}. A completely different plot offers 15...\texttt{ae8}!? 16.f3 c6 17.f2 \texttt{d7} 18.e1 (18.b2 \texttt{h6}) 18...f5. Shirov's novelty defines the queen's placement a little too early.

\texttt{16.b2 ab8 17.c3 fe8}

A critical position. Both sides have completed the "compulsory program" and it is time for heavy calculation.

\texttt{18.g4}

18.a4!? bans 18...\texttt{b5} and 18...\texttt{b5}, but Black gets through the e-file: 18...\texttt{e6}! 19.g4 \texttt{be8} 20.g5 \texttt{e4}! 21.xe4 xxe4 22.d2 d4

White's defence is not easy – 23.g1 would face 23...\texttt{xh2}, but he can make a draw with accurate moves – 23.d4 \texttt{e5} 24.xe5 \texttt{xe5} 25.h1 b6 26.g1 d4 27.xd4 xxc5 28.gxh6 c1=+. The text is also very sharp.

\texttt{18...b5 19.g5 xxc5 20.a4! b6 21.xe8}!

21.xf6? loses to 21...\texttt{e4}. The best continuation was 21.b4! when Black risks to enter a slightly worse endgame. He should carry on the attack with 21...\texttt{xc3}! 22.xc3 c5!!
\end{verbatim}
1.c4 e5 2.d3 c6 3.d3 c6 4.e3

24...Qc2! 25.Qhe1 c5 26.Qxd5 c4!
27.Qxb5 Qxd2+ 28.Qe2 Qxe2+
29.Qxe2 Qxb5 30.a4 Qd7 31.Qc1
Qxa4 32.Qa1 should be a draw.
After mutual mistakes, the game
was eventually drawn:

26...Qd6 27.Qab1 Qb5 28.Qxb5
Qxb5 29.Qc3

29...d4 (29...Qf8=; 29...Qxc3
30.Qxc3 d4=) 30.Qxd4 Qf5+
31.Qf4 Qxd4 32.exd4 Qxe5+
33.Qxe5 Qf8 34.Qb1 Qe7 35.Qb7
Qd7 36.Qxa7 Qxh2 37.Qa8
Qh6 38.Qg8 hxg5 39.Qxg7 Qe7
40.Qg8 Qe2+ 41.Qd5 Qe3 42.a4
Qxf3 43.Qc6 Qc3+ 44.Qb5 Qb3+
45.Qc4 Qa3 46.Qb4 Qd3 47.a5
Qx64+ 48.Qc5 Qa4 49.Qb5 Qa1
50.a6 Qf6 51.Qd8 Qb1+ 52.Qc5
Qa1 53.Qb5 Qb1+ 54.Qc5 Qe5
Draw.

11. Suba – Delchev
Albacete 05.09.2004

1.c4 Qf6 2.d3 c5 3.Qf3 c6
4.e3 Qb4 5.Wc2 Qxc3 6.bxc3 d6
7.e4 0-0 8.g3 Qh8 9.d3 Qg8
Another way to enable ...f7-f5 was ...d7. My manoeuvre ...f6-g8-e7 is a bit slow, but the position is closed and White cannot do much with the tempi.

10.h4 ge7 11.g2 f5 12.exf5 xf5 13.f3

13.exf5 xf5 14.b1 b8 15.0-0 d7 is easy to play.

13.d7 14.0-0 h6 15.d2

White can create serious threats only on the kingside. Perhaps he could try 15.h3 intending h2-g4.

15.ge7 h3 c8 17.h2

The transformation of the pawn structure was definitely in my favour – the c4-pawn is a juicy target. I could attack it with a knight on a5, but I should trade first a pair of rooks on the a-file. Perhaps that explains Suba’s next move –
it prevents ...\textit{a}8, but at the high price of creating more doubled pawns! Of course I had to trade queens and play a better endgame although my decision does not spoil my position either. It just leaves White more chances for obtaining some counterplay.

\textbf{28.} g4 \textit{d}8 \textbf{29.} h4 \textit{b}8 \textbf{30.} a3 \textit{g}8 \textbf{31.} c1 \textit{d}8?

This is panic. I suddenly change my mind and offer to trade queens in a worse setting than 3 moves ago. The cold-blooded attack on the e4-pawn \textit{31...f}6! would have assured me of an edge. The trick is that \textit{32.g}4 is effectively parried by \textit{32...d}8! \textit{33.g}5? \textit{h}7.

The rest is not too interesting:

\textbf{32.} xd8 \textit{xd}8 \textbf{33.} a7 \textit{c}8 \textbf{34.} e3 \textit{f}6 \textbf{35.} f3 \textit{d}7 \textbf{36.} a1 \textit{e}6 \textbf{37.} a4 \textit{d}7 \textbf{38.} f4

\textbf{38...f}6?! (38...c5!) \textbf{39.} xe5 dxe5 \textbf{40.} c5 \textit{d}7 \textbf{41.} a6 \textit{b}5 \textbf{42.} a2 \textit{d}3 \textbf{43.} xb6 cxb6 \textbf{44.} xb6 \textit{xc}3 \textbf{45.} c7 \textit{e}8 \textbf{46.} a3 \textit{xa}3 \textbf{47.} a3 \textit{xe}4 \textbf{48.} a5 \textit{xe}2 \textbf{49.} xg2 \textbf{50.} e5 \textit{d}8 \textbf{51.} xf6 gxf6 \textbf{52.} g4 \textit{d}2+ \textbf{53.} g3 \textit{d}3+ \textbf{54.} f4 \textit{h}3 \textbf{55.} xe4 \textit{g}7 \textbf{56.} a8 \textit{b}3 \textbf{57.} f4 \textit{f}7 \textbf{58.} h8 \textit{g}7 \textbf{59.} a8 \textit{b}5 \textbf{60.} c8 \textit{g}5 \textbf{61.} a8 Draw.
Main Ideas

1.c4 e5 2.c3 e5 3.d3 c6 4.g3 b4 5.d5

White escapes the exchange on c3, but the knight jump has two drawbacks:

1. As a rule, exchanges help the defender, and this is no exception. Although we do not take on d5 at once, the trade is constantly in the air. Moreover, after 5...e4!? 6.h4 0-0 7.g2 d6!? 8.0-0 g5!? 9.d4 h6!

When I started my work on this book, the line with 8...g5 was totally neglected by practical players and it was harshly criticized by Marin and Watson in their works on the English Opening. My analyses suggested that in fact it was promising for Black and I hoped to arm you with a powerful surprise weapon. The Candidates tournament in Mos-
cow, however, saw both Aronian and Anand opting for 5...e4. Their games did not change my evaluation, but they pushed the variation under the limelight.

The diagram position is too sharp for generalisations and it demands concrete play. Still, there is something I would like to stress – Black should not hold for the material advantage. On the opposite – he must be ready to return it for an initiative. For instance: 10.\texttt{Ax}b4 \texttt{Ax}b4 11.f3 gxh4! 12.\texttt{Ax}h6 hxg3 13.hxg3 \texttt{Ah}5

14.\texttt{Ax}f8 \texttt{Ax}g3!.

10.\texttt{Ag}2 is more solid – See the free-style Game 13 SonoflucK, Rybka 2.x-Intuitivestra, playchess.com 2007.

Note also Nakamura’s move order 8.a3 when simplest is 8...\texttt{Aa}5 (8... Anand’s 8...\texttt{Ac}5 is a decent alternative, but after 9.0-0 Black should look for improvements. I suggest 9...\texttt{Ag}4!? ) 9.b4 (9.0-0 g5 10.b4 \texttt{Ab}6; 9.e3 g5 10.b4 \texttt{Ae}5!) 9...\texttt{Ab}6 10.\texttt{Ab}2

10...\texttt{Ae}4 11.\texttt{Ax}d4 \texttt{Ax}d4 12.e3 \texttt{Af}5=. 
Chapter 6. 3.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 4.\( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 5.\( \text{d}5 \\

Step by Step

1.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 2.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{e}5 \) 3.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 4.\( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{b}4 \)

The first question which comes to mind is why Black led out his bishop to b4 in the first place. Wasn’t it easier to play at once 4...\( \text{c}5 \). One reason is that 4...\( \text{c}5 \) 5.\( \text{x}e5 \) \( \text{x}f2+ \) 6.\( \text{x}f2 \) \( \text{x}e5 \) 7.\( \text{e}4 \)! is somewhat better for White. Another argument is that after 4...\( \text{b}4 \) 5.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{c}5 \), Black obtains counterplay by trading on d5 and then undermining the d5-pawn with ...\( \text{c}7-\text{c}6 \).

5.\( \text{d}5 \) (5.\( \text{g}2 \) is covered in the next chapter) 5...\( \text{e}4!? \)

This rare move is risky, but it is much more enterprising than the established equalizer 5...\( \text{c}5 \) 6.\( \text{g}2 \) 0-0 7.0-0 \( \text{d}6 \)

8.\( \text{e}3 \)

Or 8.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 9.\( \text{cxd}5 \) \( \text{d}4 \) 10.\( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{xd}4= \) 8...\( \text{a}6 \)! 9.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{a}7 \) 10.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{xd}5 \) 11.\( \text{cxd}5 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 12.\( \text{h}4 \) \( \text{f}5 \). I analyse this line in detail in the annotations to Game 12 Agdestein-Topalov, Stavanger 2014. It could serve as a backup of our main repertoire.

6.\( \text{h}4 \)

6.\( \text{g}1 \) is undoubtedly a strange way of fighting for an opening advantage: 6...0-0 7.\( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{d}6!? \). White has lost two tempi so we can sacrifice the e4-pawn without much hesitation: 8.\( \text{xf}6+ \) \( \text{x}f6 \) 9.\( \text{xe}4 \) \( \text{xe}8 \)
White is unable to finish his development without big concessions.

6...exb4 offers White the bishop pair advantage, but it cannot even balance Black's central domination - 6...exb4 7.d4 0-0 8.g2 (8.a3 c6 9.xc6 dxc6) 8.d5 9.c2 (9.cxd5 wxd5=) 9...xc2+ 10.xc2 dxc4 11.xc4 e6 12.c2 e8 13.b3 g4 14.b2, Smyslov-Benko, Wijk aan Zee 1972, 14...f3†. White needs its d5-knight for an indirect attack on the e4-pawn - by trading its only defender.

6...0-0 7.g2 d6!? The hunting season on the h4 is open! The threat ...g5 is now looming. Black's last move has a poor reputation, but nonetheless it is the most testing continuation.

8.0-0

8.exb4 exb4 9.a3 c6 10.d3

10...d5 10.e8 is considered equal after 11.0-0 h6.
11.0-0 exd3!? 12.xd3 This pawn sacrifice was seen in Topalov-Aronian, Moscow 2016, but something went wrong very quickly - 12.e5 13.d4?!
13.c2 xxc4 14.e4 c6 15.b3 e5 is about equal. Topalov takes e5 under control, but his move is probably wrong in view of:
13.xc4 14.e4 e6 15.b3

15.c5!? The game actually went 15.a5 16.a4 when 16...c5! would have
been in Black’s favour – 17.b4
cxb4 18.Qg5 dxe4 19.Qxf6 gxf6
16.Qxc5 (16.Qd1 Qe5 17.f4 Qg4
18.Qd2 Qc6+, heading for d4) 16...
Qa5.]

8.Qxf6+ Qxf6 9.Qxe4 Qe8 offers
Black excellent compensation as
the bishop lacks a good retreat
square (10.Qf3 Qh3). So White has
to part with it – 10.Qxc6 bxc6 11.0-0
Qg4 12.f3 Qe6 13.d3 Qc5+ 14.Qh1 d5
15.cxd5 cxd5=.

The insertion of 8.a3 Qc5
8...Qa5 is simpler – 9.b4 (9.0-0
g510.b4 Qb6; 9.e3 g510.b4 Qe5!)
9...Qb6 10.Qb2 Qd4 11.Qxd4
Qxd4 12.e3 Qf5 is roughly equal.

White will open the f-file, but
without minor pieces his attacking
chances are minimal.
9.0-0 helped Nakamura to beat
Anand in Moscow 2016.
The game went 9...Qe8 10.e3
g5?! 11.b4 Qb6? (Nakamura
suggested after the game
11...gxh4 12.Qb2 Qxd5 13.cxd5
Qe5 14.bxc5 Qg4 15.Qb3 Qf3+
16.Qxf3 Qxf3 17.h3+) 12.Qb2
Qxd5 13.cxd5 Qd4 (13...Qe5
14.f4) 14.d3 gxh4 15.dxe4 Qe6
16.dxe6 Qxe6 17.e5=.

I propose to improve with:
9...Qg4! hitting immediately e2.

The idea behind this move is seen
in the line:
a) 10.b4 Qxd5 11.cxd5 (11.bxc5
Qf4) 11...Qd4 12.Qe1 Qxe2+ 13.Qxe2
Qxf2+.
b) 10.h3 Qe6 11.d3 Qxd5 12.cxd5
Qxd5 13.dxe4 Qe6 14.b4 Qb6 15.Qf5
f6=.
c) 10.Qe3 Qxe3 11.fxe3 Qe7 12.b3
Qe6=.
d) 10.Qxf6+ Qxf6 11.Qxe4 (11.Qh1
Qae8) 11...Qfe8 12.d3 Qd4 13.Qf3
c6! 14.Qe3 Qxf3+ 15.exf3 Qh3
16.Qe1 Qxe3 17.Qxe3=

17...d5! 18.cxd5 cxd5 19.Qxd5 Qxe3
20.fxe3 Qg5!. This double attack on
d5 and e3 allows Black to take over the initiative and assures him of full compensation for the pawn.

8...g5!?

Forcing the play.

8...e5. 8...e8 is much more common, but the pawn structure arising after 9.d3 is pleasant for White. Still, Black gets enough counterplay.

9.f3 exd5 10.cxd5 exf3 11.exf3 e5 was seen in Nepomniachtchi-Efimenko, Ningbo 2011. Black's dark-squared bishop will remain out of play on the queenside so he must alter the pawn structure by ...c7-c5!. That would enable a back door via d8.

For instance 12.e3 (Marin's recommendation) 12...a5 13.c2 c5 14.xe5 (14.dxc6 xe6) 14...xe5 15.d3 g4 16.e4 d7=.

9...exd3 10.xd3 xd5 11.cxd5 e5 12.e2 c5 13.b3 a5! (intending ...a4) 14.a3 d7.

A critical position. The threat ...gxh4 is very real and Black is not too afraid of a counterattack as long as he controls the centre. White has a wide choice now. He can either focus on the kingside hoping to develop an attack, or shift his attention left on the b4-bishop:

10.h1

Marin proposes 10.xb4 xb4 11.f3, but correspondence chess has seen White struggling to equalize: 11...gxh4! 12.xh6 hxg3 12...e3!? 13.g4 c5 14.g5 e7 also deserves attention, but the text is preferable because it counts on attack rather than on material advantage.
13.hxg3 h5

14.fxe4
14...fxe3 15...xe4
gives Black a strong attack.
Black owns the initiative, but probably White can maintain the balance with accurate defence after 16...xc1.

The game McNab-Haik, Metz 1988, saw 10...a4 a5
10...cxd4? 11.cxb4 xe2+
12.xh1 c6

sets more problems as the obvious 13.xf6?! xf6 14.xe3 gxh4
15.xd1 stumbles into 15...g4 with many threats.
It is better to retreat – 13.c3 xc1
14.xxc1 gxh4 15.gxh4 with sharp play. For instance, 15...g4 is not decisive due to 16.xe4 d5 17.d2 and White is holding.

14.gxh4
The attack on h6 is easily parried: 14..d2 e7 or 14.cxb6 axb6 15.cc2 h7 16.d2 g8.
14...h8 15.h1 g8 16.f3 exf3 17.xf3 e6. A sharp position with mutual chances has arisen. The activity of Black’s pieces compensate the enemy bishop pair. We can even sacrifice the exchange, using the fact that White’s kingside is still undeveloped:
18..f5
18..b2 concludes the development. We can meet it by 18...h5 19.e1 e7 20.f2 g6
21.g1 d7=
18..e4 19.xh6 xg2 20.xg2 xh4. The h6-knight has no retreat, but we cannot win it. Thus we have some sort of a fragile balance.
I have also analysed the somewhat slow:
10. h3 \( \text{\#xd5} \) (10...gxh4 and 10...\text{\#xa5} are perfectly possible, too) 11. \text{\#xd5} \text{\#b8} 12. \text{\#a4} \text{\#a6} 13. \text{\#a3} \text{\#d7} 14. \text{\#b3} \text{\#a5} 15. \text{\#xb7} c8=.

Finally, 10. a3 \text{\#a5} 11. \text{\#e3} gxh4 transposes to the main line.

10...\text{\#xa5}

10...\text{\#xd5} 11. \text{\#xd5} \text{\#e7} 12. \text{\#xe4} gxh4 13. \text{\#a4}±.

11. \text{\#g2}

This position is strategically unbalanced and it needs testing.

Both 11...\text{\#xd5} 12. \text{\#xd5} \text{\#e7} 13. \text{\#e3} \text{\#h3}∞ and 11. \text{\#h3} 12. \text{\#ge3} \text{\#xf1} 13. \text{\#xf1} are unclear. See the free-style Game 13 Sonofluck, Rybka 2.x-Intuitivestra, playchess.com 2007.
Chapter 6. 3.\textit{\textit{f}3} \textit{c6} 4.g3 \textit{b4} 5.\textit{d}5

Annotated Games

12. Agdestein – Topalov
Stavanger 2014

1.c4 e5 2.\textit{c}3 \textit{f}6 3.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}6 4.g3 \textit{b}4 5.\textit{d}5 \textit{c}5 6.\textit{g}2 0-0 7.0-0 d6

8.e3

White prevents the unloading operation 8.d3 \textit{xd}5 9.cxd5 \textit{d}4 10.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 11.e3 \textit{b}6 with easy equality. Black only should refrain from undermining the centre with ...c6. Such an idea would have had some sense if Black had knights and the d5-pawn was restricting them. With only long-range pieces left on board, ...c6 is anti-positional because:
1. It does not solve any strategic problems;
2. It only prolongs the diagonal to the g2-bishop;

3. In principle, one should not display unnecessary activity on the wing where the opponent is stronger. Thus, after:
   12.a4 a5! 13.\textit{d}2,

instead of preparing ...c6, we should turn our attention to the kingside where ...f5 is a natural idea. We can push it immediately:
   13...f5 14.\textit{h}1, but here we need to turn again to 14...\textit{d}7, since 14...g5 is a bit premature due to 15.\textit{h}5, e.g. 15...\textit{d}7 16.f4 exf4 17.gxf4 g4 18.h3. This line suggest that perhaps it would be better to wait for White to shift his queen from the d1-h5 diagonal:
   13...\textit{d}7 14.\textit{c}2 f5! 15.\textit{h}1 when we have two possible set-ups.

a) Simplest is to open the e-file and trade all the rooks with a probable draw: 15...\textit{f}7 16.f4 exf4 17.exf4
Note that Anand’s rook lift ...\( \text{h}8\)f6-h6 is clumsy since White can easily prevent ...\( \text{h}5 \) with f4, \( \text{f}3 \).

b) The same idea could be modified by gaining space first with 15...g5 16.f4 exf4 17.exf4 (17.gxf4 g4 18.e4 \( \text{d}e8 \) 19.e5 h5=) 17...g4 18.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{h}8 \) 19.b3 h5 20.h4 (20.\( \text{b}2 \) e7 21.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{d}h7 \) 22.\( \text{ae}1 \) \( \text{f}7 \) 23.\( \text{d}2 \) c6=} 24.\( \text{a}3 \) h4) 20...\( \text{e}3 \) 21.\( \text{h}2 \) \( \text{f}8 \) 22.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{ae}8 \) 23.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{h}7 \)=.

The first plan is certainly safer and is effective against all White’s move orders, for instance, 14.\( \text{c}1 \) (instead of 14.\( \text{c}2 \) ) 14...\( \text{e}8 \) 15.b3 (15.\( \text{c}4 \) c5=) 15...f5 16.\( \text{h}1 \) \( \text{f}7 \).

On a final note, I should add that if White begins with 12.b4 (instead of 12.a4), it is best to counter it with 12...a5!

12...\( \text{d}7 \) 13.a4 a5 14.b5 f5 15.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{f}6 \) is possible, of course, if a player like Anand chose it, but the b5-pawn clamps on c6 and reduces Black’s counter-attacking options.

13.bxa5 (13.b5 a4!) 13...\( \text{xa}5 \)

14.d2 f5 15.\( \text{xa}5 \) \( \text{xa}5 \) 16.f4 \( \text{e}7 \) 17.\( \text{e}1 \) b6, Rogozenco-Balogh, Germany 2009.

14...\( \text{e}7 \) 15.e4. Here the game Marin-Komarov, Cairo 2001, finished in a draw, but Black obviously has a slight edge owing to his better pawn structure.

8...a6 9.b3

White’s most unpleasant plan is based on the attack with \( \text{h}4 \), f4, aiming to open the f-file. Therefore, 9.\( \text{h}4 \) should be his most principled continuation. However, the sharp attack 9...\( \text{xd}5 \) 10.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 11.f4 (11.b3 c6 12.\( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{xc}6 \) 13.\( \text{b}2 \) d5 14.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{e}7 \)=, Tari-Matlakov, Yerevan 2014.) 11...\( \text{xf}4 \) 12.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 13.\( \text{xf}4 \)?, Romanov-Fressinet, Hamburg 2014, could be tamed by 13...f5 or even 13...\( \text{e}8 \), intending to meet \( \text{h}5 \) by ...f5.

9.d4 \( \text{a}7 \) should not be a problem:

10.dxe5

10.\( \text{c}3 \) h6 11.h3 (11.d5 \( \text{e}7 \))

11...\( \text{f}5 \) 12.a3 (12.dxe5 dxe5)

12...\( \text{e}4 \) 13.\( \text{e}2 \) exd4 14.\( \text{exd}4 \)

(14.\( \text{exd}4 \) d5 15.\( \text{cxd}5 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 16.\( \text{c}3 \)

\( \text{xd}5 \) 17.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{xc}3 \) 18.\( \text{xc}3 \) c5)
14...\(\texttt{\textit{exd4}}\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{exd4}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{f6}}\) leads to normal play in the centre.
10.b3 \(\texttt{\textit{exd4}}\) 11.\(\texttt{\textit{exd4}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{exd4}}\) 12.exd4 \(\texttt{\textit{exd5}}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{cxd5}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{d7}}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{e3}}\) a5= is rather dull.
10...\(\texttt{\textit{exd5}}\)! 11.b3 \(\texttt{\textit{g4}}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{xf4}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{e4}}\) was equal in Kuzubov-Gupta, Iasi 2015.

Finally, the plan of a queenside pawn storm 9.d3 \(\texttt{\textit{a7}}\) 10.\(\texttt{\textit{d2}}\) has no bite.
10.\(\texttt{\textit{xf6+}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xf6}}\) 11.\(\texttt{\textit{d2}}\) invites Black’s queen to the kingside – 11...\(\texttt{\textit{g6}}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{c3}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{h5}}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{h4}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{g4}}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{f3}}\) f5!=, Grischuk-Adams, Warsaw 2013.
10...\(\texttt{\textit{exd5}}\) 11.\(\texttt{\textit{cxd5}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{e7}}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{b3}}\) c6 13.\(\texttt{\textit{dxс6}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xc6}}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{c3}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{b8}}\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{d4}}\)

Now 15...\(\texttt{\textit{exd4}}\) is enough for equality, but in Tomashevsky-Svidler, Moscow 2007, Black opted for:
15...\(\texttt{\textit{e4?!}}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{d2}}\) d5 17.f3, when 17...\(\texttt{\textit{e6?!}}\) 18.\(\texttt{\textit{d1}}\) f5 would have accomplished Black’s main strategic goal in our anti-English repertoire – to occupy the centre and hold it.

9.\(\texttt{\textit{a7}}\) 10.\(\texttt{\textit{b2}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{exd5}}\) 11.\(\texttt{\textit{cxd5}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{e7}}\) 12.\(\texttt{\textit{h4}}\)

White hopes to open up the f-file with f4. 12.d4 is harmless owing to 12...\(\texttt{\textit{e4}}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{g5}}\) f5 14.\(\texttt{\textit{h5}}\) h6 15.\(\texttt{\textit{e6}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xe6}}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{dxe6}}\) c6.

12...f5!

12...c6? 13.\(\texttt{\textit{dxс6}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xc6}}\) 14.f4 led to Black’s rout in Swiercz-Balogh, Budapest 2014.

13.f4

In Marin’s opinion, critical here is 13.\(\texttt{\textit{c1}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{b6}}\) (to free the queen) 14.f4 e4 15.g4, but he only considers:
15...\(\texttt{\textit{exd5?!}}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{xf5}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{xf5}}\) 17.gxf5 \(\texttt{\textit{e7}}\) 18.\(\texttt{\textit{c4}}\). We have the much better option of:
15...\(\texttt{\textit{fxg4?!}}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{xe4}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{e8}}\) with active play. For example:
a) 17.\textit{\text{e}}1 \textit{\text{d}}5 18.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 19.\textit{\text{g}}3 \textit{\text{g}}6 20.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 \textit{\text{xf}}5! 21.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}4 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{d}5 22.\textit{\text{c}}3 \textit{\text{f}}5 with a firm blockade on the light squares;

b) 17.\textit{\text{f}}5 \textit{\text{h}}5 18.\textit{\text{f}}4 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{h}4 19.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}4 \textit{\text{h}}6 20.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}7+ \textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}7 21.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}7 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}7 22.\textit{\text{g}}4+ \textit{\text{h}}8 23.\textit{\text{h}}4 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 24.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{e}7 \textit{\text{e}}8 25.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{e}8 \textit{\text{e}}8 26.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5!=. Note this tactical hit. It exploits the inclusion of 13.\textit{\text{e}}1 \textit{\text{b}}6. So Marin’s improvement may be not better than Agdestein’s choice at all!

13 ... \textit{\text{e}}4 14.\textit{\text{g}}4 \textit{\text{d}}5

14 ... \textit{\text{f}}x\textit{g}4 15.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{e}4 \textit{\text{e}}8 16.\textit{\text{f}}5 \textit{\text{h}}5 17.\textit{\text{f}}4 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{h}4 18.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}4 is already in White’s favour. The above-mentioned endgame with opposite-coloured bishops might be a draw, but a pawn is a pawn.

15.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}5 16.\textit{\text{g}}\textit{f}5 \textit{\text{e}}7 17.\textit{\text{h}}1 \textit{\text{f}}6

18.\textit{\text{d}}3

White’s flank attack 18.\textit{\text{g}}1 \textit{\text{d}}5 19.\textit{\text{f}}1 should not succeed owing to Black’s superior centre. A simple defence would be 19 ... \textit{\text{c}}5 20.\textit{\text{e}}1 \textit{\text{a}}3 21.\textit{\text{e}}5 \textit{\text{d}}6=, but Black has a number of other good plans, as ...\textit{\text{e}}\textit{ad}8, ...\textit{\text{d}}5-\textit{d}4.

18 ... \textit{\text{c}}6

The most principled retort was 18 ... \textit{\text{d}}5. Then White has nothing better, but push 19.\textit{\text{f}}6 when both captures are possible:

19.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}6 20.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}6 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}6=; 19 ... \textit{\text{g}}\textit{f}6 20.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{e}4 \textit{\text{xe}}3 21.\textit{\text{g}}1+ \textit{\text{h}}8 22.\textit{\text{h}}5 \textit{\text{d}}5=.

19.\textit{\text{d}}\textit{xe}4

Agdestein fails to assess realistically the position. He overestimates the significance of the open g-file. 19.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}6 \textit{\text{x}}\textit{f}6 20.\textit{\text{d}}\textit{xe}4 \textit{\text{xe}}3= was called for. The threat of e4-e5 would provide sufficient counterplay.

19 ... \textit{\text{d}}\textit{xe}4 20.\textit{\text{c}}2 \textit{\text{e}}\textit{ae}8 21.\textit{\text{g}}1 \textit{\text{f}}6 22.\textit{\text{ae}}1

The stranded e3-pawn is a cause of constant concern for White. Black can choose a solid set-up as ...\textit{\text{f}}7, ...\textit{\text{h}}8, \textit{\text{f}}8 or the more active:

22 ... \textit{\text{f}}7 23.\textit{\text{e}}4?

White counted on 23 ... \textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}1 24.\textit{\text{x}}\textit{g}1 which would have given him decent compensation, but he misses Topalov’s counter-blow. The calm 23.\textit{\text{d}}2 kept things under control:
23...\text{\textit{wh5}} 24.\textit{\textbf{af1}} or 23...\textit{\textbf{d5}} 24.\textit{\textbf{af3}} when Black cannot double rooks on the e-file in view of \textit{\textbf{a}a3}.

23...\textit{\textbf{d5}!+} 24.\textit{\textbf{xf6}} \textit{\textbf{xf6}} 25.\textit{\textbf{ae5}} \textit{\textbf{a7}} 26.\textit{\textbf{exd5}} \textit{\textbf{cxd5}} 27.\textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{d8}} 28.\textit{\textbf{c1}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} 29.\textit{\textbf{h3}} \textit{\textbf{e7}} 30.\textit{\textbf{g3}} \textit{\textbf{h8}} 31.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{b8}} 32.\textit{\textbf{g4}} \textit{\textbf{d4}} 33.\textit{\textbf{g1}} \textit{\textbf{d3}} 34.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} 35.\textit{\textbf{exd3}} \textit{\textbf{a7}+} 36.\textit{\textbf{f1}} \textit{\textbf{h1}+} 37.\textit{\textbf{e2}} \textit{\textbf{e4}+} 38.\textit{\textbf{d1}} \textit{\textbf{b8}} 39.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{xf3}+} 40.\textit{\textbf{xf3}} \textit{\textbf{exf5}} 43.\textit{\textbf{a4}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} 44.\textit{\textbf{h3}} \textit{\textbf{f2}} 45.\textit{\textbf{a6}} \textit{\textbf{g5}} 0-1

13.\textit{\textbf{Sonofluck,Rybka-Intuitivestra}}

PAL/CSS Freestyle 2007

1.\textit{c4} \textit{\textbf{e5}} 2.\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textbf{c6}} 3.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{f6}} 4.\textit{\textbf{g3}} \textit{\textbf{b4}} 5.\textit{\textbf{d5}} \textit{\textbf{e4}} 6.\textit{\textbf{h4}} 0-0 7.\textit{\textbf{g2}} \textit{\textbf{d6}} 8.0-0 \textit{\textbf{g5}} 9.\textit{\textbf{d4}} \textit{\textbf{h6}} 10.\textit{\textbf{h1}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} 11.\textit{\textbf{g2}} \textit{\textbf{h3}}

The potential strength of the \textit{\textbf{g2}-}bishop discourages immediate active actions with \ldots\textit{\textbf{f5}}-\textit{\textbf{f4}}, but in future the \textit{\textbf{f}-}pawn could turn into an important resource.

I think that White has just enough for the exchange to balance the game, e.g. 16.\textit{\textbf{g6}} 17.\textit{\textbf{c4}} \textit{\textbf{b6}} 18.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{f6}} 19.\textit{\textbf{a4}} \textit{\textbf{f4}} 20.\textit{\textbf{g1}}.

It looks safer to gain some space on the queenside with 16...\textit{\textbf{b5}!} 17.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{g7}} 18.\textit{\textbf{g1}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 19.\textit{\textbf{a4}} \textit{\textbf{xa4}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xa4}} \textit{\textbf{b6}} 21.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{d7}=}.
According to the engines, the positions on the last two diagrams have the same evaluation, but from a practical point of view, White has made a big progress. The b7-pawn secures him at least a draw while any mistake will cost Black dearly. Without the a-pawns, Black would not have risked anything, of course. The rest of the game shows that even computer's help is often not enough to save such "equal" (?) positions.

45...\textit{Be7}?

Black should always threaten to take the bishop. 45...\textit{Bf8}! 46.\textit{Cc4} \textit{Bxd5} 47.\textit{gxf5} \textit{Bxf5} 48.\textit{Be2} \textit{Bf3} 49.\textit{Bxf3} exf3 50.\textit{Bf2} g4 51.\textit{Bg3} \textit{Bg7} 52.\textit{Bxg4} f2! is a draw.

46.\textit{Cc4} \textit{Bg7} 47.\textit{Bd4} \textit{Bxd4} 48.\textit{exd4} \textit{Be7} 49.\textit{Bf2} 1-0

I'm not sure what has actually happened, but this position is probably still a draw after 49...e3+! 50.\textit{Be2} \textit{Bg7} 51.\textit{Be6} (51.\textit{Bb3} \textit{Bf6} 52.\textit{Bc8}; 51.\textit{Bc8} \textit{Be8} 52.\textit{Be6} \textit{Bg6} 53.\textit{Bxe3} \textit{Bf8}) 51...\textit{Bf6} 52.\textit{Bb5} (52.\textit{Bxe3}?? c5; 52.\textit{Bb3} \textit{Bxe6}) 52...\textit{Bxe6} 53.dxe6 d5!
Chapter 7. 3.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 4.g3 \( \text{b4} \) 5.\( \text{g2} \)

Main Ideas

1.c4 e5 2.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 3.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{c6} \)
4.g3 \( \text{b4} \) 5.\( \text{g2} \) 0-0 6.0-0

However, the strategical plot in this position is much simpler than after 7.\( \text{g5} \). White's only serious plan is connected with f3 and we must learn how to meet it. I suggest 11.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{e5} \)? – see Game 14 Kelly-Gormally, Birmingham 2002. It is enough to trade any pair of minor piece to achieve comfortable play.

7...\( \text{xc3} \) 8.bxc3 \( \text{e8} \) 9.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{e3} \)!

6...e4!? I do not say 6...d6 or 6...\( \text{e8} \) are bad, but I will always choose the aggressive approach unless it's proven wrong. And practice shows 53 percent in Black's favour!

7.\( \text{g5} \)
7.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{xc3} \) 8.dxc3 \( \text{h6} \) 9.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{d6} \)
10.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e8} \) may be of equal worth.

The other reasonable option is 9...\( \text{exf3} \) 10.\( \text{xf3} \) when most solid looks 10...\( \text{we7} \) (10...d5 seems to hold, too, but I suspect that we could expect surprises from White here), although this idea is based on the positional pawn sac 11.e3 \( \text{e5} \) 12.\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{d6} \) 13.d3 c5 14.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 15.\( \text{xf5} \) d5! 16.cxd5 c4\( \alpha \). It is a fair alternative to 9...\( \text{e3} \).

10.\( \text{d3} \) (10.\( \text{dxe3} \) \( \text{we7} \)! 11.\( \text{h3} \) \( \text{c5} \)=) 10...\( \text{d5} \)
Chapter 7

Since the source game Kasparov-Karpov, Seville 1987, 11.b3 was White’s main retort. The bulletin of the world title match awards it an exclamation mark and puts an evaluation “=”. Indeed, I also prefer White after 11...a5 12.a3 c6. However, I suggest the more active set-up: 12...b6!. Instead of b7-c6, we’ll build the pawn chain b6-c5. That will leave c6 free for our knight. Have in mind that 12...b6 is nearly unexplored. Play may continue:

13.cxd5 axd5 14.f4 b7

Black’s game is very easy. He will trade bishops with ...e7 and will block the long diagonal with ...c5, ...c6-d4. White’s threats on the f-file only look dangerous, but he cannot do much without his queen which is stranded on the other flank. My main line runs:

15.c4 e7 16.xb7 xxb7 17.f5 c5! 18.f6 c6 19.b2 h6 20.e4 g6 21.ae1 d4∞.

Perhaps Svidler also was not satisfied with White’s game since at the Candidates tournament 2016 he came up with the novelty: 11.a4!?, but after 11...h6 12.cxd5 axd5 13.e4 f5 14.xc5 f4 he failed to revive his king’s bishop.

The g2-bishop is a poor sight, but the position remains extremely tangled – Game 15 Svidler-Karjakin, Moscow 2016.

The same idea works in the event of 11.cxd5 xxd5 12.e4 f5! 13.c4 d4e7 followed up by ...f4.

Conclusion:
The ball is in White’s court in the 9...e3 line. 9...exf3 also seems in good shape.
Chapter 7. 3. ♜f3 ♜c6 4. g3 ♜b4 5. ♜g2

Step by Step

1.c4 e5 2.♕c3 ♜f6 3.♗f3 ♜c6 4.g3 ♜b4 5.♗g2 0-0 6.0-0

6.♖d5 e4 7.♕h4 d6 transposes to the previous chapter.

6...e4!? This advance perfectly fits in with our aggressive approach to the opening as it promises active piece play in a strategically unbalanced position.

Alternatives are rather passive:

a) 6...♕e8 7.♖d5 ♖xd5 8.cxd5 ♖d4 9.♖xd4 exd4. If Carlsen was willing to defend this, it should not be dangerous, but it looks deadly dull to me.

b) 6...d6 gives White some spatial advantage due to the plan e3-d4. The best shaping of this idea is, however, the slower 7.d3 h6 8.♕a4! (8.♖d5 ♖c5 9.e3 a6!) 8...a5 9.b3

White defends c4 and enables the tactical shot 9...♖c5 10.♕xe5! ♖xe5 11.d4 with the easier game. 9...♕f5 is dubious in view of 10.d4! (threatening a3).

9...♕e7 could prove a waste of time as in Aronian-Topalov, Moscow 2016: 10.♗b2 ♖c5 11.e3 ♖a7 12.♖c3 ♖e8 13.♕h4. The ex-world champion did not find anything better than 13...♖d8 14.♖d2 ♖e7 15.♖ad1 c6 16.♖e2 ♖f5 17.♕xf5 ♖xf5 18.d4 ♖c8 19.♖c3 exd4 20.exd4 ♖e4 21.♕xe4 ♖xe4 22.♕xe4 ♖xe4 23.♕e1 ♖xe1+ 24.♕xe1 ♖f5 25.♕e7=. In general, the queen stands better on d7 in this line.

9...♕e8 10.♗b2
Reviving the threat of 10...\texttt{c5} 11.\texttt{dxe}5 \texttt{x}xe5 12.d4 \texttt{xc}4 13.bxc4 \texttt{a}7 14.e3. 

Svidler-Nakamura, Candidates, Moscow 2016, saw 10...\texttt{f5} 11.e3 \texttt{e}7? when White missed 12.d4!, trapping the b4-bishop. Correspondence chess has seen: 10...\texttt{g4} 11.h3 \texttt{f}5 12.e3 \texttt{d}7 13.h2 \texttt{ab}8 and Black is holding thanks to the possibility of ...b5. Still, the whole Black's set-up is hanging on a hair.

7.\texttt{g5}

7.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{xc}3 8.dxc3 (8.bxc3 \texttt{e}8 9.f3 exf3 10.\texttt{xf}3 d5 transposes to line B.) 8...h6 9.c2 d6 10.e3 \texttt{e}8

7...\texttt{xc}3 8.bxc3

8.dxc3 \texttt{e}8 9.h3 d6 10.f4 (10.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{x}h3?! 11.\texttt{x}h3 h6=, Muthaih-Costachi, Porto Carras 2015) 10...\texttt{e}5 11.b3 \texttt{f}5 12.d5 h6 is similar to the previous comment – 13.e3 \texttt{d}7 14.h3 \texttt{g}6 15.h2 \texttt{e}5 16.f4 exf3 17.\texttt{xf}3, J.Gabriel-Gyimesi, Deizisau 2009. The open e-file is a decent insurance against White's kingside attack.

8...\texttt{e}8 9.f3

9.d3 is senseless. After 9...exd3 10.exd3 d6 11.\texttt{b}1 h6 12.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{xe}4 13.\texttt{xe}4 \texttt{h}3 14.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{e}5 it turns out that 15.\texttt{xb}7 is not a threat in view of 15...\texttt{g}4 16.f3 \texttt{xf}3 .

We have now two good options: 
A. 9...e3!?; B. 9...exf3.

The latter is more dynamic and complex, but it is up to you to decide whether that is a plus. The arising positions with a fluid centre are rather chaotic and demand perfect calculation.

9...e3 is easier to play and Black is commonly the active side.
A. 9...e3!?  

This push became popular after Karpov's win over Kasparov in the 1987 world title match. Karpov writes that it was invented by his second I. Zaitsev for the match in Bagio against Korchnoi, but later he discovered an older correspondence game Berndt-Zaets, 1979. The idea behind this sacrifice is that Black easily restores the material balance in the event of 10.dxe3 \( \text{W}e7! \) 11.\( \text{W}h3 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 12.\( \text{W}f4 \text{xc}4 \) 13.e4 d6 14.\( \text{W}d3. \)

![Chessboard diagram showing pawn positions after 10.d3.]

In 2001 Kasparov drew as White with Sadvakasov in the endgame after 14.\( \text{W}e4 \) 15.\( \text{W}xc4 \). A year later Khalifman-Grischuk made only the moves 14...\( \text{e}6 \) 15.\( \text{e}3 \) before signing a peace treaty. Curiously, modern engines evaluate both moves as 0.00 which is highly unusual for a position without forced variations.

10.d3  

White keeps his pawns connected. The obvious threat is \( \text{W}e4, \text{x}e3 \) so Black must quickly find targets in order to distract the enemy from the overextended pawn.

10...d5 11.\( \text{W}b3 \)

11.cxd5 \( \text{W}d5 \) 12.\( \text{a}3 \)

12.\( \text{W}e4 \) f5 13.c4 \( \text{d}e7 \), intending to meet any knight retreat by 14...f4, promises Black an initiative.

12...\( \text{W}xg5 \) 13.f4 \( \text{h}h5 \) 14.\( \text{W}xd5 \) \( \text{g}4 \) 15.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{xf}3 \) 16.\( \text{B}x\text{g}3 \) b6 17.\( \text{Bxe}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \) gives Black nice compensation.

Svidler's novelty 11.\( \text{W}a4!? \) does not change significantly Black's play – 11...h6 12.cxd5 \( \text{W}d5 \) 13.d4 f5 14.\( \text{c}5 \) f4 – see Game 15 Svidler-Karjakin, Moscow 2016.

11...\( \text{B}a5 \) 12.\( \text{W}a3 \)

12.\( \text{W}a4 \) does not protect c3. That encourages 12...c6 (although 12...b6 is also possible) 13.cxd5 \( \text{W}d5 \) with a double attack. Then 14.c4 \( \text{c}3 \) 15.\( \text{W}c2 \) \( \text{xe}2+ \) is equal, as well as 14.\( \text{B}b2 \) b5.

12...b6!  

This rare set-up is more active than the well tested 12...c6 13.cxd5 cxd5 14.f4 \( \text{c}6 \)

14...\( \text{g}4 \) 15.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) allows
White to launch a pawn storm on the kingside after 16.h3 \( \texttt{d7} \) (16...\( \texttt{xf3} \) 17.\( \texttt{xf3} \)) 17.\( \texttt{b1} \) \( \texttt{c7} \) 18.\( \texttt{e1} \) \( \texttt{e7} \) 19.g4.

15.\( \texttt{b1} \)? \( \texttt{c7} \)

15...\( \texttt{g4} \)?! 16.\( \texttt{xb7} \) \( \texttt{xe2} \) 17.\( \texttt{xf7} \) \( \texttt{a5} \) 18.\( \texttt{e1} \) ±;

15...\( \texttt{b6} \)?! 16.\( \texttt{b2} \) \( \texttt{g4} \) 17.\( \texttt{c4} \).

This is a critical position for the Karpov/Zaitsev/Zaets variation.

16.\( \texttt{f3} \)!

The stem game Kasparov-Karpov, Seville 1987, saw 16.\( \texttt{b2} \) \( \texttt{g4} \) 17.\( \texttt{c4} \) \( \texttt{dxc4} \) 18.\( \texttt{xf6} \) \( \texttt{gxf6} \) 19.\( \texttt{e4} \) \( \texttt{g7} \) with active play. Perhaps White's best continuation is 20.\( \texttt{c3} \) (20.h3 \( \texttt{xe2} \) 21.\( \texttt{xf6} \) \( \texttt{xf1} \) 22.\( \texttt{c3} \) \( \texttt{e5} \)) 20...\( \texttt{d8} \) 21.\( \texttt{xb7} \) (21.\( \texttt{xc4} \) \( \texttt{d4} \)) 21...\( \texttt{d4} \) 22.\( \texttt{xc4} \) \( \texttt{f8} \) 23.\( \texttt{c5} \) \( \texttt{c8} \) 24.h3 with unclear complications.

White could try to improve over Kasparov's 17.\( \texttt{c4} \) with 17.\( \texttt{f3} \), but then 17...\( \texttt{d7} \) restricts the enemy on the kingside (White's game is easier after 17...\( \texttt{e8} \) 18.h3! \( \texttt{c8} \) 19.\( \texttt{d4} \) \( \texttt{xd4} \) 20.\( \texttt{cxd4} \) \( \texttt{b6} \) 21.\( \texttt{bcl} \)) 18.\( \texttt{c4} \) \( \texttt{xc4} \) 19.\( \texttt{xc4} \) \( \texttt{e8} \) 20.\( \texttt{a1} \) (20.\( \texttt{e5} \) \( \texttt{xe5} \) 21.\( \texttt{xe5} \) \( \texttt{xe2} \) 22.\( \texttt{xf6} \) \( \texttt{xf1} \) 23.\( \texttt{xf1} \) e2 is dynamically balanced.) 20...h6 (Preparing to meet 21.\( \texttt{b3} \) by 21...\( \texttt{e6} \).

16.\( \texttt{f3} \) anticipates the manoeuvre ...\( \texttt{g4} \) (with tempo!), ...\( \texttt{d7} \) and leaves Black in a somewhat cramped position. White may then proceed with h3, g4, or with the more solid \( \texttt{b2} \), \( \texttt{c4} \) (he can also prepare it with \( \texttt{fcl} \)).

13.\( \texttt{xd5} \) \( \texttt{xd5} \) 14.\( \texttt{f4} \)

If White lingers with this move, he might never achieve it, for instance, 14.\( \texttt{e4} \) \( \texttt{f5} \) 15.\( \texttt{c4} \) \( \texttt{e7} \) 16.\( \texttt{c3} \) \( \texttt{f4} \)!

14...\( \texttt{b7} \)

15.\( \texttt{c4} \)

15.\( \texttt{b2} \) should transpose after 15...\( \texttt{c5} \) (15...\( \texttt{e7} \) 16.\( \texttt{f5} \) \( \texttt{gxg2} \) 17.\( \texttt{e2} \) \( \texttt{f6} \) 18.\( \texttt{c4} \) \( \texttt{d7} \) 19.\( \texttt{e4} \) \( \texttt{xf5} \) 20.\( \texttt{xf6} \) \( \texttt{h8} \) is also possible.) 16.\( \texttt{c4} \) \( \texttt{e7} \). This move order offers Black additional possibilities, but I think that \( \texttt{e7} \) is the best retreat anyway. For instance, White's attack is more
dangerous after 16...\texttt{b4} 17.\texttt{c3} f6 18.\texttt{xb7} \texttt{xb7} 19.\texttt{f3} \texttt{c6} 20.\texttt{h1}. 
16...\texttt{c7} is also dubious in view of 17.\texttt{f3} \texttt{e6} (or the knight will be clogged with f4-f5) 18.\texttt{ab1} f6 19.f5 when 19...\texttt{d4} 20.\texttt{xd4} cxd4 21.\texttt{b2} \texttt{c6} 22.\texttt{h4!} \texttt{e5} 23.\texttt{f4} surrounds the d4-pawn.

15...\texttt{e7} 16.\texttt{xb7} \texttt{xb7} 17.\texttt{f5}

17.\texttt{b2} c5 18.f5 \texttt{c6} 19.f6 transposes to the main line.

In my opinion, Black has two decent options here:

\textbf{B1.} 10...d5; \textbf{B2.} 10...\texttt{e7}

The latter is more cunning and easy to play. It is based on a positional pawn sacrifice which gives Black significant strategic advantage.

\textbf{B1.} 10...d5 11.d4

11.cxd5 \texttt{xd5!} helps Black activate his queen. The point is that 12.\texttt{d4} \texttt{h5} 13.\texttt{xc6} (13.e3?! \texttt{g4} 14.\texttt{f3} \texttt{e5} 15.\texttt{exg4} \texttt{exg4} 16.\texttt{e2} \texttt{ad8} 17.\texttt{g2} \texttt{e4} 18.\texttt{b1} c5) 13...\texttt{xc6} 14.e3 \texttt{g4} 15.\texttt{a4} \texttt{h3} gives Black a significant positional advantage which amply compensates a small material deficit.

15...\texttt{e6} has similar ideas – 16.\texttt{xc6} (16.\texttt{b1}?! \texttt{e2} 17.\texttt{e1}}
The game Girth-Scwenk, corr 2010, went on 18...xf4 \(\text{h5}\) 19...a3 \(\text{bd8}\) 20...\(\text{d4}\) when 20...\(\text{xd4}\) 21...\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{a5}\)! 22...c1 \(\text{xe3}\) forces a perpetual, but Black could certainly play on with 22...\(\text{h5}\) 23.a4 \(\text{xb8}\).

White has tried to improve on 12...\(\text{d4}\) with 12...b2?! , but 12...g4! 13.d3 \(\text{a5}\) 14...f2 \(\text{ad8}\) is clearly in Black's favour.

Another attempt was 12.d3 \(\text{c5}\)+ 13...h1 \(\text{g4}\) 14...e1 \(\text{h5}\)!? 15.f4 (15.e4 f5) 15...\(\text{xe5}\) 16...\(\text{xe5}\), Van Wely-Ruck Los Angeles 2011, when 16...\(\text{xe5}\)! would have left Black with a more mobile rook which could attack both h2- and a2-pawns.

11...h6

I do not like 11...\(\text{dxc4}\)! 12...g5\(\text{xc4}\) (12...\(\text{c2}\) h6 transposes) 12...h6 13...xf6 \(\text{xf6}\) 14.e4 (14...\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{d6}\)

15...\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{g6}\) 16.e4) 14...\(\text{d6}\) (14...\(\text{g4}\) 15...a4 \(\text{e7}\) 16...\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{d7}\)

15...d2 \(\text{d7}\) 16...\(\text{xc4}\), Tomasevsky-Gajewski, Berlin 2015.

The common 11...\(\text{e4}\) is another way to prevent the pin from g5, but the knight is somewhat hanging on that square. For instance, 12...\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{dxc4}\) 13...e5 \(\text{xe5}\) 14...\(\text{xe4}\) looks unpleasant: 14...\(\text{g4}\) (14...\(\text{g6}\) 15...\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{e7}\) 16.e4 \(\text{c6}\) 17...\(\text{xc4}\)+) 15.f3, but 15...f5 16...\(\text{d5}\)+ \(\text{xd5}\)= saves the day.

The text keeps more tension.

12...\(\text{xd5}\)

Alternatively:

12...\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{dxc4}\) 13...f4

13...b1 \(\text{e7}\) 14...b2 \(\text{e4}\) 15...\(\text{xe4}\) (15...a4 \(\text{e6}\) 15...\(\text{xe4}\) 16...e5 \(\text{xe5}\) 17...\(\text{xe4}\) \(\text{d7}\) leads to massive elimination of forces after 18...\(\text{xb7}\) \(\text{xb7}\) 19...\(\text{xb7}\) \(\text{xe2}\) 20...\(\text{xc7}\) \(\text{f6}\) 21...\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xa2}\) 22...\(\text{b4}\)!=.

13...\(\text{e4}\) 14...d1

After 14...e5 \(\text{xe5}\) 15...\(\text{xe5}\), simplest is 15...\(\text{c5}\) (aimed against 16.e4) 16...\(\text{ab1}\) \(\text{g4}\)=.
16.e4 5xe7 17.5d6 18.5xf6 was unpleasant, to say it mildly, in Caruana-Anand, Moscow 2016. In the postmortem Caruana also proposed 18.h4!? 16.e4 5xf1 17.exf5 5xh2 18.5xh2 5xe5 19.5xe5 5g5 should be tenable. Black could always sac the exchange and play with 3-4 pawns for a piece. For instance: 20.5f1 c6 21.f6 5xe5 22.dxe5 5e8=. However, at the press conference in Moscow Caruana called the position “resignable”.

15.5e5 5xe5 16.5xe5 5d6 17.5xe1 (17.5f2 is the same – 17...f6 18.5d5+ 5h8 19.5xf6 gxf6 20.gg6=) 17...f6 18.5d5+ 5h8 19.5xf6=.

12.5e5 5xe5 13.dxe5 5xe5 is at least equal after (14.5f4?! 5e8 15.cxd5 5f5=) 14.cxd5 5g4.

12...5xd5!

13.e3

This was played by Aronian against Adams in 2015. I have also analysed:

13.5h4 5h5 14.5b3

Or 14.5b1 5g4 15.5f3 5xf3

Now 20.5xb7 5e7 21.5a5 5d5 would be totally even so in the correspondence game Zlotkowski-Nowak, 2013, White tried 20.5f2!? 5a5 21.5e4 and got an overwhelming position after 21...5h8? 22.g4 c6 23.5xf6 5e6 24.5g5.

Black should have defended the f6-pawn with 21...5e6 22.d5 5a6 when White has just about sufficient compensation for the exchange.
13...\textit{h5} stumbles into 14.\textit{b1 d5} 15.\textit{b5 e7 16.e4} c6 17.\textit{b2}±.
14.\textit{b3 x}2 15.\textit{fe1 g2}+! 16.\textit{xg2 h5} is excellent for Black.

\textbf{13...f5 14.d2}

Black was threatening ...\textit{e4}. Another attempt to put the centre in motion is 14.\textit{e2} e4 15.c4 \textit{h5} 16.b2 \textit{ad8} with full mobilisation.

14...\textit{d7} 15.b3 \textit{e4} 16.c4 b6 17.f4 \textit{ad8}

In the stem game Aronian failed to equalize completely with White after 18.\textit{f1g6} 19.a3 a5!? 20.b4 \textit{xb3} 21.axb3 c5±.

\textbf{B2. 10...e7 11.e3}

11.d4!? is an interesting alternative. It looks strategically wrong as it offers Black a seemingly full control over e4. However, White puts his hopes on 11...h6 12.e4! \textit{xe4} (12...\textit{xe4} 13.e5 \textit{h7} 14.f6 triggers a strong attack.) 13.e1

\textbf{12.d4}

It is natural for White to avoid exchanges, moreover that the f5 would be a nice place for the knight. 12.xe5 \textit{xe5} 13.b1 \textit{b8} occurred
in Aronian-Anand, Stavanger 2015. After 14.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{e}7 15.d3 d6 16.e4 \texttt{g}4 17.\texttt{f}3 (17.\texttt{c}2 a6 18.\texttt{b}1 \texttt{e}6) 17...\texttt{h}3 18.\texttt{g}2, a draw was signed.

In Biedermann-Kurgansky, email 2012, White came up with 14.c5, intending to meet 14...\texttt{xc}5 by a second sac, 15.c4 and the a1-h8 diagonal suddenly opens up. Black preferred development over material and the game was drawn after 14...b6 15.c4 \texttt{e}6 16.d3 \texttt{b}7 17.e4 d6 18.cxd6 \texttt{xd}6 19.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{e}7 20.\texttt{g}5=.

12.\texttt{h}4!? d6 13.d3 is best met by 13...\texttt{g}6!

14.\texttt{f}5

In Karjakin-Eljanov, Baku 2015, White played 14.\texttt{x}g6= and offered a draw. 14...\texttt{e}5 15.d4 (15.e4 \texttt{xc}3 16.\texttt{b}1 \texttt{xf}5 17.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{e}5 18.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{a}5) 15...\texttt{e}6 16.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{e}7 17.e4 \texttt{xf}5 18.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{e}2 19.\texttt{xe}2 \texttt{exe}2 20.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{c}2 leads to a balanced endgame.

12...\texttt{d}6!

This move, in conjunction with the pawn sacrifice on move 15, effectively patches the 10...\texttt{e}7-line. The source game Kasparov-Karpov, Seville 1987, saw 12...\texttt{d}3?! 13.\texttt{e}2 (13.\texttt{f}5!?) 13...\texttt{xc}1 14.\texttt{axc}1 \texttt{d}6 15.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{c}6 16.\texttt{cf}1 with an initiative. 12...\texttt{xc}4?! 13.\texttt{f}5 \texttt{e}5 14.e4 \texttt{d}5 15.d4= is also dangerous.

13.\texttt{d}3 c5 14.\texttt{f}5

After 14.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{g}4 15.\texttt{d}2 the thematic break from the main line: 15...d5 16.cxd5 \texttt{c}4 is bad because White’s bishop enters play from a3 - 17.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{d}8 18.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xc}4 19.\texttt{d}4=+. I propose to modify this idea with:

15...b5!?

14.\texttt{f}5

16.cxb5

16.\texttt{xa}8 is risky – 16...\texttt{xa}8 17.cxb5 \texttt{h}3 18.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{c}4 19.d4 \texttt{d}3 20.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{e}4 and all the fun is for Black.

16...d5 17.a4

17.d4 prevents the knight from reaching d3, but \texttt{c}4 is also a perfect stand for it – 17...\texttt{c}4 18.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{ac}8 19.a4 \texttt{h}5 20.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{xd}5 21.\texttt{xc}4 when 21...\texttt{e}4 22.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{g}6 is equal. 21...\texttt{f}6 22.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{e}4 23.\texttt{xc}5 \texttt{g}5 24.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{g}3= is more forceful.

17...\texttt{ac}8 18.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{c}4 19.d4 \texttt{d}3 20.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{e}4=. 

125
Chapter 7

14...\textit{\textbf{\textit{xf5}}} 15.\textit{\textbf{\textit{xf5}}} \textit{d5}!

The point of the 10...\textit{\textbf{\textit{We7}}}-line. Without it, White would enjoy a bishop pair and the better centre.

16.cxd5 \textit{c4}

17.dxc4 \textit{\textbf{xc4}} 18.\textit{\textbf{d4 \textit{\textbf{xe3}}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xe3 \textit{\textbf{xe3+}}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xe3 \textit{\textbf{xe3}}} restores the material balance and the chances are even after 21.c4 \textit{b6} 22.a4 \textit{\textbf{xc8}}.}

17...\textit{\textbf{d3}} 18.\textit{\textbf{d2}}

The stem game which introduced 15...d5, Khismatullin-Tomashevsky, Chita 2015, saw 18.\textit{\textbf{xf6? \textit{\textbf{xf6+}}} Instead of panicking, White should have calmly defend, but he can hardly expect an edge with his central pawns blocking his bishop. A possible continuation is 18...\textit{\textbf{e4}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xe4 \textit{\textbf{xe4}}} 20.\textit{\textbf{f3 \textit{\textbf{xf3}}} 21.\textit{\textbf{xf3 \textit{\textbf{ad8}}} 22.\textit{\textbf{af1}} (22.\textit{\textbf{b1 \textit{\textbf{b6}}} 23.\textit{\textbf{b5 \textit{\textbf{d6}}} 24.a4 \textit{a6} 25.\textit{\textbf{b1 \textit{\textbf{xd5=}}} 22... \textit{\textbf{xd5}}} 23.\textit{\textbf{xf7 \textit{\textbf{b5+}}}.
Chapter 7. 3.\( \text{d}f3 \text{c}6 4.g3 \text{b}4 5.\text{g}2 \)

Annotated Games

14. Kelly – Gormally
Birmingham 20.01.2002

1.c4 \text{d}f6 2.\text{c}c3 e5 3.g3 \text{b}4 4.\text{d}f3 e4 5.\text{d}d4 \text{c}6 6.\text{c}c2 \text{x}c3 7.dxc3 d6 8.\text{g}2 h6 9.\text{e}e3 0-0 10.0-0 \text{e}e8

11.\text{w}c2

White’s bishops lack prospects. His only viable plan is to push f4, but 11.f4 \text{ex}f3 12.\text{ex}f3 has not caught in practice since Black could take the best stand against this pawn structure – 12...\text{d}d7 13.\text{h}3 \text{e}e7 14.\text{w}c2 (14.f4? \text{f}f5) 14...d5 (or 14...\text{w}c8 15.\text{h}2 \text{d}5). This break in the centre is Black’s main method of defence against a pawn storm on the kingside.

15.cxd5 \text{ex}d5 16.\text{w}f2 \text{c}8 17.\text{h}2 b6 18.c4 \text{xe}3 19.\text{xe}3 c5=, Lautier-Karpov, Biel 1990.

More often White tries to disrupt the coordination of the black pieces before pushing f4.

A possible stand is 11.b3, but it allows the regroupment 11...\text{e}e5 12.f4 \text{ex}f3 13.\text{ex}f3 \text{d}d7 14.\text{h}3 \text{c}6. As a rule, Black needs to trade one minor piece to be perfectly happy with his position. That’s why plans with \text{d}5 do not bother him at all. For example, 12.\text{d}5 (instead of 12.f4) 12...\text{f}5 13.\text{h}3 \text{a}5 14.\text{e}3 a4 with counterplay on the queenside, e.g. 15.\text{d}2 \text{xd}5 16.\text{cxd}5 \text{d}7 17.\text{h}2 \text{c}6 18.\text{xc}6 \text{bxc}6 19.c4 \text{e}b8.

The queen move is meant to hinder ...\text{e}5, but – surprise!
11...\(\square e5\)!

A similar idea is 11...\(\square d7\) 12.b3 \(\square e7\)!

Note that the most popular continuation, 11...a5, loses a tempo since White is not obliged to answer 12.a4, but can develop a piece. After 12.\(\&d2\) \(\&e7\) 13.f4 Black's pieces do not succeed to take the best stand with ...\(\&d7\), ...\(\&c8\).

12.\(\&xe4\)

Let's investigate the alternatives:
12.b3 \(\square e5\) achieves the goal of trading a piece.
12.h3 \(\&e6\)

The thematic 12...\(\&d7\) is good, but why not use the hit on c4 to win a tempo!
Even 12...\(\&g6\) 13.f4 exf3 14.exf3 \(\&d7\) 15.f4 \(\&e7\) 16.g4 \(\&c6\) 17.g5 hxg5 18.fxg5 \(\&d7\) is equal.
13.b3 \(\&d7\) 14.\(\&h2\) \(\&f5\)!

Exploiting the tactical trick 15.\(\&xf5\) \(\&xf5\) 16.f4? \(\&eg4+!\) 17.\(\&h1\) \(\&h5\) with attack. If White did not take on f5, we retreat the bishop to h7 and f4 would not have a bite anymore owing to the hole on d3.
Thus 12.\(\&xe4\) is the most principled move, but White has not won a single game after it in correspondence chess!

12...\(\&xc4\)

This leaves more tension than 12...\(\&xe4\) 13.\(\&xe4\)

If Black traded his last knight here, he should be able to hold the draw in view of the opposite-coloured bishops, for instance:
13...\(\&g4\) 14.\(\&d3\) \(\&xe3\) 15.\(\&xe3\) \(\&h3\) (15...\(\&e7\) 16.\(\&fe1\) b6 17.\(\&d2\) \(\&b7\) 18.f3 \(\&e6\) 19.e4 \(\&h3\), Berkes-Gyimesi, Hungary 2003) 16.\(\&fe1\) \(\&d7\) 17.\(\&d2\) \(\&e6\) 18.e4 \(\&ae8\) 19.f3 f5, Polugaevsky-Uhlmann, Solingen 1974. Perhaps even better is to insert 13...a5 14.a4 first.

13.\(\&g2\) \(\&xe3\) 14.\(\&xe3\) \(\&e7\) 15.c4 \(\&e4\)
16.\textbf{b}d3

Polugaevsky-Panno, Mar del Plata 1971, saw 16.b3 \textbf{d}7 17.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{f}5 18.\textbf{ae}1 \textbf{f}8 19.f3 \textbf{f}6 20.e3=. Black's best stand is more restrained: 16...\textbf{f}5! 17.\textbf{b}2 a5 18.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{f}6

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board1.png}
\end{center}

19.\textbf{ad}1 b6 20.f3 \textbf{g}5 21.e4 \textbf{h}3=.

16...b6 17.b3 \textbf{b}7 18.\textbf{fe}1 \textbf{ad}8 19.\textbf{ad}1 c5 20.\textbf{c}2 d5=

Opening the d-file allows Black to eliminate the rooks and reach a draw position. One mistake on move 29 complicated White's task, but it all ended up peacefully at the end.

21.cxd5 \textbf{xd}5 22.\textbf{ac}1 \textbf{b}7 23.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{g}5 24.e4 \textbf{f}6 25.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{xd}1 26.\textbf{xd}1 \textbf{e}8 27.\textbf{xd}8+ \textbf{xd}8 28.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{d}4+

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board2.png}
\end{center}

29.\textbf{f}1? \textbf{a}6! 30.\textbf{xa}6 \textbf{d}1+ 31.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{c}2+ 32.\textbf{f}1 \textbf{xc}1+ 33.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{e}6 34.\textbf{xa}7 \textbf{d}2+ 35.\textbf{f}1 \textbf{d}4 36.\textbf{a}8+ \textbf{h}7 37.e5 \textbf{e}2+ 38.\textbf{g}1 \textbf{e}3+ 39.\textbf{f}1 \textbf{xe}5 40.\textbf{e}4+ \textbf{xe}4 41.fxe4 \textbf{g}6 42.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{f}6 43.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{e}5 44.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{b}5 45.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{d}6 46.\textbf{g}2 \textbf{g}5 47.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{f}6 48.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{b}5 49.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{b}4 50.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{g}4 51.\textbf{g}2 \textbf{b}5 52.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{d}6 53.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{h}5 54.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{f}5 55.exf5 \textbf{xf}5 56.\textbf{c}6 \textbf{g}5 57.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{f}5 58.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{g}5 Draw.

---

15. Svidler – Karjakin
Candidates, Moscow 20.03.2016

1.c4 \textbf{f}6 2.\textbf{c}3 \textbf{e}5 3.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{c}6 4.g3 \textbf{b}4 5.\textbf{g}2 0-0 6.0-0 \textbf{e}4 7.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{xc}3 8.\textbf{xc}3 \textbf{e}8 9.f3 \textbf{e}3 10.d3 d5 11.\textbf{a}4

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board3.png}
\end{center}

Svidler's novelty hinders the plan with ...\textbf{a}5 and ...b6, but the queen does not have any impact on the centre. Karjakin takes the chance to hem in the g2-bishop.

11...\textbf{h}6 12.cxd5 \textbf{xd}5 13.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{f}5 14.\textbf{c}5 \textbf{f}4 15.\textbf{b}2 \textbf{b}8

Defending the b7-pawn in order to free the c8-bishop. If Black wanted
to push ...b5, he could have done it without any preparation since 15...b5 16.\textit{\texttt{w}}xb5? \textit{\texttt{w}}b8 would be in his favour. However, this move would be double-edged as it creates weaknesses on the queenside.

Karjakin provokes c4 which weakens the square d4. It is indicative that the engines prefer for White more restrained play on the queenside:

a) 16.\textit{\texttt{a}}ab1 \textit{\texttt{w}}e7 17.\textit{\texttt{d}}e4 (17.c4 \textit{\texttt{d}}f6 18.\textit{\texttt{d}}a6 \textit{\texttt{a}}a8 19.\textit{\texttt{w}}b5 \textit{\texttt{e}}d8 20.\textit{\texttt{c}}c5 \textit{\texttt{w}}xc5 21.\textit{\texttt{d}}xc5 \textit{\texttt{b}}6 22.\textit{\texttt{e}}b3 \textit{\texttt{a}}5=) or:

b) 16.\textit{\texttt{d}}e4 b5 17.\textit{\texttt{w}}c2 \textit{\texttt{w}}e7

The best place for the queen is f7 from where it is eyeing both c4 and g6. Now the most principled continuation is:

b1) 18.c4 \textit{\texttt{d}}db4 19.\textit{\texttt{w}}c1 bxc4 20.\textit{\texttt{d}}xc4 \textit{\texttt{e}}5! 21.\textit{\texttt{d}}d4 \textit{\texttt{f}}xg3 22.\textit{\texttt{h}}xg3 \textit{\texttt{d}}bc6 23.\textit{\texttt{d}}xe3 \textit{\texttt{f}}5 with chaotic play where Black's pieces are very active.

More prophylactic approaches are:

b2) 18.\textit{\texttt{a}}ab1 \textit{\texttt{e}}6 19.a4 \textit{\texttt{a}}6 20.axb5 axb5 21.\textit{\texttt{c}}c1 \textit{\texttt{f}}7 22.\textit{\texttt{d}}c5 \textit{\texttt{f}}5=.

b3) 18.\textit{\texttt{w}}c1 \textit{\texttt{f}}7 19.a4 \textit{\texttt{f}}xg3 20.\textit{\texttt{h}}xg3 \textit{\texttt{a}}5=.

Black should play complexly, combining threats on both flanks.

16.\textit{\texttt{c}}4?! \textit{\texttt{d}}e7! (eyeing f5) 17.\textit{\texttt{g}}4?

No matter the threats, one should never make such moves.

17...\textit{\texttt{b}}6 18.\textit{\texttt{e}}e4 \textit{\texttt{e}}6

The opening is over and we can take stock now. White has made a novelty, then played all the obvious moves, and ended down clearly worse! To be sure, the engines evaluate this position as nearly even, but I guess that nobody would like to contemplate such a hopeless bishop on g2. It would be interesting to know what went wrong with his home preparation. After all, Svidler is one of world's leading experts on the English Opening. He was obviously frustrated with his achievements as his next attempt to resurrect the poor bishop is almost losing. White adds to the bad bishop another positional drawback – an even worse king.

19.\textit{\texttt{g}}5? \textit{\texttt{h}}5!?

Karjakin does not want to part with the sight of the sealed bishop, but the position was ripe for decisive action. 19...\textit{\texttt{h}}xg5! 20.\textit{\texttt{d}}xg5 \textit{\texttt{f}}5 was much stronger. 20.\textit{\texttt{w}}b5 \textit{\texttt{f}}5
21.\text{d}xg5 does not help either owing to 21...\text{d}d4 22.\text{xd}x4 \text{xd}x4 23.\text{h}h3 c6 24.\text{a}a4 \text{x}xh3 25.\text{x}xh3 \text{f}f6.

20.\text{f}d1 \text{d}d4?!

20...\text{d}d7! 21.Wfa3 \text{f}5 was a good introduction to ...\text{d}d4. Now White is still kicking.

21.\text{xd}x4 \text{xd}x4 22.\text{xa}7 \text{d}7 23.\text{a}3

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}

\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

23...h4 (23...\text{c}6) 24.\text{c}3 \text{f}5 25.\text{h}3 \text{xe}x3?

Black is getting impatient. 25...\text{c}6\text{f}, taking the centre under control, was a must. The text allows White to activate the queen and drops all the advantage. The subsequent play was sprinkled with mis-

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}

\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

26.\text{e}e5 \text{g}6 27.\text{d}d5+ \text{e}e6 28.\text{xd}x7 \text{xd}x7 29.\text{h}2= \text{a}8 30.\text{h}3 \text{xe}h3 31.\text{xe}h3 \text{e}3 32.\text{d}c1 \text{e}e8 33.\text{c}2 \text{f}7 34.\text{d}4 \text{d}8 35.\text{d}5 \text{e}5 36.\text{b}1 \text{g}6 37.\text{d}6 \text{c}x\text{d}6 38.\text{xb}6 \text{h}5 39.\text{xd}6 \text{d}a8 40.\text{b}5? (40.\text{g}6!) 40...\text{c}6 41.\text{g}6+ \text{x}xg6 42.\text{c}1 \text{h}7 43.\text{g}1 \text{a}7 44.\text{g}4 \text{g}8 45.\text{h}5 \text{e}7 46.\text{g}x\text{h}4 \text{g}6 47.\text{g}4 \text{f}8 48.\text{g}h4 \text{g}6 49.\text{g}4 \text{f}8

50.\text{xf}4?

50.\text{e}5! \text{xa}2 51.\text{e}7 \text{g}6 52.\text{xf}4 was still winning.

50...\text{xa}2 51.\text{f}h4 \text{g}6 52.\text{e}5

\textbf{Draw.}
I conclude my survey on the English Opening with rare second moves. Their only merit is that they might throw us out of our repertoire. We need a concrete approach towards any one of them.

1.c4 e5 2.d3 is aimed against 2...c6 in view of 3.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\)3. One possible exploitative strategy is 2...f5 which is normally bad due to d2-d4. I analyse this plan in Game 16 Schwaninger – Balinov, Oberwart 2000. We could reach more familiar positions with 2...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{b}}\)4+?! 3.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{d}}\)2 (or 3.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{d}}\)2 c5 and we meet a3 by ...\(\text{\textit{a}}\text{\textit{a}}\)5) 3...\(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{d}}\)+ 4.\(\text{\textit{xd}}\text{\textit{d}}\)

Here simplest is to trade a pair of knights with 4...\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\)6 5.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\)3 \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{c}}\)6 6.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{c}}\)3 0-0 7.g3 d6 8.\(\text{\textit{g}}\text{\textit{g}}\)2 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{d}}\)4 9.0-0 \(\text{\textit{xf}}\text{\textit{f}}\)+ 10.\(\text{\textit{xf}}\text{\textit{f}}\)3 c6=.

2.a3 is a typical Sicilian move so we should not discard it altogether. Just as 2.g3, it has no direct influence on the centre so we can safely employ our plan of claiming the centre with 2...c6. However, we should meet d4 by exd4, e.g. 3.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{c}}\)3 d5 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.d4 exd4 or:

3.d4 exd4 4.\(\text{\textit{xd}}\text{\textit{d}}\)4 d5

If White does not exchange now on d5, we take on c4:
5.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\)3 dxc4 6.\(\text{\textit{xd}}\text{\textit{d}}\)+ \(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{d}}\)8 7.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\)4 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{d}}\)7 8.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{c}}\)3 \(\text{\textit{gf}}\text{\textit{f}}\)6 9.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{d}}\)1 \(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{e}}\)8 or 5.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{c}}\)3 dxc4.

5.cxd5 is the only principled line, but it offers us an initiative. I suggest to prevent any blockading ideas with the manoeuvre ...\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\)-e7-
f6. It hinders White's harmonious development: 5...cxd5 6.\textit{f}f3 c6 7.\textit{d}d3 g4 8.g3 \textit{e}7 9.g2 \textit{f}6 10.0-0 \textit{g}e7

The isolated d-pawn is always ready to move forth, gaining even more space.

2.\textit{f}f3 e4 3.\textit{d}d4 \textit{f}6

looks already pleasant for Black. Good old chess laws hint that White is playing with fire and should be punished by an energetic attack.

4.d3 \textit{c}6 5.\textit{x}c6 dxc6 is quite clear so we should consider mostly 4.\textit{c}3, keeping the pawn on d2.

4...\textit{c}5 5.\textit{b}3 \textit{b}4 6.\textit{c}2 0-0!

The point! White wins a pawn, but falls behind in development. We can play for suffocation with simple centralising moves: 7.\textit{x}e4 \textit{xe}4 8.\textit{xe}4 \textit{e}8 9.\textit{c}2 d5 10.a3 \textit{f}8 11.e3 \textit{c}6 12.\textit{e}2 dxc4 13.\textit{xc}4 a5↑.

You do not need glasses to notice that White's kingside lacks any defenders...
Chapter 8. Rare Second Moves

Step by Step

1.c4 e5

A. 2.d3; B. 2.a3; C. 2.\(\text{\&}f3\)

A. 2.d3

This ridiculous move aims to discourage plans with \(\text{\&}c3 \text{\&}b4\). It would not have posed any problems to us had we the Sicilian Reversed with ...d5 in our arsenal. The funny thing is that we still have:

2...\(\text{\&}b4+!?!\) with a rather easy game.

Note that if we delayed the check for one move later – 2...\(\text{\&}f6\), intending 3.\(\text{\&}f3 \text{\&}b4+\), White might definitely throw us out of our repertoire with 3.a3!? – why not!

In the annotations to Game 16 Schwaninger – Balinov, Oberwart 2000, I consider in detail an alternative plan which is based on 2...f5!?. This is an attempt to exploit White's second move since normally 2...f5 is dubious in view of d2-d4! An argument in its favour is that it is applicable after both 2.d3 and 2.a3. On the other hand, it allows White to follow typical for the English Opening schemes. That leaves him inside his comfort zone.

3.\(\text{\&}d2\)

I propose to meet 3.\(\text{\&}d2\) by 3...c5!? 3...a5 is another positionally well grounded option – 4.\(\text{\&}gf3\) \(\text{\&}c6\) 5.e3 \(\text{\&}f6\) 6.\(\text{\&}e2\) 0-0 7.0-0 \(\text{\&}e8\) 8.a3 \(\text{\&}f8\) 9.b3 d6 10.\(\text{\&}c2\) \(\text{\&}g4\) 11.\(\text{\&}e1\) \(\text{\&}d7\) 12.\(\text{\&}b2\) h6 13.h3 \(\text{\&}h5\), Csom-Taimanov, Saint Vincent 2001.

4.\(\text{\&}f3\) \(\text{\&}c6\) 5.g3 \(\text{\&}ge7\) 6.a3 \(\text{\&}a5!\) We keep the bishop in order to hamper White's queenside play. 7.\(\text{\&}g2\) 0-0 8.0-0 d6

We are ready to attack 9.e3 with 9...f5 so perhaps White should immediately change the course of events with:
9.b4!? cxb4 10.axb4 axb4 11.axb4
12.a3 dc6 13.d4 e4 (13...
14.dxe5=) 14.xg5 f5 15.d5 e5
16.c5 dc5 17.xc5 xd5!? 18.a4
d8 with roughly equal chances,
but all the fight is still ahead.

3...xd2+ 4.xd2

We have from here several ways to complete development. Simplest is:

4...f6

Another plan consists of ...d6, ...f5, ...
f6, but probably the best way to play for a win is:
4...b6!? 5.f3 d6 6.g3 b7 7.g2
f6 8.0-0 0-0 9.c3 bd7.

This line is inspired by the Bogo-
Indian Defence. Black’s position is
very solid and flexible. See Game
17 Lein-Korchnoi, Johannesburg
1979.

B. 2.a3

This modest pawn move does eliminate ...
but it neglects the centre. That should encourage us to claim it with:

2...c6!? 3.d4

3.c3 d5 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.d4 should be met by 5...exd4!.

3.f3 e4 4.d4 d5 5.cxd5 f6 is a reversed Alapin where Black’s ac-
tive pieces ensure him a pleasant albeit equal game.
3...exd4

3...e4 4.\texttt{c}c3 d5 is more in the spirit of this book, but it leads to an overly static position where White’s game is too easy: 5.\texttt{f}f4 \texttt{e}7 6.e3
6.\texttt{e}e5 \texttt{f}f6 7.\texttt{c}xd5 \texttt{c}xd5 8.e3 0-0 9.\texttt{g}ge2 \texttt{bd}7 10.\texttt{b}b3 \texttt{xe}5 11.\texttt{d}xe5 \texttt{g}4 12.\texttt{x}xd5 \texttt{x}xd5 13.\texttt{xd}5 \texttt{d}8

White could win a pawn with 14.\texttt{g}g3, but Black’s initiative and bishop pair amply compensate for it after 14...\texttt{e}6!. More prudent is 14.\texttt{ec}3 \texttt{f}5 15.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{xe}5=.
6.cxd5 \texttt{c}xd5 7.\texttt{x}b8?! \texttt{xb}8 8.\texttt{a}a4+ \texttt{d}7 9.\texttt{x}a7?? drops the queen after 9...\texttt{c}6.
6...\texttt{f}f6 7.cxd5 \texttt{c}xd5 8.\texttt{ge}2 0-0 9.\texttt{e}e5 \texttt{c}6 10.\texttt{f}f4 \texttt{e}6 11.\texttt{e}2

We cannot stand the \texttt{e}5-bishop for long so 11...\texttt{d}6 12.\texttt{xd}6 \texttt{xd}6 looks consistent. We have enough counterplay after 13.h4 \texttt{ac}8, but our chances to break through the enemy’s ditches appear to be minimal.

4.\texttt{x}d4 d5

We can play first 4...\texttt{f}f6, followed up by 5...d5. I’m planning to recapture on d5 with pawn anyway and I’m not afraid of 5.e4 d5=. Still, we could develop the knight to \texttt{e}7 instead of \texttt{f}6 in some lines so it looks clever to push ...\texttt{d}5 immediately.

5.\texttt{f}3

5.\texttt{c}c3 dxc4 6.\texttt{xd}8+ \texttt{xd}8 7.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{d}7 8.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{gf}6 transposes to the main line.
Of course, Black can also keep the tension with 5...\texttt{f}6.

5.cxd5 is risky as Black will get an initiative in various ways. I like the following original set-up: 5...\texttt{c}xd5 6.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{c}6 7.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{g}4 8.g3 (8.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{d}4) 8...\texttt{e}7 9.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{f}6 10.0-0 \texttt{ge}7

It is difficult for White to complete development as 11.\texttt{c}c3 could
face 11...\textit{\textbf{xf5}} 12.\textit{\textbf{b}5} \textit{\textbf{d}4}. Perhaps he should seek simplification with 11.\textit{\textbf{g}5} \textit{\textbf{xf}3} 12.\textit{\textbf{xf}6} \textit{\textbf{gx}2} 13.\textit{\textbf{xe}7} \textit{\textbf{e}4} 14.\textit{\textbf{xe}4} dxe4 15.\textit{\textbf{xd}8} \textit{\textbf{xd}8}=.

5...\textit{\textbf{dxc}4}

It is worth considering more complex lines as 5...\textit{\textbf{xf}6} 6.\textit{\textbf{g}5}

If White fianchettoed his king’s bishop, he would be unable to prevent ...\textit{\textbf{d}4}.

6...\textit{\textbf{e}7} 7.cxd5 cxd5! 8.e3 \textit{\textbf{e}7} 9.e4 c6 10.\textit{\textbf{e}2}

It seems that White will obtain a standard IQP position, but 11...\textit{\textbf{d}4}!?

throws him out of his comfort zone.

Following 12.\textit{\textbf{xd}4} \textit{\textbf{xd}4} 13.exd4 \textit{\textbf{d}5}, White should play accurately in order to maintain the balance:

\textit{\textbf{C. 2.\textit{\textbf{f}3} \textit{\textbf{e}4} 3.\textit{\textbf{d}4} \textit{\textbf{f}6}}}

3...\textit{\textbf{c}6} is the common move here, but Black’s pawn formation after 4.\textit{\textbf{xc}6} dxc6 is too static and it would be difficult to devise a clear plan.

Perhaps long castling is best, in order to mount a kingside attack, but 5.\textit{\textbf{c}3} \textit{\textbf{f}6} 6.e3 \textit{\textbf{f}5} 7.\textit{\textbf{b}3} b6 8.\textit{\textbf{c}2} d7 9.b3 \textit{\textbf{e}7} 10.h3 h5 11.\textit{\textbf{b}2} 0-0-0 12.a3 is double-edged.

\textit{\textbf{b) 14.\textit{\textbf{xe}7} \textit{\textbf{xe}7} 15.\textit{\textbf{c}3} \textit{\textbf{xc}3}}}

16.bxc3 \textit{\textbf{e}8} 17.e3 \textit{\textbf{g}4} 18.\textit{\textbf{xe}7} \textit{\textbf{xe}7} 19.f3 \textit{\textbf{ae}8} = 20.0-0 \textit{\textbf{xe}2} 21.fxg4 \textit{\textbf{xe}3}.

\textit{\textbf{6.\textit{\textbf{xd}8+ \textit{\textbf{xd}8} 7.\textit{\textbf{f}4} \textit{\textbf{d}7} 8.\textit{\textbf{c}3 \textit{\textbf{gf}6} 9.\textit{\textbf{d}1 \textit{\textbf{e}8}}}}}

Now both 12...\textit{\textbf{b}7} 13.b4, Rakhmanov-Seirawan, Berlin 2015, and 12...c5 13.b4 \textit{\textbf{b}8}, seem unclear.
The text is more in the spirit of the book.

4.\textit{c}c3

After 4.d3 we can already play 4...\textit{c}6. The point is that we no longer fear the set-up with e3, b3, \textit{b}2 and a possible f3 later where White needs his d-pawn on d2 to protect e3. For instance: 5.\textit{x}c6 dxc6 6.\textit{c}c3 \textit{c}5 7.e3 exd3 gives Black free piece play.

4...\textit{c}5 5.\textit{b}3 \textit{b}4 6.\textit{w}c2

We meet 6.d4 (and 6.d3) by 6...exd3 7.\textit{x}d3 \textit{c}6.

6.g3 \textit{x}c3 (or 6...0-0 7.\textit{g}2 \textit{x}c3) 7.bxc3 0-0 brings about a familiar pawn structure where the knight on b3 is a little strange and aloof from the kingside. Play may continue

My claim may sound exaggerated, but I believe that Black's game is clearly better! White is severely lagging behind in development and it would be difficult for him to castle. An illustrative line is:

9.\textit{c}c2 d5 10.a3 \textit{f}8 11.e3 \textit{c}6 12.e2 dxc4 13.\textit{x}c4 a5†.
Chapter 8. Rare Second Moves

Annotated Games

**16. Schwaninger – Balinov**

**Oberwart 2000**

1.c4 e5 2.g3 f5 3.§g2 §f6 4.d3 §e7 5.§c3 0-0 6.§f3

White’s move order is unimportant provided that he fianchettoes his bishop and develops the king’s knight on f3. The only independent set-up is 6.e3 d6 7.§ge2 c6 (7... §a6!? limits White’s options)

8.0-0

8.b4 discloses White’s plans too early and suggests a counter in the centre with 8...§e6 9.b5 d5 10.bxc6 §xc6. It is not clear at all that the advance of the b-pawn is White’s best idea. Central play with b3, f4 may be a more clever approach.

8...§a6

White’s set-up is a little passive, but it protects well his castling position. Thus the manoeuvre 8...§e8 already encourages 9.b4! §h5 10.f4. The text slows down White’s offensive.

9.f4

Or 9.b3 §e6 10.§b2 §d7 11.f4 §ae8 12.§d2 §d8=, Ribli-Drabke, Austria 2011.

9...§e8 10.§b1 §f7!

The point! Black targets the c4-pawn and prepares ...e4, e.g. 11.b4 e4, or 11.a3 §c7 12.b4 e4.

It transpires that White should protect c4:

11.b3 §d7 12.§d2 §ae8 13.§b2

13...§d8

Black is fully mobilised and well coordinated.

6...d6 7.0-0
Rare second moves

7...c6

I have played in one game 7...a6, having in mind to meet 8.b1 by 8...c6 9.b4 c7 10.b5 d7, but this set-up is a bit too passive.

Later I was attracted by the straightforward idea 7...e8!? 8.b4

8...h5
Black's idea is to sac a pawn for a great initiative after 9.d2 (9.c2 f4) 9...f4 10.gxf4 h3

11.xh3 (11.h1 xg2+ 12.xg2 bd7 13.h1 g4) 11...xh3 12.g5 h4 13.h1 g4 14.f3 h3.

Critical, however, is 9.e3! which prevents ...f4 and prepares a trade of queens with d2. My analysis shows that Black can hold the endgame after 9...e6 10.d2 xd1 11.xd1 c6 12.b5 c8 13.a3 bd7 14.bxc6 bxc6 15.ab1 f7, planning ...d5.

Still, it is not worth to test White on the move 9.e3!. The text does not waste time on dubious queen manoeuvres, but prepares ...h8, e6.

The best move order, however, is 7...a5!? in order to exchange the a-pawns, and more importantly, to provoke ab1.

8.b1

Of course, 8.b4 is better. In fact, White might need the rook exactly on a1. For instance, 8...h8 (intending ...e6), is best met by:

9.a4 e6 10.a3. In practice, White chooses instead exclusively:

9.b1
9...a6 10.a4 e6 11.b5 axb5 12.axb5

Black has achieved comfortable development and after 12...c7 13.bxc6 bxc6 14.b3 the game
Spraggett-Dolmatov, Hastings 1989, has finished in a draw.

8...a5!? 9.a3 \((h)8 10.b4 axb4 11.axb4 a6 12.b5 \((c)5 13.ae3 \((e)6 14.bxc6 bxc6

15.\((b)3

The email game Kuttruf-Zeh, 2004, saw 15.\((b)6 \((d)7 16.\((c)2 \((b)7 17.\((b)2?! \((c)5 and Black's game is even more pleasant. An obvious improvement is 17.\((d)5=.

Black could also meet 15.\((b)6 by 15...\((e)8!? 16.\((c)5 f4, for example – 17.cxd6 \((xd)6 18.\((d)2 \((e)7 19.e3 \((a)3 20.\((e)1 fxe3 21.hxg3 \((a)6 with active piece play.

Now 22.d4 would be risky in view of 22...e4 23.\((e)5 \((g)5 24.\((a)1 \((x)1 25.\((x)1 \((c)8↑.

15...\((g)4

The thematic idea 15...f4 was also possible, but perhaps Balinov wanted to keep the centre more fluid.

16.\((b)6?! \((e)8

Black smells the blood and stakes on a kingside attack. 16...\((xe)3 17.\((xd)8 \((xd)8 ensured him a clear edge though.

17.\((a)1 \((xa)1 18.\((xa)1

18...f4?

Black has a big Elo advantage and rushes to finish off the opponent with a direct attack. Correct was 18...\((d)8! 19.\((b)4 \((xe)3 with the bishop pair advantage and a target on e3.

19.\((d)2? (19.\((a)3! d5 20.\((a)3) 19...fxg3 20.hxg3 d5 21.e3? (21.e1) 21...\((c)5 22.\((a)5 \((h)5—+

142
Black has achieved the ultimate attacking set-up. The rest is irrelevant to the opening:

23.cxd5 \( \mathcal{E}xf3? \quad 24.\mathcal{D}e4 \quad \text{cxd5} \)
25.\( \mathcal{A}xf3 \quad \text{dxe4} \quad 26.\mathcal{A}xg4 \quad \mathcal{W}xg4 \)
27.\( \mathcal{A}c1? \quad \text{h6} \quad 28.\mathcal{A}xc5 \quad \mathcal{A}xc5 \)
29.\( \mathcal{A}xc5 \quad \mathcal{W}d1+ \quad 30.\mathcal{G}g2? \quad \mathcal{W}f3+ \quad 31.\mathcal{H}h2 \quad \text{\textit{xf2+}} \quad 32.\mathcal{H}hl \quad \text{\textit{g3}} \) 0-1

17. Lein – Korchnoi
Johannesburg 1979

1.c4 \( \mathcal{G}f6 \quad 2.\mathcal{D}f3 \quad b6 \quad 3.g3 \quad \mathcal{B}b7 \)
4.\( \mathcal{G}g2 \quad e5 \quad 5.d3 \quad \mathcal{B}b4+ \quad 6.\mathcal{A}d2 \quad \mathcal{A}xd2+ \quad 7.\mathcal{W}xd2 \) 0-0 8.0-0

8...\( d6 \)

Korchnoi had played earlier 8...\( \mathcal{E}e8 \quad 9.\mathcal{C}c3 \quad c6 \quad 10.\mathcal{A}ac1 \quad d5 \quad 11.cxd5 \quad \text{cxd5} \quad 12.d4 \quad e4 \quad 13.\mathcal{D}e5 \quad \mathcal{B}bd7 \quad 14.\mathcal{A}xd7 \quad \mathcal{W}xd7=, \) Hort-Korchnoi, Moscow 1971, but White could improve with 10.d4! e4 11.\( \mathcal{G}h4 \quad d5 \quad 12.\mathcal{F}f5 \). It is more logical to leave the pawns on dark squares.

9.\( \mathcal{C}c3 \quad \mathcal{B}bd7 \quad 10.e4 \)

White chooses a plan with f4, but it turns problematic. As usual, central play is better: 10.d4 \( \mathcal{E}e8 \quad 11.\mathcal{W}c2 \) where Black is solid, but cramped.

10...\( \mathcal{A}c5 \quad 11.\mathcal{H}h4 \quad \mathcal{B}e6 \quad 12.\mathcal{A}e2 \)

So far 12.f4 drops a pawn after 12... \( \mathcal{E}xf4 \quad 13.\mathcal{G}xf4 \quad \mathcal{A}xe4 \)

12...\( \mathcal{A}h5 \quad 13.\mathcal{A}f5 \quad g6 \quad 14.\mathcal{A}e3 \)

14...\( \mathcal{G}g5 \)

14...f5 equalized because 15.exf5 \( \mathcal{A}xg2 \quad 16.\mathcal{A}xg2 \quad \mathcal{E}xf5 \quad 17.g4? \) would lose to 17...\( \mathcal{G}hf4 \quad 18.\mathcal{G}xd5 \quad \mathcal{W}g5 \).

15.\( \mathcal{A}ad1 \quad f5 \quad 16.\mathcal{E}xf5 \quad \mathcal{A}xg2 \quad 17.\mathcal{A}xg2 \)

White’s knights are slightly better coordinated than Black’s after 17.\( \mathcal{A}xg2! \quad \mathcal{G}xf5 \quad 18.\mathcal{G}h1 \quad \mathcal{W}h8 \quad 19.f4 \quad \mathcal{E}xf4 \quad 20.\mathcal{G}xf4 \quad \mathcal{W}e7 \).

17...\( \mathcal{W}xf5 \quad 18.\mathcal{W}h1?! \)

An incredible move from a decent grandmaster as Anatoly Lein. I fail to understand its motives. 18.f4= eliminated the tension.

18...\( \mathcal{W}g4 \quad 19.\mathcal{H}h4 \quad g5 \quad 20.\mathcal{G}g2 \quad \mathcal{F}f6 \quad 21.\mathcal{G}g1 \quad \mathcal{H}g7 \quad 22.\mathcal{A}e3 \quad \mathcal{W}h5 \)

143
23.\textit{We}2 \textit{Wg}6 24.\textit{\textit{Dd}}5 \textit{Ef}7 25.\textit{We}4
\textit{\textit{Xe}}4+ 26.\textit{dxe}4 \textit{Eaf}8 27.\textit{\textit{Dg}}2
\textit{\textit{Dd}}4

\textbf{28.\textit{\textit{Dd}}2}

White stubbornly refrains from
28.f4 which should be enough
to hold after 28...\textit{gxf}4 29.\textit{\textit{Xf}}4 \textit{c6}
30.\textit{fxe}5 \textit{dxe}5. Perhaps Lein shared
the opinion of GM Spiridonov who
liked to say that f4 was ALWAYS
bad?!

28...\textit{\textit{Ge}}6 29.\textit{h}3 \textit{h}5 30.\textit{Ee}1 \textit{g}4
31.\textit{h}4 \textit{a}6 32.\textit{\textit{Ee}}3 \textit{\textit{Cc}}5 33.\textit{\textit{Dd}}5 \textit{c6}
34.\textit{Ec}3

\textbf{34...b}5

This game is a good example of what
to do against passive waiting game
– Korchnoi implacably advances,
seizing more and more space all
over the board.

35.\textit{\textit{Cb}}5 \textit{axb}5 36.\textit{b}4 \textit{\textit{Ce}}6
37.\textit{Ee}3 \textit{\textit{Ba}}8 38.\textit{\textit{Dg}}2 \textit{c}5 39.\textit{\textit{Bxc}}5
\textit{\textit{Dxc}}5 40.\textit{\textit{Dd}}5 \textit{c}4 0-1

I suppose that the game was ad­
journed and the knight analysis
convinced Lein that his position
was hopeless.
Chapter 9. 1.\(\text{\textit{d}}f3\) d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4

Main Ideas

1.\(\text{\textit{d}}f3\) d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4 f6!

White players had great expectations about this system five years ago. It seemed that the sharp attack: 4.e3 e5 5.c5 was an effective way to exploit the light-squares weaknesses in Black's camp. After 5...a5 White followed up with 6.\(\text{\textit{a}}b5+\)? c6 7.\(\text{\textit{c}}c4\) axb4 and his design was based on the hit 8.\(\text{\textit{d}}xe5\).

\(\text{\textit{w}}e7\) 11.\(\text{\textit{w}}xh8\) \(\text{\textit{f}}6\) was winning for Black as the queen remains entrapped on h8. The same theme occurs in various lines of the 3.b4 system and it is worth remembering it.

In 2013 Bukavshin introduced the new idea 6.\(\text{\textit{w}}a4+\), aiming to uncoordinate Black's pieces. Critical then is 6...d7 7.b5 \(\text{\textit{c}}c5\) 8.\(\text{\textit{c}}c4\) \(\text{\textit{e}}7\) 9.exd4 exd4

Black should forget about short castling, but it turns out that his king can find a safe haven on the opposite wing. An important nuance is that White cannot regain the pawn with 10.\(\text{\textit{b}}b2\) \(\text{\textit{g}}4\) 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}xd4\) because after 11...\(\text{\textit{d}}d7\)! all his minor pieces are hanging and 12.\(\text{\textit{e}}e6\) \(\text{\textit{x}}e6\) 13.\(\text{\textit{e}}xe6\) stumbles into 13...\(\text{\textit{f}}xf2+\)!. That leaves White with 10.\(\text{\textit{a}}a3\) \(\text{\textit{a}}6\)!? 11.0-0 \(\text{\textit{b}}b4\) 12.d3 when
Black has a pleasant choice between 12...c6 13.\( \text{\$b}d2 \text{ b6=} \) and 12...\( \text{\$f}5 \) 13.\( \text{\$b}3 \text{ \$d6=} \) enabling ...0-0-0. See Game 20 Fraczek-Van Assche, corr. 2013.

Another modern direction of White’s investigations is the Benko or Benoni Reversed pawn structure. For instance:

4.\( \text{d3} \text{ e5} \text{ 5.a3} \)

White tries to keep his queenside pawns fluid and to keep all his options open. Of course, we’ll not oblige. We can attack his shaky queenside formation with either 5...a5 or 5...c5. But not both! In a position of this type:

Black lacks comfortable places for his pieces and his stand is passive — he will have to defend against King’s Indian style attacks without counterplay on the queenside.

The 5...c5 approach is universal as it works against different set-ups. Its strong point is that it is centre-oriented and preserves Black’s spatial advantage. For instance, 6.bxc5 \( \text{\$xc}5 \text{ 7.g3 \$e7} \text{ 8.\$g2} \text{ 0-0} \text{ 9.0-0}. \)

Black will aim to keep the status quo in the centre while White will attempt flank stabs as f2-f4. See Game 19 Iturrizaga-Ly Mo, Calesta 2016.

Sometimes White offers a pure Benko gambit with 6.g3 cxb4 7.\( \text{\$g}2 \text{ \$c6} \) 8.0-0 a5, but his compensation is at most sufficient for a draw as the game Korchnoi-Seirawan, London 1984, suggests.

In the above diagram we see that White’s pawn on a3 hampers the move \( \text{\$c}1\)-a3 which is essential in the fight for the c5-square. That led the first players to the idea of refraining from a2-a3 and the move 4.\( \text{\$a}3 \text{ e5} \text{ 5.\$c2} \) is their latest hope of reviving the 3.b4 system. Although 5...c5 is still possible, I propose to enhance this plan by inserting 5...\( \text{\$a}6!? \) first.
The trick is that 6.\( \texttt{b1} \) c5!? 7.bxc5 \( \texttt{xc5} \) 8.d3 \( \texttt{d7!} \) threatens the nasty pin ...a4 and it is unclear how White should neutralise it.

With a hindsight, White may choose 7.b5, but then 7...\( \texttt{c7} \) 8.d3 \( \texttt{d6} \) 9.g3 b6 10.\( \texttt{g2} \) b7 11.0-0 a6 opens up the a-file and that is a good base for counterplay. Of course, there is seemingly nothing to attack on the queenside, but if we considered the breakthrough ...e5-e4, we would notice that the c4-pawn is a potential target.

**In conclusion**, the 3.b4 line is still not living up to White's expectations. The ultra-sharp variations with c4-c5 are balanced, at best, while calmer development offers Black a structural advantage after ...c5 (or ...a5).
Chapter 9. 1.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) d5 2.\(c4\) d4 3.b4

Step by Step

1.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) d5 2.\(c4\) d4 3.b4 f6!

This aggressive approach best fits in the spirit of our book. We take advantage of any move that does not attack the centre to grab more space.

A. 4.d3; B. 4.e3; C. 4.\(\text{\textit{a3}}\)

Rare alternatives are:

4.\(\text{\textit{b2}}\) e5 5.e3 (5.a3 c5) 5...dxe3 6.fxe3 \(\text{\textit{xb4}}\). White does not have full compensation for the pawn:

7.\(\text{\textit{e2}}\) \(\text{\textit{h6}}\) 8.0-0 0-0 9.\(\text{\textit{b3}}\) \(\text{\textit{c6}}\); 7.a3 \(\text{\textit{e7}}\) 8.\(\text{\textit{c2}}\) \(\text{\textit{h6}}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{d3}}\) g6 10.\(\text{\textit{c3}}\) \(\text{\textit{e6}}\) 11.0-0 \(\text{\textit{d7}}\);

7.c5 (Vaganian) 7...\(\text{\textit{xc5}}\) 8.\(\text{\textit{c4}}\) \(\text{\textit{e7}}\) 9.0-0 \(\text{\textit{bc6}}\) when 10.\(\text{\textit{xe5}}\) \(\text{\textit{xe5}}\) 11.\(\text{\textit{xe5}}\) is countered by 11...\(\text{\textit{xe3}}\)+!

A. 4.d3 e5 5.a3 c5

If you are a Pirc fan, you may consider 5...a5!? 6.b5 \(\text{\textit{d7}}\)!. Then 7.e3 would be well met by 7...dxe3 8.fxe3 e4 9.\(\text{\textit{d4}}\) \(\text{\textit{c5}}\) when 10.g3 \(\text{\textit{e7}}\) is considered in **Game 18** Van der Werf-Burg, Wijk aan Zee 2013.

6.bxc5

6.g3 \(\text{\textit{cxb4}}\) 7.\(\text{\textit{g2}}\) \(\text{\textit{c6}}\) 8.0-0 a5 is a good version of the Benko Reversed. Korchnoi-Seirawan, London 1984, went 9.e3 \(\text{\textit{g4}}\) 10.h3 \(\text{\textit{xf3}}\) 11.\(\text{\textit{xf3}}\) \(\text{\textit{c5}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{d5}}\) \(\text{\textit{ge7}}\) 13.e4, when instead of the hasty 13...\(\text{\textit{xd5}}\) 14.cxd5 \(\text{\textit{e7}}\), which was roughly equal, Black could have posed more problems with 13...\(\text{\textit{d7}}\)!! 14.\(\text{\textit{h5}}\)+ \(\text{\textit{d8}}\)!!+. Please forgive me for this line, I’m perfectly aware that only a silicon creature would take it.
6...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}5} 7.g3 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}e}7} 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{a}g}2} 0-0

9.0-0=

See Game 19 Iturrizaga-Ly Mo, Caleta 2016.

B. 4.e3 e5 5.c5

White cannot play 5.exd4? since he is worse after 5...e4! – 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}e}2}

Or 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{h}h}4} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}d}4} 7.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}c}3} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}b}4}

8.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}h}5+} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}f}8} 9.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}2} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{h}h}6\text{\textgreek{f}}}+, Gudmundsson-Kaila, Munich 1936.

6...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}e}7} 7.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{g}g}1} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}c}6} 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}e}3} when strongest is 8...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}h}6!}, heading for f5.

5.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}5?} fxe5 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}h}5+} is all wrong since even 6...g6?! (6...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}7}! 7.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}5+} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}f}7} 8.c5 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{a}a}6} is close to winning)

7.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}5+} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}f}7} 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}h}xh8} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}6} is rather unclear. Black threatens to win the enemy queen with ...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}d}7}, ...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{g}g}7}.

We typically meet 5.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}3} by 5...c5

6.bxc5 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}c}6}

Correspondence players prefer 6...\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}5?!} when 7.exd4 exd4

8.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{a}a}3} b6 keeps Black's centre together.

7.exd4 exd4

5.a3 c5 6.exd4 cxd4 is a better version of the previous line from Black's standpoint as the a3-square is occupied.

5.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}2} transposes to 4.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}2} – we can eat the pawn.

5...a5 6.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{a}a}4+?!}

6.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}5+?} c6 7.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}c}4} axb4 8.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}5?} loses to 8...fxe5! 9.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}h}5+} g6 10.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}5+} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}7} 11.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}h}xh8} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}f}6}

Panjwani-So, Edmonton 2014, went further 12.d3 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}6} 13.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}d}2} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{b}b}7}

14.a3 dxe3 15.fxe3 b3 16.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}4} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{xe}4}}

17.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}6} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}h}4+} 18.g3 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}g}xg3} 19.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{g}g}1}

\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}4+} 20.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}d}1} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}xc}5} 21.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}5} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}f}2+}

22.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{e}e}2} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{f}fxd}3} 23.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}d}4} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}f}2+} 0-1.

6.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{c}c}4} axb4 7.exd4

It is not a good idea to delay this exchange too much as later Black might recapture on d4 by piece – 7.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}b}3} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{h}h}6} 8.0-0 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}5}

9.exd4 \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{x}d}4!} 10.\texttt{\textbf{\textsc{d}d}4} \texttt{\textbf{\textsc{w}x}d}4

149
11.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{b6} \), Chouari-Pupke, corr. 2004.

7...\( \text{exd4} \) 8.\( \text{0-0} \) \( \text{hxc5} \)

As Russians say, we take everything and easily win. Our king will be safe on f8. The game Gareev-Ramirez, Saint Louis 2014, continued 9.\( \text{d}h4 \) g6 10.d3 \( \text{xf8} \) 11.\( \text{d}d2 \) \( \text{c6} \) 12.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{e7} \) 13.f4 \( \text{a5} \) 14.\( \text{exg8} \),

when instead of 14...\( \text{Exg8} \) 15.f\( \text{5\text{e5}} \), Black had 14...f\( \text{5!!} \).

6...\( \text{d7} \)

6...\( \text{c6} \) steers the game into a complex ending – 7.b5 \( \text{b4} \) 8.a3 \( \text{d5} \) 9.\( \text{exd4} \) exd4 10.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{e7+} \) 11.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 12.0-0 \( \text{xd4} \) 13.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{c5} \)

14.\( \text{b3} \)

White's only trump is his lead in development so he should not give us a respite with 14.\( \text{b2} \)

\( \text{ge7} \) (another good option is 14...\( \text{f4} \) 15.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 16.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{e6} \) 15.\( \text{c4} \) d4 17.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{b6} \) 17.\( \text{b3} \) 0-0= as in Demuth-So, Montpellier 2015.

14...\( \text{d6} \). White has a slight initiative, but Black should be able to neutralise it. Mareco-Ni Hua, Baku 2015, saw further 15.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{ge7} \) 16.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{f4} \) 17.d4 \( \text{d3} \) 18.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{xc1} \) 19.\( \text{xc1} \) when 19...\( \text{f7} \) would have been unclear. In the game Black wrongly opted for a long castle – 19...\( \text{e6} \) 20.\( \text{c5} \) \( \text{xc5} \) 21.\( \text{xc5} \) 0-0-0 22.b6 c6 23.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 24.\( \text{e1} \).

7.b5 \( \text{xc5} \) 8.\( \text{c4} \)

8.a3? \( \text{xa3} \) 9.\( \text{xa3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 10.\( \text{exd4} \) is bad in view of 10...\( \text{e4} \).

8...\( \text{e7} \) 9.\( \text{exd4} \) exd4

10.\( \text{a3} \)

Ramirez-Edouard, Arlington 2015, featured 10.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{g4} \) 11.\( \text{xd4} \) when 11...\( \text{d7} \)! 12.\( \text{e6} \) \( \text{xe6} \) 13.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{xf2} \)+ was strong, as Edouard points out. Black is on top after 14.\( \text{xf2} \) \( \text{c5} \) 15.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{d3} \) 16.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{xb2} \) 17.\( \text{g7} \)! \( \text{d4} \)+ 18.\( \text{f1} \) \( \text{f8} \).
The careless 10.0-0 allows the redeployment 10...\(\text{g}4\) 11.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{d}7\).

**10... \(\text{a}6!\)? 11.0-0 \(\text{b}4\) 12.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{f}5\)**

12...c6 13.\(\text{bd}2\) b6=, Bukavshin-Shukh, Saratov 2013.

**13.\(\text{b}3\)**

In Demuth-Duda, Ruzomberok 2014, White decided to provoke ...b6 with 13.\(\text{c}1\), but that only bolsters Black's queenside. He was better after 14.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{d}6\) 15.\(\text{bd}2\) 0-0-0 16.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{g}6\) 17.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{ed}5\).

13.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{xd}3\) 14.\(\text{xd}3\) \(\text{xd}3\) 15.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 16.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{d}6\) 17.\(\text{bd}2\) leads to an equal endgame after 17...0-0-0 18.\(\text{ac}1\) b6 19.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{xe}4\) 20.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{d}5\) 21.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{c}5\). Instead, 17...\(\text{d}8\) 18.\(\text{ac}1\) b6 19.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{d}5\) and 17...d3 18.\(\text{ac}1\) b6 are similar.

**13...\(\text{d}6\)**

Black is ready to castle long. Objectively the position is equal, but Black's game is easier. After all, he is still a pawn up. See **Game 20** Fraczek-Van Assche, corr. 2013.

White's play might be characterised as *hypermodern*, but it looks to me simply bad. I propose to take over the initiative with concrete play.

**6.\(\text{b}1\)**

The other possible approach is 6.\(\text{a}3\) c5 7.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{e}6\)

7...e4 8.\(\text{g}1\) \(\text{d}7\) 9.\(\text{g}2\) f5 10.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{a}4\) 11.\(\text{d}3\) is tangled.

8.\(\text{d}3\) (8.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{c}7\) 9.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{d}7\) 10.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{h}3\)) 8...\(\text{d}7\) 9.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{e}7\)?

More solid set-up is 9...\(\text{d}6\) 10.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{e}7\) 11.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{b}8\) 12.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{c}7\) 13.\(\text{g}2\) 0-0 14.0-0 b6.

10.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{h}3\) 11.0-0 h5 (11...\(\text{x}g2\)?)

Black has good attacking prospects: 12.e3 \(\text{x}g2\) 14.\(\text{x}g2\) h4;
12.e4 \(\text{dxg}2\) 13.\(\text{dxg}2\) h4;
12.h3 \(\text{whxh}3\) 13.\(\text{ce}1\) h4 14.\(\text{wa}4+\) \(\text{xf}7\) 15.\(\text{xe}h4?!\) g5 16.\(\text{hf}3\) \(\text{g}8\) followed by ...\(\text{eg}6\).
12.\(\text{ce}1\) \(\text{dxg}2\) 13.\(\text{dxg}2\) \(\text{c}7\) 14.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{g}6\)

Here 14...g5 is a bit premature owing to 15.h4.
14...dxe3 15.\(\text{fxe}3\) 0-0 16.e4 \(\text{e}6\) 17.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{d}4\) is "only" equal. It is more interesting to castle:
14...0-0 15.\(\text{h}4\)
15.\(\text{fe}1\) would be too passive – 15...\(\text{e}6\) whereas 16.f4?! drops a pawn to 16...\(\text{exf}4\) 17.\(\text{gx}f4\) \(\text{wc}7\).
After the text, we can take over the initiative with:
15...g5?! 16.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{xf}5\) 17.\(\text{exf}5\) \(\text{dxg}2\) 18.\(\text{exg}2\) e4?! 19.dxe4 \(\text{h}8\) 20.d4 \(\text{e}8\). The c4-pawn is weak and we could attack it with ...\(\text{e}5\), ...\(\text{d}6\).
For instance: 21.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{a}2\) 22.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{wa}8\) 23.\(\text{g}1\) \(\text{g}8\), intending ...\(\text{g}4\).

7.d3 is not entirely correct – 7...\(\text{xb}4\)
8.\(\text{xb}4\) \(\text{xb}4\) 9.e3 \(\text{e}7\) 10.exd4 exd4 11.g3 \(\text{c}6\) 12.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{e}7\) 13.\(\text{g}2\) 0-0+.

7...\(\text{xc}5\) 8.d3 \(\text{d}7\)!

Note that 6.b5?! \(\text{c}5\) 7.d3 is dubious in view of 7...\(\text{a}6\).

6...\(\text{c}5\)!!? 7.\(\text{bx}c5\)

7.b5 solidifies our centre – 7...\(\text{c}7\)
8.d3 \(\text{d}6\) 9.g3 b6 10.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{b}7\) 11.0-0 \(\text{a}6\) 12.\(\text{a}4\) axb5 13.axb5 \(\text{e}7\) 14.e4

The threat ...\(\text{a}4\) is rather awkward for White and 9.\(\text{xb}7?\) loses material. Remains: 9.e3 \(\text{a}4\) 10.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{e}7\) (10...dxe3 11.fxe3 \(\text{e}7\)=) 11.exd4 \(\text{b}6\) (11...\(\text{exd}4\)? 12.\(\text{xb}7\) \(\text{c}6\) 13.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{b}6\) 14.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{a}5\)+ 15.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{xf}3\)=) 12.a3 exd4 13.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{c}5\) with active pieces.
Chapter 9. 1.d4 d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4

Annotated Games

18. Van der Werf – Burg
Wijk aan Zee 14.01.2013

1.efd5 2.c4 d4 3.b4 f6 4.d3 e5
5.a3 a5 6.b5

6...efd7

Black’s first task in the diagram position was to decide:
1. How to meet e2-e3.
2. Then he should choose the best set-up of his e8 and g8.
3. Finally, he should weigh the pros and cons of an early ...a5-a4.
The best solution is 6...ed7 as pointed out in the “Step by Step” chapter. It prepares to counter 7.e3 by 7...
dxe3 8.fxe3 e4 9.ed4 ed5!. At the same time it does not block the way to the dark-squared bishop. Thus, if
White decides to play 7.a4 himself, 7...eb4+! would be unpleasant – 8.d2 ed7 9.xb4 axb4 10.eb3 c5.

Black’s 6th move does not address any of the above-mentioned strategic problems. It allows 7.e3! dxe3
8.fxe3 when 8...e4 would be already bad in view of 9.ed4! with domination in the centre.

7.g3 ed7 8.e2 ec5

Black plays by general considerations, without bothering himself with “details”. I would prefer 8...a4
in order to squelch the enemy’s thematic queenside play. That is not so significant from computer’s standpoint, but it would drastically complicate White’s task OTB because he remains without a clear plan. For instance, undermining the centre with 9.e3 also does not work due to 9...dxe3 10.fxe3 ec5 or 10.e4 e3 ed5
11.ed3 ec5.
Here is a similar game: 4.d3 e5 5.a3 ed7 6.g3 a5 7.e2 ed6 8.b5 ed7 9.ed2 a4 10.0-0 ec5

153
Chapter 9

11.\(\text{Qd2}\) \(\text{Qe7}\) 12.\(\text{Qe1}\) f5 13.\(\text{Qc2}\) 0-0 14.\(\text{Qb4}\) \(\text{Qe6}\) (14...f4!??) 15.\(\text{Wc2}\) \(\text{Wd7}\) (15...f4!) 16.\(\text{Wad1}\) \(\text{Wad8}\) 17.\(\text{Qd5}\) \(\text{Wh8}\) 18.\(\text{Qfe1}\) f4 19.\(\text{Qe4}\) \(\text{Qb3}\) =, Iturrizaga-Wang Hao, Dubai 2014.

9.a4 \(\text{Qg6}\)

The engines prefer 9...\(\text{Qf5}\), but humans understand that Black's only active plan in this structure is ...f6-f5-f4 so the knight should not be hampering it.

10.\(\text{Qa3}\) \(\text{Qe6}\) 11.\(\text{Qfd2}\) \(\text{Wc8}\)

The battle is for c5 so the queen should have stayed in touch with the dark squares. 11...\(\text{Qb8}\) was more accurate.

12.h4 \(\text{Qd6}\) 13.h5 \(\text{Qf8}\) 14.\(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Qxb3}\) 15.\(\text{Wxb3}\) \(\text{Qd7}\)

Chances are roughly even and any small nuance could tip slightly the balance in either side. Now 16.h6! would have given White a hidden trump in a future endgame.

16.\(\text{Qd2}\) \(\text{Qc5}\) 17.\(\text{Qc2}\) 0-0 18.\(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Qxb3}\) 19.\(\text{Qxb3}\) f5

The ABC book recommends to fix the enemy pawns on light squares and 19...h6 was a step in the right direction. Instead, Black puts his own one on a “wrong” place, begging to be stopped with 20.f4!.

20.\(\text{Wc2}\) \(\text{Qxa3}\) 21.\(\text{Wxa3}\) \(\text{Qf6}\) 22.\(\text{Qa1}\) f4

Black is more active here, but 23.\(\text{Qxd4}\) \(\text{Qxf4}\) 24.\(\text{h6}\) g6 25.\(\text{Wd2}\) would hold. Instead White errs and lands in a critical position.

23.\(\text{Qd2}\)? \(\text{Qxg3}\) 24.\(\text{Qxg3}\) \(\text{Qf2}\) 25.\(\text{Qf3}\) \(\text{Qg4}\) 26.\(\text{Qh1}\) \(\text{Qh2}\) 27.\(\text{c5}\) \(\text{Qh8}\) 28.\(\text{Wc4}\) \(\text{Qf5}\) 29.\(\text{Wd5}\) \(\text{Qg5+}\) 30.\(\text{Qc2}\) c6 31.\(\text{Wxc6}\) bxc6 32.\(\text{Wf7}\) h6 33.\(\text{Qab1}\) e4 34.\(\text{Wxg4}\) exd3+ 35.\(\text{Qxd3}\) \(\text{Qe3+}\) 36.\(\text{Qc2}\) d3+ 37.\(\text{Qb2}\) dxe2 38.\(\text{Wf1}\) \(\text{Qd4+}\) 39.\(\text{Qa3}\) \(\text{Qxg4}\) 40.\(\text{Qb3}\) \(\text{Qd8}\) 41.\(\text{c7}\) \(\text{Qd1}\) 42.\(\text{Qf7}\) \(\text{Qh7}\) 0-1

19. Iturrizaga – Ly Mo
Caleta 01.02.2016

1.\(\text{Qf3}\) d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4 f6 4.d3 e5 5.a3 c6 6.bxc5 \(\text{Qxc5}\) 7.g3 \(\text{Qe7}\) 8.\(\text{Qg2}\) 0-0 9.0-0
The queen's knight should control the key square c5 from a6 or d7. But the other knight could take another route – to g6, leaving c6 for the bishop, e.g. 9...d7 10.bd2 a6 11.c2 (11.e4 c6) 11...c6 12.b3 b6

13.xc5 xc5 14.a4 e4↑.

10.bd2 e7 11.e1 a6 12.c2 e6 13.b1 b8 14.f4 d7 15.e4

15...h6

White has made all his active moves, but he cannot progress any further. The d4-pawn cuts his forces on two and hampers his manoeuvring. Conversely, Black possesses a clear plan for offence. He can push forth his kingside pawns.

16.d2 f5 17.f2 e4?!

This is a typical strategic mistake. The pawn trade is almost always in White's favour since it frees his pieces. Normal would have been 17...exf4 18.xf4 be8. Then Black will aim for ...g5, ...f4.

18.dxe4 fxe4 19.xe4 xc4 20.b4


20...c5 21.f3 xb4?!

This idea is probably based on miscalculation. Black's knight is heading for c3, but instead it will be forced to land the passive place b6.

22.axb4 a4 23.g4 f6 24.c2

24.b5? would repel the knight – 24...b6 25.b4 with the more active pieces. Instead, White suddenly shifts the battle to the kingside.

24...b5 25.g6 h8 26.e4 g8 27.bc1 c3 28.d3 e7 29.f1 b6 30.xf6?!
Simplifying Black's task. The opposite-coloured bishops justify the quick draw that followed.

30...\textit{xf6} 31.\textit{h5} \textit{e4} 32.\textit{xex4} \textit{xe4} 33.\textit{e5} Draw.

\textbf{20. Fraczek – Van Assche} \\
corr FICGS 2013

1.\textit{f3} \textit{d5} 2.\textit{c4} \textit{d4} 3.\textit{b4} \textit{f6} 4.e3 \textit{e5} 5.c5 \textit{a5} 6.\textit{a4}+ \textit{d7} 7.b5 \textit{xex5} 8.\textit{c4} \textit{e7} 9.exd4 \textit{exd4} 10.\textit{a3} \textit{a6} 11.0-0 \textit{b4} 12.d3 \textit{f5} 13.\textit{b3} \textit{d6} 14.\textit{bd2}

\textit{14...0-0-0}

14...\textit{a4} temporary uncoordinates White's heavy pieces, but it is more committal since the b4-knight loses pawn support. That binds the d6-queen with its defence. Still, the game remains balanced: 15.\textit{b1} 0-0-0 16.\textit{h4} \textit{g6} 17.\textit{xg6} hxg6 18.h3 f5 19.\textit{f3} \textit{bd5}

Black had no time for 19...\textit{h5} (covering g5 and threatening ...g5), due to 20.\textit{e1} \textit{ed5} 21.\textit{e5} (threatening 22.\textit{xb4} \textit{xb4} 23.\textit{e6}) 21...\textit{c3} 22.\textit{xb4}! \textit{xb4} 23.\textit{b2} and White preserves some initiative due to the hanging state of the c5. This line suggests that it would be preferable to get rid of the problem bishop.

20.\textit{xc5} \textit{xc5} 21.\textit{g5} \textit{c3} 22.\textit{e1}

\textit{22...ed5}!

The exchange sacrifice is not obligatory. For instance, Black could save it with 22...\textit{e8}, but then White could repeat moves with 23.\textit{f7} (23.\textit{e6+}!) 23...\textit{d8} 24.\textit{c4}.

23.\textit{e6} \textit{d6} 24.\textit{xd8} \textit{xd8} Black has full compensation thanks to the weakness of the b5-pawn. He would have practical chances OTB, but computers easily defend such positions: 25.\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5} 26.\textit{d2} f4 27.\textit{e1} g5 28.b6 cxb6 29.\textit{b2} \textit{d6} 30.\textit{ac1} \textit{e8} 31.\textit{xe8+} \textit{xe8} 32.\textit{xex3} dxc3 33.\textit{xc3} draw, Kögler-Rüfenacht, ICCF 2012.

15.\textit{h4} \textit{g6} 16.\textit{xg6} hxg6 17.h3 \textit{ed5}

17...f5 weakens both e5 and g5 and that gives White sufficient compensation for the pawn after 18.\textit{e1} \textit{ed5} 19.\textit{f3}. Black finds an indirect defence of the piece:
18. \(\text{e}4 \text{e}5\)  

It seems that White is in a predicament, but he finds enough counterplay thanks to the open c-file:

27. \(\text{b}6\) \(\text{cxb}6\) 28. \(\text{d}2\) \(\text{d}3\) 29. \(\text{b}1\) \(\text{b}6\) 30. \(\text{e}3\) \(\text{h}d4\) 31. \(\text{c}1\) \(\text{c}4\) 32. \(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{xc}4\) 33. \(\text{e}1\) \(\text{c}6\) 34. \(\text{e}4\) \(\text{d}4\) 35. \(\text{c}1\) \(\text{c}4\) 36. \(\text{c}3\) \(\text{a}3\) 37. \(\text{d}1\) \(\text{xc}3\) 38. \(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{xc}3\) 39. \(\text{xd}3\) \(\text{b}2\) 40. \(\text{d}1\) \(\text{b}5\) 41. \(\text{d}8^+\) Draw.

19. \(\text{a}e1\)  

It turns out that 19. \(\text{xc}5\)? stumbles into 19... \(\text{exh}3!!\) 20. \(\text{gxh}3\) \(\text{g}5^+\) 21. \(\text{h}2\) \(\text{h}8^+\).

19...\(\text{b}6\) 20. \(\text{b}2\) \(\text{f}8\) 21. \(\text{g}3\) \(\text{a}4\) 22. \(\text{d}1\) \(\text{c}5\) 23. \(\text{a}3\) \(\text{xc}4\) 24. \(\text{dxc}4\) \(\text{h}4^!\) 25. \(\text{axb}4\) \(\text{xb}4\) 26. \(\text{c}1\) \(\text{xc}4\)
Chapter 10. 1.dı³f³ d5 2.c4 d4 3.e3

Main Ideas

1.dı³f³ d5 2.c4 d4 3.e3

This chapter deals with some very sharp variations which need memorization. White is ready to contest the centre with pawn sacrifices in the Blumenfeld/Benko style. For instance, 3...c5 4.b4 (4.exd4 is the Benoni Reversed. It is covered in the next chapter.) 4...dı³f6!? 5.dı³b2 cxb4 6.a3 may be not entirely correct, but it is not easy to refute, especially in rapid games. My repertoire choice is quick development with:

3...dı³c6

In the last years Black has found new ideas which cast doubt on White's opening approach. First of all, 4.exd4 dı³xd4 5.dı³xd4 dı³xd4 6.dı³c3 c6 7.d3 dı³h6! turns out to be even slightly more pleasant for Black.

In my 2012 book, The Modern Réti, I suggested that White could obtain a slight pull after 8.dı³e2 (8.dı³e3 dı³d8 9.d4 dı³f5) 8...dı³f5 9.0-0 e5 10.g4 dı³h4 11.dı³e3 dı³d6 12.dı³e4 dı³c7 13.f4. However, the latest innovation: 9...dı³d8!?, which clears d4 for the knight, leaves White without a clear plan. His only sensible attempt to get something out of the opening could be an attack on the e-file, but: 10.dı³e1 g6! 11.dı³g4 dı³g7 12.dı³xf5 dı³xf5 13.dı³g5 dı³e6!? 14.dı³d2 h6 15.dı³f4 g5 16.dı³e3 dı³c7 17.dı³e2 0-0-0
leaves to interesting double-edged play.

The tricky 4.b4?! has also received serious blows. The lazy solution is to answer 4...cxb4!? 5.exd4 e5

You can play normal chess here without having to discover only moves. For instance: 6.dxe5 f5 7.d3 c6 or 6.e4 7.axb4 exf3 8.xf3 xd4=.

A sterner test of White’s idea is to grab the pawn:
4...dxe3 5.fxe3 cxb4 6.d4 e5! 7.a3 c6!

The point! Instead of 7...e4?! Black opts for a position with an open e-file. Now 8.d5?! e4 9.fd2 e5 promises Black a strong attack, so White should play:
8.e3 exd4 9.exd4 f6 10.e2

A critical position. Black will bolster his kingside with the manoeuvre ...c8-f5-g6 and he’ll wait to see whether White’s centre will offer sufficient compensation. But do not overestimate your chances! Most probably the position is balanced. See Game 22 Hacker-Kribben, BfF-Schachserver 2013.

You should also be ready to face the symmetrical pawn structure that arises after:
4.d3 e5 5.exd4 exd4

White will prepare b4 and I think that we must counter it with ...b5!. An illustrative line is 6.e2 f6 7.0-0 c5!? 8.a3 0-0 9.c2 a5 10.b3 b8! 11.a3 b5!

We preserve our space advantage.
Chapter 10. 1.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{3}}\) d5 2.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{4}}\) d4 3.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{3}}\)

Step by Step

1.\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{3}}\) d5 2.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{4}}\) d4 3.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{3}}\) \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{6}}\)!

This is a solid equalizer. 3...\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{5}}\) also has enough fans who love gambit pawns after 4.b4 (Of course, the Benoni Reversed with 4.exd4 is a decent alternative. I consider it in the next chapter). Perhaps the most tricky move order is 4...\(\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{f}}\text{\textit{6}}\)!? 5.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{2}}\) dxe3 6.fxe3 cxb4. This approach is principled, but it demands very precise play.

To start, White should avoid here:

a) 7.d4?! in view of 7...g6!

7...e5 8.\(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{5}}\) \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{2}}\) 0-0 10.a3 \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 11.0-0 \(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{7}}\) is nice for Black so White should continue in gambit style with 8.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{2}}\) exd4 9.exd4 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 10.c5!? \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{7}}\) 11.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{5}}\)+ \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{2}}\)+ \(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{7}}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{7}}\)+ \(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{7}}\) 14.0-0 with enough compensation for the pawn.

8.\(\text{\textit{a}}\text{\textit{4}}\) \(\text{\textit{a}}\text{\textit{3}}\) (8.\(\text{\textit{a}}\text{\textit{3}}\)?) 8...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{7}}\);

8...\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 9.d5 \(\text{\textit{a}}\text{\textit{5}}\) 10.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{1}}\) \(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{8}}\); 11.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{2}}\) \(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{7}}\), followed up by ...\(\text{\textit{h}}\text{\textit{6}}\), is unclear.

9.\(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{4}}\) \(\text{\textit{h}}\text{\textit{6}}\)! 10.\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{3}}\) 0-0 11.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{2}}\) \(\text{\textit{a}}\text{\textit{5}}\)+ 12.\(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{3}}\) \(\text{\textit{h}}\text{\textit{5}}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{2}}\) e5!

14.\(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{5}}\) \(\text{\textit{h}}\text{\textit{4}}\)+ 15.g3 \(\text{\textit{h}}\text{\textit{3}}\) 16.\(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{3}}\) \(\text{\textit{g}}\text{\textit{2}}\).

b) 7.a3! e6 8.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{2}}\) \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 9.0-0 a5 10.d4 is perhaps White’s best move order towards this position:

It was tested in several correspondence games which commonly featured 10...\(\text{\textit{b}}\text{\textit{6}}\) and White enjoyed an initiative after 11.d5!? exd5 12.\(\text{\textit{xf}}\text{\textit{6}}\) \(\text{\textit{xf}}\text{\textit{6}}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{bd}}\text{\textit{2}}\).

Critical is 10...\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{7}}\)! 11.\(\text{\textit{bd}}\text{\textit{2}}\) 0-0. White is yet to prove his compensation. Dammer-Buettner, corr. 2014, saw 12.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{5}}\)\!? \(\text{\textit{x}}\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{5}}\) 13.dxe5 \(\text{\textit{d}}\text{\textit{7}}\) 14.axb4 \(\text{\textit{xb}}\text{\textit{4}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{e}}\text{\textit{4}}\) \(\text{\textit{c}}\text{\textit{5}}\).
12.axb4 \( \triangle x b 4 \) also looks fine for Black. So the ball is in White's court in this line.

### A. 4.exd4; B. 4.b4?!

4.d3 aims to throw us out of repertoire if we answered 4...e5 5.exd4 \( \triangle x d 4 \) 6.\( \triangle x d 4 \) \( \triangle x d 4 \). Not that it is such a big achievement, but I consider ...\( \triangle h 6 \) instead of ...e5. We can follow in Anand's footsteps: 5...exd4. Of course it is natural to preserve more pieces on the board since we have a space advantage.

The plot in this position turns around the d4-pawn. White will aim to encircle it and we cannot oblige to play by general considerations. Before all, we should decide how to meet the following White's plan:

6.\( \triangle e 2 \)

Bach-Anand, Caleta 2016, featured 6.a3 a5 7.\( \triangle f 4 \) \( \triangle d 6 \) 8.\( \triangle x d 6 \) \( \triangle x d 6 \).

6...\( \triangle f 6 \) 7.0-0 \( \triangle e 7 \) 8.\( \triangle a 3 \) 0-0 9.\( \triangle c 2 \) a5 10.b3 h6 (10...\( \triangle b 8 \) 11.\( \triangle b 2 \) \( \triangle c 5 \) 12.a3 b5) 11.a3

11.\( \triangle d 2 \) does not hit d4 so we could continue 11...\( \triangle f 5 \) 12.a3 \( \triangle h 7 \) 13.b4 \( \triangle f 6 \).

11...\( \triangle e 8 \) 12.\( \triangle b 1 \)

The best solution here is to stop the march of the b-pawn with:

12...\( \triangle b 8 \) 13.b4 (13.\( \triangle b 2 \) \( \triangle c 5 \) 14.b4=) 13...axb4 14.axb4 b5=

We see that White can always drag our bishop to c5 by playing \( \triangle b 2 \), and equalize with b4. That brings us back to move 7. Why not try:

7...\( \triangle c 5 \)! Then 8.\( \triangle a 3 \) 0-0 9.\( \triangle c 2 \) a5 10.b3 \( \triangle b 8 \) ! 11.a3 b5

keeps the tension in our favour since we have preserved our superior centre. Remember this thematic way of neutralising the plan with b4!

White could try to exploit the absence of our bishop from e7 with:

8.a3 a5 9.\( \triangle g 5 \), but 9...h6 10.\( \triangle x f 6 \) (10.\( \triangle h 4 \) 0-0 11.\( \triangle b d 2 \) \( \triangle e 7 \)) 10...\( \triangle x f 6 \) 11.\( \triangle b d 2 \) 0-0 12.\( \triangle e 4 \) \( \triangle e 7 \) still keeps
things in control. Black is ready to take over the initiative after 13.\text{d}d2 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}b6 14.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d1 a4 15.h3 f5.

A. 4.exd4 5.exd4 5.exd4 6.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}c3

White does not gain anything by delaying this natural move – 6.d3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}h6 7.e2 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f5 8.d2 g6 9.f3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d6.

6...c6 7.d3

7.e2 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}h6 8.d3 transposes.

7...\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}h6!

Black generously offers White to play 8.e3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d8 9.d4 since his game is very easy after 9...\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f5. Although he cannot realistically claim an advantage, practical experience sees him scoring more than 70% from here:

10.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d2 g6 11.d5

11.0-0-0 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}g7 12.e2 0-0 13.0-0 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d5 hardly even equalizes after 11...\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d6! (threatening 12.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}xc3+ 13.bxc3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}e5+) 12.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}c1 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}g6 13.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}g5, Zvjaginsev-Granda Zuniga, Pamplona 1996.

8.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}e2

8.xh6 gxh6 9.e2 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f5 hardly needs more attention – Black’s pieces dominate the board. The “improved” version of the above line is 8.e3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d8 9.xh6 (9.e2 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f5 10.0-0 has no venom due to 10...g6) 9...gxh6 10.d4 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}g7 11.d5 hardly even equalizes after 11...\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d6! (threatening 12.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}d3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}xc3+ 13.bxc3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}e5+) 12.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}c1 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}g6 13.\text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}g5, Zvjaginsev-Granda Zuniga, Pamplona 1996.

8.h3 \text{\texttt{\textdollar}}f5 9.g4 aims to prevent
Black's knight from reaching d4, but 9...\textit{w}e5+! (9...\textit{g}h4 10...\textit{g}e3 \textit{w}f6 11.f4 e5 12.f5) throws a spanner in the works.

\textbf{10.\textit{g}e4}

The more natural move 10.\textit{w}e2 does not even equalize after 10...\textit{w}xe2+! 11.\textit{g}xe2 (11.\textit{g}xe2 \textit{h}h4 12.\textit{g}g3 \textit{f}f3+ 13.\textit{h}d1 g6) 11...\textit{d}d4=.

10...\textit{d}d4 11.f4 \textit{w}a5+ (11...\textit{w}c7 12.\textit{g}e3 e5) 12.\textit{d}d2 \textit{w}d8 13.\textit{g}g2 g6 14.\textit{c}c3, Naiditsch-Bauer, Mulhouse 2011, brought about a position where White is overextended. That could be exploited with 14...h5=.

\textbf{8...\textit{f}f5 9.0-0}

9.g4 \textit{h}h4 10.\textit{g}g1 \textit{w}d6 11.\textit{g}g3 is clearly dubious in view of 11...e5!
11.h5 12.\textit{g}e4 \textit{w}b4+ 13.\textit{d}d2 \textit{w}xb2 14.\textit{c}c3 \textit{w}b6 15.gxh5 was unclear in Getz-Hammer, Sandefjord 2012.
12.\textit{e}e3 f5 13.\textit{g}xf5 \textit{g}xf5=.

\textbf{9...\textit{d}d8}

The latest innovation in this line, aimed at anticipating g4.
The older move was 9...e5!? 10.g4 \textit{h}h4 11.\textit{g}e3 \textit{w}d6 12.\textit{e}e4, Illescas-

The h4-knight is easily defended with 17.\textit{w}e1 (or 17.\textit{f}f2 \textit{h}d7 18.\textit{w}e1) 17...\textit{d}d7 18.\textit{f}f2 g5 while 18...\textit{c}c6 19.f6 \textit{g}xe4 20.\textit{x}xg7 \textit{g}g8 21.\textit{d}xe4 \textit{g}g6 is equal.

\textbf{10.\textit{h}e1}

10.\textit{g}g4 g6 11.\textit{x}f5 \textit{xf5} 12.d4 \textit{g}g7 13.\textit{e}e3 0-0= was the stem Game 21 Gorovets-Bosiocic, Greensboro 2014.

\textbf{10...g6!}

Gonzalez Vidal-Naroditsky, Tsaghkadzor 2015, saw 10...\textit{d}d4 11.\textit{f}f4! g6 12.\textit{e}e5 f6 13.\textit{x}d4 \textit{w}xd4 14.\textit{f}f3 with an initiative.
11.\textit{g}g4

Concrete approach. White targets the e7-pawn.

11...\textit{g}g7 12.\textit{x}xf5 \textit{x}xf5 13.\textit{g}g5 \textit{e}6!? 13...f6 14.\textit{e}e3 \textit{w}xd3 15.\textit{b}b3 \textit{w}d7 16.\textit{a}ad1 \textit{c}c7 17.\textit{c}c5 e5 is probably a draw. White cannot regain the pawn, but he owns the only open file. An illustrative line is 18.h3 h5 19.\textit{e}e4 \textit{x}xe4 20.\textit{e}xe4 \textit{f}f8 21.xxf8 \textit{x}xf8 22.e3 \textit{h}h7 23.\textit{c}c2 f5 24.\textit{e}ed3 \textit{g}g7 25.\textit{w}d2 f4=.

14.\textit{d}d2 h6 15.\textit{f}f4 g5 16.\textit{e}e3 \textit{c}c7 17.\textit{e}e2 0-0-0

21.axb6 can be calculated up to a perpetual check. More dangerous, however, is 19.d4 when 19...\textit{xd}4? fails to 20.\textit{d}d5.

19.\textit{ed}1 \textit{d}d4=.

B. 4.\textit{b}4?! \textit{d}xe3

4...\textit{x}b4!? is an interesting and simpler alternative. Its idea is to meet 5.exd4 by 5...e5. For instance: 6.a3

Or 6.dxe5 \textit{f}f5 7.\textit{a}a3 \textit{d}d3 8.\textit{w}b3 \textit{c}c5=.

6...e4 7.axb4 \textit{ex}f3 8.\textit{w}xf3 \textit{w}xd4 9.\textit{a}a4 \textit{f}f6

10.\textit{c}c3

Or 10.\textit{w}e3+ \textit{w}xe3+ 11.\textit{f}xe3 \textit{d}d7 12.b5 a5=.

10...\textit{e}e7 11.\textit{b}b5 \textit{w}d7 12.\textit{a}xa7 \textit{c}xa7 13.\textit{c}xa7 \textit{w}e6+ 14.\textit{e}e2 \textit{d}d7=.

5.\textit{f}xe3 \textit{b}b4

5...e5 has never been played, not because it is particularly bad, but because it is better to take the sacrificed pawn. The position after 6.b5 \textit{b}b4 7.\textit{c}c3 \textit{f}f5 8.e4 \textit{g}g4 is strategically unbalanced and unclear.

165
Chapter 10

6.d4

6.\texttt{wa4+ dc6} 7.d4 has no bite: 7... \\
d7 8.\texttt{b3 e5}

9.d5

If White tries to play by analogy with the main line 9.e2, the d4-pawn falls after 9...exd4 10.exd4 \texttt{xd4}. And in the event of 10.0-0, Black could return the pawn with a positional advantage – 10...d3!? 11.xd3 \texttt{f6} 12.e3 \texttt{d6} 13.b2 0-0.\texttt{f}.

9...\texttt{b4} 10.e3

10.a3 \texttt{a6} 11.e5 was horrible for White after 11...\texttt{c5} 12.c2 \texttt{a4} 13.f2 \texttt{f6} 14.e3 \texttt{d6} 15.d3, Kozul-A.Petrosian, Slovenia 1994, 15...\texttt{g4}!\texttt{f}.

10.d2 is hardly an improvement – 10...\texttt{a6} 11.e5 \texttt{c5} 12.b2 \texttt{f6} 13.e2 \texttt{d6} 14.xd7 \texttt{xd7} 15.e3 0-0 16.0-0 \texttt{fe8}.

10...\texttt{f6}!

Pakhomov-Ovetchkin, St Petersburg 2012, saw 10...f6? which was bad in view of 11.c5! (dragging a piece on c5) 11...\texttt{xc5} 12.a3, winning the unfortunate knight.

11.e2 \texttt{d6} 12.0-0 0-0 13.c5 \texttt{xc5} 14.a3

14.e4!

6...e5

The simplest choice from a practical standpoint. It ensures us easy development and a good control of the centre. 6...c5 and 6...e6 are also possible.

7.a3

7.e5!? \texttt{h4} 8.d2 \texttt{f6} 9.e3 may look absurd, but in fact Black's task is not so easy due to White's powerful pawn centre. I even suspect that it is objectively White's best option and his only way to keep the balance although Black retains some initiative with best play:

9...\texttt{g4}!
9...\textit{d6} 10.a3 \textit{xe5} (10...\textit{c6}!?)
11.axb4 \textit{f5} 12.\textit{d3} \textit{xd3}
13.\textit{xd3} was unclear in Arribas
Lopez-Hernando Rodrigo, Sants
Open 2013 and after 13...\textit{g4}?
14.\textit{c2}! White got an edge.
White may try 10.\textit{f3} \textit{h5} 11.c5
\textit{xc5} 12.a3! \textit{c6} 13.dxc5 \textit{xc5}
14.\textit{b3} with very sharp play
where better calculation should
decide the game.

9...\textit{f5} 10.\textit{f3} \textit{e4} 11.\textit{xe4}
\textit{xe4}+ 12.\textit{e2} \textit{c3}+ 13.\textit{d2}
\textit{e4}+ 14.\textit{e2} \textit{c3}+ led to a re-
petition of moves in Czarnota-
Socko, Katowice 2010.

10.\textit{f3}!?

10.a3 \textit{xe5} 11.axb4 could face
11...\textit{xb4}!! 12.dxe5 \textit{f5} 13.\textit{a4+}
c6 14.\textit{xb4} 0-0-0+ 15.\textit{d6} \textit{he8}
16.g3 \textit{xd6}+ 17.\textit{e1} \textit{h6} 18.\textit{exd6}
a6. White's king will never find a
safe haven so his defence should
be unpleasant in a practical
game.

10...\textit{h6} 11.\textit{e1} c5!

11...\textit{e6} 12.b1 \textit{xe3} 13.\textit{a4+}
d7 14.\textit{b5} \textit{ec2}+ 15.\textit{f2} \textit{g6}
16.c5 \textit{a6} is another crazy po-
sition where White has at least
two decent moves:

13.a3

Black manages to blockade the
enemy pawns after 13.e4 \textit{g6}
14.\textit{xd6}+ \textit{xd6} 15.a3 \textit{c6} 16.d5
\textit{ce5} 17.h3 \textit{xf3}+ 18.\textit{xf3} \textit{e5}
19.\textit{g3} 0-0.

13...\textit{a6} 14.\textit{xd6}+ \textit{xd6} 15.\textit{d3}
0-0 16.a2 cxd4 17.exd4 \textit{f6} 18.\textit{f2}
g4 19.\textit{e3} \textit{a8} 20.\textit{e1}
This position is dynamically bal-
anced, but Black can pose practical
problems to White with 20...b5↑ — he does not risk much with the d5-square in his possession.

The bottom line of my analysis is that 7.\(\text{b}xe5!?\) should not be underestimated and it leads to great complications where the cost of mistakes looks higher for White.

7...\(\text{d}c6!\)

The first game in this variation, Takacs-Rubinstein, Merano 1924, saw 7...\(\text{a}4?!\) 8.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{d}3+\) 9.\(\text{d}d3\). White should be more aggressive: 8.\(\text{b}e5!\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{a}4!\) with a pull. For instance: 9...\(\text{d}6\) 10.\(\text{xc}6\) \(\text{h}4+\) 11.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{x}g3+\) 12.\(\text{hx}g3\) \(\text{h}h1\) 13.\(\text{b}5!\) \(\text{f}6\) 14.\(\text{e}5+\) \(\text{c}6\) 15.\(\text{xc}6\) \(\text{d}7\) 16.\(\text{e}5+\) \(\text{e}6\) 17.\(\text{d}6\), with a strong attack.

12.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{b}6\) 13.0-0 \(\text{c}5\) 14.\(\text{c}3\) 0-0 15.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{d}7\)↑.

9...\(\text{e}5\) 10.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{h}4\)+ 11.\(\text{f}2\)

8.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{ex}d4!\) (It is safer to open up the e-file. That also weakens White's g1-a7 diagonal.) 9.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{f}6\) 10.\(\text{c}3\) transposes to line B2.

B1. 8.\(\text{d}5\)↑; B2. 8.\(\text{c}3\)

8.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{ex}d4!\) (It is safer to open up the e-file. That also weakens White's g1-a7 diagonal.) 9.\(\text{ex}d4\) \(\text{f}6\) 10.\(\text{c}3\) transposes to line B2.

B1. 8.\(\text{d}5\)↑ e4 9.\(\text{fd}2\)

10.\(\text{c}6\) 11.\(\text{c}e5\) 12.\(\text{c}e2\) 0-0 13.0-0 \(\text{e}8\) is also in Black's favour as 14.\(\text{db}5\) \(\text{g}4\) 15.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) will practically cost White the c4-pawn while 14.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{a}6\) will deprive him of any sensible ideas.

12.\(\text{xc}6\) \(\text{xc}6\) 13.\(\text{xc}6\) \(\text{xc}6\) 14.\(\text{e}2\) occurred in Neubert-Dmitriev, ICCF World Cup, 1990 when taking the pawn with 14...\(\text{c}5\) would have given Black a clear edge.

Simpler is 9...\(\text{xd}4\) 10.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 11.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{f}6\) when White should not have enough compensation:
11...\texttt{g}4 12.g3 \texttt{xf}2 13.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{xf}6 14.\texttt{xf}6 \texttt{xf}6 15.\texttt{xf}2 \texttt{e}4+ 16.\texttt{f}3, Mueller-Fier, Caleta 2014, 16...\texttt{c}5 offers Black a better queenless middlegame.

12.\texttt{e}2

12.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{fg}4 13.\texttt{a}2 \texttt{d}6 14.g3 \texttt{h}6+.

12...\texttt{g}4 13.g3 \texttt{xf}2 14.gxh4 \texttt{xd}1 15.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{c}5

White's pieces are too passive.

**B2. 8.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{f}6**

Perhaps 8...exd4 9.exd4 \texttt{f}6 is just as good since the only line of independent significance, 10.d5 \texttt{a}5 11.\texttt{d}3, is better for Black. It was proved by two 2013 email games of Mujunen which featured 11...\texttt{c}5 12.\texttt{e}2+ \texttt{e}7 13.\texttt{xe}7+.\texttt{xe}7.

9.\texttt{e}2!?

9.d5 \texttt{a}5

9...e4 10.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{e}5 is not too clear after 11.\texttt{e}2!.

10.\texttt{xe}5 \texttt{d}6 11.\texttt{f}3 0-0 12.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{g}4 13.0-0

Black obtains an initiative thanks to the timely undermining of the enemy centre: 13...c6 14.\texttt{b}1 b5!, Nguyen-Steinke, corr. 2014.

**9...exd4! 10.exd4 \texttt{e}7 11.0-0**

11.\texttt{f}4 0-0 12.d5 \texttt{a}5 13.\texttt{b}5 is effectively parried with 13...\texttt{e}8 (or even 13...\texttt{d}6 14.\texttt{d}2 b6 15.\texttt{xd}6 cxd6 16.\texttt{g}5 h6 17.\texttt{h}4 \texttt{e}7 18.0-0 g5 19.\texttt{f}2 \texttt{g}4) 14.0-0 c6.

11...0-0

Both sides have completed development, but we still have an extra pawn. I should note, however, that White's fluid centre keeps us at bay so all the fight is ahead. Our task would be easier if we provoked d5 since we'd have clear counterplay with ...\texttt{a}5, ...c6. After the more cunning 12.\texttt{h}1, we could lead our bishop to f5 or g4, having in mind ...\texttt{h}5-g6. I would gladly take Black here. See **Game 22** Hacker-Kribben, BdF-Schachserver 2013.
Chapter 10. 1.\textit{f}3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.e3

\textbf{Annotated Games}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{l}
21. Gorovets – Bosiocic  
Greensboro 31.08.2014  
\hline
1.\textit{f}3d5 2.c4d4 3.e3 \textit{c}6 4.exd4  
\textit{xd}4 5.d4 \textit{xd}4 6.d\textit{c}3 \textit{c}6  
7.d3 \textit{h}6 8.e2 \textit{f}5 9.0-0 \textit{d}8  
10.g4 g6 11.xf5 xf5 12.d4  
\textit{g}7 13.e3 0-0 14.d2
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

We see a typical Caro-Kann/Scandinavian pawn structure. It is generally harmless for Black, but it is useful to know what exactly he should do in it. If he waits passively, White could trade bishops and organise a kingside attack. The best approach is to harass the c4-pawn, trying to provoke b3. 14...e6 is therefore principled, but 15.e2 \textit{a}5 16.d\textit{d}1 \textit{a}6 17.b3 \textit{d}ad8 allows 18.e4 and 17...\textit{a}5 is met by 18.d5. Thus it is best to put a rook on d8 before moving the f5-bishop.

14...\textit{b}6 15.a4

It was better to play a waiting game with 15.d\textit{ad}1 \textit{a}6 16.e2 \textit{d}ad8 17.d2 \textit{e}6 18.b3 \textit{c}8. White’s knight is better off on c3 than on c5.

15...\textit{a}6 16.b3 \textit{fd}8

The correct rooks set-up is 16...\textit{ad}8. The other one will go to e8 in order to prepare ...e5. Opening the centre would be in favour of Black’s bishop pair.

17.c5 \textit{b}6 18.d\textit{d}1 \textit{c}7 19.f3  
\textit{b}6 20.e4

It is now clear that 16...\textit{fd}8 was wrong. It would be senseless to try to justify it with 20...a5 since after 21.a4 the pawn on b6 would be a potential target. On the other hand,
White is threatening g4 which would not have been a problem stayed the right rook on d8 – Black could simply retreat to c8. I would think of repairing the damage with 20...Ec8, but then White would obtain an initiative with 21.Eh6.

20...Ed7 21.Ef2 Ed8 22.g4 Exe4 23.fxe4 e6 24.Ed2?! The pawn structure has changed in White’s favour who is now controlling the game. He should have tried to maintain the grip with 24.Eg5 Ef8 25.Eh1 when 25...b5 would allow 26.c5 e5 26.d5. After the text Black opens lines on the queenside and should be confident for his future.


33...Edb7?!

The table have turned and Black now misses the chance to deal a blow in the centre – 33...c5! 34.d5 exd5 when 35.exd5? would fail to 35...Ee7. Remains 35.Exd5 Eb1+

36.Ec1 Edb7 with an initiative. After the text the game is totally even, but the draw has come after mutual mistakes:

34.Ef2 Eb2 35.Ed2 Ec2 36.Ec2 Ed1+ 37.Eg2 Eb4 38.c5 Eg7 39.Ed4 Eb8 40.d5 Ef4? (40...cxd5 41.exd5 exd5 42.Ed5 Eh1!!=) 41.Eg3? (41.
Ed3+) 41...Eg1+ 42.Exg1 Exg3+

43.Ef1 Eh3+ 44.Ee1? (44.
Ef2=) 44...Eg3+ 45.Ed1 Exg4+


22. Hacker – Kribben,
Schachserver, 04.10.2013

1Ef3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.e3 Ec6 4.b4
dxe3 5.fxe3 Eb4xh4 6.d4 e5 7.a3
Ec6 8.Ee2 exd4 9.exd4 Ef6
10.Ed3 Ef7 11.0-0 0-0 12.Ed1

12...Eg4

Black’s pieces are well placed and
out of reach of the enemy forces. The c6-knight can always retreat to a5 after d4-d5, then ...c6 will generate counterplay. Remains to accommodate the light-squared bishop. I prefer to put it on g6. The shortest route to this place is:
12...f5 intending 13.h4 g6 with a stable albeit small edge.
If White keeps the tension with 13.f4 g6 14.a2 (14.b5 runs into 14...a6 15.xc7 c8 16.d5 h5), we could spend a tempo on prophylaxis – 14...a6, planning to seek exchanges with ...e4.

13.e3 e8

Jakel-G.Flear, Antwerp 1993, saw 13...d7 14.a4 e8 15.g1 ad8 16.ad1, when 16...b6 17.c5 a5 would have been a good defensive stand on the queenside.

14.g1 d6

Black is not afraid of the pin g5 anymore so he decides to activate the bishop. He could also commit himself with a long-term strategic choice as 14...b6. However, Kribben prefers to delay this move for a while. The game has reached the manoeuvring stage where tempi are not so important. Still, I would leave the bishop on e7 in order to defend f6 and keep an eye on d4.

15.b1 b8 16.c2

White creates threats on the diagonal b1-h7, e.g. d3, g5. If Black now tries to cover it with 16.h5 17.d3 g6 18.g5 b6 19.xg6 hxg6 20.d5 a5, White has 21.f3 and the idea c2-f2-h4 hints that it is not very good to have doubled pawns on g6 while White’s knight is still alive.
Perhaps Black should have braced himself for 16...h6, but he stubbornly avoids any pawn moves. It is difficult to win a game without making any committal move.

16...e7 17.d3 g6 18.e4 xe4 19.xe4 b6 20.d5

20.c5 f4 21.bd1 was more straightforward. Chances would be roughly even already. The text move is a small inaccuracy due to 20...e6 21.c6 d7 22.d5 f4!, but Black comes up with an amazingly passive answer:

20...f8 21.a4
It is obvious that Black cannot win without neutralising the enemy centre. Thus 21...c5 appears logical, but it would be a tactical mistake in view of 22.dxc5 $\text{xc5}$ 23.$\text{xc5}$ bxc5 24.$\text{xb8}$ $\text{xb8}$ 25.$\text{g5}$.

It transpires that White’s bishop should be repelled first. Again, the most straightforward attempt 21... $\text{f4}$ 22.$\text{e4}$ f5 is not convincing due to 23.$\text{c6}$.

Thus we can conclude that we should play something like 21... $\text{d7}$, preparing ...$\text{f4}$ or ...c7-c6-c5. Instead Black plays yet another meaningless move.

21...$\text{f4}$ 22.$\text{a5!}$ $\text{d7}$ 23.axb6 $\text{xb6}$ 24.$\text{bd1}$ $\text{c8}$ 25.$\text{h4}$ $\text{h8}$ 26.$\text{e1}$ $\text{d8}$ 27.$\text{f3}$ c6 28.$\text{e4}$ b5 29.cxb5 cxb5 30.$\text{d5}$ b4 31.$\text{d4}$

Black’s pieces are scattered around the board and that makes it impossible to convert the extra pawn.

31...$\text{g5}$ 32.$\text{c5}$ b3 33.$\text{g6}$ $\text{hxg6}$

34.$\text{xb3}$ $\text{g8}$ 35.$\text{d4}$ $\text{b2}$ 36.$\text{e2}$ $\text{xe2}$ 37.$\text{xe2}$ $\text{e5}$ 38.$\text{d4}$ $\text{f6}$ 39.$\text{f3}$ $\text{f4}$ 40.$\text{d4}$ $\text{e8}$ 41.$\text{b6}$ $\text{xd4}$ 42.$\text{xd4}$ $\text{xd4}$ 43.$\text{xd4}$ $\text{c5}$ 44.$\text{c6}$ $\text{xc6}$ 45.$\text{xc6}$ g5 46.$\text{g1}$ $\text{xc6}$ Draw.
Chapter 11. 1.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( d5 \) 2.\( \text{c}4 \) \( d4 \) 3.\( \text{g}3 \)

Main Ideas

1.\( \text{d}f3 \) \( d5 \) 2.\( \text{c}4 \) \( d4 \) 3.\( \text{g}3 \)

This move should ring a bell in our mind – White is provocatively neglecting the centre! According to my understanding, at this point we should switch our thinking process from playing for equalization to exploiting the opponent’s passivity. The immediate consequence of his approach is that we get a really wide choice. Indeed, any development aimed at bolstering the \( d4 \)-pawn would be appropriate – 3 ... \( \text{c}5 \), 3 ... \( \text{c}6 \), 3 ... \( g6 \), even 3 ... \( f6 \). It is difficult to single out one of these moves and claim it is best. You should take the decision according to your personal taste and style. I consider several decent set-ups, but my own preference is 3 ... \( \text{c}6 \) – probably because I like to play against the Pirc as White. It involves more calculation and piece clashes. Pure \( d4 \)-players may like to control the centre with pawns so I analyse 3 ... \( \text{c}5 \), too. It leads to the Benoni Reversed after 4.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 5.\( \text{exd}4 \) cxd4 6.\( \text{g}2 \) \( e5 \) 7.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 8.0-0 \( \text{f}6 \) when White can exploit his extra tempo with 9.\( \text{g}5 \) (in the normal Benoni he has already \( h3 \)!) 9 ... \( \text{h}6 \) 10.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 11.\( \text{bd}2 \)

Let us now deal with 3 ... \( \text{c}6 \) 4.\( \text{g}2 \) \( e5 \) 5.\( \text{d}3 \)

5.0-0 \( e4 \) 6.\( \text{e}1 \) \( h5 \) takes over the initiative on move 6! See Game 25 Malakhov-Tomashevsky, Jurmala 2015.

5 ... \( \text{b}4 \) +!? This check is an elegant solution of the problem what to do with this
A well tested alternative is 5...\(\text{Qg}6\) 6.0-0 a5 (preventing 5...
\(\text{Qe}7\) 6.b4!) 7.Qa3 which I discuss in
**Game 24** Azaladze-Gagunashvili, Tbilisi 2009 or 7.e3 \(\text{Qc}5!?)\, see
**Game 23** Hamitevici-Edouard, Montpellier 2015.

The point is that 6.Qbd2?! a5 deprives White of his two main plans – Qa3-c2 or Qc1-g5xf6. Remains:
6.Qd2 a5 7.0-0 \(\text{Qf}6\)

We should consider from here White’s two main plans:

**a)** Flank stabs: 8.Qa3 0-0 9.Qc2
\(\text{Qxd}2\) 10.Qxd2

9...\(\text{Qxd}4!\)? (9...\(\text{exd}4=\))
10.Qxd4 (10.Qxe5 \(\text{Qe}8\) 11.f4 \(\text{Qg}4!\))
10...\(\text{Qxd}4\) 11.Qc3 \(\text{Qd}6\) 12.a3 \(\text{Qg}4!?)
Black has a tiny plus due to the stranded pawn on d3. See **Game 26** Zmokly-Ness, ICCF 2011.

12.Qb1 does not make sense since
12...a4 13.b3 would only make a weakness on a3.
On the other hand, 12.b3 \(\text{Qf}5\) 13.Qb1
is too slow. Black could push 13...e4,
or aim for an attack with 13...h5

14.b4 \(\text{axb}4\) 15.axb4 \(\text{h}4\) 16.b5 \(\text{Qd}8\).
White has nothing to attack on the queenside while his king lacks adequate defence.

**b)** Play in the centre: 8.e3 0-0
9.exd4

10...\(\text{Qxe}8\) 11.a3 (11.f4 \(\text{Qb}4!\)) 11...
\(\text{Qd}6\). White’s pieces are passive.
Chapter 11. 1.\( \text{d}f3 \) d5 2.\( c4 \) d4 3.\( g3 \)

Step by Step

1.\( \text{d}f3 \) d5 2.\( c4 \) d4 3.\( g3 \)

A. 3...c5; B. 3...\( \text{d}c6! \)

3...g6 offers White more chances to develop an initiative.

A. 3...c5 4.e3 \( \text{d}c6 \) 5.exd4 cxd4 6.\( \text{g}2 \) e5 7.\( d3 \)

7...\( \text{d}6! \)

Overprotecting the important pawn at e5. The other standard way of fighting the Benoni is 7...\( \text{f}6 \) 8.0-0 \( \text{d}7 \), but White's extra tempo allows him to take over the initiative thanks to the straightforward plan of pushing b4: 9.\( \text{a}3! \) \( \text{e}7 \) 10.\( \text{c}2 \) 0-0 11.\( \text{b}1 \) a5 12.b3 \( \text{b}8 \) 13.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 14.a3 \( \text{c}7 \) 15.b4 axb4 16.axb4 when the only way to stop b4-b5 is:

16...b5, but White preserves some pull.

Putting a knight on c5 does not change the pattern – 9.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 10.\( \text{a}3! \) 0-0 11.\( \text{c}2 \) a5 12.b3 \( \text{c}7 \) 13.\( \text{b}1 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 14.\( \text{a}3 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 15.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 16.a3 \( \text{f}8 \) 17.\( \text{b}4 \) axb4 18.axb4 \( \text{f}8 \) 19.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{a}5 \), Krnic-Cruz Lopez, Lyon, 1990, 20.\( \text{b}4\)±.

8.0-0 \( \text{f}6 \) 9.\( \text{g}5 \)

In the normal Benoni White prevents this move with h3. Indeed, it is positionally right to trade the bishop since White has less space. Furthermore, Black's knight is an
important attacking piece which controls e4 and could be unpleasant if it dig itself on c5. That said, it does not automatically means that White becomes better with c1-g5xf6. More likely, chances are objectively even. My big correspondence database shows 48% only and that is normal as Black retains the better centre. But undoubtedly, his game is practically more difficult since he lacks an active plan. All he should do is wait, hiding behind his central pawns.

Alternatively:
9.a3 could be met by 9...h6, but let us allow g5 and consider 9...a5 10.g5 h6 11.xf6 xf6 12.bd2 when again 12...c7 should be a solid retort. I must admit that I’m partial in my assessment since I love bishops in open positions...

9.ee1 0-0 10.da3 e8 11.cc2?! a5 12.b3 h6 13.xb1 – this plan is already dubious because Black’s pieces are actively placed in the centre and 13...f5 14.a3 f8 sets up the thematic breakthrough 15.b4?! e4!.

**11...c7!**

The best set-up. The bishop retreats in advance from e4 or c4-c5. The famous game Zvjaginsev-Bareev, Sochi 2005, saw instead 11...e7?! 12.a3 f5 13.e2 0-0 14.b4 e8 15.h4 e6 16.e4 g5? 17.h5!± with a decisive attack.

**12.a4**

The simplest way to push b4. Two correspondence games went 12.a3 a5 13.e4 d7 14.e8 0-0 15.ac1 e8 16.e4 e7 17.c5 ab8 18.fd2 b4 19.b3= The weak c5-pawn offers Black sufficient counterplay.

**12...0-0 13.b4 f5 14.b3**

White has fulfilled stage one of his plan, but it seems that he lacks any stage 2. A further advance of his queenside pawns will produce weaknesses. Black has two possible stands: the more active one is to leave the rook on a8 and push ...a5. Or he plays ...ac8 (or ...ab8) followed up by ...b6:

a) 14..ac8 15.ac1 b6 16.a3 a5 17.b5 d8
1. \( \text{d}3 \) d5 2. c4 d4 3. g3

18. \( \text{h}4 \) \( \text{h}7 \) 19. c5 \( \text{e}6 \) 20. \( \text{cxb6} \) \( \text{xb6} \) 21. \( \text{xc8} \) \( \text{xc8} \) 22. \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{c5} \) (d3 is a target), Kriksciunas-Hay­akawa, ICCF 2014.

b) 14... \( \text{e}7 \) 15. a3 a5 16. b5 \( \text{d}8 \) 17. \( \text{wc2} \) \( \text{e}6 \) 18. \( \text{ae1} \) \( \text{xa3} \) 19. \( \text{xe5} \) a4=.

**B. 3... \( \text{c}6! \) 4. \( \text{g}2 \) e5**

7. \( \text{xe4} \) when both 7... \( \text{h}3 \)!? and 7... \( \text{h}4 \) promise Black an attack and ade­quate compensation for the pawn. See Game 25 Malakhov-Toma­shevsky, Jurmala 2015.

5... \( \text{b}4 \)!?

This check considerably restricts White’s choice of plans. At the same time it leads to complex positions where the better player could prove his superiority.

5... \( \text{f}6 \) is a solid equalizer – 6.0-0, when Black has two decent plans:

a) 6...a5! 7.e3

The devoted Reti fans prefer 7.\( \text{a}3 \), aiming for a pure flank strategy. Indeed, White’s next moves are easy, but in the long run he risks to get gradually suf­focated. See Game 24 Azalad­ze-Gagunashvili, Tbilisi 2009 for details.

7. \( \text{g}5 \) is rarely played. After 7... \( \text{e}7 \) 8. \( \text{bd2} \) (8. \( \text{a}3 \) 0-9. \( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 10. \( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 11. \( \text{b1} \) \( \text{c}5 \) 12. \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{g}4 \) 13. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{ad8} \) 14. \( \text{h}1 \) f5 15. \( \text{g}1 \) e4\( \uparrow \), Sahu-Thipsay,
New Delhi 1987) 8...0-0 9.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)e1 (9.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xf6 \(\text{\texttt{x}}\)xf6 10.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)e1 \(\text{\texttt{g}}\)g4=, Shariyazdanov-Vaulin, Krasnoyarsk 1998) 9...\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)d7 10.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xe7 \(\text{\texttt{w}}\)xe7 11.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2,

Black has retained the better centre, Rakhmanov-Korneev, Sochi 2014. His most consistent plan is to prepare \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)5, \(\text{\texttt{e}}\)5-e4, for instance, 11...\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c5 12.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b1 \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)5.

The current status of 7...\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xe3 8.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xe3 \(\text{\texttt{e}}\)e7 is dead equal – 9.h3 0-0 10.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c3 \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)f5 11.d4 exd4 12.\(\text{\texttt{x}}\)xd4 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)xd4 13.\(\text{\texttt{x}}\)xd4 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)6, Gabuzyan-Tomashevsky, Yerevan 2014.

8.exd4 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)xd4!? This is the modern trend. Practical experience has seen White scoring less than 50%. See Game 23 Hamitevici-Edouard, Montpellier 2015. Besides, 8...\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xd4 is also fine.

b) 6.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)d6. The only drawback of this move is that it could lead to a drawish symmetrical pawn structure after 7.e3 0-0! 8.exd4 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)xd4 (or 8...\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xd4=) 9.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\)g5 h6 11.\(\text{\texttt{x}}\)xf6 \(\text{\texttt{w}}\)xf6 12.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)d2 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)6 13.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\)e1 \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)f5 14.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\)e4 \(\text{\texttt{d}}\)d8 15.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b3 \(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b8 16.\(\text{\texttt{x}}\)xd6 \(\text{\texttt{w}}\)xd6 draw, Zhou Weiqi-Ma Qun, China 2015.

The other plan, 7.\(\text{\texttt{a}}\)a3, gives more chances for a full-fledged fight – 7...0-0 8.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 (8.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b5 is senseless due to the simple retreat 8...\(\text{\texttt{g}}\)e7, e.g. 9.e3 \(\text{\texttt{a}}\)6 10.\(\text{\texttt{a}}\)a3 dxe3 11.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xe3 \(\text{\texttt{g}}\)g4 12.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)5)

8...\(\text{\texttt{e}}\)e8 9.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b1 a5 10.b3 (10.a3 \(\text{\texttt{a}}\)4) 10...\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b4 11.a3 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 12.\(\text{\texttt{w}}\)xc2 with a pleasant choice between 12...\(\text{\texttt{w}}\)e7, \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)5 or \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)6.

The other plan, 7.\(\text{\texttt{a}}\)a3, gives more chances for a full-fledged fight – 7...0-0 8.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 (8.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b5 is senseless due to the simple retreat 8...\(\text{\texttt{g}}\)e7, e.g. 9.e3 \(\text{\texttt{a}}\)6 10.\(\text{\texttt{a}}\)a3 dxe3 11.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)xe3 \(\text{\texttt{g}}\)g4 12.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)5)

8...\(\text{\texttt{e}}\)e8 9.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b1 a5 10.b3 (10.a3 \(\text{\texttt{a}}\)4) 10...\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)b4 11.a3 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 12.\(\text{\texttt{w}}\)xc2 with a pleasant choice between 12...\(\text{\texttt{w}}\)e7, \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)5 or \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)6.

6.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\)d2

6.\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)d2?! is a typical positional mistake. The knight at \(\text{\texttt{d}}\)2 blocks the way of the \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)1-bishop and cannot support the break \(\text{\texttt{b}}\)2-\(\text{\texttt{b}}\)4 with the manoeuvre \(\text{\texttt{b}}\)1-\(\text{\texttt{a}}\)3-c2. My game Nenkov-Delchev, Sunny Beach 2014, went further 6...a5 7.0-0 \(\text{\texttt{w}}\)f6 8.a3 or 8.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\)e1 0-0 9.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)c2 \(\text{\texttt{c}}\)5 10.b3 \(\text{\texttt{w}}\)e7 11.a3 \(\text{\texttt{f}}\)f5.

8...\(\text{\texttt{c}}\)5 9.b3 0-0+
10. \( \text{d}e4 \text{x}e4 \text{11.} \text{d}xe4 \text{f}6 \text{12.} \text{d}e1 \text{d}e6 \\
\text{13.} \text{d}d3 \text{e}7 \text{14.} \text{d}d2 \text{(14.} \text{w}c2 \text{w}b8 \text{15.} \text{d}d2 \text{b}5!) \text{14...} \text{a}4 \text{ and White's queenside crumbled down.} \\
\text{6.} \text{f}d2 \text{a}5 \text{7.} \text{a}3 \text{f}6 \text{8.} \text{c}2 \text{ could be safely met by 8...d6. In practice Black has played 8...0-0 and 8...f5, but I see no reason to offer the enemy the bishop pair. 8...c5!? is more principled, but you should be ready to part with the a5-pawn after 9.0-0 0-0 10.b3d6 11.a4 e8 12.d2, although Black's compensation is more than enough.} \\
\text{6...a5 7.0-0 f6} \\

The blitz game Anand-Kramnik, Zürich 2016, saw 7...ge7 8.xb4 \\
8.e3 f5 (8...dxe3!? 9.xe3 f5) \\
9.exd4 fxd4 10.xd4 xd4 11.e1 f6. \\
8...xb4 9.bd2 0-0 

8.e3 

White should not delay for long the break in the centre, but he could try a hook from the flank: 8.a3 0-0 9.c2 xd2 10.xd2 w6 11.f4 exf4 12.xf4. The possibility of f2-f4 should not be underestimated and perhaps Black should anticipate it with 10..e8 (intending 11.f4? d4!, eliminating the defence of the e3-square, Likavsky-Voloshin, Ceske Budejovice 1998.) 11.a3 w6 10-0-0. White has weakened his queenside so the line 12.f4 g4 13.f5 w6 14.h3 e3 15.xe3 dxe3 16.e4 d4 17.g4 d7 18.h2 a4 is obviously pleasant for Black. \\
8.xb4 axb4 9.bd2 0-0 10.e1 hardly deserves any attention since it does not even win a pawn after 10..f5 11.c2 w7 12.xc6?! bxc6 13.xb4 w8. \\
8.g5 0-0 9.a3 h6 10.xf6 w6 11.c2 e7 12.d2 w6 13.b1 h5! 14.a3 a4 is obviously in Black's favour owing to the imminent attack on the kingside. \\
8...0-0 9.exd4

10.a3 \\
10.wb3 e6 11.a3 bxa3 12.xa3 \\
\text{E}xa3 13.wx a8=, Cvitan-Barle, Rijeka 2010. \\
10...bxa3 11.wb3 when 11..e6 12.xa3 transposes to the above game. \\
The text is more ambitious.
9...\( \text{Qxd4!} \)?

Of course, 9...\( \text{exd4=} \) is also possible. Its only drawback is that the pawn structure is too symmetrical. Here are some examples:

a) 10.\( \text{Qa3}\) \( \text{Qd7} \) (or 10...\( \text{Qf5}\) 11.\( \text{Qf4}\) \( \text{Qh5}\))

[Diagram]

11.\( \text{Qf4}\) \( \text{Qc5}\) 12.\( \text{Qb5}\) \( \text{Qe6=} \).

b) 10.\( \text{Qg5}\) \( \text{h6}\) 11.\( \text{Qxf6}\) \( \text{Qxf6}\) 12.\( \text{a3}\) \( \text{Qc5}\) 13.\( \text{Qbd2}\) \( \text{Qf5}\) 14.\( \text{Qe1}\) \( \text{Qe5=} \).

10.\( \text{Qxd4}\)

The tactical justification of Black’s idea is the line 10.\( \text{Qxe5}\) \( \text{Qe8}\) 11.\( \text{f4}\)

Or 11.\( \text{Qe1}\) \( \text{Qd6}\) 12.\( \text{f4}\) \( \text{Qg4}\) 13.\( \text{Qxg4}\) \( \text{Qxe1=}\) 14.\( \text{Qxe1}\) \( \text{Qxg4}\) 15.\( \text{Qxg4}\) \( \text{Qxe1=}\). 11.\( \text{Qg4}\)! (to be fair, the blunt 11...\( \text{Qd7}\) achieves the same effect) regaining the pawn since 12.\( \text{Qd5}\) \( \text{Qh6=} \) leaves White with a horrible hole on e3, e.g. 13.\( \text{Qc3}\) \( \text{Qc5}\) 14.\( \text{Qh1}\) \( \text{c6}\) 15.\( \text{Qg2}\) \( \text{f6}\) 16.\( \text{Qf3}\) \( \text{Qdf5=}\), and 12.\( \text{Qxg4}\)? fails to 12...\( \text{Qe2=}\) 13.\( \text{Qh1}\) \( \text{Qxg4}\).

10...\( \text{Qxd4}\) 11.\( \text{Qc3}\) \( \text{Qd6}\) 12.\( \text{a3}\)

12.\( \text{Qg4}\)!?

Black has a slight initiative, see Game 26 Zmokly-Ness, ICCF 2011.
Chapter 11. 1.\textit{f}3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.g3

\textbf{Annotated Games}

\begin{center}
23. Hamitevici – Edouard
Montpellier 31.05.2015
\end{center}

1.11lf3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.g3 4.ig2 e5 5.d3 4f6 6.0-0 a5 7.e3 \textit{c}5 8.exd4

\begin{center}
8...\textit{xd}4!?
\end{center}

The rare 8...\textit{xd}4 is very good, too – 9.\textit{xe}5

Of course, 9.\textit{xd}4 cannot be of any theoretical interest. The full control of d4 suggests that Black’s game is better: 9...\textit{xd}4 10.\textit{c}3 0-0 11.\textit{f}3 h6 12.h3 c6 13.\textit{e}2 \textit{a}7 14.b3 \textit{e}8 15.\textit{b}2 \textit{h}7 16.\textit{ad}1 \textit{g}5 17.\textit{h}5 \textit{f}5 18.d4 \textit{c}2 19.\textit{d}2 \textit{g}6 20.\textit{h}4 exd4 21.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 22.\textit{xd}4 \textit{d}3 0-1, Karaokcu-Ivanisevic, Skopje 2015.

9...0-0 10.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}4

a) 11.\textit{bd}2 \textit{e}8! 12.\textit{b}3 (12.h3 \textit{e}2+ 13.\textit{h}1 \textit{xd}3!) 12...\textit{e}2+ 13.\textit{h}1 \textit{a}7 14.a4 \textit{d}7. White’s defence is difficult. For instance, the relatively best 15.\textit{e}3 loses pawns after 15...\textit{xf}3 16.\textit{xf}3 \textit{g}x3+! 17.hxg3 \textit{h}3+ 18.\textit{g}1 \textit{xe}3 19.\textit{g}2 \textit{xd}3.

b) 11.\textit{e}3! \textit{xf}3+ 12.\textit{xf}3 \textit{xf}3 13.\textit{xf}3 \textit{xd}3 14.\textit{d}1 \textit{e}4 15.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xe}4 is totally equal.

9.\textit{xd}4

9.\textit{c}3 0-0 does not change the character of play.

9...\textit{xd}4 10.\textit{e}1

10.f4 0-0 11.fxe5 \textit{g}4 12.\textit{c}3 \textit{xe}5 13.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}6 14.\textit{e}4 \textit{xd}3 left White pawnless in an online game.
Chapter 11

10.h3 0-0 11.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}c3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{E}}}e8 12.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}h2 h6 occurred in Bu Xiangzhi-Ganguly, Doha 2014.

White opted for the sharp 13.f4 exf4 14.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xf4 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}a6 15.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d2 when instead of 15...g5? 16.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe3 17.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}c2 18.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}f2 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xa1 19.d4\pm, Black could have played 15...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}h5! 16.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e3?! \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}g6 with an initiative, or even the simple 15...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}ae6=.

10...0-0 11.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}c3

11.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe5? loses to 11...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}g4 12.f3 (12.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d2 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}f3) 12...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xf3+ 13.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xf3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d4+ 14.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}ae8, M.Gomes-Adhiban, Pune 2014.

11...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e8 12.h3

12.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e4 is positionally bad since White needs his knight to contest the d4-square. Zimina-Mirzoeva, Plovdiv 2014, went on 12...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe4 13.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe4 c6\±. It is much more logical to take g4 under control.

12...c6

I have mentioned above the rook lift ...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}a6. It is also possible here although the rook looks a bit awk-
ward on a6: 12...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}a6 13.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}f5 14.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}a4 h6 15.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}ad1 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d7 16.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}a3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}c8 17.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}h2=, Alf-Lange, corr. 2010.

13.f4

White possesses a bishop pair and aims to open play. On the other hand, this pawn push weakens the king. Edouard suggests 13.g4 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d7 14.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e2 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe2+ 15.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe2 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}f8\omega.

A correspondence game saw a completely different plan which could be born only in a computer’s brain: 13.b3 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}f5 14.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}b2 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d6 15.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e2 – killing Black’s strongest piece. The game R.Angelov-V.Popov, 2013, went further 15...h6 16.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d2 a4 17.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xd4 exd4 18.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe8 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe8 19.bxa4 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xa4 and was eventually drawn. Perhaps 14...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}c7 instead of 14...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}d6 is slightly more accurate. By defending e5, Black preserves his knight from exchange – 15.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e2 \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}e6.

13...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xf4 14.\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe8+ \textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe8?!

The d4-square is a matter of paramount importance so the manoeuvre 14...\textit{\textsf{\texttt{Q}}}xe8-c7-e6 was called for. Then Black would have had an excellent game.
15.\textit{\textit{\textit{xf4}} \textit{\textit{xf5}}} 16.g4 \textit{\textit{g6}} 17.\textit{\textit{d2}} \textit{\textit{d8}}?!

A mundane move obviously made by general considerations. Stronger was 17...\textit{\textit{h5}}! 18.g5 \textit{\textit{h7}} killing three birds with one shot – Black makes a \textit{luft}, gains the f5-square for his knight, and transfers the f6-knight via the route h7-f8-e6. As a “bonus”, the g5-pawn could hang.

18.\textit{\textit{c7}} \textit{\textit{d7}}

19.\textit{\textit{xa5}}?

Apparently White missed the pin along the a-file. Indeed, moves like 19...\textit{\textit{a8}}!, with the idea of 20.\textit{\textit{b4}} \textit{\textit{b3}}, are difficult to spot. Correct was 19.\textit{\textit{b6}}! with unclear play. Edouard suggests 19...\textit{\textit{xd3}} 20.\textit{\textit{xd3}} \textit{\textit{b3}} 21.\textit{\textit{b1}} \textit{\textit{xa1}}. In principle White’s pieces should be stronger, but his naked king offers Black counter-chances.

19...\textit{\textit{a8}}!! 20.\textit{\textit{a4}} \textit{\textit{e2}}+! 21.\textit{\textit{xe2}} \textit{\textit{xa5}} 22.\textit{\textit{b3}} \textit{\textit{xd3}}+ 23.\textit{\textit{ed1}} \textit{\textit{xd1}}+ 24.\textit{\textit{xd1}} \textit{\textit{h5}}

Edouard converts his advantage with energy and confidence.

25.\textit{\textit{gxh5}} \textit{\textit{xh5}} 26.\textit{\textit{c5}} \textit{\textit{f4}} 27.\textit{\textit{a3}} \textit{\textit{h5}} 28.\textit{\textit{f3}} \textit{\textit{hxh3}}+ 29.\textit{\textit{h2}} \textit{\textit{xf3}} 30.\textit{\textit{xf3}} \textit{\textit{g5}} 31.\textit{\textit{f4}} \textit{\textit{d2}}+ 32.\textit{\textit{xd2}} \textit{\textit{f3}}+ 33.\textit{\textit{g3}} \textit{\textit{xd2}} 34.\textit{b4} \textit{\textit{c4}} 35.\textit{\textit{f4}} \textit{\textit{xa3}} 36.\textit{\textit{c3}} \textit{\textit{f8}} 37.\textit{\textit{e4}} \textit{\textit{c4}} 38.\textit{\textit{c3}} \textit{\textit{e7}} 39.\textit{b5} \textit{\textit{e6}} 40.\textit{\textit{e4}} \textit{\textit{f5}}+ 41.\textit{\textit{d4}} \textit{\textit{e5}} 0-1

24. Azaladze – Gagunashvili

Tbilisi 2009

1.\textit{\textit{f3}} \textit{\textit{d5}} 2.\textit{\textit{c4}} \textit{\textit{d4}} 3.\textit{\textit{g3}} \textit{\textit{e5}} 5.\textit{\textit{d3}} \textit{\textit{f6}} 6.0-0 \textit{\textit{a5}} 7.\textit{\textit{a3}} \textit{\textit{c5}}

Black’s only active plan in this structure is connected with ...\textit{\textit{e5}}-\textit{e4} so the d4-pawn should be well protected and the e-file should remain open for a rook on e8. Another consideration is that \textit{\textit{c5}} discourages possible breaks in the centre. That said, 7...\textit{\textit{e7}} also has enough adherents, but it is more prophylactic than aggressive.

8.\textit{\textit{c2}}

8.\textit{\textit{g5}} 0-0 9.\textit{\textit{d2}} is well met by 9...\textit{\textit{e7}}! 10.\textit{\textit{c2}} \textit{\textit{h6}}. Without a dark-squared bishop, White’s counterplay in the centre would
be impotent. Note that 10...\(\textit{\&d7}\) 11.\(\textit{\&e7}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&xe7}}\) could be attacked with 12.e3 or even 12.f4, as in Rivas-Romero, Alicante 1989.

Similarly, 8.\(\textit{\&b5}\) 0-0 9.\(\textit{\textbf{\&g5}}\) is parried by 9...\(\textit{\&e7}\) 10.e3 h6.

\(\textit{8...0-0 9.a3}\)

Another critical line is 9.\(\textit{\textbf{\&g5}}\) h6 10.\(\textit{\textbf{\&xf6}}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&xf6}}\) 11.\(\textit{\&d2}\)

The game Adamski-Rausis, Lingenby 1989, saw 11.b3 \(\textit{\textbf{\&e7}}\) 12.a3 \(\textit{\&e6}\) 13.\(\textit{\&d2}\) f5 and Black controls the board. White's attempt to push b4 was instructively parried by the curious rook lift 14.\(\textit{\&c1}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&a6!}}\). 15.\(\textit{\&b1}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&b6}}\). Here Adamski tried 16.f4 exf4 17.\(\textit{\&xf6}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&f7}}\) 18.b4 axb4 19.\(\textit{\&b3}\), but 19...\(\textit{\&xa3}\) 20.\(\textit{\&xc5}\) \(\textit{\&xb1}\) 21.\(\textit{\&xb1}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&xc5}}\) 22.\(\textit{\&xb7}\) \(\textit{\textbf{\&a5!}}\) leaves Black with a sound extra pawn.

11...\(\textit{\&e7}\)

12.a3 (12.\(\textit{\&e4}\) \(\textit{\&b6}\); 12.\(\textit{\&b3}\) \(\textit{\&b6}\)) 12...a4 (or 12...\(\textit{\&g4}\) 13.\(\textit{\&h3}\) \(\textit{\&e6}\) 14.\(\textit{\&b1}\) a4) 13.b4 (exploiting the hanging \(\textit{\&a8}\)) 13...axb3 14.\(\textit{\&xb3}\) \(\textit{\&d6}\). It seems that White has achieved his goal, but Black is still better thanks to his bishop pair. The break 15.e3 does not help - 15...dxe3 16.fxe3 \(\textit{\&a5}\) 17.\(\textit{\&d2}\) f5 18.d4 c6 19.\(\textit{\&h5}\) \(\textit{\&e6!}\), Henderson-Krutous, ICCF 2015. The c4 and a3-pawns are hanging.

9.\(\textit{\&d2}\) \(\textit{\&f5}\) leaves White without sensible moves - he cannot play \(\textit{\&e4}\), 10.f4 is also dubious due to 10...e4. 10.b3 \(\textit{\&d6}\) would prevent \(\textit{\&a3}\). Remains 10.a3 when 10...h6?! would be a good prophylactic move, aimed against the idea of \(\textit{\&g5}\), as in the line 10...\(\textit{\&d7}\) 11.\(\textit{\&b1}\) a4 12.b4 axb3 13.\(\textit{\&xb3}\) \(\textit{\&e7}\) 14.\(\textit{\&g5}\).

\(\textit{9...\&e8}\)

Another interesting set-up is 9...\(\textit{\&e7}\) 10.\(\textit{\&b1}\) a4 11.\(\textit{\&d2}\) \(\textit{\&a5}\) 12.b4 axb3 13.\(\textit{\&xb3}\) \(\textit{\&xb3}\) 14.\(\textit{\&xb3}\) c6, but the text is more consistent. Black prepares ...e4.

10.\(\textit{\&g5}\)

10.\(\textit{\&b1}\) a4 11.\(\textit{\&d2}\) stumbles into 11...e4 12.dxe4 \(\textit{\&xe4}\) 13.\(\textit{\&b4}\) b6.

Similar is 10.b3 e4, e.g. 11.\(\textit{\&g5}\) (11.\(\textit{\&d2}\) exd3 12.exd3 \(\textit{\&g4}\) 13.\(\textit{\&f3}\) \(\textit{\&d7}\) 14.\(\textit{\&b2}\) \(\textit{\&f5}\)) 11...exd3 12.exd3 \(\textit{\&g4}\).

10.e3 dxe3 11.\(\textit{\&xe3}\) \(\textit{\&f8}\) 12.d4 also does not solve White's problems due to 12...e4! 13.\(\textit{\&d2}\) \(\textit{\&g4}\) 14.f3 \(\textit{\&h5!}\).

\(\textit{10...h6 11.\&xf6 \&xf6 12.\&d2 \&e7}\)

It is natural to avoid exchanges having more space, but 12...a4 13.\(\textit{\&e4}\)
\(1.\text{e}4 \text{d}5 \ 2.\text{c}4 \text{d}4 \ 3.\text{g}3\)

\(\text{\textellipsis} \text{e}7 \ 14.\text{\texttt{a}}\text{xc}5 \text{\texttt{xc}5 is also pleasant for Black. The game Larsen--Short, Hastings 1988, was eventually drawn after 15.\text{\texttt{d}d}2 \text{\texttt{f}f}5 (Perhaps 15...\text{\texttt{a}a}5 16.\text{\texttt{b}b}4 \text{\texttt{b}b}3 poses more problems to White.) 16.\text{\texttt{a}a}b1 \text{\texttt{a}a}5 17.\text{\texttt{b}b}4 \text{\texttt{d}d}8 18.\text{\texttt{d}b}d1 \text{c}6 19.\text{e}4 \text{dxe}3 20.\text{f}xe3 \text{\texttt{g}g}4 21.\text{\texttt{f}f}3 \text{\texttt{h}h}3 22.\text{\texttt{g}g}2 \text{\texttt{g}g}4 23.\text{\texttt{f}f}3 \text{\texttt{h}h}3 24.\text{\texttt{g}g}2, draw.\}

\[ \text{13.b3} \]

\[ \text{13...\texttt{g}g4!} \]

\[ \text{13...\texttt{f}f5 also looks pretty, but it is better to activate first the bishop.} \]

\[ \text{14.\texttt{e}e1} \]

\[ \text{14.\texttt{e}e4 \text{\texttt{b}b}6 15.\text{\texttt{a}a}b1 is too slow -- 15...\texttt{f}f5 16.\text{\texttt{d}d}2 \text{e}4! 17.\text{d}xe4 \text{d}3. The \text{\texttt{g}g4 is decisive in this line!} \]

\[ \text{14...\texttt{f}f5 15.\texttt{h}h3?!} \]

Black is obviously better, but White should not facilitate his task by weakening his kingside. A waiting game would have been more stubborn for White.

\[ \text{15...\texttt{h}h5 16.\texttt{b}b1 \texttt{g}g5!} \]

Black is all set for 16...\text{e}4 17.\text{d}xe4 \text{\texttt{g}g}5, but the threat is stronger than its execution!

\[ \text{17.\texttt{c}c1 \texttt{e}4!} \]

\[ \text{This breakthrough crowns Black's strategy. All the diagonals to his bishop pair are ripped open.} \]

\[ \text{18.\text{d}xe4 \text{\texttt{xe}2 19.\texttt{h}h4 \texttt{g}g4 20.\texttt{b}b4 \text{\texttt{a}xb}4 21.\texttt{b}b3 \text{\texttt{a}a}7?} \]

\[ \text{Black has played perfectly so far, but this awful move ruins all his efforts. The simple 21...\text{d}d3 22.\text{\texttt{a}a}5 \text{\texttt{d}d}2 23.\text{\texttt{a}a}2 \text{\texttt{d}d}4 24.\texttt{b}b2 \text{\texttt{f}f}3+ wins easily.} \]

\[ \text{22.c5} \]

\[ \text{The tables have turned and Black is now worse. After mutual mistakes, the game was drawn:} \]

\[ \text{22...\texttt{ed}8 23.\texttt{axb}4 \texttt{fxe}4 24.\text{\texttt{c}c}d4? (24.\text{\texttt{b}b}5\pm) 24...\texttt{xd}4 25.\texttt{b}b5 \texttt{xb}5 26.\text{\texttt{a}a}d4 \text{\texttt{d}d}4 27.\texttt{e}e3? \texttt{f}f3+ 28.\text{\texttt{x}x}f3 \texttt{xf}3 (28...\texttt{xf}3\pm) 29.\texttt{b}b3+ \texttt{c}c4? 30.\texttt{xb}7 \texttt{d}d8 31.\texttt{a}a7 \texttt{b}b3 32.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{d}d5 33.\texttt{e}e8+ \texttt{xe}8 34.\texttt{xd}5\pm} \]

187
Chapter 11

34...\textit{h7} 35.\textit{g}6! 36.\textit{d}1 \textit{f}6 37.\textit{g}2 \textit{e}5 38.\textit{d}3+ \textit{g}6 39.\textit{x}g6+ \textit{x}g6 40.\textit{c}1 \textit{f}5 41.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}5 42.\textit{c}4 \textit{e}1 43.\textit{c}6 \textit{e}5 44.\textit{h}5 \textit{e}6 45.\textit{c}5+ \textit{f}6 46.\textit{g}4 \textit{e}4+ 47.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}xf4 48.\textit{f}5+ \textit{g}7 49.\textit{x}f4 \textit{c}4 50.\textit{d}5 \textit{xc}6 51.\textit{f}5 \textit{f}6+ 52.\textit{e}5 \textit{f}7 53.\textit{c}5 \textit{e}7+ 54.\textit{f}5 \textit{f}7+ 55.\textit{g}4 \textit{h}7 56.\textit{f}5 \textit{d}7 57.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}7 58.\textit{c}6 \textit{d}6 59.\textit{xc}7+ \textit{f}6 60.\textit{h}7 \textit{d}4+ 61.\textit{e}3 \textit{h}4 62.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{xf}5 Draw.

25. Malakhov-Tomashevsky  
Jurmala 08.03.2015

1.\textit{f}3 \textit{d}5 2.c4 \textit{d}4 3.g3 \textit{c}6 4.\textit{g}2 \textit{e}5 5.0-0 \textit{e}4 6.\textit{e}1 \textit{h}5!

7.\textit{xe}4

7.d3 only accelerates Black's attack owing to 7...\textit{e}3! 8.\textit{fx}e3 \textit{h}4 9.\textit{f}3 \textit{hx}g3 10.\textit{x}g3 \textit{xf}6 11.\textit{ex}d4 \textit{xd}4 12.\textit{c}3, Jessel-O'Donnell, Dublin 2015, 12...\textit{f}5! 13.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}7 14.\textit{e}1 \textit{c}6.

7...\textit{h}4

This obvious move is far from being trivial. Black should seriously consider 7...\textit{h}3!?, aiming to limit White's choice. The point is that 8.\textit{g}2?! (or 8.\textit{g}2?!) 8...\textit{d}7 is very promising for Black who achieves an ideal attacking position with a long castle. Therefore, White must answer:

8.\textit{b}3 \textit{c}8

Black obtains a nearly free, self-conducting attack.

9.\textit{g}2

Hawkins-Pert, London 2015, saw 9.\textit{b}5 when 9...\textit{ge}7 was too timid although Black went on to win after 10.\textit{g}2 \textit{d}7 11.\textit{xb}7 \textit{b}8 12.\textit{a}6 \textit{f}5 13.\textit{f}3 \textit{d}3!.

He had more natural developing moves like 9...\textit{d}6 or even 9...\textit{f}6.

9...\textit{h}4 10.d3,  
10.\textit{h}3? \textit{x}h3 11.\textit{xb}7 \textit{d}7.
transposing to the comments to White's move 9.

8.d3

8.e3? ∅f6 9.∅g2 dxe3 10.∅e2 (10. fxe3 hxg3 11.hxg3 ³d6) 10...³d4 11.∅xe3+ ³e7 12.∅c3 occurred in V.Popov-Navara, Minsk 2015, when 12...∅g4! was winning.

8.∅g2 ∅f6 9.∅f3 hxg3 10.fxg3 ∅h3 11.d3?! (11.∅xh3 ³xh3 12.d3 was the lesser evil) 11...²d7 12.²f2 ∅g4 13.∅xh3 ³xh3 14.∅g2 0-0-0 was seen in Harika-Zimina, Rome 2015.

This position illustrates Black’s main goal after 6...h5!. White is probably lost here. Harika played 15.∅a3 when the strongest plan was 15...f6 followed up by ...g5. The decisive blow should be dealt on h2, e.g. 16.²a4 g5 17.b4 ²xb4 18.²b1 ³c5 19.²c2 ²dh8 20.²a3 ²xa3 21.²xa3 ²xh2! 22.²xh2 ²h7 23.²b5 ²xg3!–+

8...³h3

8...³f6!? is another critical line.

a) 9.∅g5 hxg3 10.fxg3 ³e5 11.³d2 (11.∅g2 ³e7) 11...³eg4 12.³ef3

Black has various ways of developing his attack. 12...³h3 or 12...³h5!? threaten ...³xh2. Another obvious try is 12...³e3 13.²a4+ c6 14.³fc1 ³e7.

Perhaps the most unpleasant continuation is 12...c6!, anticipating White's check from a4 and enhancing the above-mentioned threats. If then 13.²a4 (13.³h4 ²a5 14.c5 ²xc5 15.³f5 ³xh4 16.²xf6 ³h6–), 13...³h5 14.³fc1 ²d7 15.³f4 ³e3 looks rather ominous.

In these lines White's light-squared bishop is clearly missing from g2. So we should consider:

b) 9.∅g2 hxg3 10.fxg3 ³h3 (10...³g4 is also worth considering) 11.²f2 (11.³xh3 ³xh3 12.²f3 and 11.³g5 ²d7 12.²xf6 were more resilient, but Black is better in either case.) 11...³g4 12.³f4 (avoiding the pattern of Harika-Zimina after 12.³g2) 12...³xg2 13.³xg4 ³h3 14.³e4+ ³e7 15.³d2 ²d7 16.b4 f5 was yet another opening rout, Podzielny-Meister, playchess.com 2007.

Attack is the best defence and White should probably not lose any tempo, but take immediately on c6:
Chapter 11

c) $9.\text{hx}c6+! \text{bxc6}$ 10.$\text{g}f3$ aiming for $\text{b}1$-$d2$-$e4$. Then 10...$\text{hx}g3$ 11.$\text{fx}g3$ $\text{g}4$ is unclear:

White has 12.e4 $\text{dxe3}$ 13.$\text{he}3$ $\text{e}7$ 14.$\text{e}1$ $\text{xe}3$ 15.$\text{xe}3$ 0-0 where the bishop pair serves as a good compensation for the pawn.

9.$\text{g}2$

9.$\text{g}2$ $\text{hx}g3$ 10.$\text{fx}g3$ $\text{d}7$ 11.$\text{d}2$ 0-0-0 is excellent for Black, but:

9.$\text{b}3$, aiming to hamper the castle, deserves attention: 9...$\text{c}8$ (9...$\text{hx}g3$? 10.$\text{xb}7$) 10.$\text{g}2$

10.$\text{g}2$ is dangerous for White since his pieces remain passive – 10...$\text{f}6$ 11.$\text{f}3$ $\text{g}4$ 12.$\text{d}2$ $\text{e}7$. 10...$\text{x}g2$ 11.$\text{xe}2$ $\text{hx}g3$ 12.$\text{fx}g3$.

Now 12...$\text{h}3$ 13.$\text{xb}7$ $\text{xh}2+$ 14.$\text{f}2$ $\text{d}7$ 15.$\text{f}4$ $\text{c}8$ 16.$\text{d}2$ $\text{f}6$ 17.$\text{h}1$ $\text{g}4$+ forces a draw, but of course Black should keep the tension with 12...$\text{d}7$! 13.$\text{d}2$ 0-0-0.

9...$\text{d}7$

It was better to exchange first on g3, avoiding the exchange sacrifice $\text{xe}4 - 9...\text{hx}g3!$ 10.$\text{fx}g3$ $\text{d}7$ with a strong attack. The same reasoning applies to Tomashevsky's next moves, too.

10.$\text{f}4$?

10.$\text{g}5$ $\text{e}7$ is also dubious. 10.$\text{x}h4$! was the only defence. I would not even consider taking the exchange. Black retains the initiative with 10...$\text{f}6$! 11.$\text{f}3$ $\text{g}4$, for instance: 12.$\text{e}4$ $\text{e}7$? (there is no reason to repeat moves with 12...$\text{f}6$) 13.$\text{b}3$ $\text{d}8$ 14.$\text{f}5$ $\text{c}6$ 15.$\text{f}3$ $\text{x}h2$.

10.$\text{f}4$? $\text{hx}g3$ 11.$\text{fx}g3$ $\text{f}6$ 12.$\text{f}3$ $\text{g}4$+$.

10...$\text{f}6$ 11.$\text{f}3$ $\text{d}6$ (11...$\text{hx}g3$ 12.$\text{fx}g3$ $\text{g}4+$) 12.$\text{c}1$ 0-0-0 13.$\text{a}3$ $\text{hx}g3$ 14.$\text{fx}g3$

Black has obtained a very strong position and now 14...$\text{xf}4$! 15.$\text{xf}4$ $\text{de}8$ 16.$\text{f}2$ $\text{e}5$ was clearly better for him. His next two moves wipe out his advantage.

14...$\text{g}4$? 15.$\text{xd}6$ $\text{cxd}6$

(15...$\text{xe}2$! 16.$\text{xe}2$ $\text{cxd}6$)
White should be able to hold after 16.\texttt{f4}, e.g. 16...\texttt{ce5} 17.\texttt{b5} a6 18.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{b}8 19.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{g}4 20.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{xf7} 21.\texttt{d7} \texttt{g}2 22.\texttt{xe7} \texttt{d}8 23.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{h}1+ 24.\texttt{xg2} \texttt{xa1} 25.a3 \texttt{a2} 26.b3 \texttt{xa3} 27.\texttt{g7} d5=.

16...\texttt{xg4} 17.\texttt{f2}?! 

17.\texttt{f4} was essential – 17...\texttt{e5} (17...\texttt{xe2} 18.\texttt{f2} \texttt{xd3} 19.\texttt{b5} \texttt{e}5 20.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{g}4 21.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{xf4} 22.\texttt{g}2 with good chances for a draw.

17...\texttt{g5} 18.\texttt{c5} (or 18.b4 \texttt{b}8 19.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{e}5 20.\texttt{xe1} \texttt{f5}) 18...\texttt{he}8 19.\texttt{b5} \texttt{xc5} 20.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{f}8 21.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{e}5 22.\texttt{c}4

Black dominates in the centre and he only needs to open another file against the enemy king to finish the game.

Black could include first 12...\texttt{c}5 13.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{xd}3 14.\texttt{xe}5 and only now 14...\texttt{g}4. Then 15.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{f}5 16.\texttt{xc}7 \texttt{a}4 offers good compensation, but 15.\texttt{f}3 looks totally equal. The text keeps the pawn structure unbalanced.

13.\texttt{f}3

The bishop does not stand well on f3. Perhaps 13.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{xc}3 14.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{c}6 15.\texttt{e}3 was more solid.
The opening stage is over. The opposition of the pawns e5:d3 defines a slight space advantage for Black. Naturally, White seeks to trade them.

\[16.\text{wb}3\text{xd}3 17.\text{we}3\text{d}7 18.\text{xe}5\text{fe}8 19.\text{xe}8+\text{xe}8 20.\text{xe}2 \text{h}5\]
\[21.\text{c}2 \text{f}5 22.\text{d}1 \text{e}7\]

Black grasps the chance to complicate things with a pan sacrifice. OTB, that could offer him practical chances, but in an email game, White easily holds the balance.

\[23.\text{xb}h5 \text{d}8 24.\text{we}2 \text{xe}2\]
\[25.\text{xe}2 \text{d}2 26.\text{a}a2 \text{c}2 27.\text{f}3\]
\[\text{xe}6 28.\text{d}3 \text{c}1+ 29.\text{f}2 \text{d}7\]
\[30.\text{e}2\]

\[30...\text{bh}1 31.\text{b}3 \text{c}5 32.\text{g}2 \text{e}1\]
\[33.\text{f}4 \text{xb}3 34.\text{xe}6 \text{fxe}6\]
\[35.\text{e}2 \text{a}1 36.\text{xe}6 \text{f}7 37.\text{e}3\]
\[\text{xa}3 38.\text{g}4 \text{a}2+ 39.\text{g}3 \text{c}5\]

Draw.
Chapter 12. 1.\( \text{d}f3 \) d5 2.\( g3 \)

Main Ideas

1.\( \text{d}f3 \) d5 2.\( g3 \) c6

With this move we prepare to lead out our bishop to \( g4 \). That would solve Black’s main problem against White’s fianchetto – the poor fate of the light-squared bishop which often remains caged on c8.

3.\( c4 \)

The only way to exploit the imminent 3...\( \text{g}4 \) is to attack the light squares on the queenside which would be left somewhat weakened by the absence of the bishop.

I consider \( \text{K1} \) set-ups in the next chapter.

3...\( \text{g}4 \)

4.\( \text{b}3 \) is well met by 4...\( \text{xf}3 \) while 4.\( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{f}5! \) 5.\( \text{b}3 \) misses the mark in view of 5...\( \text{d}7! \)

4...\( \text{e}6 \)

White has now three main approaches.

1. One of them is to drag Black’s queen to b6 and harass it later with \( \text{e}3 \) or c4-c5:

5.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{b}6 \)

The most critical test of 3.c4 is 3... dxc4 4.\( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{d}7 \), but it is not in the spirit of our book. I analyse here only plans where we hold the centre.

4.\( \text{g}2 \)

a) 6.d3 \( \text{d}7 \) 7.\( \text{e}3 \) is easily parried by 7...\( \text{c}5 \), but if you read carefully the “Step by Step” chapter, you could also force play with 7...dxc4!?.

b) 6.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.0-0 \( \text{e}7 \) 9.\( \text{a}4 \) \( \text{xf}3 \) 10.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{c}6 = \).

c) 6.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 7.d4 \( \text{gf}6 \) 8.c5 \( \text{a}6! \) 9.0-0 \( \text{e}7 \) 10.\( \text{e}1 \) b6. Remember the retreat ...\( \text{a}6 \) after c4-c5. It is effective in many lines. There is an exception though:
Black does not play ...\( \text{Na6} \)

Here 11...\( \text{Na6} \) is inaccurate (11...\( \text{Na6} \)+!12.a\( \text{xb3} \)+!11.a\( \text{xb3} \) a6=) because White's rook is already on e1. That does not leave Black time for ...b6 after 11.e4 dxe4 12.\( \text{xe4} \)+!dxe4 13.\( \text{xe4} \) (threatening 14.\( \text{f1} \)).

2. Sometimes White plays c4, d4, b3: 5.0-0 \( \text{xf6} \) 6.d4 \( \text{bd7} \) 7.\( \text{bd2} \) \( \text{e7} \)! 8.b3 0-0 9.\( \text{b2} \) a5 10.a3 h6 Whenever White's knight jumps on e5, we take it, and if he attempted e4, we answer ...\( \text{f5} \), aiming to trade on e4 more pieces. That would secure our king against a kingside attack.

3. White's most principled approach is 5.cxd5.
Then the simplest answer is 5...\( \text{xf3} \) 6.\( \text{xf3} \) cxd5 7.0-0 \( \text{c6} \) 8.d3 \( \text{f6} \) 9.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{e7} \)

See Game 29 Mola-Delchev, 2015.

More double-edged is 5...\( \text{exd5} \). It offers White a pawn majority in the centre and the dynamic factors often play a decisive role. If Black stays passively, he risks to fall under attack – White will simply roll forth all his kingside pawns. I suggest the active set-up with ...\( \text{d6} \):

6.0-0 \( \text{f6} \) 7.d3 \( \text{bd7} \) 8.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{d6} \) 9.h3 \( \text{h5} \) 10.e4 0-0

a) Now 11.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{e8} \) 12.\( \text{h4} \) (For 12.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{c5} \) see Game 28 Markowski-Pedersen, Istanbul 2003.) is the sterner test of our plan. We oppose a dark-squared strategy – 12...\( \text{c5} \)!, heading for e6-d4. Our idea is to lure the pawns into our camp where we could attack them easier. A typical position with an overextended White's centre is:
17...e3 stumbles into 17...c5 and 17...d1 could be met by either 17...c5, or 17...f6.

b) It would be a moral victory for Black if White exchanged on d5 – 11.exd5 cxd5 12.g4 g6 13.h4 c5 14.xg6 hxg6 15.d4 e6 16.e3

Stayed the g-pawn on g3, White might have hoped for some advantage in view of his pressure on d5. But the weakened h2-b8 diagonal gives us excellent counterplay: 16...c7! 17.b3 d6.

To sum up, taking on d5 by e-pawn leads to rich sharp play.
Chapter 12. 1.\( \text{d}f3 \text{ d}5 \text{ 2. g}3 \text{ c}6 \text{ 3. c}4 \text{ g}4 \)

Step by Step

1.\( \text{d}f3 \text{ d}5 \text{ 2. g}3 \text{ c}6 \text{ 3. c}4 \text{ g}4 \)

![Chess Board Illustration]

4.\( \text{g}2 \text{ g}2 \)

4.\( \text{b}3 \text{ x}f3 \)

Morozevich's 4...\( \text{b}6 \) is less clear – 5.\( \text{e}5 \text{ e}6 \text{ 6. d}3 \text{ f}6 \) (White had the slightly more active pieces after 6...\( \text{g}6 \text{ 7. e}3 \text{ x}b3 \text{ 8. x}b3 \text{ g}7 \text{ 9. f}3 \text{ x}b2 \text{ 10. x}a7 \text{ x}a7 \text{ 11. x}a7 \) in Aronian-Motylev, Sochi 2015.) 7.\( \text{f}3 \text{ f}7 \text{ 8. h}3 \) (8.\( \text{c}3 \text{ a}6 \)) 8...\( \text{e}5 \)

![Chess Board Illustration]

The tactical background of Black's set-up is the line 9.\( \text{c}8 \text{ b}4+ \text{ 10. d}2 \text{ a}5 \).

The stem game Grischuk-Morozevich, Moscow 2012, went 9.0-0 \( \text{a}6 \text{ 10. c}3 \text{ e}7 \text{, but } \text{11. c}2 \) would have been in White's favour. I have also analysed 10...\( \text{xb}3 \text{ 11. x}b3 \text{ d}4 \text{ 12. e}4 \text{ g}6 \text{ 13. e}3 \). 5.\( \text{xf}3 \)?

5.\( \text{xf}3 \text{ e}6!=, \text{ intending to recapture on } \text{d}5 \text{ by } \text{c-pawn}, \text{ is balanced.} \\
\text{a) 6. g}2 \text{ f}6 \text{ 7.0-0 e}7 \text{ 8. b}3 \text{ b}6 \text{ 9. c}2 \text{ 0-0 10. b}3 \text{ a}5 \text{ 11. c}3 \text{ a}6=}

![Chess Board Illustration]

12.\( \text{d}3 \text{ d}8 \text{ 13. b}2 \text{ d}4 \text{ 14. e}4 \text{ x}e4 \text{ 15. d}xe4 \text{ e}5 \text{ 16. a}3 \text{ c}5 \text{ 17. b}4 \text{ a}6 \text{ 18. b}5 \text{ x}b5 \text{ 19. x}b5 \text{ c}8 \text{ 20. d}1 \text{ c}5 \text{ 21.a4 d}7\text{+, Rapport-Balogh, Zombathely 2011.} \\
\text{b) 6. b}3! \text{ b}6! \text{ [Black has tried}
only 6...epromote a6, heading for c5, but
the knight is misplaced there
- 7.&type2 &c5 8.&e8c2 &e6 (8...d4
9.b4±) 9.0-0 &e7 10.d4 &c6d7
11.&e2d2 0-0 12.&e5b3 with a slight
advantage due to the bishop pair
although 12...c5 promises Black
counterplay.] 7.&e5c3 &f6 8.&e4d5
&xb3 9.axb3 cxd5 10.&e2b5?!
&d7 11.&e3xa7 &xa7 12.&e1xa7 when
White's small material
advantage will be short-lived - 12...
&c5 13.&e5c8 14.&e3 &c6, fol-
lowed up by ...&a5xb3.

5...&e5b6
It is safer to trade queens.
5...&e8d7 6.d4 offers White some
initiative although the full con-
trol of the blockading d5-square
neutralises all concrete threats.
For instance: 6...dxc4 7.&e4d4 e6
8.&e5c3 &f6 9.0-0 &e7 10.&e10-0,
Maletin-Pushin, Tula 2009.
6.&e5xb6 axb6 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.&e8c3
e6=.

4.&e8e5 &f5! 5.&e2g2
5.&e5b3 is already a strike at thin
air due to 5...&e8d7! 6.d4 &e5
7.&e5xe5 &e8c7 8.cxd5 &e4 9.&e3 &e4d5
10.&e8c3 g6!? 11.e6 &f6=.
5.cxd5?! &e5xd5 is a double hit to
h1 and a2. White is happy to find
6.&e5b3 (6.d4 &e8b1 7.&e8b1 &e8h1
8.&e5b3 &e7d7 9.&e6xf7 &e4 10.&e1
&e8d4 11.&e6h8 &e8d5 12.&e6b7
&b8 13.&e6a6 &e6f6; 6.&e6f3 &e8b1
7.&e8b1 &e8a2 8.&e8c2 &e8a6--) when simplest would be 6...
&e8d7=. 6...&e5xb3 7.axb3 &e6 is
also roughly equal after 8.d4
(8.d3 &e8d7 9.&e4c4 e5 10.&e2g2 &e6
11.0-0 &e7 12.&e4bd2 0-0 13.&e5
&c5 14.&e5a5 &e7d7 8...&e5d9 &e6
f6 10.&e4c4 &e6 11.&e5g2 &e6b4=.
5...&e6!

6.0-0
6.cxd5 exd5 7.0-0 &e8d7 8.d4 &e6
to 8...&e8g6 9.&e8c3 &e8e7 10.&e8h3 h6
11.&e8b3 &e8b6 12.&e8d1 &e8d8 13.&e8b3
&e8b6 14.&e8d1 &e8d8 15.&e8b3 draw,
Pigusov-Dreev, Pavlodar 1987)
9.&e8f4 &e8e5 10.dxe5 &e8d7 11.&e8c3
&g6 12.e4 &e8e4, Kengis-Yako-
vich, Pinsk 1986.
6...&e8f6 7.d4 &e8d7 8.&e8c3 &e8e7=, see
Game 27 Kazmierczuk-Carolei,
ICCF 2013

4...&e8e6

Main continuations now are:
A. 5.&e8b3; B. 5.0-0; C. 5.cxd5
A. 5.\textit{b3 b6} 6.d3

6.\textit{c2} brings White good results. His idea is to win a tempo later with \textit{e3} or to exploit the weakening of the back rank. For instance: 6...\textit{d6} 7.cxd5 which forces 7...exd5, although this set-up is not dangerous for Black as we’ll see in line C.

An independent line arises after 6...\textit{d7}, having in mind 7.cxd5 cxd5. The game T.L.Petrosian-Aghasaryan, Yerevan 2013, continued 8.0-0 \textit{e7} 9.\textit{a4} \textit{xf3} (9...\textit{h5}?! 10.\textit{e5} \textit{c7} 11.d4 \textit{xe2} 10.\textit{xf3} \textit{c6} 11.\textit{c3} \textit{e7} =

6.\textit{c3} \textit{d7} 7.\textit{e3} \textit{dxc4}?! 8.c5 should be met by 8...\textit{a6}! 9.0-0 \textit{e7} 10.\textit{e1} b6 11.cxb6 axb6 12.e4 0-0 13.exd5

6...\textit{d7} 7.\textit{e3} \textit{dxc4}!?

Black has two solid alternatives: 7...\textit{c5} 8.\textit{xc5} \textit{xc5} 9.\textit{c3} \textit{d6} 10.\textit{bd2} a5 11.\textit{c1} \textit{cd7} 12.0-0 0-0; 7...\textit{xb3} 8.axb3 a6 9.\textit{bd2} \textit{gf6} 10.0-0 \textit{e7} =.

White has undisputable compensation due to his lead in development and open files on the queenside. The best defence is to take the centre under control with:

10...\textit{f6}

In Romanishin-Delchev, Forni di Sopra 2014, I chose 10...\textit{xf3} 11.\textit{xf3} \textit{a5}

Safer is 11...\textit{xc4} 12.\textit{xc4} \textit{c8} 13.0-0 (13.\textit{xa7}b5 14.\textit{b6} \textit{xb6} 15.\textit{xb6} \textit{a3} 16.0-0 \textit{e7} =) 13...\textit{b6} 14.\textit{ab1} \textit{gf6} 15.\textit{fc1} \textit{e7} 16.a4 0-0 17.a5 \textit{d5} 18.axb6 \textit{axb6} 19.\textit{xb6} \textit{xb6} 17.\textit{xb6} 21.\textit{xb6} c5 =.

12.\textit{b1} \textit{b8} 13.\textit{c3} \textit{c7} 14.\textit{a4}

14.\textit{h5}?! \textit{d6} 15.\textit{e4} \textit{d5} 16.\textit{xd5} \textit{exd5} 17.\textit{g5} \textit{gf6} (17...\textit{h6} 18.e4=) 18.\textit{xf7}+ \textit{e7} =.

14...\textit{gf6} 15.\textit{xa7} when 15...\textit{d5}?! is unclear.

One year later, Romanishin repeated the variation, but his opponent
Marzano was apparently well prepared and opted for 10...f6. The same idea works also after 10...\textit{xc}4 11.xc4f6! (but not 11...gf6 12.b1 with nasty pressure).

11.b1

11.0-0 \textit{xc}4 12.xc4 h6!? (12...e5 13.e3 b6 14.a5 0-0-0 15.fb1 c7 16.d2 e7 17.dc4 ed5 18.xb6 xb6 19.b2 is roughly equal as white will regain the pawn. The knight move aims to repel the d4-bishop from the g1-a7 diagonal.) 13.ab1 f5 14.c3 b8 15.h3 xf3 16.xf3 d6 and Black retains the extra pawn although White has probably sufficient compensation.

B. 5.0-0 \textit{f}6 6.d4

I analyse 6.b3 \textit{bd}7 7.b2 \textit{d}6 8.d3 0-0 9.b2 e8 in the annotations to \textbf{Game 30} Janaszak-Dziuba, Warsaw 2011. The same plan is also discussed in the Chapter 14, line B, but Black has an extra tempo there since he pushes ...e5 in one step – on the first move!

6...\textit{bd}7

11...\textit{xc}4 12.xc4 e5

13.e3 (13.c3 b5) 13...b6

13...b5 14.fxe5 fxe5 15.xc6 leads to a very sharp and unclear endgame after both 15...c8 16.xb5 c5 17.xe5 xe3 and 15...xc4 16.xa8 cxd3 17.exd3.

14.cf2 c8

7.c3

7.b2 e7! I prefer this square for the bishop in order to enable a possible exchange on e5 if White’s knight landed there. 8.b3 0-0 9.b2 a5

This is the thematic plan against White’s set-up, but 9...h6 also deserves attention, securing the g4-bishop: 10.e1 (10.e5 xe5 11.dxe5 \textit{d}7 12.h3 \textit{h}5 13.g4
Chapter 12

\( g6 14.e4 \) \( \triangleleft c5 \) 10...\( f5 \) followed up by ...a5.

10.a3

10...\( \triangleleft e5 \) \( \triangleleft x e 5 \) 11.dxe5 \( \triangleleft d7 \) is generally fine for Black – 12.h3 \( \triangleleft h 5 \) 13.g4 \( \triangleleft g 6 \) 14.e4 dxe4 15.dxe4 \( \triangleleft c 5 \) 16.d6 \( \triangleleft d 3 \) 17.a3 f6!! (17...\( \triangleleft x e 5 \) 18.c5) 18.d2 \( \triangleleft b 8 \) 19.c5 fxe5\+.

10...h6

10...b5 11.c5 \( \triangleleft b 8 \) 12.b4 is difficult to win with either side.

11.e1 \( \triangleleft f 5 \) 12.a5 \( \triangleleft x e 5 \) 13.dxe5 \( \triangleleft d 7 \) 14.cxd5

14.e4 is dubious with a closed c-file – 14...dxe4 15.dxe4 \( \triangleleft c 5 \) 16.d6 \( \triangleleft x d 6 \)\+.

14...cxd5 15.e4

White needs to open the centre as otherwise Black has a clear plan on the queenside – 15.d4 \( \triangleleft c 5 \) 16.\( \triangleleft c 1 \) \( \triangleleft c 8 \) 17.\( \triangleleft b 2 \) \( \triangleleft d 7 \) 18.\( \triangleleft e c 1 \) b5 19.\( \triangleleft e 3 \) \( \triangleleft f d 8 \) 20.\( \triangleleft f 3 \) a4 21.d4 \( \triangleleft x b 3 \) 22.\( \triangleleft x b 3 \) axb3 23.\( \triangleleft x b 3 \) \( \triangleleft c 4 \)\+; Malaniuk-Dreev, Tilburg 1993.

15...dxe4

16.dxe4 (16.dxe4 \( \triangleleft c 5 \) 17.d8=) Here Bagirov-Rabiega, Berlin 1995, signed a draw. Both 16...\( \triangleleft x e 4 \) 17.dxe4 \( \triangleleft c 8 \) and 16...\( \triangleleft c 5 \) 17.dxe5 are equal.

7.b3 \( \triangleleft e 7 \) 8.\( \triangleleft b 2 \) 0-0 9.\( \triangleleft d 2 \) should transpose to 7.d2 unless Black chooses 8.\( \triangleleft e 4 \)? 9.d2 \( \triangleleft x d 2 \) 10.d2 0-0.

7...dxc4?!

7...e7 is certainly possible. White usually continues 8.\( \triangleleft b 3 \)

8.cxd5 exd5 9.h3 is best met by 9...\( \triangleleft f 5 \) (9...\( \triangleleft h 5 \) allows 10.\( \triangleleft e 5 \) \( \triangleleft x e 5 \) 11.dxe5 \( \triangleleft d 7 \) 12.g4 \( \triangleleft g 6 \) 13.f4) 10.\( \triangleleft h 4 \) \( \triangleleft g 6 \)\=.

8...\( \triangleleft b 6 \)

In this popular position top players prefer lately 9.\( \triangleleft e 1 \)

9.c5 is typically met by 9...\( \triangleleft a 6 \) and then ...b6. The rook move is aimed against it.

9...0-0 10.c5 \( \triangleleft x b 3 \)

10...\( \triangleleft a 6 \) is less attractive here as 11.e4 dxe4 12.\( \triangleleft x e 4 \) \( \triangleleft x e 4 \) 13.\( \triangleleft x e 4 \) practically forces 13...\( \triangleleft x f 3 \) in view of the threat 14.\( \triangleleft f 1 \).

You could retain more tension with 10...\( \triangleleft c 7 \) 11.\( \triangleleft f 4 \) \( \triangleleft c 8 \), but it is not advisable to give more space to a good player as you will have to struggle for the rest of the game, e.g., 12.h6 (12...b6 13.d6 \( \triangleleft d 8 \) 14.\( \triangleleft x e 7 \) \( \triangleleft x e 7 \) 15.\( \triangleleft x b 6 \) axb6 16.e4) 13.e4 dxe4 14.\( \triangleleft x e 4 \) \( \triangleleft x e 4 \) 15.\( \triangleleft x e 4 \) \( \triangleleft f 6 \) 16.\( \triangleleft e 1 \) \( \triangleleft d 5 \) 17.\( \triangleleft d 2 \) \( \triangleleft x f 3 \) 18.\( \triangleleft x f 3 \) \( \triangleleft d 8 \) 19.h4 with an

11.axb3 a6 12.b4 \texttt{efe}8

The blunt 12...\texttt{xf}3 (anticipating the typical manoeuvre \texttt{f}3-d2-b3-a5) 13.exf3 \texttt{fd}8 proved quite effective for a draw in Bu-Malakhov, China 2015: 14.f4 g6 15.\texttt{xe}3 \texttt{e}8 16.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{c}7 17.\texttt{b}1 \texttt{f}6 18.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{g}4 19.\texttt{f}3 h5 20.h3 \texttt{h}6 21.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{g}7 22.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{f}5 23.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{h}8 24.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{f}6 25.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{ae}8 26.\texttt{h}1 \texttt{e}7 27.\texttt{a}a1 \texttt{cg}8 28.g4 draw.

13.\texttt{f}4

13.\texttt{d}2 e5 assures Black of counterplay.

8...e4

It is clear that White’s hopes are based on the strong centre, but in practice he often inserts a4 a5 first: 8.a4 a5 9.e4 \texttt{b}4

9...\texttt{b}6, threatening ...e5, is also in Black’s favour.

10.\texttt{e}2 e5 11.d5 cxd5

11...\texttt{ec}8 keeps the extra pawn – 12.\texttt{d}1 cxd5 13.exd5 0-0\texttt{=}, Matnadze-Dzagnidze, Istanbul 2012, but it is even better to have even pawns and a clear positional advantage.

12.exd5 0-0 13.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{ec}8\texttt{=}.

8...e5

8...b5 9.h3 (9.e5? \texttt{d}5 10.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{e}7\texttt{=} 9...\texttt{xf}3 10.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{e}7 11.e5?! \texttt{d}5 12.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{f}8 defends everything and Black can hope to advance his pawn majority on the queenside. However, in this line White has lasting pressure by just staying solidly in the centre, e.g. 11.\texttt{d}1 0-0 12.\texttt{f}4, which compensates for the missing pawn. It is better to contest the centre at once.

9.\texttt{e}3 (9.dxe5?! \texttt{xf}3 10.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{xe}5\texttt{=}) 9...\texttt{ex}d4 10.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{d}5 (threatening 11...\texttt{e}6) 11.e5 \texttt{d}5 12.\texttt{e}2

Black has at least two ways of reaching comfortable equality:

a) 12...\texttt{b}6 13.\texttt{ad}1 \texttt{d}3 14.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{d}7 15.\texttt{xb}6 axb6 16.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xb}2 17.\texttt{xd}7 \texttt{xc}4 18.\texttt{xb}7\texttt{=}.

b) 12...\texttt{f}5?! 13.\texttt{xd}5 cxd5 14.\texttt{fd}1 \texttt{e}7 15.b3 \texttt{d}3 16.e6 0-0 17.exf7+ \texttt{h}8\texttt{=}. 201
C. 5.cxd5 exd5

It is always risky to unbalance the game with Black, but this is the best way to play for a win. In my practice I prefer the solid 5...\(\text{x}f3\) 6.\(\text{x}f3\) cxd5 7.0-0 \(\text{c}6\) 8.d3 \(\text{f}6\) 9.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{e}7\)

White's bishop pair does not have great prospects due to the symmetrical pawn structure. I consider in detail this backup line in the annotations to Game 29 Mola-Delchev, 2015.

6.0-0

6.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{b}6\) 7.\(\text{c}2\) is an attempt to win a tempo with \(\text{e}3\) since White was going to play \(\text{c}2\) anyway. However, the black queen may retreat to a6 where it would be quite active:

7...\(\text{d}7\) 8.0-0 \(\text{g}6\) 9.d3 (9.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{d}6\)) 9...\(\text{c}5!\)

An important move, aimed at driving the enemy queen back to d1.

9...\(\text{d}6\) 10.e4 0-0 is also possible – 11.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{e}8\) (11...\(\text{e}5\) 12.\(\text{x}e5\) \(\text{x}e5\) 13.\(\text{e}3!\) d4 14.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{b}5\) 15.\(\text{c}1\) offers White a mobile pawn pair e4-f4.) 12.\(\text{e}3\)

12...\(\text{a}6!\) (12...\(\text{a}5\) 13.\(\text{d}4!\) dxe4 14.dxe4 defines the centre in White's favour) 13.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{e}5\) 14.h3 \(\text{d}7=(\text{or 13...c5 14.\(\text{d}b5\) d4 15.\(\text{x}d6\) \(\text{xd6}\) 16.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{a}6?\)).

10.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{d}6\) 11.\(\text{c}3\) 0-0 12.\(\text{e}3\)

12.e4 is not a good idea because of 12...dxe4 13.dxe4 \(\text{e}5\). After 12.h3 \(\text{h}5\) 13.e4 dxe4 14.dxe4 \(\text{e}5\) 15.g4 \(\text{g}6\) 16.\(\text{x}e5\) \(\text{x}e5\) 17.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{e}7\) 18.f3 Black could trade a piece with 18...h5 19.g5 \(\text{xc}3\) 20.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{d}5=?\).

12...\(\text{a}5\)

13.\(\text{h}3\)

The game T.L.Petrosian-Hovhannisyan, Lake Sevan Martuni 2015, saw the wrong plan 13.a3?! \(\text{e}8\) 14.b4 \(\text{d}8\) 15.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{f}8\) 16.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{e}6\) 17.\(\text{c}3\) when 17...b5 18.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{c}8\) 19.\(\text{b}3\) c5 20.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) favours Black.

13...\(\text{h}5\) 14.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{g}6\) 15.f4 \(\text{e}8\)
16.\textit{xf}2. Now a good redeployment is 16...\textit{ed}8! 17.\textit{d}d2 \textit{c}c7 18.\textit{ac}1 \textit{b}8! =.

6...\textit{df}6 7.\textit{d}3 \textit{bd}7 8.\textit{ac}3 \textit{d}6

8...\textit{e}7 and 8...\textit{c}5 are well tested alternatives.

9.\textit{h}3

I do not believe that White could aspire to the advantage without this move so he better play it right away. 9.\textit{e}4 does not gain anything since 9...0-0 10.\textit{h}3 \textit{h}5 will simply transpose. Besides, 9...\textit{dxe}4 10.\textit{dxe}4 \textit{e}5 evens the game outright.

9.\textit{c}2 0-0 10.\textit{e}4 \textit{e}8 11.\textit{h}3 \textit{h}5 is another important branch of the main line.

9...\textit{h}5

9...\textit{xf}3 10.\textit{xf}3 \textit{d}4

10...0-0 11.\textit{e}4 \textit{dxe}4 12.\textit{dxe}4 gives White a fluid centre and the bishop pair.

11.\textit{e}4 leads to a very static position where Black lacks any active plan while White could try to mount a minority attack with \textit{b}4. I would avoid it for practical reasons.

10.\textit{e}4

The only sensible plan. 10.\textit{d}d4 0-0 11.\textit{f}5 \textit{c}7 12.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}8 13.\textit{d}d2 \textit{f}8 14.\textit{b}4 \textit{e}6 15.\textit{d}4 \textit{b}6 was pleasant for Black in Vaganian-Murey, Marseille 1987.

10...0-0 11.\textit{exd}5

Practice has also seen here 11.\textit{c}2 although this position arises more often following the move order with 9.\textit{c}2. We answer 11...\textit{e}8 12.\textit{h}4

For 12.\textit{e}3 \textit{c}5! see Game 28 Markowski-Pedersen, Istanbul 2003.

12...\textit{c}5!

The knight is heading for e6-d4. We try to keep as much tension as possible in the centre and play on the dark squares. Any White's pawn advance will be double-edged as his pieces are still undeveloped and not ready to back it.

This line now branches to:

a) 13.\textit{g}5? \textit{e}6 14.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 15.\textit{exd}5 \textit{d}4 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{g}5++. 
b) 13.\text{\textit{e}3} \text{\textit{e}6} 14.\text{\textit{exd}5} \text{\textit{xd}5} 15.\text{\textit{exd}5} \text{\textit{cx}d}5 16.d4 \text{\textit{e}7} 17.\text{\textit{w}f5} \text{\textit{e}2} 18.\text{\textit{fe}1} \text{\textit{c}4} 19.\text{\textit{f}3} \text{\textit{g}6}=.

c) 13.f4 \text{\textit{e}6}! 14.e5 (14.\text{\textit{f}5} \text{\textit{c}5+} 15.\text{\textit{h}2} \text{\textit{g}6=} 14...\text{\textit{c}5+} 15.\text{\textit{h}2} \text{\textit{d}7} and White’s offence has come to a halt while Black could think of ...g5 or ...f6.

d) 13.\text{\textit{f}5} \text{\textit{f}8} 14.\text{\textit{e}3}
14.g4 \text{\textit{g}6} 15.e5 \text{\textit{fd}7} 16.d4 \text{\textit{e}6}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\tikz{[scale=0.5, color=black!20, very thin, line width=1pt, black, open, draw]}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

We see a typical overextended White’s centre. 17.\text{\textit{e}3} stumbles into 17...c5 and 17.\text{\textit{d}1} could be met by either 17...c5, or 17...f6.
14...\text{\textit{g}6} 15.\text{\textit{xc}5} (15.\text{\textit{ad}1} \text{\textit{xf}5}) 15...\text{\textit{xc}5} 16.\text{\textit{xd}5} \text{\textit{xf}2+} 17.\text{\textit{xf}2} cxd5=, Leopolis-Pelger, gameknot.com 2007.

11...cxd5 12.g4 \text{\textit{g}6} 13.\text{\textit{h}4} \text{\textit{c}5} 14.\text{\textit{dxg}6}

The immediate 14.d4 could face 14...\text{\textit{ce}4} 15.\text{\textit{xd}5} \text{\textit{xd}5} 16.\text{\textit{dxg}6} fxg6 17.\text{\textit{xe}4} \text{\textit{f}4} with compensation, e.g. 18.\text{\textit{w}f3} \text{\textit{h}8} 19.\text{\textit{xb}7} (19.\text{\textit{xe}1} \text{\textit{b}8}) 19...\text{\textit{b}8} 20.\text{\textit{c}6} \text{\textit{e}6} (20...\text{\textit{c}7?!}) 21.\text{\textit{xd}5} \text{\textit{xd}4}=.

14...hxg6 15.d4 \text{\textit{e}6} 16.\text{\textit{e}3}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\tikz{[scale=0.5, color=black!20, very thin, line width=1pt, black, open, draw]}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

16...\text{\textit{c}7}!

Underlining the weakness of the h2-b8 diagonal. 16...\text{\textit{f}4} cost Black a pawn after 17.\text{\textit{b}3} \text{\textit{b}8} 18.\text{\textit{ad}1} b5 19.\text{\textit{xf}4} \text{\textit{xf}4} 20.\text{\textit{fe}1} \text{\textit{b}6} 21.\text{\textit{xd}5} \text{\textit{xd}5} 22.\text{\textit{xd}5}+, Radjabov-Ivanchuk, Ningbo 2011, with an eventual draw.

17.\text{\textit{b}3} \text{\textit{d}6} 18.f4 \text{\textit{b}6} 19.\text{\textit{ad}1} \text{\textit{ae}8} 20.\text{\textit{h}1}

Or 20.g5 \text{\textit{h}5} 21.\text{\textit{xd}5} \text{\textit{g}3} 22.\text{\textit{f}3} \text{\textit{f}5} 23.\text{\textit{xb}6} axb6 and Black easily regains the pawn.

20...\text{\textit{e}7} 21.f5 \text{\textit{c}7} 22.\text{\textit{g}1} \text{\textit{f}4=}

White’s position is dangerous in view of his naked king.
Chapter 12. 1.\( \text{f3} \) d5 2.g3

Annotated Games

27. Kazmierczuk – Carolei
VWC6/pr23 ICCF 2013

1.f3 f6 2.g3 d5 3.g2 g6 4.0-0 g4 5.e5 f5 6.d4 \( \text{bd7} \)
7.c4 e6 8.c3 \( \text{e7} \)

This position arises more often with a knight on f3 instead of e5. The difference should be in Black’s favour as he is constantly threatening to take on e5, for instance:
9.b3 0-0 10.b2 \( \text{xe5} \) 11.dxe5 \( \text{e4} \)
12.\( \text{xe4} \) dxe4= or:
9.f4 0-0 10.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 11.dxe5 (11.\( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{b6} \)) 11...\( \text{d7} \) 12.\( \text{xb7?} \)
\( \text{c5} \) 13.\( \text{b4} \) (13.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{xc6} \) 14.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{c8} \)) 14.\( \text{a3} \) \( \text{b8} \)
15.\( \text{c6} \) \( \text{b6} \)) 13...\( \text{b8} \) 14.\( \text{a3} \) \( \text{b3} \).

9.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{b6} \)

Black does not have enough compensation after 9...\( \text{xe5} \) 10.dxe5 \( \text{d7} \) 11.\( \text{xb7} \) 0-0 12.\( \text{xc6!} \) \( \text{xe5} \)
13.\( \text{a6} \) \( \text{xc4} \) 14.e4.

10.\( \text{xd7} \) \( \text{xd7} \) 11.e4 \( \text{dxe4} \)
12.\( \text{xe4} \) 0-0 13.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{fd8} \)

It is possible to trade queens immediately – 13...\( \text{xb3} \) 14.\( \text{xb3} \) a6
15.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{ac8} \) 16.d5 \( \text{xd5} \) 17.\( \text{xd5} \) e5
18.d6 \( \text{xd6} \) 19.\( \text{xb7} \) \( \text{b8} \) 20.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{c5} \)=.

14.h3 \( \text{xb3} \)

14...\( \text{f6} \) 15.\( \text{c5} \) gave White a slight pull after 15...\( \text{xc5} \) 16.\( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{c7} \)
17.\( \text{fd1} \) in Mozharov-Belov, Moscow 2014, due to the weak square d6.
The waiting 14...h6 was a good alternative to the game move.

White should continue 15.\( \text{fc1} \)!
Or 15...\textit{w}\textsubscript{c}3 \textit{d}6 16.d5 \textit{c}5!; Otherwise Black takes on b3:
15.\textit{e}fd1 \textit{w}xb3 16.axb3 \textit{d}6 17.\textit{c}c3 \textit{e}c2;
15.\textit{e}fe1 \textit{w}xb3 16.axb3 \textit{a}6 17.\textit{d}c3 \textit{e}c2 18.d5 \textit{w}xb3 19.dxc6 bxc6
20.\textit{e}xc6 \textit{e}ac8 21.\textit{f}xd7 \textit{e}xd7 22.c5 \textit{e}xc5 23.\textit{e}xc5 \textit{e}xc5
24.\textit{e}xa6 \textit{b}7=.
15...\textit{w}xb3 16.axb3 \textit{a}6 17.\textit{d}c3! (intending d4-d5 or 17...\textit{d}f6 18.\textit{a}a4)
17...\textit{e}ac8, Romanishin-Dorfman, Tashkent 1980. It was interesting to try here 18.d5 when 18...
\textit{exd}5 19.cxd5 \textit{x}d5 20.\textit{e}xc5 \textit{e}xc1+ 21.\textit{e}xc1 \textit{g}8 offers White a slight ini-
tiative. The computer proposes the original 18...\textit{d}c5!? 19.dxc6 bxc6
with the more active pieces which compensate for the split queenside
pawns.

15.axb3

![Chess Diagram]

15...\textit{a}5

Sam Collins successfully defended against K. Arkell and L. Gutman the
position after 15...\textit{d}f6 16.\textit{e}c5 \textit{x}c5
17.dxc5 \textit{e}4.
The text fixes the b3-pawn which
might prove useful at some point. However, human players mistrust

such committal moves as it is diffi-
cult to judge which pawn would be weaker – b3 or a5.

16.\textit{e}fd1

This has no venom. More challenging was to take c2 under control
with 16.\textit{f}c1, or to display activity with
16.g4!? \textit{x}g6 17.f4 \textit{h}6 18.f5 \textit{exf}5
19.\textit{g}x\textit{f}5 \textit{h}7 20.\textit{d}d2 \textit{b}6 21.\textit{c}c3.

16...\textit{d}f6 17.\textit{e}xf6+ \textit{xf}6 18.\textit{d}d2 \textit{h}5 19.\textit{e}h2 \textit{e}7

20.\textit{d}5

Both sides lack an active plan and a
waiting game would be a logical ap-
proach. White forces the course of
events, but becomes even slightly
worse due to his doubled pawn.

20...\textit{c}xd5 21.\textit{c}xd5 \textit{b}4 22.\textit{d}d4
\textit{c}5 23.\textit{d}da4?! \textit{xe}3 24.\textit{f}xe3
\textit{exd}5 25.\textit{e}xa5 \textit{e}a5 26.\textit{e}a5 \textit{e}6
27.\textit{b}5 \textit{d}7 28.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}6 29.\textit{g}2
\textit{f}8 30.\textit{f}2 \textit{e}7 31.\textit{h}4 \textit{d}6
32.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}7 33.\textit{d}2 \textit{c}6 34.\textit{a}5
\textit{c}8 35.\textit{a}4 \textit{d}6 36.\textit{a}5 \textit{c}6
37.\textit{b}5 \textit{a}6 38.e4 dxe4 39.\textit{xe}4
\textit{e}1 40.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}1+ 41.\textit{d}4 \textit{d}7
42.\textit{b}6+ Draw.
In principle, White should avoid exchanges. 13.\( \text{xf}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 14.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{cxe}4 \) 15.\( \text{dx}e4 \) \( \text{cxd}5 \) 16.\( \text{ex}d5 \) \( \text{g}6 \) eliminates the whole centre.

Another try is 13.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{g}6 \), creating a hidden pin along the diagonal, e.g. 14.\( \text{ae}1 \) \( \text{dxe}4 \) 15.\( \text{dx}e4 \) \( \text{d}5 \)!. Or 14.\( \text{fd}1 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 15.\( \text{ex}d5 \) \( \text{e}5 \) with the more active pieces.

13.\( \text{xf}8 \)

13...\( \text{dxe}4 \) 14.\( \text{dx}e4 \) \( \text{xf}3 \) 15.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{e}5 \) 16.\( \text{g}2 \) \( \text{d}3 \) 17.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{c}4 \) 18.\( \text{ad}1 \) \( \text{xb}3 \) simplifies to a balanced endgame.

13...\( \text{b}6 \)! (intending ...\( \text{c}5 \)?)

14.\( \text{ae}1 \) occurred in the correspondence game Ptak-Merlicek, 1997, when 14...\( \text{dxe}4 \) 15.\( \text{dx}e4 \) \( \text{xf}3 \) 16.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{e}5 \) would force the clumsy retreat 17.\( \text{e}2 \). Instead, Black chose the solid 14...\( \text{c}5 \) 15.\( \text{ex}d5 \) and a draw was agreed.

14.\( \text{a}4 \)?!

I understand White’s reluctance to take on d5, but this move hands Black the initiative. Perhaps best re­tort was 14...\( \text{xf}3 \) 15.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{d}4 \), but the retreat to e7 is also good enough.

14...\( \text{e}7 \) 15.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{c}5 \) (15...\( \text{e}6 \)?)

16.\( \text{ex}d5 \) \( \text{cxd}5 \) 17.\( \text{g}5 \)

17...\( \text{e}7 \)

17...\( \text{e}6 \)!? 18.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 19.\( \text{g}4 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 20.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 21.\( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{e}8 \) would have given Black full compensation for the pawn. The text is passive and White could have exploited it with 18.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 19.\( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 20.\( \text{ae}1 \) with a slight pull.

18.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{h}6 \) 19.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 20.\( \text{fe}1 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 21.\( \text{xe}6 \) \( \text{xe}6 \) 22.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 23.\( \text{b}3 \)

It was possible to eat the a7-pawn – 23.\( \text{xa}7 \) b6 24.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 25.\( \text{b}5 \) e5 26.a4 and White always has a5 to save the bishop – 26...\( \text{e}7 \) 27.\( \text{ec}1 \)
Chapter 12

Chapter 12

39. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{d4} \) 40. \( \text{b3} \) \( \text{h7} \) 41. \( \text{c3} \) \( \text{d8} \) 42. \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{d1+} \) 43. \( \text{e1} \)

A decisive mistake. 43... \( \text{f4} \) 44. \( \text{f1} \) \( \text{e3} \) 45. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e5} \) 46. \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 47. \( \text{g2} \) \( \text{g5} \) 48. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{g8} \) 49. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{g4} \) 50. \( \text{c3} \)

White's bishop controls both wings so it seems that 25.f4 was better, but then g3 would become a target after ... \( \text{h5} \), ...g5. Markowski adopts the Nimzowitsch's approach to blockade e6, but it is ineffective here.

25... \( \text{xe5} \) 26. \( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{a6} \) 27. \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{f7} \) 28. \( \text{xa3} \) \( \text{d7} \) 29. \( \text{e2} \) \( \text{f6} \) 30. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{e5} \)!

Black takes over the initiative for a small price.

31. \( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{c5} \) 32. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{h5} \) 33. \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{g6} \) 34. \( \text{e1} \) (34. \( \text{d1+} \) ) 34... \( \text{d4} \)

Black forces the play prematurely. 34... \( \text{ed8} \) was better.

35. \( \text{dxe4} \) \( \text{dxe4} \) 36. \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{d8} \) 37. \( \text{xd8} \) \( \text{xd8} \) 38. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{e6} \)
7.0-0

7...\texttt{b3} only hinders White's plan with \texttt{a3}, \texttt{b4} and sooner or later he'll have to return the queen back home - 7...\texttt{d7} 8.\texttt{c3} \texttt{c6} 9.\texttt{g2} \texttt{f6} 10.0-0 \texttt{e7} 11.d3 0-0 12.\texttt{d2} \texttt{ac8} (or 12...\texttt{d4}) 13.\texttt{fc1} \texttt{fd8} 14.\texttt{d1} h6 15.a3 \texttt{d6} 16.b4 \texttt{e5} 17.\texttt{ab1} \texttt{e8} 18.\texttt{a4} b6 19.e3 \texttt{d6} 20.\texttt{b3} \texttt{e7} 21.\texttt{b2} \texttt{xc1+} 22.\texttt{xc1} \texttt{xc8=}, Anastasian-Seirawan, Groningen 1997.

7...\texttt{c6} 8.\texttt{d3} \texttt{f6} 9.\texttt{c3} \texttt{e7} 10.\texttt{f4}

10.\texttt{f4} 0-0 11.\texttt{f4} a6 12.\texttt{fc1} b5 13.\texttt{d1} offers Black the initiative - 13...\texttt{c8} 14.e4 d4 15.\texttt{b1} \texttt{d7} 16.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c5} 17.\texttt{e2} \texttt{d7} or 17...\texttt{b6} 18.b4 \texttt{d7} 19.\texttt{e1} a5. Even the positional pawn sac 17...\texttt{a4} 18.b3 \texttt{c3}!? 19.\texttt{xc3} dxc3 20.\texttt{xc3} \texttt{a3} 21.\texttt{c2} \texttt{d4} assures Black of a comfortable game with zero risk.

10.e4 is unimpressive. In the concrete position Black can safely trade on e4, but it is generally clever to keep the centre closed when facing a bishop pair. Therefore, I recommend to meet e4 by ...d4:

10...d4 11.\texttt{b1} \texttt{d7} 12.a3 a5 13.a4 \texttt{g5} 14.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c5} 15.\texttt{e2} \texttt{xd2}

16.\texttt{xd2} \texttt{b6} 17.\texttt{c2} \texttt{b3} and Black had a slight initiative in Pr.Nikolic-Bluebaum, Germany 2014.

White often develops his bishop on d2 - 10.\texttt{g2} 0-0 11.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c8} or 11...\texttt{b6} 12.\texttt{b1} a6 13.\texttt{a4} \texttt{a7} 14.\texttt{ec1} \texttt{ac8} 15.a3 b5 16.\texttt{c3} \texttt{d7}.

12.a3

12.\texttt{b3} does not really threaten anything - 12...\texttt{d4}! 13.\texttt{fc1} (13.\texttt{xb7} \texttt{c5} 14.\texttt{b5} a6) 13...\texttt{a6} 14.\texttt{d1} \texttt{g5}!? 

A thematic idea in this pawn structure. At some point White will try to activate his g2-bishop with e2-e4 and we'll answer ...d4. Then, according to the ABC book, our dark-squared bishop will be constrained behind our own pawns. To be sure, White could prevent the exchange, but 15.e3 creates a weakness on d3 which might tell after 15...\texttt{e7} 16.\texttt{e2} \texttt{b6}.

The game Zaragatski-Gyimesi, Germany 2011, went 15.\texttt{xg5} \texttt{g5} 16.d4 \texttt{b6} 17.e3 \texttt{c7} 18.\texttt{a4} \texttt{xa4} 19.\texttt{xa4} \texttt{e7} 20.\texttt{c5} \texttt{a7} 21.b4 \texttt{b5} 22.\texttt{f1} \texttt{d6} 23.\texttt{ac1} \texttt{d7} 24.\texttt{d3} \texttt{b8}
25.\textit{c}2 g6 26.a4 \textit{g}7 27.a5 b5
28.axb6 draw.

12...a6 13.b4 \textit{d}7 14.\textit{b}3 \textit{d}4
15.\textit{a}2 \textit{f}6 16.\textit{ac}1 \textit{e}5 17.\textit{h}1

Black has gained some advantage in
the centre which allows him to dis-
play activity on the kingside:
17...h5 18.f4
18.h3 weakens g3 – 18...\textit{b}6
19.f4 \textit{f}5 20.\textit{h}2 \textit{e}3 21.fxe5
\textit{xf}1+ 22.\textit{x}f1 \textit{xe}5 23.\textit{a}4 \textit{c}6.\textit{f}
18...\textit{g}4 19.e4 dxe4 20.\textit{xe}4 (20.
dxe4 \textit{b}3) 20...\textit{xc}1 21.\textit{xc}1 \textit{e}7
22.h3 \textit{f}6 23.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 24.g4
(24.\textit{xb}7 \textit{f}5 25.\textit{h}2 \textit{xd}3)
24...\textit{d}7. White’s position is dan-
gerous, McShane-Fressinet, Wijk
aan Zee 2011.

10...0-0 11.a3 \textit{c}8

I had played earlier 11...\textit{b}6 12.b4
\textit{d}4 13.\textit{g}2 \textit{f}8 14.\textit{d}2, Buchal-
Delchev, Bad Wiessee 2013,

when 14...a5! 15.bxa5 \textit{b}3 is ab-
solutely comfortable for Black. In-
stead, I opted for the mundane
14...\textit{c}7 15.e3 \textit{b}5 16.\textit{xb}5 \textit{xb}5
17.\textit{b}3 \textit{ac}8 18.\textit{fc}1 \textit{xc}1+ 19.\textit{xc}1
\textit{xc}1+ 20.\textit{xc}1 \textit{a}5 21.\textit{d}2 axb4
22.axb4 h5 23.\textit{f}1 \textit{d}7 (23...d4!=)
24.\textit{c}3 d4=.

12.\textit{c}1 a6 13.\textit{g}2 \textit{d}7 14.\textit{d}2
b5 15.f4 \textit{d}4 16.\textit{h}1 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{b}1
\textit{db}3 18.\textit{e}1 d4 19.\textit{e}4 a5
20.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 21.\textit{e}1 a4

Fixing the pawns on dark squares.
21...\textit{b}6 22.b4 axb4 23.\textit{xb}4 would
be totally equal and Black should
even think about defence since 23...
g6?! would run into 24.e4.

22.\textit{b}4 \textit{d}7 23.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5
24.\textit{d}2 \textit{c}7 25.\textit{c}2 \textit{fc}8 26.\textit{fc}1
\textit{g}6 27.\textit{f}3 \textit{d}6 28.\textit{d}1 h5 29.h4
e5 30.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 31.\textit{g}1 f5
32.\textit{g}2 \textit{g}7 33.\textit{d}5

33...\textit{d}6

Black has a lasting advantage due to
the weak kingside pawns. Perhaps I
should have changed a pair of rooks
with 33...\textit{d}6 34.\textit{xc}7+ \textit{xc}7!= in or-
der to free my bishop from the pin.
The c-file is unimportant.


34.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}7} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}8} 35.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash d}5} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}8} 36.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}3} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}3} 37.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash g}1} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}7} 38.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}1} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash h}6}

38...\texttt{\textbackslash d}6?! is similar to the game – 39.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}c7} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}c7} 40.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}5} 41.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash g}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}7} 42.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}5} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}3} 43.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}5\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}}.

39.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash d}6} 40.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}c7} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}c7} 41.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}1} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}5} 42.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}2} \texttt{b}4

42...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}7} 43.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}5} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}3} 44.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}5 45.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}d}4 is a draw.

43.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}xb}4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}b}4 44.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}4} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}b}2 45.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}x}a4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash d}6} 46.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}6} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}6} 47.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}6} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}6} 48.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash g}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}5} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash d}raw}.

30. Janaszak – Dziuba  
Warsaw 17.12.2011

1.\texttt{c4} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}6} 2.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{c}6 3.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash g}2} \texttt{d}5 4.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}3} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash g}4} 5.0-0 \texttt{e}6 6.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}d7} 7.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash d}6} 8.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}2} 0-0 9.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}d2}

9...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}e}8

Our plan is to push ...\texttt{e}5, so this move is not bad, but the immediate 9...\texttt{e}5 was also possible. Even better is to include 9...\texttt{a}5 10.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{e}5 in order to weaken the enemy’s queenside. The blitz game Edouard-Gunina, 2014, went 11.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash h}5} 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash h}4} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}8} 13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}1}?! (this move would make sense only if the centre were closed with \texttt{e}4-\texttt{d}4) 13...\texttt{e}4! 14.\texttt{dxe}4 \texttt{dxe}4 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}5} when 15...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}7} (instead of 15...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}5}) would have preserved an important attacking piece.

Note that 10.\texttt{a}3 is an almost automatic answer since otherwise Black would obtain some pull on the queenside. For instance, look at the game Sadorra-Dreev, Richardson 2010: 9...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}8} 10.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}5} 11.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}e1} \texttt{a}5 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash h}4} \texttt{a}4 13.\texttt{h}3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}6} 14.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{dxe}4 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}4 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}4 \texttt{a}xb3 17.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}b}3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}6} 18.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}2} 19.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}1} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}a}8 20.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}a}2 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}a}2 21.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash d}1} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}5} with active pieces.

The text waits for White to define his plan first. A similar approach is 9...\texttt{a}5 10.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash h}5} 11.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}2} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}5} 12.\texttt{e}4

12...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}4 13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash x}e}4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash e}8} 14.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash h}4} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}5} 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}3} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}6} 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash a}d}1 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash f}8} 17.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash b}1} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbackslash c}5=}, Leko-Kasparov, Wijk aan Zee 2001.

10.\texttt{h}3

If White delayed this move too much, the bishop could return to \texttt{e}6! Let's consider:
Chapter 12

10.a3 a5 11.\(\mathcal{W}\)c2 e5 (threatening \(...e5\rightarrow e4\rightarrow e3\))

11...dxe4 12.dxe4 \(\mathcal{A}\)e5!.

a) We commonly meet 12.e4?! by 12...dxe4 and then we try to exploit the hole on d4 – 13.dxe4

\[\begin{align*}
13.\&xe4 & \&xe4 14.dxe4 \&c5 \\
15.\&h4 & (15.\&fd1 \&f6 16.h3 \&xf3 \\
17.\&xd7 \&ed8) 15...\&b6 (15...g6?) 16.h3 \&e6 17.\&fd1 \&d4. \\
13...\&b6! 14.\&c3 (14.h3 allows 14...\&xf3 15.\&xf3 \&c5 16.\&d2 \&e6) 14...\&c5 15.h3 \\
15.\&b2 \&xf3! 16.\&xf3 \&d4 17.b4 c5 crowns Black's dark-squared strategy. \\
15...\&h5 16.g4 \&g6 17.\&h4 \&d4 18.\&xd4 exd4\#. White's pieces are awkwardly placed. That turns the otherwise strong e4-pawn into a weakness.
\end{align*}\]

b) 12.e3?! h6!. Now our bishop could retreat to e6. 13.\&h4 \&c8! 14.h3 \&e6 15.f4 (15.\&c3 b5) 15...\&xf4 16.exf4 \&c5 17.b4 \&a6 18.c5 \&e7 and White is unable to parry all Black's threats – apart of the hit on b4, ...\&h5 is also awkward.

\[\begin{align*}
10...\&h5 11.\&c2
\end{align*}\]

The insertion of 11.a3 a5 suits Black. 11.e4 is premature due to the pin –

12.e4

12.g4?! \&g6 13.\&h4 offers us space to grab – 13...d4\# 14.a3 a5 15.\&xg6 hxg6 16.\&ae1 \&e7 (16...\&c5 17.\&f3 \&e7 18.\&c1 \&d6 19.\&d2 \&ad8) 17.\&c1 \&c5 18.\&a1 \&f8, pinpointing the weakness on f4.

12.e3?! h6! 13.\&h4 \&f8! faces White with a choice:

a) 14.g4 \&g6 15.\&xg6 weakens h4 and the whole kingside – 15...\&xg6 16.\&f3 (16.\&fe1 \&h4 17.\&h1 h5) 16...h5 16...\&e7 17.a3 (17.cxd5 cxd5 18.\&ac1 \&ad8) 17...e4 is promising, too – 18.\&d4 (18.dxe4 dxe4 19.\&d2 \&e5 20.b4 \&h4 21.\&h1 \&e6 22.\&xe5 \&xe5\#) 18...\&h4\#.

b) 14.a3 a5 15.\&f5 \&c7 16.cxd5 cxd5 17.b4 (17.\&fc1 \&c8) 17...\&c8\# or 17...\&g6.

c) 14.\&df3 \&d7 15.e4 dxe4 16.dxe4 \&xf3 17.\&xf3 c5 18.\&fe1 \&c7 19.\&ad1 \&e6=.

12...dxe4
Our general approach to this position is to take on e4, but 12...d4!? cannot be really bad. White has put his bishop on b2 and the queen on c2 so he will need 2 tempi to redeploy them for the typical KI attack. Other schemes have no venom – 13.h4 a5 14.f5 f8 15.f4 g6 16.h4 exf4 17.gxf4 e2 18.f2 h5 19.df3 xf3 20.xf3 xf4.

13.dxe4

Trading knights underlines the weakness of d4 – 13.xe4 xe4 14.dxe4 c7 (14...f6 15.e2 ad8 16.fd1 c5 17.ed2 e6) 15.h4 c5 16.f5 f8 17.c3 a5 18.a3 e6 19.b4 d4.

13...a5 14.h4

14.a3 b6 15.c3 c5 is a familiar plan – 16.b2 xf3 17.xf3 d4 18.g2 ed8 19.b4 c5 20.xd4 exd4

14...c5 15.f3

15.g6

This is a consistent move for the plan based on occupying d4. However, concrete thinking reveals that Black could penetrate even deeper in the enemy camp as d3 is also available – 15...xf3! 16.hxf3 c7 17.ad1 d3 18.xd3 xd3 19.a1 ad8 20.g2 b6.

16.xg6 hxg6 17.ad1 c7 18.g2 ad8 19.b1?! e6 20.h4?! c5

20...d4! was more energetic. The pawn is immune owing to 21.xd4 exd4 22.xd4?! xg3.

21.xd8 xd8 22.ad1 (22.h3!)

22...g4 23.f1

23...d4?

Black should have looked for a coup de grace. Any capture on f2 wins by force since after 23...xf2 24.xf2 xf2+ 25.xf2 b6+ 26.f1 e3 the black heavy pieces dominate the board, e.g. 27.xe5 d3 28.c5 d4+. Another interesting way of attacking the enemy king was 23...g5! 24.hxg5 xf2 25.xf2 d6 26.f3 xg5 27.g2 xf2 28.xf2 d3+. After the “positional” 23...d4 24.xd4 exd4 25.d3! Black would have stood “only” better. Instead,
White lets the hit on f2 through once again and this time Black grasps his chance.

24. \( \texttt{xd4} \) \( \texttt{exd4} \) 25. \( \texttt{e1} \) \( \texttt{xf2!} \)
26. \( \texttt{xf2} \) \( \texttt{d3+} \) 27. \( \texttt{f3} \) \( \texttt{f5??} \)

27... \( \texttt{e5} \) or 27... \( \texttt{d2} \) were winning while now 28. \( \texttt{exf5!} \) \( \texttt{d2} \) 29. \( \texttt{g4} \) \( \texttt{d3} \)
30. \( \texttt{f3=} \) saves the game as 30... \( \texttt{d7} \) is not mate!

28. \( \texttt{e5??} \) \( \texttt{xe5} \) 29. \( \texttt{e1} \) \( \texttt{d4} \)
30. \( \texttt{h3} \) \( \texttt{d2} \) 31. \( \texttt{xd2} \) \( \texttt{xd2} \)
32. \( \texttt{xd2} \) \( \texttt{exd2} \) 33. \( \texttt{h5} \) \( \texttt{gxh5} \)
34. \( \texttt{xf5} \) \( \texttt{f7} \) 35. \( \texttt{c8} \) \( \texttt{b6} \) 36. \( \texttt{b7} \)
\( \texttt{xa2} \) 37. \( \texttt{xc6} \) \( \texttt{b2} \) 38. \( \texttt{e4+} \) \( \texttt{g6} \)
39. \( \texttt{f3} \) \( \texttt{d2} \) 40. \( \texttt{e8+} \) \( \texttt{h6} \) 41. \( \texttt{f7} \)
\( \texttt{e2+} \) 42. \( \texttt{d3} \) \( \texttt{e5} \) 43. \( \texttt{d5} \) \( \texttt{g5} \)
44. \( \texttt{e4} \) \( \texttt{g4} \) 45. \( \texttt{f7} \) \( \texttt{g5} \) 46. \( \texttt{f3+} \)
\( \texttt{g3} \) 47. \( \texttt{xe5} \) \( \texttt{e3+} \) 48. \( \texttt{c2} \)
\( \texttt{g4} \) 49. \( \texttt{g7} \) \( \texttt{h4} \) 50. \( \texttt{g6} \) \( \texttt{e5} \)
51. \( \texttt{d3} \) \( \texttt{g3} \) 52. \( \texttt{f1} \) \( \texttt{f5} \) 53. \( \texttt{h7+} \)
\( \texttt{g5} \) 54. \( \texttt{h3} \) \( \texttt{f2+} \) 55. \( \texttt{d3} \) \( \texttt{h2} \)
56. \( \texttt{g7+} \) \( \texttt{f4} \) 57. \( \texttt{f1} \) \( \texttt{f2} \) 58. \( \texttt{f7+} \)
\( \texttt{e5} \) 59. \( \texttt{g7} \) \( \texttt{d6} \) 60. \( \texttt{g5} \) \( \texttt{e1} \)
61. \( \texttt{e4} \) \( \texttt{b2} \) 62. \( \texttt{d5+} \) \( \texttt{c6} \) 63. \( \texttt{d1} \)
\( \texttt{0-1} \)
Main Ideas

1.♗f3 d5 2.g3 c6 3.♕g2 ♖g4!
4.0-0 e6

The King’s Indian Reversed set-up assumes that White will play d3, e4 instead of c4.
An independent line is 5.d4 ♘f6 6.♗bd2 ♕e7 7.♖e1 0-0 8.e4 when Black tries to provoke e4-e5 with ...♘g4-h5-g6 and retreats the knight to e8.

Black has a wide choice against the KI Reversed, but I discuss only set-ups with ...♗d6 and then ...♘g8-f6 or ♘g8-e7. The latter may be easier to play, but White has a way to prevent it by the move order 5.b3 (or even 4.b3) 5...♗d7 6.♗b2 ♘gf6 7.d3 ♘d6 8.♗bd2 0-0 9.e4
Both sides have completed development and we should now take the chance of occupying the centre with 9...e5

White’s only active plan here is to play f2-f4-f5, gaining space on the kingside. If we neutralise it in advance, White will run out of useful moves. Then we should expect to take over the initiative. First, we should concentrate our forces in the centre – ...♖e8, ...♘c7, ...♗ad8.
Our aim is to reach a position of this type:

White’s advance has come to a halt, his pawns are hanging. See Game 31 Maiwald-Sasikiran, Dresden 2005.
Chapter 13

The set-up with $5.d3\ \&d6\ 6.e4\ \&e7$ is based on similar ideas, but the e7-knight can counter $\&h4$ with $...\&g6$. Another plus for Black is the option of $...f6$, preserving the light-squared bishop. For instance:

$7.\&e1\ \&d7\ 8.h3\ \&h5\ 9.\&h4$

$9...dxe4!\ 10.dxe4\ \&g6\ 11.\&xg6\ \&xg6\ 12.f4\ f6!$. White has not achieved anything except of weakening his king.

White can try to exploit our set-up by changing plans: $7.\&bd2\ \&d7\ 8.d4\ 0-0\ 9.\&e1\ \&c7\ 10.c3,$

but further advance with e4-e5 will only give us a free hand on the queenside. We could take space with $...a5, ...b5$ while on the kingside we a rock-solid.

Pantsulaia-Dreev
Gjakova 2016

$9...dxe4!\ 10.dxe4\ \&g6\ 11.\&xg6\ \&xg6\ 12.f4\ f6!$. White has not achieved anything except of weakening his king.

White can try to exploit our set-up by changing plans: $7.\&bd2\ \&d7\ 8.d4\ 0-0\ 9.\&e1\ \&c7\ 10.c3,$

This is a model example where White has kept the tension and now Black counterattacks in the centre:

$14...c5\ 15.exd5\ \&xd5\ 16.\&g5\ \&c7\ 17.\&e3\ \&f6\ 18.\&b5\ \&xe3\ 19.\&xe3\ \&d5\ 20.\&d2\ \&ed8=$.

Of course, in the diagram position Black could also unload the centre with $14...dxe4!?\ 15.\&d2\ \&d5$ or persist with the waiting game by $14...\&b8!?$ or even $14...\&b8!?$.

As a whole, if White offered you a choice, $...\&e7$ gives the g4-bishop more freedom.
Chapter 13. The King's Indian Set-up

Step by Step

1.e4 d5 2.g3 c6 3.g2 g4! 4.0-0 e6

This move keeps more tension than 4...d7 5.d3 e5 which is also possible – 6.h3 h5 7.e4 dxe4 8.dxe4 gxf6 9.e1 c5 10.a4 a5. Besides, White could shun this option altogether by playing 4.b3 e6 5.b2.

A. 5.d4 B. 5.b3; C. 5.d3;

A. 5.d4 f6 6.bd2 e7 7.e1 0-0 8.e4

We should not be afraid of an attack here so we can allow e4-e5. We should even provoke it with the manoeuvre:

8...h5

I see no reason to open the centre with 8...dxe4 9.xe4 xe4 10.xe4 f5 11.e1 d7 12.c3 h6 13.b3 b6 with a solid, but passive position.

8...a6 would be justified in the event of 9.e5?! , but 9.c3! underlines the clumsy placement of the a6-knight.

8...bd7!? 9.c3 h5 transposes to the main line.

9.c3 bd7 10.h3

10.e5 e8 11.b3 is often seen.

A. 9.f4 B. 9.e5; C. 9.c5

A. 9.f4 e5 10.e5 e7 11.e1 e8 12.bd2 h5 13.h3

White's intention is to keep the space advantage and gradually advance on the kingside. ...c5 does not
promise serious counterplay and White might even use the d4-square for one of his knights.
It is more effective to attack the b2 and the c3-pawns. For instance: 11...\texttt{dc7}! 12.\texttt{ae3} a5! 13.\texttt{ac1} \texttt{ab6}! 14.\texttt{d3} (or 14.b3 \texttt{ab5} when 15.\texttt{ed2} runs into 15...\texttt{xc3}!) 14...\texttt{ac4}. Only when White's pieces take passive defensive stands, could we think of ...c5 or even ...f6.

10...\texttt{g6} 11.e5

11.exd5 lacks any constructive idea. Black had comfortable equality after 11...\texttt{cx}d5 12.\texttt{de5} \texttt{xe}5 13.dxe5 \texttt{dd7} 14.\texttt{b3} \texttt{c5} 15.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5} 16.\texttt{e3} \texttt{c8} 17.h4 h6=, Speelman-Gausel, Slough 1997.

11...\texttt{e8}!?\texttt{E}

11...\texttt{e4} 12.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{xe4} 13.\texttt{h2} \texttt{g6} 14.h4 h6, Anand-McShane, London 2013, is possible, but I prefer to keep the option of ...f6. The knight may be useful for this plan.

12.\texttt{f1} c5 13.\texttt{h2} cxd4 14.cxd4 \texttt{c8} 15.\texttt{e3}

Sulava-Feletar, Porec 1998. White was too busy redeploying his knights and temporarily uncoordinated them. That makes the break 15...f6! very strong – 16.exf6 \texttt{xf6} 17.\texttt{eg4} \texttt{e4}. White can preserve his centre, but 16.f4 fxe5 17.fxe5 \texttt{b8} leaves him with bad pieces and no trace of an attack.

B. 5.b3 \texttt{d7} 6.\texttt{b2} \texttt{gf6} 7.d3

7.d4 \texttt{e7}! should transpose to Chapter 12 line B if White pushed c4.

7...\texttt{d6} 8.\texttt{bd2}

8.c4 0-0 was discussed in Chapter 12 – Game 30 Janaszak-Dziuba, Warsaw 2011.

8...0-0 9.e4

Of course, it is better to occupy the centre than to seek simplification with 9...dxe4 10.dxe4 \texttt{e5} when 11.c3! leaves Black with less space.

10.h3 \texttt{h5} 11.\texttt{e1}
11.g4 g6 12.h4 e8 is similar to the main line.

11...e8 12.h4 c7

Black will choose the right timing for opening the d-file. White does not have any attack so he commonly ends up in a slightly worse position. See Game 31 Maiwald-Sasikiran, Dresden 2005.

C. 5.d3 d6

5...d7 is an alternative move order.

Then 6.c4 allows 6...xf3 7.xf3 (7.exf3 d6 8.c3 e7 9.e1 0-0 10.a3 f5) 7...dxc4! 8.dxc4 e5 9.d2 xf3+ with significant chances to make a draw. However, the common plan with ...f6 from the previous chapter is more interesting.

White usually answers 6.bd2 d6 7.e4 e7, transposing.

6.e4 e7 7.bd2

The insertion of h3 may occur now or on the next turn.

Sometimes White delays bd2, intending to roll quickly his pawns:

7.e1 d7 8.h3

8.bd2 0-0 9.b3 makes a hole on c3 which Black can exploit with concrete play — 9...b4! 10.h3 (10.b2 loses a pawn to 10...xf3 11.xf3 a5 12.d1 xa2, Leon Hoyos-Vera Gonzalez, Yucatan 2004) 10...h5 (10...xf3 is also good) 11.e3 c3 12.b1 c5 13.h4 d4 14.e1 c6 15.f4 f6, Iljin-Goganov, Sochi 2015.

8...h5 9.h4

Now the manoeuvre 9...g6, which I recommend in the position with bd2 0-0 inserted, drops the d5-pawn, so Black should exchange on e4 first:

9...dxe4! 10.dxe4 g6 11.xg6 xg6 12.f4 f6! 13.d2 0-0 14.c4 c5+ 15.h2 e7 16.a3 b6=, T.L.Petrosian-Hovhannisyan, Yerevan 2012.

7...d7 8.h3

8.d4 0-0 9.e1 c7 10.e3 h5 occurred in D’Amore-Caruana, Siena 2010. With a knight on e7 instead of f6, this manoeuvre is not too effective, as Black cannot force e5 anyway. D’Amore could not find a good retort and lost the initiative after 11.e3 b8 12.a3 b5. Perhaps 10...a5, followed up by queenside play, is stronger. The game Pantsulaia-Dreev, Gjakova 2016, is a good model:

9.c3 c8 10.e1 e8 11.a4 a5 12.b3 b6 13.h1 h5 14.e3 c5.

219
8.b3 0-0 9...b2 a5 10.a3 b5 11.c4 11...\textit{h}e2 \textit{w}b6 12.d4 (12...h3 \textit{h}h5 13.g4 \textit{g}6 14.e5 \textit{c}7) 12...c5 13.a4 \textit{b}4+.
11...\textit{w}b6 12...c2 \textit{ab}8 13...ab1 e5 offers Black the better centre.

8...\textit{h}h5 9...\textit{e}l 0-0

10...\textit{h}h4

10...\textit{g}6!

This way Black saves the bishop. 10...e5 is also possible, but why to give the opponent the bishop pair without a substantial reason?!

11...\textit{x}g6 \textit{x}g6 12.f4 \textit{b}6+ 13...h1 \textit{ae}8 14...f3 f6

Black's king is safe and he keeps his options in the centre open – Karjakin-Aronian, blitz, Stavanger 2013.
Chapter 13. The King's Indian Set-up

Annotated Games

31. Maiwald – Sasikiran
Dresden, 28.07.2005

1.g3 d5 2.g2 g6 3.d3 c6 4.f3
5.0-0 d6 6.bd2 e6 7.b3
8.b2 0-0 9.e1 e5 10.e4
b8 11.h3 h5 12.h4

14.f4?! dxe4 15.dxe4 g6.
White could make a waiting move
like 13.h1, but 13...ad8 will face
him with the same choice again.
In most practical games he cannot
find anything better than 14.a3 a5
15.f5 f8 16.f4

Black stays beautifully, but he does
not have a clear plan yet. His saf­
est strategy is to open the d-file and
see what target White will offer him.
Most probably, ...a5 will be a useful
move, but it would be better to bring
the rest of his forces to the centre
first.

12...c7!

It transpires that White's inten­
tion to push f4 should be postponed
for a distant future since his centre
would be hanging after 13.f5 f8

Black has some initiative here. For
instance:
16...dxe4 17.dxe4 g6
17...exf4 is probably less accu­
rate since it offers the g3-square
– 18.gxf4 g6 19.g3 dxe4
20.dxe4 f5, Kasimdzhanov-
Li, Zagan 1997.
18.xg7! xg7 19.f5∞.

13.a3 ad8 14.f5 f8 15.b4 a5
16.c3

Harikrishna-Smeets, Wijk aan Zee
2008 saw 16.f3 axb4 17.axb4 c5
Chapter 13

(17...b5!?)
18.bxc5 dxe4 19.dxe4
\( \text{\#xc5} \) with harmonious pieces.

This recapture allows Black to bring new resources into play. The a4-knight is a powerful beast so 22.\( \text{\#xa4} \) b5 23.\( \text{\#a5} \) would have been easier to hold.

\[
22...b5 \quad 23.\text{\#e3} \quad e4 \quad 24.c4 \quad \text{\#xb2} \\
25.\text{\#xb2} \quad \text{bxc4} \quad 26.\text{\#ac1} \quad h5 \\
27.\text{\#xc4}
\]

\[
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node at (0,0) {
    \begin{chessboard}
      \square{1} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{2} \square{3} \square{4} \square{5} \square{6} \square{7} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{8} \square{9} \square{10} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{11} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{12} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{13} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{14} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{15} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{16} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{17} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
      \square{18} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \texttt{\#} \\
    \end{chessboard}
  \end{tikzpicture}
\]

16...dxe4! 17.dxe4 \( \text{\#b6} \)

Pinpointing the weakness of White’s light squares.

18.g4 \( \text{\#g6} \) 19.\text{\#e2} \( \text{\#a4} \) 20.\text{\#c4} axb4

It is difficult to criticize this natural move, but it unnecessarily activates the rook at a1. 10...\( \text{\#xf5} \) 11.gxf5 g6! was stronger since 12.\( \text{\#xa5} \) \( \text{\#h5} \) would tie White up and down.

21.axb4 \( \text{\#xf5} \) 22.exf5?!

Now the weak h2-b8 diagonal is Black’s main trump. The best way to build the \( \text{\#}\text{\#} \) battery is 27...\text{\#f4}! 28.gxh5 \( \text{\#d6} \).

\[
27...\text{hxg4} \quad 28.hxg4?! \quad \text{\#f4} \\
29.\text{\#e2} \quad \text{\#d6} \quad 30.\text{\#e1} \quad \text{\#d5} \quad 31.\text{\#f1} \\
\text{\#xb4} \quad 32.\text{\#d1}? \quad \text{\#c3} \quad 0-1
\]
1.g3 is often used against concrete opponents in order to exploit their narrow opening repertoire. For example, the King's Indian adepts should reckon with 3.e4, reaching the Pirc. However, it does not pose any problems to us and we can choose both 1...e5 or 1...d5 to achieve the following position:

1...e5 2.g2 d5 3.d3

Chapter 11 has taught us to meet c4 by ...d4!, although ...c6 is probably not worse;

1. To meet c4 by ...d4, although ...c6 is probably not worse;
2. To lead out our king's knight to f6, although the set-up with ...e7 is also possible. A good example to follow is Game 32 Venya-Bereza, email 2013:

3...f6 4.c4 d4 5.f3 d6 6.0-0 0-0 7.e3 c5!? (7...dxe3 is "only" equal!) 8.exd4 cxd4

9.c5 c7!? 10.b4 e6 and White had to struggle all the game due to Black's superior centre.

The other important pawn structure you should know arises when White plays e4 instead of c4. Then I suggest to bolster the centre with ...c6, complete development with ...d6, 0-0 and see the enemy's plan. I believe that we should refrain from ...d4 and fix the centre with ...dxe4
to avoid total exchanges which could occur after White’s d3-d4. Black’s further play has some nuances depending on the placement of White’s queen’s knight:

a) 4.\( \text{d}f3 \text{ } \text{d}6 \) 5.0-0 0-0 6.\( \text{d}bd2 \) \( \text{e}e8 \text{ } \text{e}4 \text{ } \text{c}6 \)

Our natural play should be on the queenside, aiming to seize space with moves like ...a5, ...b5.

On the kingside, I prefer a passive stand without making any weaknesses with ...g6 or ...h6. A good manoeuvre is ...\( \text{b}8-\text{d}7(\text{a}6)-\text{c}5-\text{e}6 \).

My main line runs:

\[ 8.\text{b}3 \text{ a}5! 9.\text{a}3 \text{ bd}7 10.\text{b}2 \text{ dxe}4 11.\text{dxe}4 \text{ wc}7 12.\text{h}4 \text{ b}5 13.\text{f}5 \text{ f}8 \]

See Game 33 Gabrielian-Riazantsev, Vladivostok 2014.

b) 6.\( \text{c}3 \text{ c}6 \) 7.\text{e}4 dxe4 – the knight on c3 enables the possibility of d3-d4 so we should exchange on e4 immediately. 8.\text{dxe}4 \text{ a}6!? 9.\text{h}3 \text{ c}7 10.\text{h}4 \text{ e}6 11.\text{f}5 \text{ c}7=.

I want to stress that after 1.g3, our tactic in the opening should be not to equalize, but to take the centre and fight for the initiative. White’s extra tempo is not worth much.
Chapter 14. 1.g3

Step by Step

1.g3 e5 2.g2 d5

3.d3

3.c4d4! (3...c6 4.d4 e4 is mentioned in Chapter 2) 4.d3 c6 transposes to Chapter 11.

3...f6?! d6 4.d3 c6 is considered below. However, we should better switch to punishing mode with 3...e4! 4.d4 c5 5.b3 c4 (5...c6=) 6.d4 c5 7.c3

7...c6 (7...f6!? ) 8.xc6 bxc6 9.0-0

9.b3 cxb3 10.axb3 h5! was the curious miniature Hulak-Beliavsky, Pula 2000: 11.a3 b6 12.h4 h6 13.d4 e3 14.f4 g4 15.d3 f5 16.0-0 h6 17.c4 dxc4 18.e4+ d7 19.c3 xg3 20.c2 f5 21.c1 xf1 22.xf1 xd4 23.d1 e8 0-1.

9...f6 10.b3 0-0 11.bxc4 dxc4 12.a3 d5=, Durarbayli-Kharlov, Kazan 2013.

3...f6

3.c6 4.f3

After 4.c4 best is 4...dxc4 (4...d4 5.f3 is Chapter 11/Line B).

4...f6 5.0-0 e7 is the Pirc Reversed. It is not the subject of this book, but it is a safe and proven way of meeting 1.g3.

3...c6 4.f3 d6 5.c4 e7 6.0-0 0-0 7.c3 d7 is another solid set-up, which I considered in the previous chapter.

4.f3

4.d2 d6 5.e4 c6 6.gf3 is covered in line B. Sometimes White tries the original set-up with 6.e2,
but it has no advantages over the standard lines. Polzin-Boensch, Berlin 1994, went 6...0-0 7.0-0 dxe4 8.dxe4 \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{d6}}}}\) 9.b3 a5 10.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c3}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{a6}}}}\) 11.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{b2}}}}\) b5.

White’s passive tactic allows for more active approaches and the best retort to 4.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{d2}}}}\) is 4...\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c5}}}}\)! since it hinders 5.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{g3}}}}\) in view of 5...e4, and 5.e4 due to 5...dxe4 6.dxe4? \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{g4}}}}\) 7.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{h3}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{xf2}}}}+!\) 8.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{xf2}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{e3}}}}\) 9.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{h5}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c6}}}}\)!. Therefore, White has to resort to another passive move – 5.e3, giving Black a free hand in the centre. He can choose any plan at his liking.

4...\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{d6}}}}\)

4...\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c6}}}}\) is possible again.

5.0-0

5.c4 d4 or 5...c6 transpose to the main line.

5...0-0

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{ch14fig1.png}
\end{center}

I’m going to analyse from here the English approach in line A. 6.c4, and the KI plans with B. 6.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{bd2}}}}\) and C. 6.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c3}}}}\), followed up by e2-e4.

A. 6.c4

I offer you now two good continuations to choose from:

A1. 6...d4; A2. 6...c6

A1. 6...d4 7.e3

7.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{bd2}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c6}}}}\) 8.a3 a5 9.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{b1}}}}\) a4. A typical way of discouraging b2-b4. Black’s pieces control more space, e.g. 10.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c2}}}}\) h6\(\text{=\underline{\text{\textit{f}}}}\).

7.b4 only weakens the queenside. Black answers 7...\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{e8}}}}\)! and gains control of c5:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{ch14fig2.png}
\end{center}

8.a3 a5 9.b5 \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{bd7}}}}\) 10.a4 \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{b4}}}}\) 11.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{a3}}}}\) c5, or 8.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{b3}}}}\) a5 9.b5 \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{bd7}}}}\) 10.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{bd2}}}}\) h6, followed by ...\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c5}}}}\).

7...c5? 

7...\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c6}}}}\) transposes to Chapter 11/Line B after 8.exd4 \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{xd4}}}}\)=.

Another option is 7...dxe3 8.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{xe3}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c6}}}}\) 9.\(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{c3}}}}\) \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{e8}}}}\). This position may be objectively balanced, but Black lacks an active plan. Conversely, White may try to display activity on the kingside – 10.h3

10.a3 \(\text{\underline{\text{\textit{f5}}}}\) 11.b4 a6 12.d4 \text{exd4}
13.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{x}\text{d}4\) \(\text{Q}\text{x}\text{d}4\) 14.\(\text{Q}\text{x}\text{d}4\) \text{c}6 was harmless in 'Movsziszian-Kir. Georgiev, Benasque 2010.

10.\(\text{Q}\text{f}8\) 11.\text{g}4 \text{h}6 12.\text{\text{Q}}\text{e}1, Andriasian-Ter Sahakyan, Yerevan 2015.

8.\text{exd}4 \text{cxd}4

The only way to play for a win. 8...\text{exd}4= leads to a symmetrical structure.

9.\text{c}5

This move order is more clever than 8.\text{\text{Q}}\text{g}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{bd}7 9.\text{\text{Q}}\text{c}3 \text{h}6 10.\text{\text{Q}}\text{xf}6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{xf}6

11.\text{b}3 \text{d}4 12.\text{\text{Q}}\text{d}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{x}\text{d}5 13.\text{\text{Q}}\text{x}\text{d}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{b}6 14.\text{a}4 \text{\text{Q}}\text{e}6 15.\text{\text{Q}}\text{b}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{ac}8 when Black was at least equal in Kachishvili-Jobava, Tbilisi 2000.

8...\text{Q}c6

The attempt to anticipate \text{\text{Q}}\text{g}5 by 8...\text{\text{Q}}\text{bd}7 could be exploited with 9.e4 \text{d}4 10.\text{\text{Q}}\text{b}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{c}5 11.a4.

9.\text{\text{Q}}\text{g}5

This surprising retreat allows us to keep the centre fluid. 9...\text{\text{Q}}\text{e}6 10.\text{\text{Q}}\text{xf}6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{xf}6 11.\text{\text{Q}}\text{d}2 \text{d}4 12.\text{\text{Q}}\text{ce}4 is easier to play with White.

After the text White does not have a convincing way to force ...\text{d}4 un-
less he plays e4, which would shut off his only good piece.
10.\textit{b}3 could be repelled by 10... \textit{a}5. Another way to oppose Black's dominance in the centre is:

10.\textit{d}4 \textit{e}4 11.\textit{e}5,

but then both:
11...\textit{e}6 12.\textit{x}c6 \textit{b}xc6 13.\textit{a}4 \textit{h}6 14.\textit{f}4 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{c}1 \textit{c}8 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}8 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{f}5 18.\textit{c}1, draw, Steinke-Gasanov, Lechenicher SchachServer, 2012, and:

11...\textit{h}6 12.\textit{x}f6 \textit{xf}6, Seeman-Miezis, Tallinn 2005, are fine for \textit{black}. The latter game went 13.\textit{c}1?! when 13...\textit{x}e5! 14.dxe5 \textit{e}6 would have even gained some advantage.

B. 6.\textit{bd}2 \textit{e}8 7.e4 \textit{c}6

12.\textit{xc}6 bxc6 13.\textit{a}4 h6 14.\textit{f}4 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{c}1 \textit{c}8 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}8 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{f}5 18.\textit{c}1, draw, Steinke-Gasanov, Lechenicher SchachServer, 2012, and:

11...\textit{h}6 12.\textit{x}f6 \textit{xf}6, Seeman-Miezis, Tallinn 2005, are fine for \textit{black}. The latter game went 13.\textit{c}1?! when 13...\textit{x}e5! 14.dxe5 \textit{e}6 would have even gained some advantage.

By fianchettoing his bishop, White hopes to mount a kingside attack.

8.a5! 9.a3 \textit{bd}7 10.\textit{b}2 \textit{dxe}4

Logical alternatives are 10...\textit{d}4 11.c3 \textit{c}5 and 10...\textit{c}7 11.\textit{e}1 \textit{dxe}4.

11.\textit{dxe}4 \textit{c}7 12.\textit{h}4

12.\textit{e}1 does not make sense anymore – the rook might be needed on the f-file. Black can answer 12...\textit{b}5, followed up by ...\textit{a}4, ...\textit{c}5.

12...\textit{b}5 13.\textit{f}5 \textit{f}8

Black's play on the queenside is easier than White's attempts on the opposite side of the board. See Game 33 Gabrielian-Riazantsev, Vladivostok 2014.
C. 6.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{c6} \) 7.\( \text{e4} \)

We are faced here with a crucial choice of plans. The engines like 7...\( \text{d4} \) 8.\( \text{\textit{c}e2} \) \( \text{c5} \), but that would mean to withstand a classical King's Indian attack with clear two tempi down and a bishop on \( \text{d6} \). While email games bring Black excellent results, I'm far from the thought that the KI is so bad that we should enter it at any cost. At least for practical reasons, it is safer to keep tension in the centre.

The next question we should answer is: how much tension are we ready to maintain? The knight is much more active on \( \text{c3} \) than it was on \( \text{d2} \) in line B. It exerts a significant impact on the centre and moves like 7...\( \text{\textit{e}8} \) could be met by 8.\( \text{exd5} \) \( \text{cxd5} \) 9.\( \text{\textit{g}5} \). That hints the move 7...\( \text{h6} \), but it has flip-sides, too. One of them is the possibility of 8.\( \text{d4} \) exd4 9.\( \text{\textit{x}d4} \) dxe4= which leaves no tension at all. Another option is 8.\( \text{\textit{h}4} \) when Black should be very accurate in order to not fall under attack. A good model to follow is the game Seirawan-Dolmatov, Graz 1978: 8.\( \text{\textit{h}4} \) \( \text{c5} \) 9.\( \text{\textit{e}1} \) (protecting the \( \text{h4} \)-knight in the event of future \( \text{f4} \) exf4) 9...\( \text{\textit{e}8} \) 10.\( \text{h3} \) \( \text{\textit{a}6} \) 11.\( \text{\textit{f}5} \) \( \text{c7} \) 12.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{\textit{e}6} \) 13.\( \text{\textit{e}2} \) \( \text{h7} \)

Black has covered everything and now he can turn his attention to the queenside. Probably the above-mentioned "threat" to suck out any life from the position with 8.\( \text{d4} \) tips the balance in favour of:

7...\( \text{dxe4} \)

It opens a file to ensure counterplay against a direct pawn storm on the kingside, and stabilises the pawn structure in the centre.

8.\( \text{dxe4} \)

8.\( \text{\textit{x}e4} \) \( \text{\textit{x}e4} \) 9.\( \text{dxe4} \) simplifies the position without changing much its strategic canvas. As in the main line, Black can choose either a stand with ...\( \text{g6} \), or with ...\( \text{\textit{b}8-a6-c5} \), ...\( \text{\textit{e}8} \). Here is an example: Jones-Howell, Halifax 2010: 9...\( \text{\textit{e}7} \) 10.\( \text{\textit{h}4} \) \( \text{g6} \) 11.\( \text{\textit{e}2} \) \( \text{\textit{a}6} \) 12.\( \text{\textit{e}3} \) \( \text{\textit{e}6} \) 13.\( \text{\textit{f}3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 14.\( \text{\textit{fd1}} \) \( \text{\textit{fd8}} \) 15.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{c7} \).
Black had to decide how to meet the manoeuvre \( \text{h3-h4-f5} \). I suggest to simply ignore it and transfer our own knight to e6 via c5 or c7.

Another possible approach is to take f5 under control with \( \ldots \text{g6} \):

Hickl-Benham, Adelaide 1990, saw \( 8...\text{e7} 9.\text{h4 g6 10.g5 d8 11.e2 bd7 12.ad1?!} \) (Stronger is \( 12.f4! \text{g7} 13.f5 c5+ 14.h1 h6 15.fxg6 fxg6 16.d2 b6 with complex play) \( 12...\text{c5 13.ad2 e6 14.e3, when 14...b5 would have passed the initiative to Black.} \)

Nakamura-Harikrishna, Wijk aan Zee 2013, shows another version of this stand: \( 8...\text{c8} 9.e2 f8 10.h4 g6 11.g5 g7 \)

In the stem game Rohde-Browne, USA 1989, White chose to return the knight disgracefully to h4 and became worse. He should have opted for \( 13.xd8 xd8 14.e7+ g7 15.xc8 \) with a roughly equal position.
Chapter 14. 1.g3

Annotated Games

32. Venya – Bereza
www.bestlogic.ru 2013

1.g3 e5 2.g2 d5 3.c4 d4 4.d3
f6 5.f3 d6 6.0-0 0-0 7.e3 c5
exd4 cxd4

9.c5 c7 10.b4 e6 11.b5

White's advanced pawns are not dangerous since they are not backed up by pieces. I think that quick development like 11.e1 bd7 12.a3 (defending c5 against the treat of ...a5) or 11.g5 bd7 12.bd2∞ was more to the point.

11...d5 12.bd2 e8 13.g5

White decides to trade light-squared bishops in order to enable bd2-c4, but that leads to destruction of his queenside.

It is not easy to give a better advice though, as 13.a3 a5 14.e1 c3 also offers Black some initiative.

13...xg2 14.xg2 d5+ 15.f3
xf3+ 16.gxf3 b6

17.b3

17.cxb6 axb6 18.a4 looks attractive for White in view of the "bad" bishop on c7. In fact that bishop is quite "good" since it protects both black pawns while the d3-pawn would turn very sensitive once Black puts his knights to c5 and d5. The a4-pawn is also a potential target in view of the idea ...a7, ...e-a8.

17...a6 18.cxb6 xb6 19.e1
bd7 20.bxa6 d5! 21.d2 f6

The d3-pawn is a cause of constant concern and White cannot get rid of it. Still, his biggest problem is the
lack of space. If you cast a look at the next diagram, you’ll notice the significance of Black's pawn centre. It helps his pieces to dominate the board.

22.\texttt{Re1} \texttt{Exa6} 23.\texttt{Ec6} \texttt{Ea7} 24.\texttt{a4} Ee7 25.\texttt{Ec4} Ec7 26.\texttt{Eb4} Ef7
27.\texttt{De1} \texttt{Ec6} 28.\texttt{Ec4} \texttt{Eb8} 29.\texttt{Exc6} Exb3 30.a5 \texttt{Eb8} 31.\texttt{Ec5} Ee6
32.\texttt{Eac1} \texttt{Dd6} 33.\texttt{Ec8} \texttt{Dd5} 34.\texttt{Ef1} \texttt{Dd6} 35.\texttt{Dd8} \texttt{Dc5} 36.\texttt{Dd2} f5 37.f3

37...\texttt{Eab7}

Black's rooks threaten to invade the third or the second rank.

38.\texttt{Dxa8} e4 39.a6? (39.fxe4+) 39...\texttt{Exd3+} 0-1

Black does not have any weaknesses on the kingside and is very stable there. On the other part of the board, he has a clear plan to open lines with 14.\texttt{Exe3} a4 15.b4 c5.

White might have had the idea of opening the f-file, but now it tran-
spires that Black’s counterplay is faster – 14.\( \text{h1a4} \) 15.f4 \( \text{a6!} \) 16.\( \text{f3} \) b4 17.\( \text{e1} \) axb3 18.\( \text{xe5} \) bxa3. White decides to counter the enemy activity in advance.

14.c4 \( \text{b7} \) 15.\( \text{c2} \) b4 16.axb4 axb4 17.\( \text{xa8} \) \( \text{xa8} \) 18.\( \text{f3} \) g6 19.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{e8} \) 20.\( \text{h3}?! \)

Intending \( \text{g4} \). That would have been a decent positional idea if White had the more active pieces. In the current situation, it only wastes time and makes a new weakness.

Although Black has more space on the queenside, the position would be close to equal after 20.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{c5} \) 21.\( \text{d3} \).

However, it is White to move and he can cut across his opponent’s hopes with 26.e5! \( \text{xe5} \) 27.\( \text{xe1} \). The tables have turned and White has activated all his forces – for a mere pawn.

26.\( \text{c5?} \) \( \text{d8=} \) 27.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c8} \) 28.e5 \( \text{xe5} \) 29.\( \text{e1} \) \( \text{g7} \) 30.\( \text{d5} \)

Now 22...h6! 23.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{c8} \) would have found employment to the dozing b7-bishop.

22...\( \text{g7} \) 23.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{xb3} \) (23...\( \text{xe4!} \)) 24.\( \text{xb4} \) \( \text{d4} \) 25.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{exd4} \)

Perhaps Black assessed this position in his favour in view of his better pieces after a possible ...c6-c5.

30...\( \text{e6!} \) 31.\( \text{xe6}? \)

Trading c4 for the c6-pawn would give more chances for a draw. For instance, the rook endgame should not be a problem to hold. The bishops complicate White’s task, but after the exchange on e6, he is just lost.

31...\( \text{fxe6} \) 32.\( \text{xe6} \) d3+ 33.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{b7} \) 34.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{b1} \) 35.\( \text{c8} \) \( \text{xc1+} \) 36.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{xc8} \) 37.\( \text{xc8+} \) \( \text{f8} \) 38.\( \text{e6+} \) \( \text{g7} \) 39.\( \text{d7+} \) \( \text{g8} \) 40.\( \text{e6+} \) \( \text{g7} \) 41.\( \text{d7+} \) \( \text{f6} \) 42.\( \text{d4+} \) \( \text{f7} \) 43.\( \text{d5+} \) \( \text{e8} \) 44.\( \text{c6+} \) \( \text{d8} \) 45.\( \text{d5+} \) \( \text{c7} \) 46.\( \text{f7+} \) \( \text{b6} \) 47.\( \text{xf8} \) \( \text{xc4} \) 48.\( \text{d6+} \) \( \text{b5} \) 49.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{c2} \) 50.\( \text{b8+} \) \( \text{c4} \) 51.\( \text{c7+} \) \( \text{b3} \) 52.\( \text{b6+} \) \( \text{c3} \) 53.\( \text{a5+} \) \( \text{b2} \) 54.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{c3} \) 55.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{c1} \) 56.\( \text{f4g5} \) 57.\( \text{f3} \) h5 58.\( \text{gxh5} \) g4+ 59.\( \text{a4} \) d2 60.\( \text{b5} \) d1=\( \text{+} \) 0-1
Index of Variations

The English Opening
1.c4 e5

2.a3 c6 136
2.d3 b4+ 135 (2...f5 140)
2.df3 e4 3.dd4 df6 138 (3...d6 138)
2.g3 c6 3.d3 d5 (3...d6 64) 4.cx5 cxd5 5.d4 e4 50
3.g2 d5 50; 3...f6 15

3.df3 e4 4.dd4 wb6 44 (4...d5 44) 5.b3 45
5.e3 f6 45; 5.c2 45

3.d4 e4 4.d3 (4.d5 49; 4.h3 d5 5.c3 h6! 53) 4...d5 50
5.cx5 cxd5 6.wb3 50 (6.h3 50)
5.g2 b4!? 51 (5...f6 22)
5.h3 h6 53 (5...f6 53)

2...d6 3...g2 c6 4.wa4 15; 4.d3 15; 4.e4 15
4.d3 c5 5.cxd5 16 (5.d4 e4 22)
4.g2 e4 5.d4 wb6 (5...d5 18) 6.c2 19 (6.e3 19; 6.b3 20)
4.d4 e4 5.c3 (5.d5 22; 5.g5 22) 5...d5 6.g5 22 (6.cx5, 6.h3 22)
6.bd7 (6...b4 23) 7.cx5 (7.h3 25) 7...cx5 8.f3 25
8.e3 27
8.b3 d6 9.wb5 28
9.f3 31
...e3 31

2...d3 df6 3...g3 c6 4.g2 d5 5.d4 e4 21 (5.cx5 cxd5 6.wb3 16)
4.df3 e4 5.df4 wb6 (5...d5 64) 6.c2 64
6.b3 64
6.e3 65

4.d4 exd4 66 (4...e4 5.g5 b4 66)
3.\( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qc6} \) 4.d4 exd4 75
4.a3 e4 76
4.d3 \( \text{xb4} \) 77
4.e4 \( \text{xb4} \) 80
4.e3 \( \text{xb4} \) 5.\( \text{wc2} \) (5.\( \text{d5} \) 87) 5...\( \text{xc3} \) 6.\( \text{wc3} \) 88
6.bxc3 92

4.g3 \( \text{xb4} \) 5.\( \text{d5} \) e4 103 (5...\( \text{c5} \) 103)
5.\( \text{g2} \) 0-0 6.0-0 e4 (6...d6 117) 7.\( \text{g5} \) (7.e1 127)
7...\( \text{xc3} \) 8.bxc3 \( \text{xe8} \) 9.f3 \( \text{e3} \) 119

9...\( \text{exf3} \) 10.\( \text{xf3} \) d5 121
10...\( \text{e7} \) 124

The Reti
1.\( \text{Qf3} \) d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4 f6 4.\( \text{wa4} \) 148, 4.\( \text{b2} \) 148
4.d3 148
4.e3 e5 5.c5 a5 6.\( \text{wa4} \) 149 (6.\( \text{b5} \) 149, 6.\( \text{c4} \) 149)

4.\( \text{a3} \) e5 5.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{a6} \) 151
3.e3 \( \text{Qc6} \) (3...c5 161) 4.exd4 162
4.b4?! 165
3.g3 c5 4.e3 \( \text{Qc6} \) 5.exd4 cxd4 6.\( \text{g2} \) e5 7.d3 \( \text{d6} \) 177
(7...\( \text{f6} \) 177)

3...\( \text{Qc6} \) 4.\( \text{g2} \) e5 5.d3 (5.0-0 e4! 188) 5...\( \text{b4} \) 179 (5...\( \text{f6} \) 179)
2.g3 c6 3.c4 \( \text{g4} \) 4.\( \text{wb3} \) \( \text{xf3} \) 196 (4...\( \text{wb6} \) 196)
4.\( \text{g2} \) e6 5.\( \text{wb3} \) 198
5.0-0 199
5.cxd5 exd5 202 (5...\( \text{xf3} \) 208)
3.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{g4} \) 4.0-0 \( \text{e6} \) 5.d4 217
5.b3 218
5.d3 219

1.g3 e5 2.\( \text{g2} \) d5 3.d3 (3.\( \text{f3} \) ?! e4 225) 3...\( \text{f6} \) 4.\( \text{f3} \) (4.\( \text{d2} \) 225) 4...
\( \text{d6} \) 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d4 226
6...c6 227
6.\( \text{bd2} \) e8 7.e4 c6 228
6.\( \text{c3} \) c6 7.e4 229
Most Chess Stars books are also available in the interactive electronic format ForwardChess. It is a free application which presents the books as they look in print. Furthermore, it also provides a board which displays the text moves or your own analysis. Read more information about Forwardchess at:
http://chess-stars.com/Forwardchess.html

Here is the link to the iOS version:

This is the Android version:

You can also use Forwardchess on Windows desktops and notebooks through the Android emulation from http://www.bluestacks.com/
This book offers an active Black repertoire against The English Opening 1.c4, the Reti 1.Nf3, and their siblings that arise after 1.g3. The authors advocate for seizing space in the centre with ...c6 and d5, followed up by ...e4 or ...d4. They pay special attention on the ideas behind the moves, leaving the detailed coverage for the "Step by Step" sections.

Alexander Delchev is the European Grand Prix winner in 2004. He has played in many Olympiads for Bulgaria. His best Elo was 2669, current rating – 2586. Delchev is the author of The Most Flexible Sicilian, Understanding the QGA, The Safest Sicilian, The Safest Grünfeld and The Modern Reti.

Semko Semkov played for Bulgaria in one Olympiad. He is a chess journalist and theoretician. He has authored Kill K.I.D. and five other books.