

Contents

Symbols	8
Introduction	9
Section 1: Open Games	11
Italian Game	12
<i>Perfect Centre</i>	12
<i>Bishop Exchanges</i>	13
Giuoco Piano	14
Møller Attack	14
Evans Gambit	16
Two Knights	19
Two Knights Main Line	19
Max Lange Attack	20
King's Gambit	22
Rare 2nd moves	24
Petroff	26
Philidor	28
Four Knights	30
Scotch Game	31
Ruy Lopez	34
<i>Kingside Manoeuvres</i>	34
Ruy Lopez Part 1	36
Berlin	36
Third-Move Alternatives	38
Ruy Lopez Part 2	40
Exchange Lopez	40
Steinitz Deferred	41
Open Lopez	42
Møller	44
Ruy Lopez Part 3	46
Marshall Attack	46
Anti-Marshall	48
Early d4	49
Chigorin	49
Breyer	51
Zaitsev	52
Closed Lopez: Other Systems	53

Section 2: Semi-Open Games	54
Sicilian	55
<i>Dragon Set-up</i>	55
<i>Scheveningen Set-up</i>	55
<i>Najdorf Set-up</i>	56
<i>Maroczy Bind Set-up</i>	56
<i>c-File</i>	56
Dragon	57
Accelerated Dragon	60
Classical (and Richter-Rauzer)	61
Sozin	62
Scheveningen (and Keres Attack)	63
Classical Scheveningen	64
Taimanov	66
Kan	67
Najdorf (and English Attack)	68
Najdorf ♗g5	71
Najdorf ♗c4	74
Najdorf ♗e2 (and Other Moves)	76
Sveshnikov	77
Kalashnikov	79
Moscow & Rossolimo	81
Grand Prix Attack	82
Closed Sicilian	83
c3 Sicilian	84
4 ♖xd4 and Other Sidelines	85
French	87
<i>Pawn-Chain</i>	87
<i>Bad Bishop</i>	87
Exchange French	88
Advance French	88
Tarrasch	90
Rubinstein	92
Winawer	93
Classical	94
Caro-Kann	96
<i>Open Centre</i>	96
Exchange & Panov-Botvinnik	96
Advance Caro-Kann	98
Main Line: 4...♗f5 (and Deviations)	99
Main Line: 4...♞d7 (and 4...♞f6)	101
Alekhine	103
Scandinavian	105
Nimzowitsch	107

Pirc/Modern	108
Austrian	108
Classical	109
150 Attack	110
Přibyl Pirc	111
Gurgenidze	112
Fianchetto	113
Anti-Pirc	114
Owen's Defence	115
Section 3: Queen's Gambit	116
<i>Light-Squared Bishop</i>	116
Queen's Gambit Accepted	117
3 e4	117
3 ♖f3 with 4 e3	119
Two Knights (4 ♘c3)	120
Queen's Gambit Declined	122
<i>Carlsbad Structure</i>	122
Orthodox & Lasker	122
Tartakower	124
Exchange	125
5 ♙f4	126
Catalan	127
Tarrasch & Semi-Tarrasch	128
Cambridge Springs	130
Slav	132
Main Line with 6...e6 (and Early Deviations)	132
Main Line with 6...♗bd7	134
Early e3	135
...a6 Slav	135
Exchange Slav	137
Semi-Slav	138
5 ♙g5	138
5 e3 and the Meran	140
Wedge Variation	142
Chigorin and Unusual Lines	143
Blackmar-Diemer Gambit	145
Section 4: Indian Defences	146
Nimzo-Indian	147

<i>The Isolated Queen's Pawn</i>	148
<i>Idea for White No. 1: d4-d5 Advance</i>	148
<i>Idea for White No. 2: Central Attack</i>	148
<i>Idea for White No. 3: Kingside Attack</i>	149
<i>Idea for White No. 4: Queenside Play</i>	149
<i>Idea for Black: Simplification</i>	149
<i>Working on the Queenside Weaknesses</i>	149
Sämisch & 4 f3	150
Rubinstein	151
Leningrad	153
Kasparov Variation	155
Classical (4 ♖c2) & Others	156
Queen's Indian	158
4 g3	158
4 a3	160
4 e3 & 4 ♗f4	161
Bogo-Indian	163
King's Indian	165
<i>Pawn-Storms</i>	165
Classical: Introduction	166
Classical Main Line	168
Sämisch	170
Four Pawns	172
Fianchetto	174
Averbakh and Unusual Lines	175
Grünfeld	177
<i>Grünfeld Centre</i>	177
Exchange: Introduction & Classical	177
Modern Exchange	180
Russian System	182
Fianchetto	183
Early Bishop Moves (and Minor Lines)	184
Benoni Systems	186
Modern Benoni	186
Benko Gambit	189
Dutch	191
Stonewall	191
Leningrad	193
Classical	194
Odds & Ends	195
Trompowsky	196
Torre, Barry and Colle	198
Veresov	199
...d6 System	200
Black Knights' Tango & Budapest	201

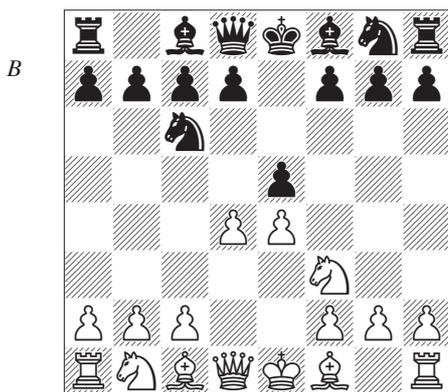
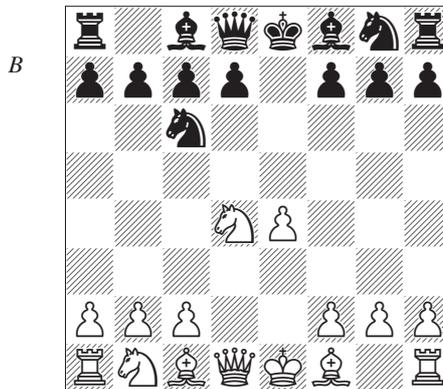
Section 5: Flank Openings	203
English	204
Symmetrical: Queenside Play	204
Symmetrical: Central Play	205
Symmetrical: Hedgehog	207
Four Knights	208
Botvinnik System	209
Reversed Dragon	210
Nimzo-English	211
Réti	213
Anti-Grünfelds	215
English Defence	216
Bird's Opening	217
Larsen's Opening	218
Dunst Opening	219
Basman's Opening	220
Index of Variations	221

Scotch Game

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♗c6 3 d4 (D)

Garry Kasparov has called the Scotch Game “the only serious alternative to the Ruy Lopez”. He tends to be well up on such things so his opinion is worth attention. White immediately pulls the trigger on d4, liquidating Black’s central strong-point and opening up further lines for his pieces.

This advance cannot be profitably prepared with 3...c3, the Ponziani Opening, since after 3...♗f6 4 d4 ♗xe4 5 d5 ♗e7 6 ♗xe5 ♗g6 7 ♖d4 ♖e7 8 ♖xe4 ♖xe5 9 ♖xe5+ ♗xe5 10 ♙f4 ♙d6! the endgame holds no dangers for Black.



3...exd4

Black is really obliged to capture White’s pawn.

3...d6 gives a bad Philidor, with the knight committed to c6.

4 ♗xd4 (D)

4 c3, the Göring Gambit, is less exciting than it looks. Black can claim immediate equality with 4...d5, or accept the challenge with 4...dxc3 5 ♗xc3 ♙b4 6 ♙c4 d6 7 ♖b3 ♖e7 when White has enough for the pawn, but no more than that.

4...♗f6

This targets the e4-pawn, and so forces some sort of concession.

4...♙c5 5 ♙e3 ♖f6 6 c3 (6 ♗b5 has been played by Ponomarev, but for anyone who hasn’t been a world champion recently the move carries a health warning – after 6...♙xe3 7 fxe3 the doubled e-pawns control a lot of squares but are still extremely ugly, and after 7...♖h4+ 8 g3 Black can drop back to d8 or play 8...♖xe4 9 ♗xc7+ ♙d8 10 ♗xa8 ♖xh1 with an utterly unclear game) 6...♗ge7 is another main line, rapidly developing and preparing ...d5. After 7 ♙c4 ♗e5!? (7...b6 8 0-0 ♙b7, preparing to castle queenside, is an excellent alternative) 8 ♙e2 ♖g6 White sacrifices the e4-pawn; for instance, 9 0-0 d6 10 f4 ♖xe4 11 ♙f2 ♙xd4 12 cxd4 ♗5g6 13 g3 ♙h3 14 ♙f3 ♖f5 15 ♚e1 d5 16 ♖b3 0-0 17 ♗c3 c6 18 ♖xb7 ♚fb8 19 ♖c7 ♖f6 with equality.

4...♙b4+!? 5 c3 ♙c5 is also popular at top level – Black provokes c3 to prevent the white knight from developing naturally on this square, without having to resort to ...♖f6.

4...♖h4?! is extremely risky. White can play 5 ♗b5 immediately, but 5 ♗c3 ♙b4 6 ♗b5 looks even better, when 6...♖xe4+ 7

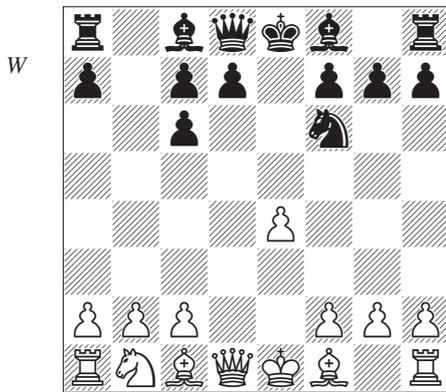
♙e2 gives White a truckload of compensation.

5 ♘xc6

5 ♘c3 ♙b4 transposes to the Scotch Four Knights.

5...bxc6 (D)

Not, of course, 5...dxc6? 6 ♖xd8+ ♔xd8, when Black has no compensation for his crippled pawn-majority in the endgame.



Black's trumps, as will become apparent, are that he can develop all of his pieces quickly to good squares. On the other hand, White holds a structural advantage. Thus Black's job is to generate some relevant play in the next few moves, while White needs just to get out of the opening alive to claim a long-term edge.

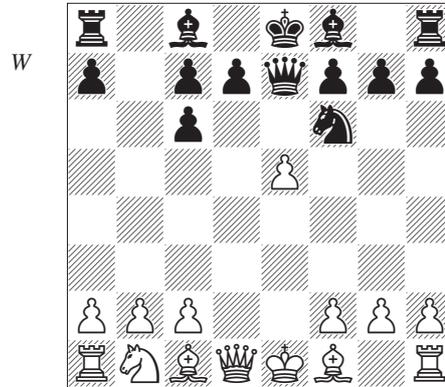
6 e5

Now the knight is threatened without any stable squares available, so Black must be accurate to avoid falling into passivity.

6...♕e7! (D)

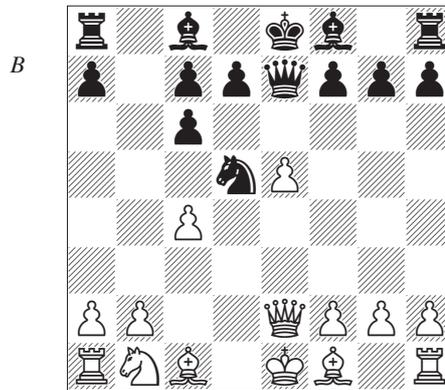
7 ♕e2

Taking the comment at move 5 into account, it should be clear that if both sides fully develop then White will be better. Accordingly, Black undertakes this disruptive manoeuvre in order to hinder White's development. It's true that his own development is similarly hindered, but (after ...♘d5) his queen will have a greater range of options



than the white queen, which will be tied to the e5-pawn. I've tried to present this as if ...♕e7 "conforms to the demands of the position", but in fact any such statements in the context of opening theory are at worst incorrect and at best *post hoc* – players started playing 6...♕e7 because Black was getting creamed after 6...♘d5 and needed to look for alternatives, found this one and discovered it worked.

7...♘d5 8 c4 (D)



Kicking the knight immediately makes sense and forces a concession – Black can misplace either his knight or his bishop.

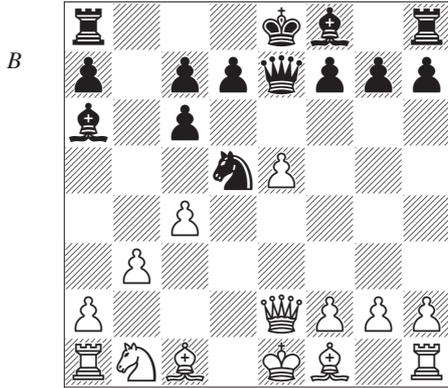
8...♙a6

8...♘b6 is the alternative, when Black aims for play down the a-file (...a5-a4) or rapid

development (by means of ...♔a6, ...♖e6 and ...♗b4).

9 b3 (D)

White can also play 9 g3, but I think it's more flexible to defend the c-pawn at once.



9...g5!

This is a perfect example of how good opening moves are found. The reason Black plays this is because the alternative way to develop the bishop, 9...g6, runs into 10 f4! when White is prepared to play ♖f2 and ♗a3 with unpleasant consequences. Accordingly Black realized he needed some more control over f4, while still facilitating his own development, and came up with this gem. Play typically now runs:

10 g3 ♗g7 11 ♗b2 0-0 12 ♗g2 ♖ae8 13 0-0 ♗xe5!? 14 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 15 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 16 cxd5 ♗xf1 17 ♗xf1 cxd5

The endgame is dynamically balanced – if White can keep the rooks in check he will be much better, but if they become active White could be routed.