

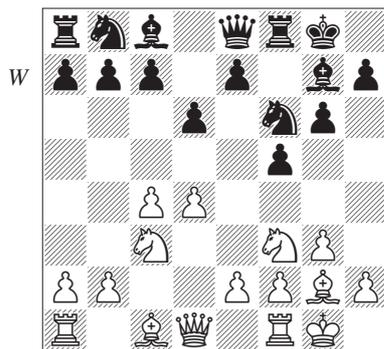
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## 8 Main Line with 7...♔e8

This queen move is undoubtedly the most popular line of the Leningrad variation. Its purpose is to support ...e5 and to transfer the queen to the kingside via either f7, g6 or h5 according to circumstances, thereby making use of the Leningrad f5-pawn.

**1 d4 f5 2 ♘f3 ♙f6 3 g3 g6 4 ♕g2 ♕g7 5 0-0-0 6 c4 d6 7 ♞c3 ♚e8 (D)**



Our main lines are now:

<b>A:</b>	<b>8 ♚b3</b>	137
<b>B:</b>	<b>8 ♚e1</b>	141
<b>C:</b>	<b>8 ♘d5</b>	145
<b>D:</b>	<b>8 b3</b>	151
<b>E:</b>	<b>8 d5</b>	161

Or:

a) 8 ♕g5 is also played, although I doubt it offers White any advantage: 8...e5 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♘d5 (10 ♕xf6

♕xf6 doesn't work out at all for White: 11 e4 ♘c6! 12 ♘d5 ♚f7 13 ♘d2 f4 14 g4 ♕g7 15 f3 ♘d4 with a decisive strategic advantage for Black, Raivio-Yrjölä, Kuopio 1992) 10...♘xd5 11 cxd5 e4 12 ♘d4 ♚f7 13 ♘b5 ♕xb2 14 d6 ♘a6 15 dxc7 ♕xa1 16 ♚xa1 ♘xc7 and Black eventually realized his material advantage in Thibault – Santo-Roman, Cannes 1988.

b) 8 ♚c2 is sometimes played, but Black doesn't have any problems:

b1) 8...♘a6 9 a3?! (if this really is necessary, then White's 8th move was misguided) 9...e5 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 e4 ♘c5 12 ♘g5 c6 13 ♕e3 ♘e6 14 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 15 exf5 gxf5 gave Black a good King's Indian position in Karr-Lesiège, Gonfreville 1999.

b2) 8...e5 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 e4 ♘c6 (this is without doubt the best square for the knight given the pawn-structure) 11 ♕e3 f4 12 ♕c5 ♚f7 13 ♘g5 ♚d7 14 ♘d5 b6 with advantage to Black, Fliszar-Galyas, Balaton 1999.

**A)**

**8 ♚b3**

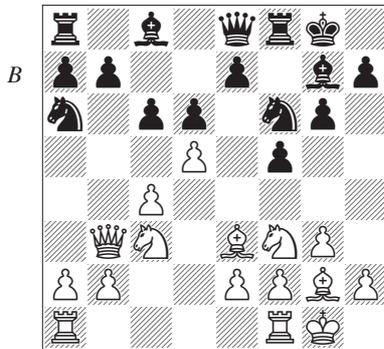
Now:

**A1: 8...c6** 137

**A2: 8...♘a6** 139

**A1)**

**8...c6 9 d5 ♘a6 10 ♕e3 (D)**

**10...d4!**

Black must waste no time; this move is based on some brilliant ideas.

We are following Karpov-M.Gurevich, Reggio Emilia 1989/90.

**11 e4?!**

11 e4 was Karpov's later improvement, but Gurevich responded well: 11...c5 12 c2 h6 13 h3 (if 13 fad1, Salov gives 13...g5 14 e1 e4! as good) 13...e5! 14 dxe6 e5 15 fad1 e6 16 fxd6 e4c4 17 f3 dxf4 18 gxf4 e6 19 ffd1 e7 20 b3 e6 21 d2 e7 with a roughly equal position, although in Karpov-M.Gurevich, Amsterdam 1991 Black eventually lost the complex game that followed.

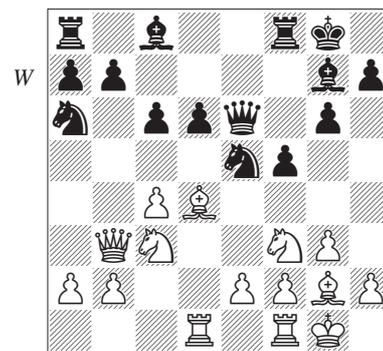
**11...e5!**

The attempt to 'trap' White's bishop by 11...e5 (which sometimes succeeds, and may be seen as a typical tactical trick) results in a complex, unclear position with an extra pawn for White: 12 dxc6 (12 e4?! c5 13 e3 f8 14 e2 b5; 12 c5? e5! {12...dxc5? 13 dxc6+ e7 14 cxb7} 13 cxd6 {13 dxe6 dxc5 14 e7+ f7} 13...c5!) 12...bxc6 13 c5+ d5 14 e5

e6 15 a3 e5 16 xa6 e5 17 e3.

**12 dxe6 e5 13 fad1**

It is never simple to choose the right rook. 13 ffd1 is entirely possible, though after 13...e6 14 e4 h6 15 fad1 it is more difficult for White to play b4, and without this it's difficult to generate active play. It is clear that White was already planning his 14th move.

**13...e6 (D)****14 e4!**

A great move! Firstly, it wasn't easy to foresee all the consequences; secondly, White had to foresee both the move and the follow-up. Now we are in the world of serious chess-players. Can you feel it?

**14...e4**

14...e4?? loses to 15 e5, but this capture by the knight can be prepared by means of 14...h6, when defending the pawn is surprisingly difficult. Clearly White had in mind 15 e3! (15 e2? is weak because of 15...e7!) 15...c5 16 e5 dxe5 17 e4