



# The Safest Grünfeld

## A Complete Repertoire for Black

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Chess Stars

[www.chess-stars.com](http://www.chess-stars.com)

Current Theory and Practice Series

The Safest Grünfeld

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# Foreword

My first book, *The Safest Sicilian*, has been very well received and readers often asked me if I was writing something new. So when in the beginning of 2010 Chess Stars offered me to continue our collaboration, I did not hesitate long. I chose the Grünfeld Defence, because it is one of the most quickly developing openings and, like the Sicilian, offers fair chances to play for a win.

I have been studying the Grünfeld for years. I often used it in decisive games as Black, but I also have extensive practice as White.

In 2009, Topalov's assistant GM Cheparinov invited me to help him prepare for the World Cup tournaments and the World Championship in Khanty Mansiysk. During our work, we made a general examination of various openings. I was surprised by the extraordinary working capacity of Cheparinov and also by the powerful arsenal of his opening ideas. We often discussed the Exchange line in the Grünfeld. He did not need too much effort to convince me that Black was in real danger in the main line with

the exchange sacrifice: 10...♗g4 11 f3 ♖a5 12 ♕d3 cd 13 cd ♕e6 14 d5!. Although there is not a forced win, Black's defence is far from trivial. White can develop his initiative in different directions, and Black must be able to find only moves in all of them.

We were both of the same opinion about the popular system with 10...♖a5 and 11..b6. It is playable, but risky, and also requires memorization of tons of variations. As we later saw, even World champion Anand failed to cope with these problems and was crushed in the first game of the match in Sofia 2010 against Topalov.

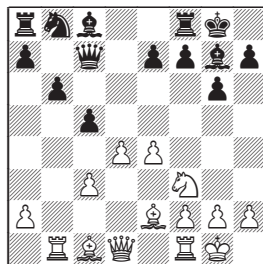
We reached the conclusion that only the Classical system with ...♖c7 gives Black fair chances to play sound positional chess. In it, it is of paramount importance to be well acquainted with its strategic ideas. The focus is shifted towards pawn structures and plans, rather than move-by-move forced play. That makes it much safer from a practical point of view, because the role of calculation and home preparation is reduced.

I have also learned how to organise effectively the joint work of two grandmasters, and how to distribute tasks in order to reap the best harvest from it.

My duties were to seek original ideas which significantly differed from established theory, and mark the main pawn structures, plans and move order tricks. Then we both put the idea under the microscope of different engines. Finally Cheparinov decided whether the idea deserved a practical test.

I used the same method with my co-author Evgenij Agrest. He plays the Grünfeld only as White so he provided the necessary critical view on my analytical work. At first I prepared a general survey of a given system, with an approximate evaluation of every branch. Zhenya's task was to find a decent way for Black to deviate from the established theory. When I deemed that his proposed setup had a solid positional background and the risk was reasonably low, we started analysing with engines. Our best assistants were Firebird and the current number 1, Houdini. The result of our effort was a number of solid alternative setups which could serve as good backup lines or even as a main repertoire.

For instance, in the Exchange System 7.♠f3 c5 8.♖b1 0-0 9.0-0, in addition to the main line with 9...♙c6, Agrest analysed in detail 9...b6 10.0-0 ♖c7!.



This development practically eliminates all the theory and lets Black play in the centre without running any risk of being crushed “by the book”.

We followed this approach throughout the whole book. In every major system, we tried to offer at least two alternatives. That should bring about flexibility in our repertoire, and allow a variable approach to opponents according to their strength or playing style. With our backup lines, you should be able to avoid long forced variations and surprise your opponents. Even for our main lines, we aimed to focus (whenever possible) on positionally sound and less forced variations.

We are convinced that the studying of an opening should not begin with a memorization of variations. We should first understand what our positional aims are, what to pursue and what to avoid. Then we should examine the typical pawn structures and plans that ensue from them. Only then should we choose a system which best fits in with our style of play.

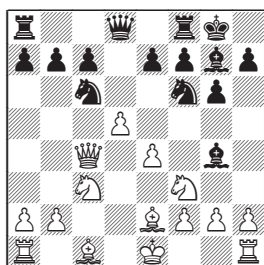
## Foreword

Here are some examples from the practice of my students.

We had studied the typical ideas and a few classical examples, so when Kadric got into the position of the following diagram, he did not get crushed, despite the fact that he did not know the best move order:

### Drenchev–Kadric

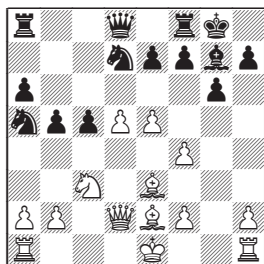
Plovdiv 05.02.2011



9...♙xf3?!

Correct is 9...♗a5! 10.♞a4 ♙xf3.

10.gxf3 ♗a5 11.♞d3! c5! 12..♙e3  
♗d7 13.f4 a6 14.e5 b5 15.♞d2



White is 150 Elo points higher rated (2521) than his opponent and much more experienced, but he was forced to think concretely in an unusual position. Black remembered that I advocate ...a6 and ...b5 in the Grünfeld and success-

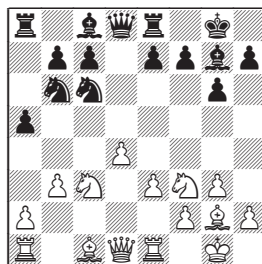
fully gained space on the queenside. Now he could have applied another typical method – a pawn sacrifice – to seize the initiative: 15...f6 16.e6 ♗b6 17.♙xc5 ♗bc4 18.♞c1 f5 19.0-0 ♞c8↑, instead of the timid 15...♞c8. However, later he got the upper hand, but failed to convert his advantage.

When we studied the ideas of the g3-system, I showed the game Benko-Smyslov, Budapest 1949 (given in the intro of Part 1) which introduced for the first time the attack on the queenside by the a-pawn.

During the following game, Kadric recalled it and, inspired by Smyslov's example, followed up by:

### G.Szabo–Kadric

Plovdiv 03.02.2011



11...a4!?

Consistent, though probably not best (11...e5! =).

12.♗xa4 ♗xa4 13.bxa4 e5! 14.♙b2 exd4 15.♙xd4 ♗xd4 16.♗xd4 ♙xd4 17.♞xd4 ♞xd4 18.exd4 and Black easily drew against the 185 Elo points favourite.

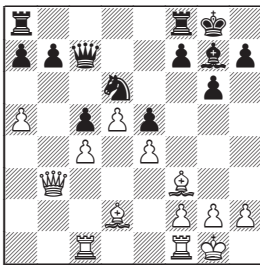
I would also like to call your attention to a thematic manoeuvre

in the Grünfeld – ...♘c6-a5-b7-d6, blockading the advanced d5-pawn.

I first delved into this idea during my work with Ivan Saric, a World and European champion under 18, and now the leading Croatian grandmaster. One of my students liked it so much that he strived to reach a similar pawn structure in every game, thinking that Black was even better. I spent some effort to convince him that the evaluation of such a position depended on the placement of the other pieces. Here is a fresh example from my own practice:

### Naumkin–Delchev

Cappelle la Grande 27.02.2011



During the game, I indulged in meditation of a philosophical character – if White did not have any problems even in this ideal blockading position, I thought, then perhaps Black did not stand so well in other similar positions either. He lacks an active plan. The natural-looking move ...f7-f5 would only weaken the e5-pawn. After ♖e1, ♙c3, Black cannot make any progress since his setup is basically passive and defensive. His left flank is cramped. That is why I recom-

mend in the book to resort to this plan mostly after having gained space on the queenside first with ...b5.

My advice is: study the main strategic ideas, before drawing your conclusions. Play according to the position – do not overestimate your chances. After all, we have Black, so reaching comfortable equality should not upset us.

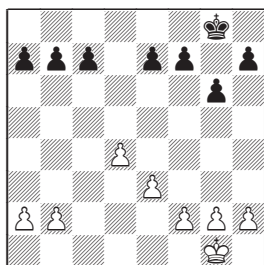
To save you time and help you quickly achieve practical results, I have used a slightly different structure than in *The Safest Sicilian*. This time I borrowed the style of presentation of my colleague in the Bulgarian national team, Kiril Georgiev, from his book *Squeezing the Gambits*, Chess Stars 2010. Again, every part is divided to 3 chapters. The titles “Step by Step” and “Complete Games” speak for themselves. The difference is in the first chapters, called “Main Ideas”. Like the “Quick Repertoire”, they also aim to give you a succinct review of the theory and the basic knowledge that should allow you to start playing the opening without much study. However, I have also included a lot of diagrams with examples of middlegame plans and typical tactical motifs. These should help you compensate for the lack of practice. The “Main Ideas” chapters are very important and complement the “Step by Step” chapters. I also tried to reduce the amount of theory in the “Step by Step” chapters by examining some backup lines in

## Foreword

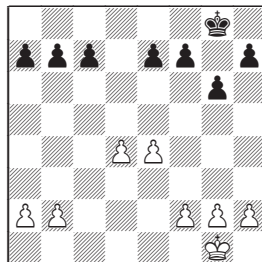
heavily annotated games, given in the “Complete Games”. That should facilitate your navigation between the numerous branches of our repertoire.

I have arranged the material according to the main pawn structures in the Grünfeld.

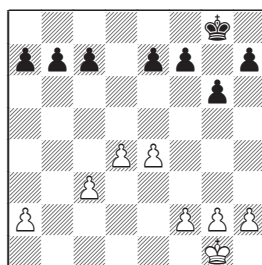
Thus Parts 1-4 consider systems where White does not hurry to occupy the centre and our g7-bishop is restrained by the d4-pawn:



Then in Parts 5-6 I examine the more aggressive pawn formation:



Finally, Parts 7-10 are devoted to the Exchange System. This has been White’s most popular weapon.



The last parts deal with some Anti-Grünfeld approaches.

I would like to thank GM Evgenij Agrest for his fruitful collaboration, and S.Semkov for editing this book.

The material in this book is up to date to April first, 2011.

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*Aleksandar.delchev@gmail.com*



# Introduction

*Black lets White build a strong pawn centre and subsequently tries to transform this strength into a weakness*

*Botvinnik*

The dynamic character of play makes the Grünfeld Defence one of the most popular contemporary openings. However, in the beginning, this original and highly provocative setup did not inspire confidence.

The birthday of this hypermodern opening was in 1922. In the first top level game, Alekhine-Grünfeld, Vienna 1922, the future World champion probably underestimated the great idea of his opponent and lost. Subsequently, Alekhine adopted it himself, starting in the same year. He even chose it for a main weapon in his match against Euwe in 1935, but the overall score was 3-1 in White's favour and he did not try it again in the rematch.

In the match-tournament in 1948, another future World champion, Smyslov, took up the torch and opted for the Grünfeld in three games. He lost one of them to Euwe, but no one could lightly dismiss the new opening anymore.

Six years later, the Grünfeld appeared in the 1954 match Botvinnik-Smyslov and later Botvinnik himself adopted it, popula-

rising it further. Henceforth, nearly all World champions included the Grünfeld Defence in their repertoire. After the catastrophe in the Tarrasch Defence in his first match against Karpov, Kasparov put his fate in the Grünfeld. Still, the total score of 5-1 and 17 draws, shows that back in the 1980s this defence was going through a crisis. Or perhaps Karpov's seconds did a better job.

For many years, the forced character of the main Grünfeld lines put the home preparation of both sides to the test and made this opening difficult to play. The strong pawn centre allowed White to launch kingside attacks where every mistake could be fatal.

Eventually, the powerful new engines helped Black neutralise the most dangerous lines and nowadays the Grünfeld defence is as reliable as ever. Svidler and Kaminsky have brought it at a new level of competitiveness and keep on winning decisive games with it. Black is in perfect theoretical shape so do not hesitate. Join the party!

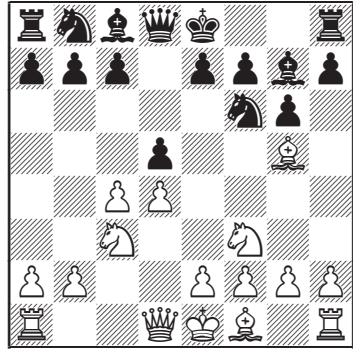
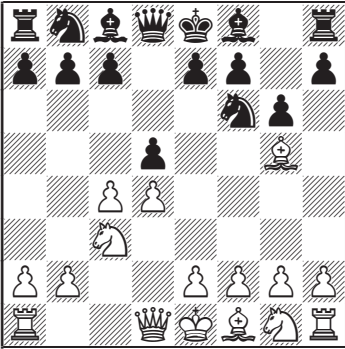
## Part 3

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# The ♖g5 System

1.d4 d5 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♙g5

4.♘f3 ♙g7 5.♙g5



## Part 3

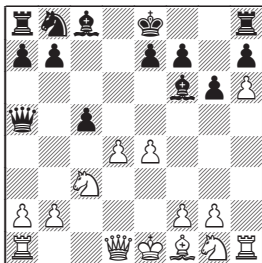
# Main Ideas

### Introduction

In this part, I deal with systems where White develops his bishop to g5. Line A is devoted to 4.♘g5 while line B considers its “improved” version 4.♘f3 ♘g7 5.♘g5.

The first test of this system was the game Alekhine–Grünfeld, Vienna 1922. It saw 4.♘g5 ♘e4! and the future World champion unexpectedly answered with 5.cxd5. This probably took the godfather of the opening, Grünfeld, unawares as he failed to find the best continuation. (nevertheless he won the game) It was demonstrated a year later: 5...♗xg5 6.h4 ♘e4! 7.♗xe4 ♙xd5 8.♗c3 ♙a5 9.h5 ♘g7 10.h6 ♘f6 11.e4 c5!

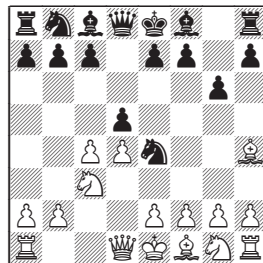
### Euwe–Von Hoorn Amsterdam 1923



12.e5 cxd4!, with a big advantage.

For half a century White did not come up with any fresh ideas until the year 1970. Then the ♘g5 system enjoyed a burst of popularity, connected with the novel move 5.♘h4. Black reacted with the thematic ...c5, but Taimanov won a number of games which put the whole Black’s setup under question. The turn of the tide was the game:

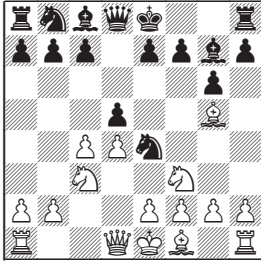
### Mecking–Fischer Buenos Aires 1970



Bobby Fischer played here 5...♗xc3! 6.bxc3 dxc4! 7.e3 ♘e6!. His idea marked the beginning of a new era in the development of the ♘g5 system. It is the foundation of our proposed repertoire, although we also provide a more solid and safe setup as a backup line.

### 3.♖c3 d5. Systems with ♘g5

The improved branch of the ♘g5 system – 4.♖f3 ♘g7 5.♘g5, had similar development. In the beginning, White linked it with the idea to grab the d5-pawn after 5...♗e4



6.cxd5, using the fact that the g5-bishop was defended. Of course, Black could easily regain the pawn, but not without concessions: 6...♗xg5 7.♗xg5 e6 8.♙d2 exd5 9.♙e3+ ♖f8, losing the right to castle. So Black should play first 8...h6 9.♗f3 and only then recapture the pawn. The resulting Carlsbad pawn structure with ...h6 on the kingside was assessed as slightly better for White. However, Black gradually learned how to cope with this approach. He found a good manoeuvre – before castling, the g7-bishop returned to f8 and then went to d6 to support play on both flanks. Alternatively, it turned out that Black was not even obliged to level the pawns. Firstly Korchnoi tried 7...c6?!, and then 7...0-0!? was discovered. Thus about 1970, White had to borrow the retreat to h4 from the 4.♘g5 variation. As a result, after 6.♘h4 ♗xc3 7.bxc3 dxc4, instead of having an extra pawn, White was playing a real gambit.

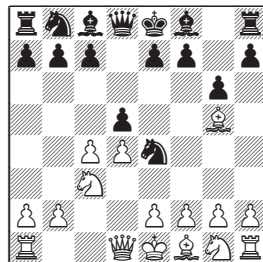
**A. 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 d5 4.♘g5**

### Objectives and Move Orders

Similarly to the previous part, White leads out his bishop, intending to complete development with e3. The big difference is that instead of targeting the c7-pawn, which is a remote threat, he now simply wants to snatch the central pawn on d5. Black has not a convenient way to defend it so he will have to take on c4. However, he should first exchange his f6-knight to reduce the number of minor pieces which is important in a cramped position. The immediate 4...dc?! 5.e4 ♘g7 6.♘xc4 0-0 7.♗e2! would be horrible for Black so he answers with:

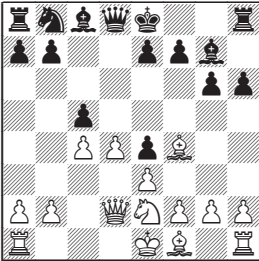
**4...♗e4**

This is by no means the only move. Svidler's efforts in the early 1990s popularised the amazing move 4...♘g7!?. Practice has confirmed that Black gets good compensation for the central pawn. Still, I advocate the opposite approach – instead of sacrificing a pawn, to pocket one. It gives more chances to win.



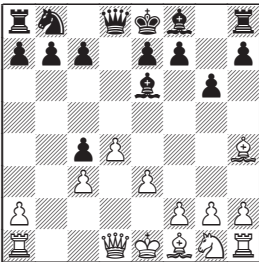
**5. ♖h4**

5. ♖xe4 deprives White of the f3-square. Black can use this to attack the central dark squares, e.g.: 5... dxe4 6.e3 ♗g7 7. ♖e2 c5 8. ♖d2 h6! 9. ♗f4 leads to the following position:



Now simplest is 9...e5! 10. ♗xe5 ♗xe5 11.dxe5 ♖xd2+ 12. ♖xd2 ♖c6 13. ♖c3 ♗f5 14. ♗e2 0-0-0+ 15. ♖c2 ♖xe5 16. ♖ad1 ♗e6 17.b3 f5=.

**5... ♖xc3! 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 ♗e6!**

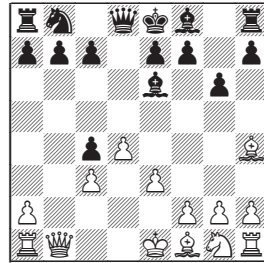


Our plan is to finish development with ...♖d7-b6, ...♗g7, and ...0-0. Then we'll wait for an opportunity to push ...c7-c5. If White played e3-e4, we should be ready to stop his central expansion with ...f7-f5 or ...e7-e5. Whenever White plays a4, we blockade the pawn with ...a5 and attack the target on a4 with ...♗d7, possibly ...♖e8.

**A1. 8. ♗e2 ♖d7!? 9.d5?! ♗f5 10. ♖d4 ♖g8**

Black has the initiative. For instance, 11.e4? ♗g7 12. ♖xc4 would fail to 12...♗xe4.

**A2. 8. ♖b1?! c5!**



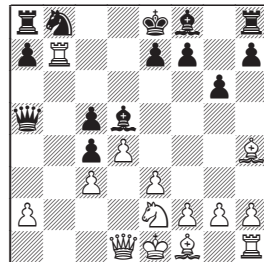
**9. ♖xb7 ♗d5 10. ♖b5+ ♖d7! 11. ♖b1 ♖xb5 12. ♖xb5 ♖d7 13. ♖e2 e5 14.f3 ♗g7**

Black has completed development with a roughly equal position.

**A3. 8. ♖b1 c5!**

An idea of Agrest.

**9. ♖xb7 ♖a5 10. ♖e2 ♗d5**

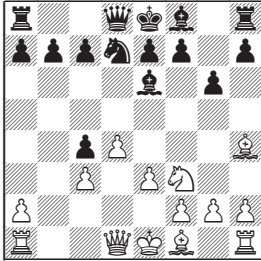


Black has full compensation for the pawn and an easy game, for

### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♗g5

instance: 11. ♖b1 (11. ♖b2 ♖d7) 11...  
 ♖d7 12. ♖b5 ♖a3.

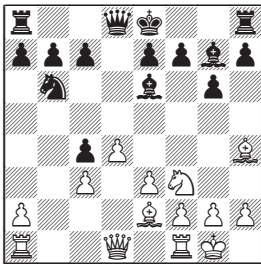
#### A4. 8. ♖f3 ♖d7!?



#### 9. ♗e2

9. d5 ♗g4 10. ♖d4 ♗xf3 is fine for Black.

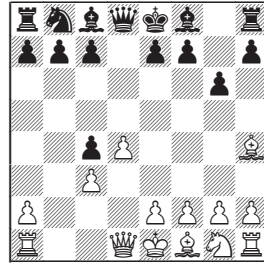
#### 9... ♖b6 10. 0-0 ♗g7



Here White can try to build up play on the kingside with e3-e4, or on the opposite flank with ♖c2, ♖d2, ♗f3.

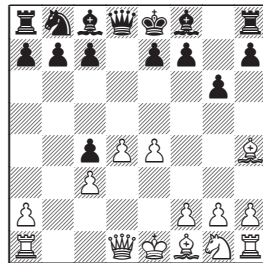
### Basic Plans and Pawn Structures

Most often we'll be dealing with the following pawn structure:



In positions with a mobile pawn centre, White usually aims for a kingside attack. However, here our c4-pawn prevents the light-squared bishop from arriving at the b1-h7 diagonal. Furthermore, our fianchettoed bishop on g7 provides good protection to our castling position. That inspires confidence in our defensive possibilities and allows us to cling to the extra pawn and temporarily concede the initiative to the opponent. When we consolidate, we will think about rolling forth our queenside pawn mass.

### Drozdoskij-Shipov Internet 2004



White hurried to occupy the centre with 7.e4?!, but now his light-squared bishop and his knight have no prospects. We successfully defend the pawn with:

7...b5!

Note that this would have been a blunder after 7.e3, because the white queen could hit our rook from f3.

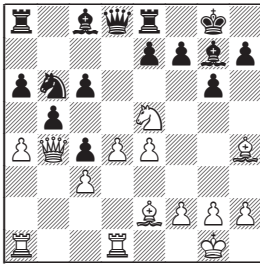
8.a4 c6 9.♘f3 ♙g7 10.♙e2 0-0 11.0-0 a6!

Do not put the bishop to b7 as it will be hanging there after 12.♖b1.

12.♖b1 ♘d7

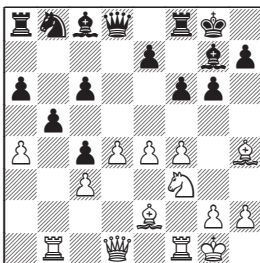
We aim to define the queenside pawn structure by...♗b6

13.♙d1 ♗b6?! (13...♙e8! was better, discouraging 14.♖b4 in view of 14...a5) 14.♖b4 ♙e8 15.♗e5



Now Black had the spectacular combination 15..a5! 16.♖c5 ♗xa4! 17.♙a4 ♖d6!!♣ and White is losing material.

**Dreev-Svidler**  
Poikovsky 2005



White has built a broad centre which restricts our minor pieces. The decision is a light-squared strategy:

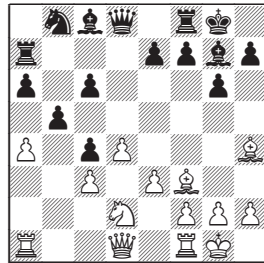
16...f5!

We have nothing to worry about with the d5-square in our control.

17.♖e1 ♙f6! 18.♙d1 fxe4 19.♗g5 ♖d5 20.♙c2 ♙f5 and Black took over the initiative.

The following position arose from the move order with 4.♗f3 ♙g7 5.♙g5, but the game soon transformed in the same pawn structure as in the previous examples:

**Delchev-Karr**  
TOP 16 France 2010



I was quite happy with my position. All my pieces are better than its counterparts. Black cannot easily develop his queenside. All I need is to finish regrouping with ♖b1 and ♙fd1. However, look what happened in just a few moves:

13...♙f5! What is this for?!

14.e4

Off course I cannot let him land on d3! (which would have been perhaps the best decision – 14.♙e1 ♙d3 15.♗b3=)

### 3.♘c3 d5. Systems with ♘g5

14...♙c8!

Black has lost too tempi, but the white centre became unstable.

15.♚b1?!

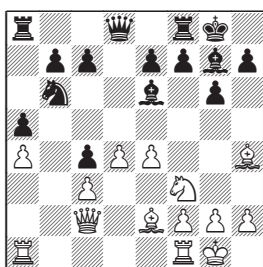
This routine move is a mistake.

15...c5! 16.axb5 ♚b7! 17.♘xc4 cxd4!

My centre has fallen apart. Only with very precise play and a little help from my opponent did I manage to escape.

#### Delchev–Ve.Schneider

La Massana 2010



We see here the same pawn formation in the centre, but the queenside setup is different. Black's counterplay is linked with the weak a4-pawn. The breakthrough ...c7-c5 is efficient as always in the Grünfeld.

In the diagram position, I was expecting something like 13...h6 with idea of ...f7-f5 next which I was planning to meet with ♜fe1! However, practically without even thinking, my opponent surprised me with:

13...♙d7!

It turns out that the a4-pawn is very sensitive. For instance: 14.♘d2

c5 15.d5 ♚e8 16.♘xc4 ♘xa4; 14.♚fb1 ♚e8 15.♙d1 f5!

14.♙g3 ♚e8!

Remember this battery!

15.♙d1 ♚c8

Black gives me a respite. She could have taken on a4 with a better endgame: 15...♘xa4! 16.♚xa4 ♙xa4 17.♚xa4 ♚xa4 18.♙xa4 c6 19.e5 b5 20.♙c2 ♙h6±.

16.♚e1 (against ...f7-f5!)

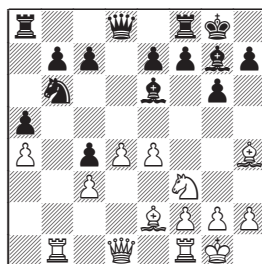
Now the most consistent was 16...c5±, but my opponent suddenly changed her mind in favour of a restraining tactic:

16...f6 17.♚a2 e5=.

My bishop on g3 is a poor sight. I had to use a great deal of imagination (and help from the opponent) to activate it through h2-g1.

#### Akobian–Roiz

Khanty Mansiysk 2007

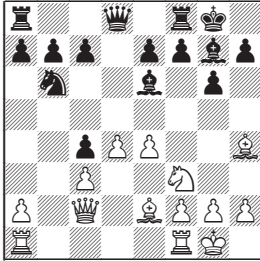


13...♙d7! 14.♚c1 ♙xa4 15.♚a3 ♚d6! 16.♙xe7 ♚xa3 17.♙xa3 ♜fe8 18.♘d2 ♙c2 19.♚b2 ♙d3!–+.

In the next example, White's pawn is on a2 so Black should seek counterplay in the centre:



**Analysis**

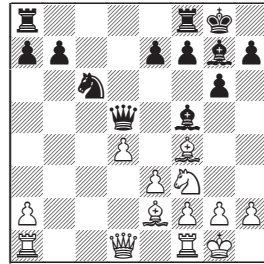


12...f5!!

With this essential novelty Black wins the battle for the d5-square.

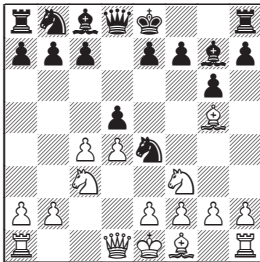
13.♖fe1 fxe4 14.♙xe4 ♕d5! 15.♙e3 ♕f6 16.♗g3 e6. Black gained an important central square and now he will aim for ...c7-c5.

8.e3 0-0 9.cxd5 cxd4! 10.cxd4 ♙xd5 11.♕e2 ♖c6 12.0-0 ♕f5=

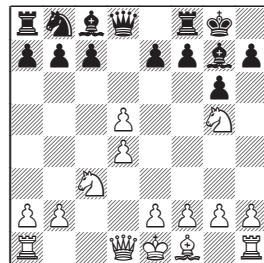


Stayed White's bishop on h4, White would have been better due to the pressure on e7 and the d8-h4 diagonal. From f4, the bishop is hitting void. Even more, in many variations, when the d5-queen had retreated to a5, ...e7-e5 will be with tempo.

**B. 4.♖f3 ♗g7 5.♗g5 ♖e4**



**B2. 6.cxd5 ♖xg5 7.♖xg5 0-0!?**



**Main lines**

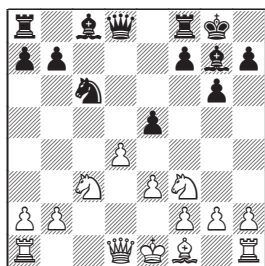
I chose this move for our repertoire because it offers Black active pieces and clear plans. Alternatives are 5...dxc4 and 5...0-0!?.

I prefer this move to 7...e6 or 7...c6?!. Now we threaten to regain the pawn with 8...e6 or even meet 8.e3 with the sharp 8...c6 9.dxc6 e5!?. so White retreats with:

**B1. 6.♕f4 ♖xc3 7.bxc3 c5**

**8.♖f3 c6 9.dxc6 ♖xc6 10.e3 e5**

### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

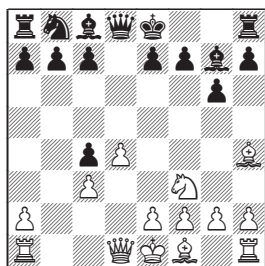


Black has full compensation for the pawn:

11.dxe5 ♖xe5 12.♕e2 ♖xf3+ 13.♕xf3 ♕e6 14.0-0 ♖a5 15.♖c2 ♗ab8, Smyslov-De la Villa, Barcelona 1990, or:

11.d5 e4 12.♖xe4 ♕f5 13.♖c3 ♖b4 14.♖c1 ♖a5.

#### B3. 6. ♕h4 ♖xc3 7.bxc3 dxc4!

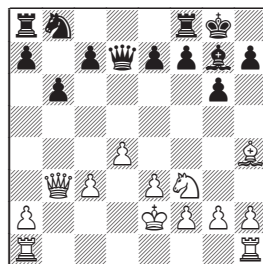


8.e3 b5! 9.a4 c6 does not give White substantial compensation so he commonly answers in Catalan style:

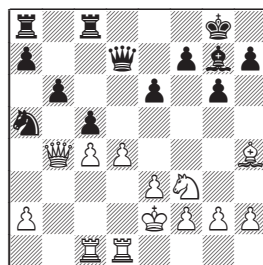
8.♖a4+ ♖d7! 9.♖xc4 b6! 10.e3 ♕a6 11.♖b3 ♕xf1 12.♖xf1 0-0 13.♖e2

It is obvious that Black's only reasonable plan is connected with

...c7-c5, but I prefer to execute it when we'll be better mobilised.



13...♖c6!? 14.♗hd1 ♖a5 15.♖b4 e6! 16.♗ac1 ♖fc8 17.c4 c5!



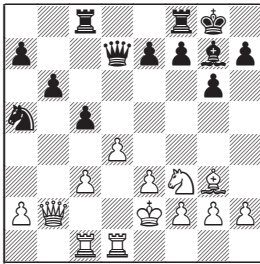
Now 18.dxc5 ♖b7 19.cxb6 axb6 would give Black excellent compensation while 18.♖b5 is also sharp and unbalanced: 18...♖b7 19.d5 exd5 20.cxd5.

### Basic Plans and Pawn Structures

We have seen already examples where White sacrificed the c4-pawn and allowed Black to defend it with ...b5 and ...c6. I'll examine here only structures that are specific for the 4. ♖f3 ♕g7 5. ♕g5 line.

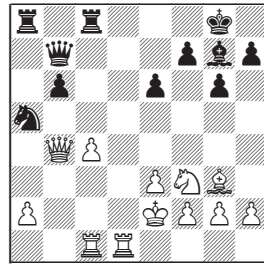
**Sahovic–Dorfman**

Lvov 1984



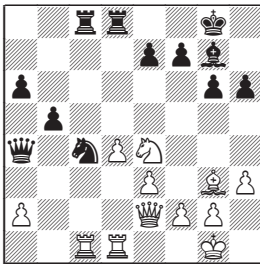
**Cebalo–Mark Tseitlin**

Davos 2008



A typical position for the line B3 with ♖a4+. White has a very solid pawn structure, but the weakness of the c4-square gives Black the better game. It is very instructive to watch how the fine strategist Dorfman accumulates small advantages:

17...♙a4! 18.♘f1 ♜fd8 19.♙e2 ♞c4 20.♙g1 b5 21.h3 a6 22.♞g5 h6 23.♞e4 cxd4 24.cxd4



No matter how good Black's position is, he can hardly win the game without activating the g7-bishop. This is achieved by:

24...e5! 25.dxe5 ♜xd1+ 26.♙xd1 ♙xd1+ 27.♞xd1 ♞xe5 28.♞d6 ♜c6+ and Black went on to convert his edge.

Black has compensation for the pawn. Both c4- and a2-pawns are weak. Still, the white pieces are active and there is no an immediate way to regain the pawn.

20...e5!

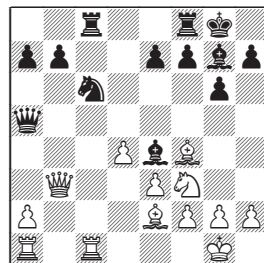
Cutting off the bishop and the knight. Black can always redeploy his own bishop via f8. White got nervous from this turn of events and tried to force exchanges:

21.♘f1 ♞f8 22.♙b5?! (22.♙b1 f6) 22...♜c5! 23.♙d7 ♙xd7 24.♞xd7 ♞xc4 25.♞cd1 f6 and Black won easily this endgame.

**Typical Tactical Motifs**

**Gelfand–Kasparov**

Astana 2001



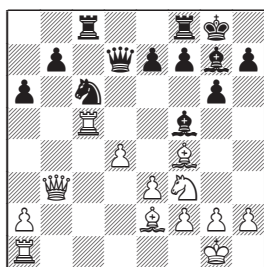
### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

Like in the other Grünfeld systems, White often falls victim to the bishop on g7. However, Gelfand was on his guards and played 16.h3, avoiding the insidious trap:

16. ♖c5 ♖xd4!!

when 17. ♖xa5 ♖xe2+ 18. ♔f1 ♕xa1 19. ♔xe2 ♖c2+ 20. ♔f1 ♖c1+ is a draw by perpetual while 17.exd4?? would leave the a1-rook hanging.

**Pantev-Bratimirova**  
Bulgaria 2009

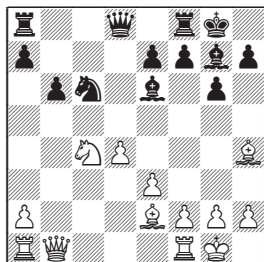


Apparently White was not acquainted with the above-mentioned tactical motif as his last move was 16. ♖c5??. It should not be a problem for us to find:

16... ♖xd4!

Black finished the game in a beautiful way.

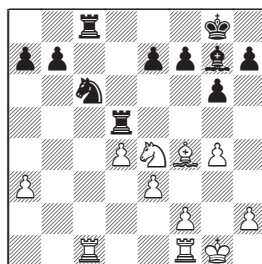
**Stefanova-Sutovsky**  
Hoogeveen 2005



The hanging h4-bishop is often a precondition for double attacks along the 4th rank:

14... ♖xd4! 15.exd4 ♖xd4 16. ♕xe7 ♖fe8 17. ♖b4 a5! and Black regains the piece.

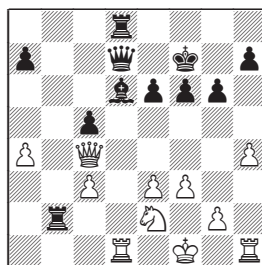
**Eljanov-Svidler**  
Nalchik 2009



Even top players can overlook the linear attack along the 4th rank. The whole combination is quite long and complicated, but once you recognised the pattern, the rest should be easier:

21... ♕xd4! 22. ♖cd1 ♖cd8 23.exd4 ♖xd4 24. ♖xd4 ♖xd4 25.f3 f5 26.gxf5 gxf5 27. ♕e3 ♖d3-+.

**Marcelin-Miton**  
Top 16 France, 2008



21... ♕g3!! 22. ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 23. ♖d4 cxd4 24. ♖c8 ♖db7 0-1

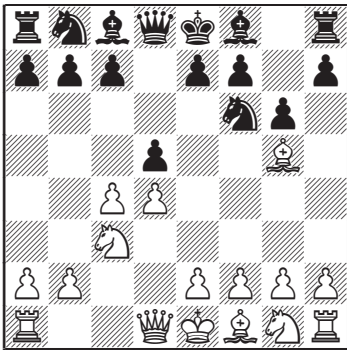
## Part 3

# Step by Step

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5

I examine 4.♗g5 in line A and 4.♗f3 ♗g7 5.♗g5 – in line B.

A. 4.♗g5



A1. 4...♗e4!?!; A2. 4...♗g7.

White's fourth move threatens the d5-pawn. In line A1, I deal with the most popular and interesting retort of Black. It brings about unbalanced positions with mutual chances. 4...♗g7 is a safe and solid variation. If White takes the pawn on d5, Black obtains an easy game. He puts his rooks on the open files and his activity fully compensates for the material deficit. Black's only problem is that he cannot play for a win. On the other hand, having 4...♗g7 in the repertoire saves some

study since White's choice is restricted to 5.♗xf6, or 5.♗f3 (line B).

A1. 4...♗e4!?! 5.♗h4

a) 5.h4!?, 5.♖c1. I consider these moves in Part 11 – SOS systems.

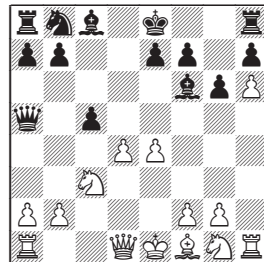
b) 5.cxd5?!

Alekhine's choice in the very first game where 4...♗e4 was played. It is based on the tactical trick:

5...♗xg5 6.h4

White regains the piece, but we have the bishop pair:

6...♗e4 7.♗xe4 ♖xd5 8.♗c3 (Rogers mentioned 8.f3?! in his SOS book. Black answers 8...♗g7 9.e3 e5↑ 10.♗e2 exd4 11.♗xd4 0-0 12.♖c1 ♖xa2 13.h5 ♗c6→) 8...♖a5 9.h5 ♗g7 10.h6 ♗f6 11.e4 c5!



It is easy to find this move nowadays. The source game Euwe-Von Hoorn, Amsterdam 1923 went:

12.e5 cxd4! 13.♗b5+ ♗c6 14.♖xd4 0-0 15.♗xc6 ♗xe5 16.♖e3 bxc6.

### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

c) 5. ♕f4

This retreat often transposes later to line B1: 4. ♖f3 ♕g7 5. ♕g5 ♖e4 6. ♕f4.

5... ♖xc3 6. bxc3 c5

6... dxc4 7. e4 ♕g7 8. ♕xc4 c5 9. ♖e2 0-0 10. 0-0 ♖c6 is a paradoxical attempt to transpose to the main line of the Exchange system. Here White has a pure extra tempo, but it is not obvious how (and is it possible at all) to make any use of it: 11. d5!? ♖a5! 12. ♕d3 e6!.

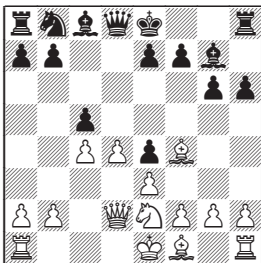
7. e3 ♕g7 8. cxd5 cxd4! (8... ♗xd5 9. ♗f3) 9. cxd4 ♗xd5 10. ♖f3 0-0 11. ♕e2 ♖c6 12. 0-0 ♕f5. I examine this position in line B1.

d) 5. ♖xe4

This is an attempt to deprive Black of his usual counterplay in the centre and eventually prove that the pawn on e4 is weak. However, White's knight would need one more tempo for activation, and his king will be constantly in danger, no matter which side it will choose for castling.

5... dxe4 6. ♗d2

6. e3 ♕g7 7. ♖e2 c5 8. ♗d2 h6! 9. ♕f4 leads to this position:



Now simplest is 9... e5! 10. ♕xe5 ♕xe5 11. dxe5 ♗xd2+ 12. ♖xd2 ♖c6 13. ♖c3 ♕f5 14. ♕e2 0-0-0+ 15. ♖c2 ♖xe5 16. ♗ad1 ♕e6 17. b3 f5=.

6... ♕g7 7. e3

7. 0-0-0 is dubious, because Black will have nice attacking prospects after 7... c5 8. d5 h6 9. ♕f4 ♖d7 10. e3 b5↑, Erdogan-Khachiyan, Yerevan 2000.

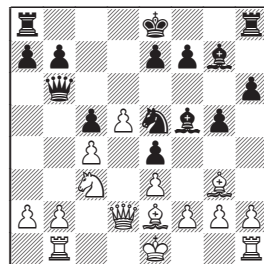
7... c5 8. d5!

8. ♖e2 h6 9. ♕f4 e5 transposes to the position of the above diagram, while 9. ♕h4?! cxd4 10. exd4 ♖c6 11. d5 ♖e5 12. ♖c3 ♕f5 is even more pleasant for Black.

8... ♗b6 9. ♗b1

Again, 9. 0-0-0!? ♖a6 10. a3 ♕d7→ would place White's king under attack.

9... ♖d7 10. ♖e2 ♖e5 11. ♖c3 h6 12. ♕h4 g5 13. ♕g3 ♕f5 14. ♕e2

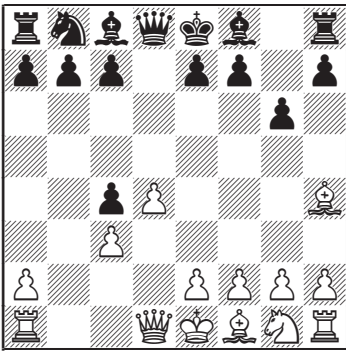


Here, in Golod-Fercec, Rieka 2010, Black chose to break through the centre with 14... ♗d8 15. 0-0 0-0 16. ♗c2 e6. I prefer to shift the focus to the kingside with 14... ♗g6 (if 14... 0-0, White could try 15. h4) 15. 0-0 0-0, with a pleasant game.

**5...♖xc3!**

After 5...c5 6.cxd5 ♖xc3 7.bxc3 ♜xd5 8.e3, Black has many options, but all of them lead to positions with only two possible results. Instead of struggling to make a draw, I prefer to snatch a pawn and play on counterattack in the centre.

**6.bxc3 dxc4**



**7.e3**

The pawn sac 7.e4?! is unclear: 7...b5 8.a4 c6 9.♖f3 ♗g7 10.♙e2 0-0 11.0-0 a6 and White is yet to prove his compensation.

It is best to meet 7.♜a4+ with ...c6!

7...♜d7 8.♜xc4 b6 9.♙g3 c5! is also a good option, Dreev-Najer, Ulan Ude 2009.

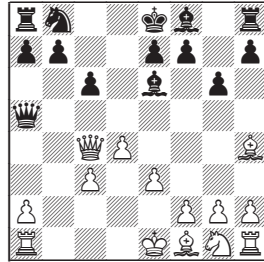
**8.♜xc4 ♜a5 9.e3**

9.♖f3 is less precise since after 9...♙e6! 10.♜b4 (Or 10.♜d3 ♖d7 11.e4 ♖b6 12.♖g5 ♙b3! and the bishop will retreat later to a4.) 10...

♜xb4 11.cxb4 a5! White has not the answer 12.b5.

9.e4 is not as good as in line B, where ♖f3 ♙g7 is inserted, since Black can lead out the bishop to h6: 9...♙e6 10.♜d3 ♖d7 11.♖f3 ♖b6 12.♖d2 ♙h6!? followed by 13...♜d8, 14...♖a4, and eventually 15...♖c5.

**9...♙e6**



**10.♜b4**

On d3, the queen is exposed to tactical tricks, for instance: 10.♜d3?! ♙g7 11.♖f3 ♖d7 12.♙e2 ♖c5 13.♜c2 ♙f5 14.♜b2 ♖a4 15.♜b4 ♜xb4 16.cxb4 ♖c3 17.♙c4 a5+ or 12.♜d2 ♖c5! 13.♜c1 ♖e4 14.♜c2 ♖d6! 15.♙d3 ♜xa2 16.♜xa2 ♙xa2, Wang Yue-Kamsky, Sochi 2008.

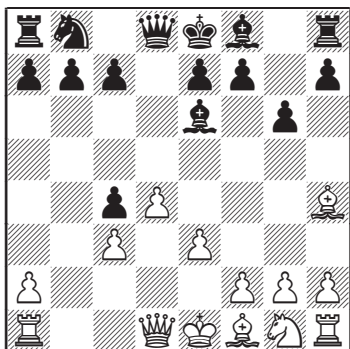
10...♜xb4 11.cxb4 ♙d5 12.♖f3 ♖d7=. Black even has some initiative so White should be careful. In P.Genov-Bok, Groningen 2009, he carelessly wasted a tempo with 13.a3 when the thematic 12...a5! 13.b5 c5 would have earned Black an edge.

**7...♙e6!**

Of course we should defend the pawn. Our plan is to finish devel-

### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

opment with ...♗d7-b6, ...♕g7, and ...0-0. (Beware the blunder 7...b5?? 8.a4 c6 9.axb5 cxb5 10.♖f3.) Sometimes Black also chooses a setup with ...♗h6.



I examine here:

A11. 8.♕e2; A12. 8.♖b1?!; A13. 8.♖b1; A14. 8.♗f3.

#### A11. 8.♕e2 ♗d7!? 9.d5?!

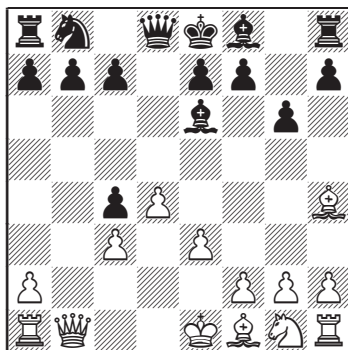
9.♗f3 ♗b6 10.0-0 ♕g7 transposes to line A4. Agrest thinks that 10...♕h6 also deserves a practical test.

#### 9...♕f5 10.♖d4 ♖g8

Black has the initiative. For instance, 11.e4? ♕g7 12.♖xc4 would fail to 12...♕xe4.

#### A12. 8.♖b1?! c5!

This idea of Svidler seems to have discouraged White from playing 8.♖b1 anymore.



#### 9.♖xb7

9.♗f3 ♖a5 is bad for White, so the only alternative to the text is 9.♖b5+?! ♗d7 (9...♗c6 10.♖xc5 ♖b6 was unclear in Iljushin-Dominguez, Khanty Mansiysk 2007) 10.♕xc4 ♕xc4 11.♖xc4 cxd4 12.exd4 (12.♖xd4 e5!; 12.cxd4 ♖a5+) 12...♗b6 with clear play against White's central pawns.

#### 9...♕d5 10.♖b5+ ♗d7! 11.♖b1 ♖xb5

It is better to trade queens or White will have some initiative after 11...♗c6 12.♗f3.

#### 12.♖xb5 ♗d7 13.♗e2

13.♗f3 e6 14.♗d2 does not win the c4-pawn due to 14...cxd4 15.exd4 ♕e7 16.♕xe7 ♖xe7 17.♗xc4 ♖hc8.

#### 13...e5 14.f3 ♕g7

Black has completed development with a roughly equal position.



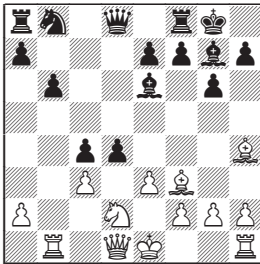
White has tried here:

a) 15.♖b1 ♗c6 16.♘c1 exd4 17.cxd4 cxd4 18.♗xc4 dxe3 19.♗g5 ♘b6 20.♗b5 ♗xb5 21.♖xb5 0-0 22.♗xe3 ♘c4♣, Sanikidze-Rodshtein, Plovdiv 2008.

b) 15.dxc5?! 0-0 16.e4 ♗c6 17.♖b1 ♖fb8 18.♞d1 ♗a4♣, Arutunian-Pashikian, Martuni 2007.

### A13. 8.♖b1

This move aims to prevent ...b5. Since Fischer's times, Black nearly automatically answered 8...b6 9.♘f3 ♗g7 10.♘d2 0-0 11.♗e2 (11.♗xc4? ♗xc4 12.♘xc4 ♖d5) and here Svidler's fascinating rook sac 11...c5! 12.♗f3 cxd4!



gives Black a strong attack. However, the game is most likely to end in a draw after:

13.♗xa8

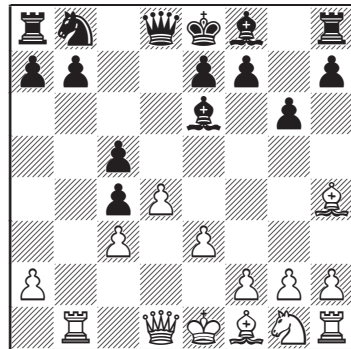
Or 13.cxd4?! ♘d7 14.♗xa8 (14.d5 ♗f5 15.e4 c3 16.♘b3 ♖c8 17.♖c2 g5! 18.♗xg5 ♗g6, with an excellent position) 14...♖xa8, Moiseenko-Svidler, Sochi 2005, and the bishop pair dominates the board.

13...dxc3 14.♘f3 ♖d3 15.♖c1 ♘a6 16.♗b7 (16.♗c6 ♘b4 17.♗a4 ♘xa2

18.♖c2 ♘b4 19.♖c1 ♘a2=) 16...♘c5 17.♗xe7 ♘xb7 18.♗xf8 ♘xf8 19.♘d4 ♘c5 20.♖xd3 (20.♘xe6+ ♘xe6 21.♖c2 ♘c5 22.♖e2 b5 23.a3 a5♣) 20...♘xd3+ 21.♘e2 ♘xc1+ 22.♖xc1 ♗xd4 23.exd4 b5 24.a3 a5 25.♖xc3 ♘e7 26.♖e3 ♘d6 27.♖e5 ♗d5 28.f3 b4 29.axb4 axb4=.

Lately Black discovered that he did not need to spend a tempo on 8...b6 and began playing 8...♘d7=. The problem of this move is that usually the knight is more active on c6. We are going to make a further step forth and propose the novelty:

### 8...c5!



An idea of Agrest. Black simply ignores the threat on b7.

9.♖xb7 ♖a5 10.♘e2

Or 10.♖d2 ♗d5 11.♖b2 ♘c6 12.♘e2 ♗g7↑.

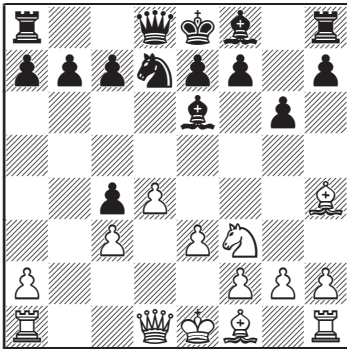
10...♗d5 11.♖b1 (11.♖b2 ♘d7) 11...♘d7 12.♖b5 ♖a3

Black has full compensation for the pawn and an easy game. He can

### 3. ♘c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

develop his bishop to g7 or h6 while White should think up a way to disentangle his pieces.

#### A14. 8. ♘f3 ♘d7!?

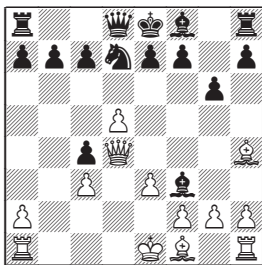


Perhaps this is the most precise move order. Thus Black cuts off sidelines like 8...♕g7 9. ♖b1 or 9. ♖b1.

#### 9. ♕e2

Rare alternatives are:

a) 9. d5 ♕g4 10. ♖d4 ♕xf3



#### 11. ♖xh8

11. gxf3 may be objectively better, but then White has not a compensation for his split pawn struc-

ture. After 11... ♖g8 12. ♖xc4 ♕g7 13. 0-0-0 (or 13. ♖d1 ♘b6 14. ♖b3 ♖d6) 13... ♘b6 14. ♖b5+ ♔f8 Black has good prospects connected with the option of ... ♖d6.

11... ♕xd5 12. ♖d4 ♘b6 13. e4 ♕c6

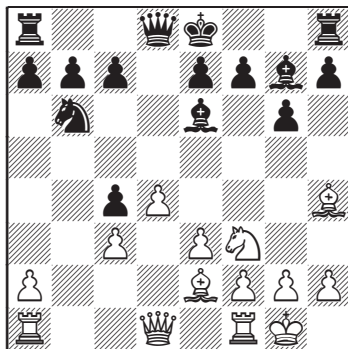
Black had more than sufficient compensation for the exchange in Gelfand-Ponomarev, Nice 2010.

#### b) 9. a4

Played by Kiril Georgiev against Rodshtein in 2010. Black answered with the mundane 9... ♕g7 and White regained the pawn with 10. ♘d2 – the idea of White’s previous move. (10. ♘g5 does not work in view of 10... ♕d5 11. e4 h6 12. exd5 hxg5 13. ♕xg5 ♘b6 14. a5 ♘xd5 15. ♕xc4 ♖d6 16. ♖b3 ♘xc3!.) After 10... ♘f6 11. ♕e2 c5 12. ♘xc4 cxd4 13. cxd4 ♘e4 14. ♖c1 ♕xc4 15. ♕xc4 ♖a5+ 16. ♔f1 ♘d2+ 17. ♔g1 ♘xc4 18. ♖xc4, play was about equal, for instance, 18... 0-0! 19. h3 ♖fc8.

I think that Black should preserve tension with 9... a5 when play will be similar to the main line.

#### 9... ♘b6 10. 0-0 ♕g7



Here White chooses between plans with e4 – line A141, and without it – line A142.

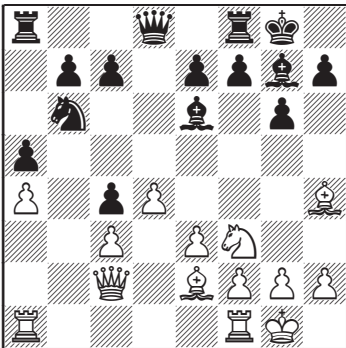
**A141. 11.a4 a5 12.♖c2**

This seems to be the most flexible move order. An alternative is: 12.♘d2

White vacates the f3-square for the bishop and prepares to send the knight to c5 via e4. The latter threat is not dangerous so we do not see a reason to hamper it by 12...f5 as in Wojtaszek-Krasenkow, Warsaw 2010. Still, Black had a good game after 13.♜b1 ♞d7 14.♜a2 0-0 15.♞fb1 ♙d5.

12...0-0 13.♙f3 ♞a7 14.♘e4 ♙d5 15.♘c5 ♙xf3 16.♜xf3 ♘d5 17.♞fc1 b6 18.♘e4 ♞d7 19.♘d2. Here Black gets a preferable game by opening the c-file and trading all the rooks. In the endgame, White's a4-pawn will be very sensitive: 19...c5! 20.♘xc4 cxd4 21.cxd4 ♞c7 22.♙g3 ♞c6 23.♘e5 ♞xc1+ 24.♞xc1 ♙xe5 25.♙xe5 ♞c8♯.

**12...0-0**



**13.♞fb1**

Alternatively:

a) 13.♘d2 should be met by 13...c5! (13...♜e8 14.♙g3 ♙d7 15.♙xc7! ♘xa4 16.♘xc4 b5 17.♘b6 ♘xb6 18.♙xb6 a4 19.♙c5 ♙c6 20.c4 bxc4 21.♙xc4±) 14.♜b2 (14.dxc5 ♘d5 15.♙xc4 ♜c7) 14...cxd4 15.cxd4, Petran-Hoelzl, Budapest 1987, 15...♞c8! 16.♞fc1 ♜c7 17.♜b5 c3. This pawn is cramping White's pieces. I prefer Black here: 18.♘e4 ♘d5 19.♘c5 ♜c6 20.♜xb7 ♜xb7 21.♘xb7 c2 22.♘xa5 ♞c3 23.♙f1 ♞fc8↑.

b) 13.♙g3 ♙f5!

A typical motif. We provoke e3-e4 in order to weaken d4. Thus our future breakthrough ...e7-e5 will gain strength.

14.e4 ♙g4 15.♘e5 (or 15.♞fb1 ♙xf3 16.♙xf3 e5 17.dxe5 ♞e8) 15...♙xe2 16.♜xe2 ♙xe5 17.♙xe5 ♞d7 18.♜c2 f6 19.♙g3. Black is fine here. He can continue, for instance, with 19...♞ae8 20.♞fb1 e5 21.dxe5 fxe5 22.f3 ♜c6 23.♞b5 ♘d7 24.♞d1 b6 25.♞dd5 ♞e6, or even better: 19...f5!? 20.f3 fxe4 21.fxe4 ♞xf1+ 22.♙xf1 ♞f8+ 23.♙g1 e6 24.h3 ♜c6 25.♙h2 ♘d7 26.♞d1 ♘f6 27.♞e1 ♘h5 28.♙e5 ♘f4♯.

**13...♜e8!**

Underlying the drawback of the early a4 – this pawn is a constant source of concern for White. Now he must reckon with ...♙d7.

**14.♘d2 ♙d7 15.♘xc4 ♙xa4**

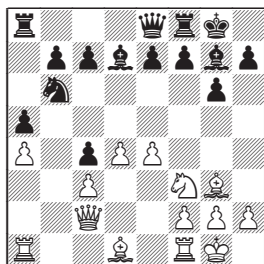
Black has active pieces, not to mention that he is still a pawn up. See **game 9 Bo. Vuckovic-Sutovsky**, Moscow 11.02.2011.

### A142. 11.e4 0-0 12. ♖c2!

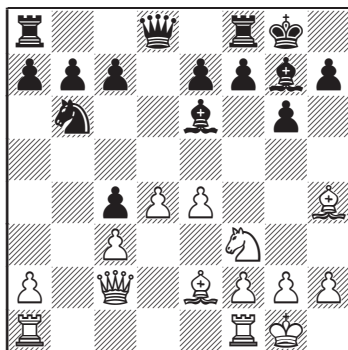
The insertion of 12.a4 a5 is hardly in White's favour since the a4-pawn is likely to fall. For instance:

13. ♗g5 ♕d7 14.f4 ♖e8 15. ♗d2 f6 16. ♖f3 ♗xa4, Kazhgaleyev-Smirin, Chalons en Champagne 2009, when 17.d5 f5!? 18.e5 ♗b3 would have paved the way to conversion to the a5-pawn. White's d5-pawn is also quite weak;

13. ♖c2 ♕d7! 14. ♗g3 (14. ♖d2 c5 15.d5 ♖e8 16. ♖xc4 ♖xa4; 14. ♖fb1 ♖e8 15. ♕d1 f5) 14... ♖e8! 15. ♕d1



The game Delchev-Ve.Schneider, La Massana 2010, went 15... ♖c8 16. ♖e1 f6 17. ♖a2 e5 18. ♕c2, with a double-edged game which I eventually won. However, in the diagram position, Black can eliminate to a better endgame with 15... ♖xa4! 16. ♖xa4 ♕xa4 17. ♖xa4 ♖xa4 18. ♕xa4 c6 19.e5 b5 20. ♕c2 ♕h6♣.



### 12... ♖f5!!

With this essential novelty, Black wins the battle for the d5-square. Without it, his position would remain cramped and somewhat worse despite the extra pawn: 12...c6 13.a4 a5 (13... ♖c8 14. ♗g5 ♖d7 15. ♖xe6 ♖xe6 16.e5 ♖b6 17.a5 ♖d5 18. ♕xc4±) 14. ♖ab1±.

### 13. ♖fe1

Alternatives are:

a) 13. ♗g5 ♕d7 14.f4 ♖e8 15. ♖ae1 h6 16. ♖f3 ♖f7 17. ♖e5 ♕xe5 18.fxe5 g5 19. ♕f2. Now Black has several good options, for instance, 19... fxe4 20. ♖xe4 c6♣ or the simpler: 19... ♖g6 20.d5 fxe4 21. ♕xb6 ♖xb6+ 22. ♖h1 ♖xf1+ 23. ♖xf1 ♖e3.

b) 13.d5 fxe4 14.dxe6 exf3 15. ♕xf3 (15. ♖fd1 ♖c8 16. ♕xf3 ♖xf3! 17.gxf3 ♖xe6) 15... ♖xf3! 16.gxf3 ♖d5♣.

c) 13.a4!? Now Black can continue as in the main line with 13... a5. In many variations he has not ...b5, but that seems irrelevant, e.g.

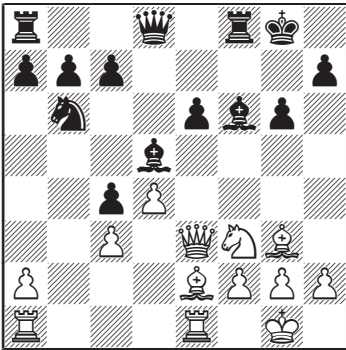
14.♖g5 ♗d7 15.♙xc4 ♘xc4 16.♚b3 h6 17.♚xc4+ ♘h8 18.♘f7+ ♗xf7 19.♚xf7 g5 20.♙xg5 hxg5 21.exf5 ♚e8 22.♚b3 b6 23.g4 ♗g8 24.d5 ♙e5! intending ...♙d6 and Black's position should be preferred.

Another good answer to 13.a4 is 13...fxe4 14.♚xe4 (14.♘d2 ♙f5 15.g4 ♙e6) 14...♙d5 15.♚e3 ♚e8 (15...♙f6!?) 16.♘e5. White has compensation, but it's not easy to decide whether it's sufficient or not. This is really a position for practical testing.

**13...fxe4 14.♚xe4 ♙d5! 15.♚e3**

Naturally, White would prefer to keep queens on. 15.♚xe7 ♚xe7 16.♙xe7 ♗f7 17.♙g5 ♘a4 18.♙d2 ♗e8 19.♘g5 ♗fe7 is obviously better for Black.

**15...♙f6 16.♙g3 e6**



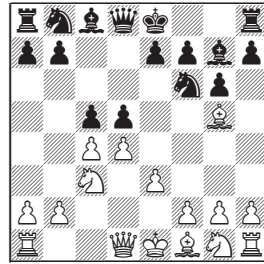
This position is sharp and unbalanced, but besides the extra pawn, Black has plenty of counterplay in the centre, for example: 17.h4 (17.♗ad1 ♚e7) 17...c5 18.h5 (or 18.dxc5

♘a4 19.♙e5 ♙xe5) 18...cxd4 (or 18...gxh5) 19.♘xd4 ♙g5 20.f4 e5! 21.♚xe5 ♙f6 22.♚e3 ♗e8 23.♚d2 ♚d7.

**A2. 4...♙g7 5.♙xf6**

5.♘f3 ♘e4 is considered in line B.

5.e3 c5! faces White with a choice:



a) 6.dxc5 ♚a5 7.♙xf6 (The bishop is hanging in many lines so White exchanges it. Instead, 7.♚d2 dxc4 8.♙xc4 ♚xc5 9.♙xf6 ♙xf6 10.♗c1 ♘c6 11.♘e4 ♚f5 12.♘xf6+ ♚xf6 13.♙d5 0-0 is equal.) 7...♙xf6 8.♗c1 dxc4 9.♙xc4 0-0 10.♘f3 ♚xc5 11.♚e2 ♘c6 12.0-0 ♚a5=. Next, Black plays 13...♙g4.

b) 6.♘f3 cxd4 7.exd4 0-0!? 8.♙xf6 ♙xf6 9.♘xd5 ♙g7 10.♘c3 ♙g4 11.♙e2 ♘c6 12.d5 ♙xf3 13.♙xf3 ♘a5 14.♙e2 ♗c8 15.♚a4 ♚c7 (15...♙xc3+!? 16.bxc3=) 16.♘b5 ♚e5! 17.♚xa5 ♚xb2 18.♗d1 a6=.

c) 6.♙xf6 ♙xf6 7.cxd5 (7.♘xd5?! ♙g7 8.♘f3 ♘c6) 7...cxd4 8.exd4 0-0 9.♙c4 ♚b6 10.♘ge2 ♚xb2 11.♗b1 (11.0-0 ♚b4 12.♙b3 ♘d7) 11...♚a3

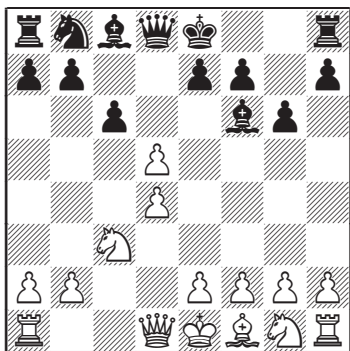
### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

12.0-0 ♖d7 13. ♗e4 ♗b6 14. ♖b3 ♕g7  
15. ♖e1 ♖d8 16. ♗2c3 ♕f5=, Krasen-  
kow-Svidler, Jonkoping 1998.

#### 5... ♕xf6 6. cxd5

6. ♗xd5?! ♕g7 7. e3 (7. ♗f3) is bad  
due to 7...c5!.

#### 6...c6!



A21. 7. dxc6?!; A22. 7. e3; A23.  
7. e4; A24. 7. ♖c1.

#### A21. 7. dxc6?! ♕xd4! 8. cxb7 ♕xb7

The lead in development offers  
Black full compensation. Some of  
White's queenside pawns will fall  
sooner or later:

a) 9. ♗f3 ♕xc3+ 10. bxc3 ♖a5  
11. ♖b3 0-0 12. e3 ♕xf3 13. gxf3 ♗d7  
14. ♖b4 ♖f5 15. ♕e2 ♖ab8 16. ♖e4  
♖xe4 17. fxex4 ♖b2, Orlinkov-Najer,  
Moscow 1996.

b) 9. ♖b3 ♕xc3+! 10. bxc3  
(10. ♖xc3 0-0 11. e3 ♖b6 12. ♗f3 ♖c8

13. ♕c4 ♕xf3 14. gxf3 ♗c6 15.0-0  
♗a5 16. b3 ♗xc4 17. bxc4 ♖c5 18. ♖fc1  
♖ac8 19. ♖d4 ♖c6 20. f4 a5 21. ♖ab1  
♖xc4=) 10... ♖c7 11. ♗f3 ♗d7 12. e3  
♕xf3! 13. gxf3 0-0 14. ♕e2 ♖ab8  
15. ♖a3 ♖c5 16. ♖xc5 ♗xc5.

c) 9. e3 ♕xc3+ 10. bxc3 ♖a5  
11. ♖d4 0-0 12. ♖b4 ♖c7 13. ♗f3  
(13. ♖c1 ♗c6 14. ♖c5 ♖b6! 15. ♖b5  
♖fc8 16. ♗f3 ♗b4) 13... ♗c6 14. ♖c5  
♖fc8 15. ♕e2 ♗a5 16. ♖xc7 ♖xc7  
17. ♖c1 ♖ac8.

#### d) 9. ♖c1

White defended the knight on  
c3, but the b2-pawn is also vulne-  
rable:

9...0-0 10. e3 ♕f6! 11. ♖xd8 ♖xd8  
12. ♗f3 ♗d7 13. ♕e2 ♖ab8.

#### A22. 7. e3

This line has disappeared as  
White gets nothing in return for the  
exchange of his bishop.

#### 7...cxd5 8. ♖b5+ ♗f8! 9. ♗ge2 ♗g7 10. ♖b3 e6

Evidently, only black can be bet-  
ter here. After 11.0-0 a6 12. ♕d3 ♗c6  
13. ♖ac1, simplest is 13...b5.

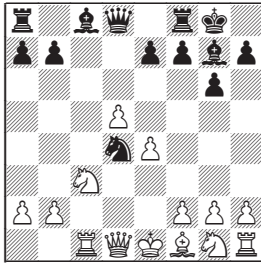
#### A23. 7. e4 0-0!

7...cxd5?! 8. ♖b5+! ♕d7 9. ♕xd7+  
♖xd7 10. exd5 ♗a6 11. ♗f3 ♗b4  
(11...0-0 12.0-0 ♗c7 13. ♖b3 ♖ab8  
14. ♗e5) 12. ♗e5 ♕xe5 13. dxe5  
♖d8 14.0-0 ♗xd5 15. ♗xd5 ♖xd5  
16. ♖a4+ b5 17. ♖xa7 favours White.

**8.e5**

Bulgarian grandmaster Iotov mentioned the interesting novelty:

8.♖c1!? ♗g7! (8...cxd5 9.♗xd5 ♗g7 10.♖xc8!+-) 9.dxc6 (9.♗c4 cxd5 10.exd5 ♖b6 11.♗ge2 ♖xb2=) 9...♗xc6! 10.d5 ♗d4



I analysed here:

a) 11.♗ge2 e5! (11...♖b6 12.♗xd4 ♗xd4 13.♖d2 ♗d7 14.♗d3 ♖ac8 15.0-0 ♖c7 16.♖c2 ♖fc8 17.♖fc1 ♖f6) 12.♗g3 h5=.

b) 11.♖d2 f5 12.♗c4 ♗d7 13.♗ge2 ♖c8=.

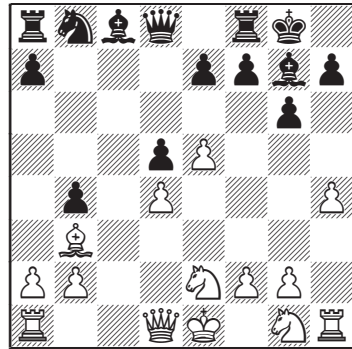
c) 11.♗d3 e6! 12.♗ge2 exd5 13.♗xd5 ♗xe2 14.♖xe2 ♗e6 15.♗c4 b5 16.♗b3 ♖a5+, with more than sufficient compensation, e.g. 17.♗c3 ♗xc3+ 18.bxc3 ♖ac8 19.0-0 ♗c4 20.♗xc4 ♖xc4=.

**8...♗g7 9.♗c4 b5 10.♗b3 b4! 11.♗ce2 cxd5**

11...♗a6 has not advantages over the recapturing of the sacrificed pawn. White has many options, but simplest is perhaps 12.♖d2. Then 12...cxd5 would be similar to the main line while 12...c5 13.♗f3! c4

14.♗c2 ♗b7 15.♖xb4 ♗xd5 16.0-0 ♗c6 17.♖c3 f6 18.exf6 ♗xf6 19.♖ad1 should be in White's favour.

**12.h4**



I do not believe in this attack because White lacks a dark-squared bishop. See the complete **game 8 Bukavshin-Matlakov**, Moscow 01.02.2011.

**A24. 7.♖c1**

Developing a piece and indirectly keeping the extra-pawn in view of 7...cxd5?! 8.♗xd5.

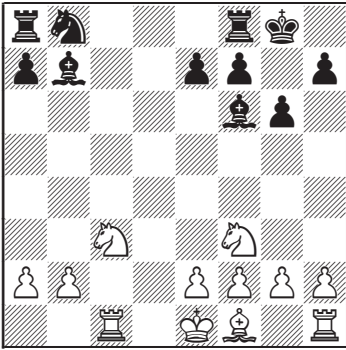
**7...0-0 8.dxc6 (8.e4 ♗g7!) 8...♖xd4! 9.♖xd4 ♗xd4 10.cxb7**

a) 10.c7 ♗c6 11.♗f3 ♗b6! 12.♗d5? ♗a5+.

b) 10.♗f3 ♗xc3+ 11.♖xc3 ♗xc6 12.e3 ♗e6! 13.♗c4 (13.♗b5?! ♗xa2) 13...♗xc4 14.♖xc4 ♖fc8 15.♗d2 ♗a5=, Ivanchuk-Dominguez, Havana 2010.

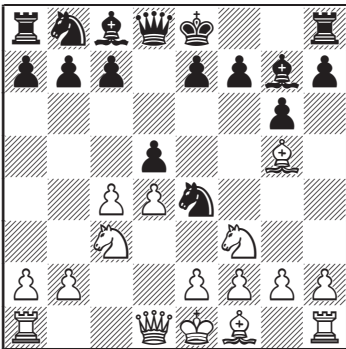
3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

10... ♕xb7 11. ♖f3 ♕f6



Black's activity balances the game. He has different ways to develop his initiative. See the annotations to **game 7 Bo. Vuckovic-Mekhitarian**, Moscow 10.02.2011.

B. 4. ♖f3 ♕g7 5. ♕g5 ♖e4



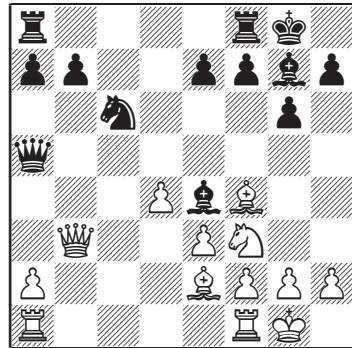
I examine here:

B1. 6. ♕f4; B2. 6. cxd5; B3. 6. ♕h4

**B1. 6. ♕f4 ♖xc3 7. bxc3 c5 8. e3 0-0 9. cxd5 cxd4! 10. cxd4 ♖xd5 11. ♕e2 ♖c6 12. 0-0 ♕f5**

The bishop is misplaced on f4. It does not attack e7, moreover, White has to reckon with ...e5, e.g. 13. ♖d2 e5!. That's why White prefers:

**13. ♖a4 ♖a5! 14. ♖b3 (14. ♖xa5 ♖xa5 15. ♕c7 ♖c6! 16. ♖fc1 ♖ac8 17. ♕g3 ♖fd8=) 14... ♕e4!**



Indirectly defending the b7-pawn (15. ♖xb7 ♖xd4!) while keeping the queen at a5 to support the break ...e7-e5. Our plan is to trade as many heavy pieces as possible and get an ending with a distant passed pawn.

a) 15. ♖ac1 ♖b4! 16. ♖c5 (16. ♕c4 h6 17. ♖fd1 ♖xb3 18. axb3 ♖ac8 19. ♖d2 ♕f5 20. ♕d5 ♖b4 21. ♖xc8 ♖xc8 22. ♕xb7 ♖c2 23. ♕b8 a5 24. h3 ♖a2 25. ♖e4 ♖c3 26. ♖xc3 ♖xc3 27. g4 ♖xb3) 16... ♖xb3 17. axb3 b6 18. ♖c3 (18. ♖c4 ♖a5 19. ♖c7 ♖xb3 20. ♖xe7 ♖fe8 21. ♖xe8+ ♖xe8) 18... ♖b4 19. ♖d2 ♕f5 20. ♕f3 ♖ac8 21. ♖xc8 ♖xc8 22. ♖a1 ♕d3, Gasanov-Kurnosov, Dagomys 2010.

b) 15. ♖fc1! ♖ac8 16. ♕g3!



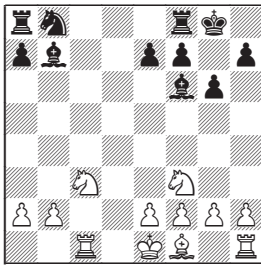
## Part 3

# Complete Games

### 7. Bo.Vuckovic–Mekhitarian

Moscow 10.02.2011

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5  
4.♙g5 ♙g7 5.♙xf6 ♙xf6 6.cxd5 c6  
7.♞c1 0-0 8.dxc6 ♞xd4 9.♞xd4  
♙xd4 10.cxb7 ♙xb7 11.♗f3 ♙f6



#### 12.e3

This move weakens the d3-square, but 12.g3 ♗d7 13.♙g2 ♞ab8! regains the pawn by force: 14.♞c2 ♙xf3 15.♙xf3 ♞xb2 16.♙xb2 ♙xc3+ 17.♞d2 ♞b8±; 14.♗a4 ♞fc8 15.0-0 ♙a6↑; 14.0-0! ♙xf3=.

#### 12...♞d8

The biggest weakness in White's position is not the b2-pawn, but the squares d2 and d3. White will castle and after the exchange on f3, Black's rook will invade the second

rank. 12...♗d7 13.♙b5 ♞fd8 should also be enough to make a draw:

14.0-0 ♙xf3 15.gxf3 ♞ab8 16.♙xd7

Or 16.b3 ♙xc3 17.♙xd7 ♙d2 18.♞c7 ♙a5 19.♞c5 ♙b4 20.♞b5 ♞xb5 21.♙xb5 ♞d2 22.a4 g5=.

16...♙xd7 17.♞c2 ♞db7 18.♞b1 ♙xc3 19.♞xc3 Kazhgaleyev-So, Guangzhou 2010.

#### 13.♙e2 ♗a6 14.0-0 ♗b4 15.a3

15.♞fd1 ♞xd1+ 16.♙xd1 ♞d8 17.♙e2 ♙xf3 18.♙xf3 ♞d2 equalises outright.

#### 15...♗d3 16.♙xd3

Or 16.♞c2 ♙xf3 17.gxf3 ♗xb2 18.♗e4 ♙g7=.

16...♞xd3 17.♞fd1 ♞xd1+  
18.♞xd1 ♙xc3

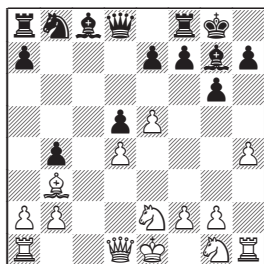
Black eliminates now to a draw rook endgame.

19.bxc3 ♞c8 20.♞c1 ♙xf3  
21.gxf3 ♞c4 22.♗f1 e5 23.♗e2  
♗f8 24.♗d3 ♞a4 25.c4 ♗e7 26.♞c3  
♗d6 27.f4 exf4 28.♗d4 fxe3  
29.♞xe3 ♞a5 30.♞f3 ♗e6 31.♞e3+  
♗d6 32.♞f3 ♗e6 33.♞e3+ 1/2-1/2.

## 8. Bukavshin–Matlakov

Moscow 01.02.2011

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 d5  
 4.♕g5 ♕g7 5.♕xf6 ♕xf6 6.cxd5  
 c6 7.e4 0-0 8.e5 ♕g7 9.♕c4 b5  
 10.♕b3 b4 11.♖ce2 cxd5 12.h4

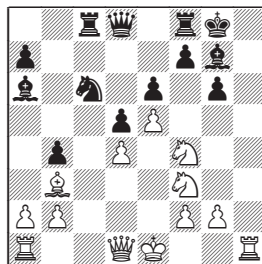


To allow or not to allow h4-h5? The game Pashikian-Edouard, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010, went 12... h5 13.♖f4 e6, with unclear play.

12...h6?! 13.♖f4 e6 14.♖f3 ♖d7 15.♕c2 ♕a6 16.♕d3 ♕xd3 17.♖xd3 ♖e7 18.0-0 ♖fc8 19.♖ac1±, Rodshtein-Khusnutdinov, Moscow 2010, is not inspiring either.

Agrest is an optimist about Black's defence in a position with an open h-file, because White lacks a dark-squared bishop. He proposes the novelty 12...♕f5, which would be justified in the event of 13.h5 ♖c6 14.♖c1 ♖c8 15.♖f3 ♕g4 or 13.♖f4 ♖c6 14.g4 (14.♕xd5 ♖c8) 14...♕d7 15.h5 e6 16.♖f3 g5. However, 13. ♖c1!, preventing ...♖c6, looks unpleasant. For instance, 13...e6 (13...♕h6 14.f4 ♕g4 15.♖f3 f6 16.h5!) 14.h5 f6 15.hxg6 hxg6 16.f3. Evidently, he is not alone to think that 12...h5 is not an obligatory retort. This game presents another interesting idea:

12...♖c6 13.h5 e6 14.♖f3 ♕a6  
 15.♖f4 ♖c8 16.hxg6 hxg6



A critical position. Let us consider the plans of both sides.

Evidently, White should try to bring his pieces closer to Black's king. However, even if he checked from h7 with his queen, that would not be any progress since the king would be comfortable on f8. White could think about some destructive sacrifice on e6 or g6, but this idea does not seem efficient as a simple move like ...♖e8 or ...♖d7 would be enough to parry it.

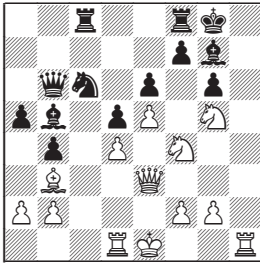
A closer look at the position reveals the manoeuvre ♖f3-g5-h7-f6. It is really dangerous. White would have at least a draw in the pocket if not a direct win. This manoeuvre is not possible yet, because the d8-queen controls g5, so perhaps a useful move like 17.♖d2 should be a candidate number 1 in our calculations. If Black did not shift the queen from the h4-d8 diagonal (for instance, to b6 or a5), White could think about ♖f4-h3-g5-h7.

You might ask, why not then immediately 17.♖h3? Because Black would answer 17...♕h6!, followed up by 18...♔g7, with domination on both flanks!

So we decide on:

17. ♖d2 and start thinking about what Black can do in his turn.

The engines very enthusiastically point out to 17... ♖b6?!, “having in mind” to double the rooks on the c-file. They underestimate White’s attacking possibilities. I checked first 18. ♖d1!, overprotecting d4 à la Nimzowitsch. How to proceed further? 18... ♗b5 19. ♘g5 a5 20. ♖e3



Suddenly a mate is looming – 20... a4?? 21. ♖h8+!. This is a bad sign. Black should answer 20... ♖fe8, but once launched, White’s attack is difficult to be deflected: 21. ♘xf7 ♗xf7 22. ♘d5 exd5 23. ♖f3+ ♔e7 24. ♖h7→.

Perhaps 19... a5? was a mistake? Let us see – 19... ♖fe8 20. ♘h7! ♖d8 21. g4 a5 22. g5 a4 23. ♘f6+ ♗f8 24. ♗c2→. There is something definitely wrong with Black’s setup here. So we discard 18... ♗b5? and check 18... ♘a5. Again – 19. ♘g5 is unpleasant.

It is clear that Black’s only counterplay could be connected with an invasion down the c-file since he has not any other open

files or diagonals on the queenside. I suppose, Black would be glad to steel the b4-pawn from the board, but GM Vuckovic would have noticed, I’m sure!

As the pawn is still on b4, however, let us think how to shift its blocker – the b3-bishop.

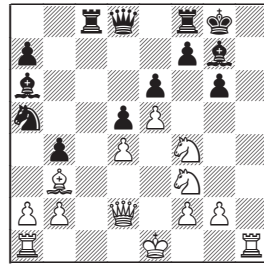
17... ♗c4 seems consistent, but:

1. It does not really threaten to take on b3, since 18. ♘h3 ♗xb3 19. axb3 is positionally great for White. He can even castle now.

2. 18. ♗d1!? would put Black into an awkward situation – how to continue?

3. The variation 18. ♘h3 ♘a5 19. ♘hg5 ♗xb3 20. ♖f4 ♖e7 21. ♘h7, when 21... f6 is the only move, does not look too attractive.

The only sensible option remains 17... ♘a5!



Now the Force (and the tempi!) are with us!

a) 18. ♘h3 ♘xb3 19. axb3 ♖c6! (the point!) 20. ♘hg5 ♖c7 21. ♖f4 ♖c8+.

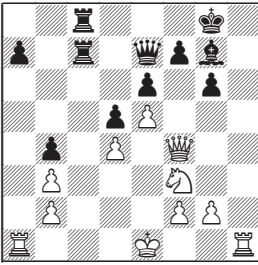
b) 18. ♖xb4 ♘xb3 19. axb3 ♖c2!.

c) 18. ♖d1 ♘c4 (18... ♘xb3 19. axb3 ♖c7) 19. ♗xc4 ♖xc4→. Black doubles or triples on the c-file

### 3.♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

and disembarks on c2.

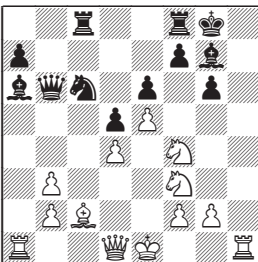
d) 18.♖d3 ♕xd3 19.♖xd3 ♖c7 (Black should be very precise with the move order and keep an eye on g5. For instance, 19...♖c7 20.♖g5 ♖xb3 21.♖h3 ♖fe8 22.axb3 ♖c2 23.♖h7+ ♖f8 24.♖h4↑ would have been risky.) 20.♖e3 (After 20.♖d1 ♖e7 21.♖b1 ♖c4 22.♖e2, Black can even gain space on the kingside with 22...f5) 20...♖e7 (20...♖d7!? 21.♖g5 ♖fc8 22.♖h7 ♖xb3 23.axb3 ♖c6 24.♖f6+ ♖f8 25.♖h7+=) 21.♖f4 ♖xb3 22.axb3 ♖fc8.



This position would be roughly equal after 23.0-0.

White has hardly paid due attention to this critical moment of the game, as he made a serious positional mistake:

17.♕c2?! b3 18.axb3 ♖b6



Black owned the initiative and White has to beat the retreat. He tries to cover the diagonal a6-f1.

19.♖e2 ♕xe2 20.♖xe2 ♖b4 21.♖d3 ♖c7 22.♖d2

22.♖f1 ♖b8 23.♕e2 ♖c2= regains the pawn.

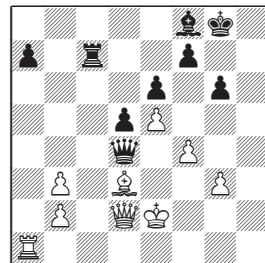
22...♖fc8 23.♖hc1 ♖c6

It is understandable that Black wants to maintain more pieces on the board, but 23...♖xc1 24.♖xc1 ♖xc1 25.♖xc1 ♖xd3 26.♖xd3 ♖xb3+ would have won a pawn and, why not, the game. For instance: 27.♖e2 ♖b5+ 28.♖e1 ♕f8 29.♖d2 ♖b4 30.♖c2 ♖a5 31.♖d1 ♖b6+.

24.g3 ♖xd4+

24...♕f8!? was more tricky. White should find 25.♖f1 ♖xd4 26.♖xd4 ♖xd4 27.♖xc7 ♖xc7 28.♖e2 to remain in the game.

25.♖xd4 ♖xd4 26.f4 ♕f8 27.♖xc7 ♖xc7



28.♖a4?

Now White is lost. 28.♖f3!

would have been more stubborn. The fine point is that he can hide the vulnerable king to g4 in some variations.

28...♖g1 29.♗e1 ♖b6?

29...♗g2+ 30.♗f2 ♖h3 should be winning. The opposite coloured bishops attack continues in full steam, e.g. 31.♗e1 ♖h5+ 32.♔f2 ♗h2+ 33.♔f3 ♗xb2 – winning a couple of pawns. In the game, Black gradually let his advantage slip away.

30.♗a5 ♗c6 31.♞a1 ♞b7 32.♗c3 ♗b6 33.♞c1 ♗xb3 34.♗xb3 ♞xb3 35.♞c2 ♖b4 36.g4 ♖a5 37.f5 gxf5 38.gxf5 exf5 39.♖xf5 ♖b6 40.♔d1 ♞e3 41.♞e2 ♔f8 42.e6 ♞xe2 43.♔xe2 f6 44.♔f3 a5 45.b3 ♔e7 46.♖g4 ♔d6 47.♔f4 ♖d8 48.♖h3 ♔c5 49.♖g2 d4 50.♔e4 ♖e7 51.♖f3 ♔b4 52.♔xd4 ♔xb3 53.♖d5+ ♔b4 54.♔d3 a4 55.♖c4 ♔c5 56.♖a2 ♖d8 57.♖c4 ♔d6 58.♔e4 ♔c5 59.♔d3 f5 60.♖a2 ♖g5 61.♔e2 ♔d4 62.♔f3 ♔e5 63.♖c4 a3 64.♖a2 ♔d4 65.e7 ♖xe7 66.♔f4 ♔c3 67.♔xf5 ♖f6 68.♔xf6 ♔b2 69.♖e6 a2 70.♖xa2 ♔xa2 1/2–1/2.

### 9. Bo.Vuckovic– Sutovsky

Moscow 11.02.2011

I chose to annotate this game because of three reasons:

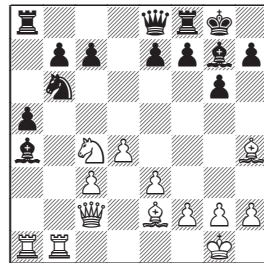
It was played recently by two strong grandmasters;

White introduced a novelty in a sharp, topical line;

The engines fail to evaluate

correctly the arising positions and might deceive readers.

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♔c3 d5 4.♖g5 ♖e4 5.♖h4 ♖xc3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 ♖e6 8.♖f3 ♖g7 9.♖e2 ♖d7 10.0–0 ♖b6 11.a4 a5 12.♗c2 0–0 13.♞fb1 ♖d7 14.♔d2 ♗e8 15.♖xc4 ♖xa4



16.♗e4

The game Avrukh-Popilski, Israel 2010, saw 16.♗a2 ♖d5 17.♗a3 (17.♗d2 could be met by 17...b5 18.♖xa5 e5!), when Black should have retreated the bishop to c6. Vuckovic's novelty looks dubious at first – the engines stubbornly claim a Black's advantage after the natural:

16...♖c6?!

I suspect that White's prospects are better after this move. Black's problem is that he is left without any decent plan. White obtains a powerful pawn centre which allows him to manoeuvre at his ease.

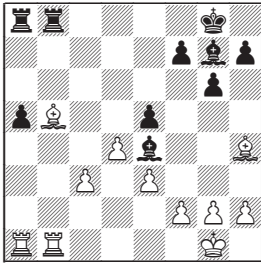
We should all learn to part with central pawns very carefully. I think that Black should have taken a deep breath here, and switch from move-

### 3. ♖c3 d5. Systems with ♕g5

by-move calculation to a long-term thinking. My understanding tells me that the centre should be attacked immediately by:

16... ♖xc4! 17. ♕xc4 e5!

Then 18. ♖xb7 ♕c6 19. ♖xc7 ♕e4 20. ♕b5 ♖b8 21. ♖xb8 ♖fb8 reverses the roles.



White is a pawn up, but Black is extremely active and the a-pawn will probably win material. For example: 22. ♖b3 ♕c2 23. ♖b2 ♕d3 24. ♕c6 ♖xb2 25. ♕xa8 a4♠. Black trades rooks and dark-squared bishops, and the pawn reaches a2.

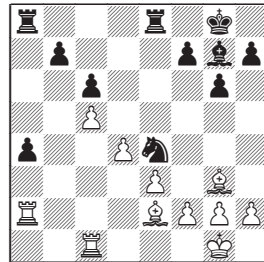
#### 17. ♖xe7 ♖d5

This is also against basic chess rules. Black avoids exchanges having less space in the centre. 17... ♖xc4 18. ♕xc4 ♕e4 seems more precise. Now 19. ♖b2 is bad due to ♖c6, so White should play 19. ♖c1 or 19. ♖xe8. In both cases Black may be holding, but it is only White who can improve his position. Variations are not forced and my examples can only illustrate the character of play, nothing more:

19. ♖c1 ♖xe7 20. ♕xe7 ♖fe8 21. ♕a3 c6 22. f3 ♕f5 23. e4 ♕d7 24. ♕c5 b5 25. ♕a2 ♕f8∞;

19. ♖xe8 ♖fxe8 20. ♖b2 a4 21. ♕g3 ♖ec8 22. f3 ♕c6 23. ♖f2 ♖a5 24. ♖e2 b5 25. ♕d3 a3 26. ♖b3 ♕f8 27. ♕e1 ♖b8∞.

18. ♖xe8 ♖fxe8 19. ♖c1 a4 20. ♕g3 ♕b5 21. ♖b6 ♖xb6 22. ♕xb5 c6 23. ♕e2 ♖d5 24. c4 ♖f6 25. c5 ♖e4 26. ♖a2



A critical moment. Black should play 26... ♖xg3 27. hxg3 a3 28. ♖f1 ♖a7 29. g4 ♖b8 30. ♖c3 ♖ba8 (30... b6 31. ♖b3) and struggle to hold this unpleasant endgame. White will blockade the a-pawn with his king and will try to win it and advance his central chain.

Instead, Sutovsky opts for a hopeless position:

26... f5 27. ♖ca1 ♖xc5 28. dxc5 ♕xa1 29. ♖xa1 a3 30. ♖f1 ♖g7 31. ♖e1 ♖f6 32. ♖d2 ♖a5 33. ♕d6 b5 34. ♖c3 ♖a4 35. ♕f3 ♖c8 36. ♖b3 ♖e6 37. ♖xa3 ♖xa3+ 38. ♖xa3 ♖d7 39. ♖b2 ♖e8 40. h4 ♖a8 41. ♕d1 ♖e8 42. ♕b3 ♖a8 43. ♕e5 ♖e7 44. ♖c2 ♖e8 45. ♖d3 ♖d7 46. ♕d4 ♖a8 47. f3 ♖a3 48. ♖c2 ♖a8 49. ♕e5 ♖e8 50. ♕f4 ♖a8 51. ♖b2 ♖f8 52. g3 ♖e8 53. ♖c2 ♖a8 54. e4 fxe4 55. fxe4 ♖a1 56. ♕g8 ♖e8 57. ♕d6 ♖g1 58. ♖d2 ♖g2+ 59. ♖e3 b4 60. ♖d3 1-0.

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## Part 1. The Fianchetto System

### 1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♟g7

3...c6 4.♟g2 d5 5.♟f3 ♟g7 6.b3 26 (6.cxd5 27)

4.♟g2 d5 5.♟f3 28

5...dxc4 6.♟a3 c3 7.bxc3 c5 8.0-0 0-0 9.♟e5 29

9.♟c4 30

9.♞b3 31

9.e3 ♟c6 10.♞e2

(10.♟b2 32) 10...♟d5 11.♟b2 ♟b6 12.♞fd1 33

12.♞ab1 33

12.♞ac1 34

12.♞ad1 35

5.cxd5 ♟xd5 6.e4 (6.♟c3 36) 6...♟b6 7.♟e2 (7.♟f3 36) 7...c5

8.d5 0-0 9.0-0 e6 10.♟ec3 ♟a6 11.a4 (11.♟d2 37; 11.♟a3 37) 11...♟b4 38

10.♟bc3 ♟a6! (10...exd5 39) 11.♟f4 e5 42

11.h3 40

11.♟f4 41

11.b3 41

6.♟f3 ♟b6 7.♟c3 (7.0-0 ♟c6 8.♟c3 44) 7...♟c6

8.e3 0-0 9.0-0 ♞e8 (9...e5 46; 9...a5 47)

10.d5 47

10.♞e1 a5 (10...e6!? 56)

11.♞c2 51

11.♟g5 50

11.b3 50

11.♞d2 50

11.a4 51

11.d5 51

11.h3 51

11.♟d2 51

11.♞e2 52

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#### 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♔f4 ♕g7

5.♖c1 70

5.♗f3 0-0 (5...c5? 72) 6.e3 72

6.♖c1 c5 78

6...dxc4 78

5.e3

5...c5 6.cxd5 79

6.♖c1 81

5...c5 6.dxc5 ♖a5

7.♖b3 83

7.♖a4+ 83

7.♗f3 86

7.♖c1 dxc4 8.♔xc4 (8.♖a4+ 87) 8...0-0 9.♗ge2

♖xc5 10.♖b3 ♖a5 88

10...♗c6 90

### Part 3. Systems with ♕g5

#### 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5

4.♕g5 ♗e4 5.♔h4 (5.cxd5 114; 5.♕f4 115; 5.♗e4 115; 5.h4!? 309)

5...♗xc3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 (7.e4 116) 7...♕e6

8.♕e2 117

8.♖b1 117

8.♖b1 118

8.♗f3 ♗d7

9.♕e2 (9.d5 119; 9.a4 119) 9...♗b6 10.0-0 ♕g7 11.a4 120

11.e4 121

4...♕g7 5.♕xf6 (5.♗f3 125; 5.e3 c5 122) 5...♕xf6 6.cxd5 c6

7.dxc6 123

7.e3 123

7.e4 123

7.♖c1 124

4.♗f3 ♕g7 5.♕g5 ♗e4 6.♕f4 125

6.cxd5 ♗xg5 7.♗xg5 0-0 126 (7...c6 126)

6.♔h4 ♗xc3 7.bxc3 dxc4 8.♖a4+ 130



**Part 4. The e3 System**

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.e3 ♙g7**

5.cxd5 ♗xd5 6.♗xd5 145 (6.♙c4 145)

5.♖b3 dxc4 6.♙xc4 0-0 7.♗f3 c5 8.d5 148 (8.dxc5 148)

5.♗f3 ♙g7 6.♙d2 153 (6.cxd5 149; 6.♖b3 149)

6.b4 149

6.♙e2 c5 7.dxc5 151

7.0-0 152

**Part 5. The ♖b3 System**

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♗f3 (4.♖a4+ 164) 4...♙g7 5.♖b3 dxc4**

6.♖xc4 0-0 7.e4 ♗c6 8.♙e2 (8.d5, 8.♙e3, 8.e5, 8.♙f4, 8.♙g5 166) 8...♙g4

(8...e5 166) 9.d5 (9.♙e3 167) 9...♗a5 10.♖b4 (10.♖a4 168) ♙xf3 11.♙xf3 c6

12.♙e3 171

12.0-0 ♖b6 13.♖a4 (13.♖xe7 170; 13.♖xb6 171) 13...♗d7 14.♖c2 171

14.♙e3 171

14.dxc6 171

14.♙e2 172

14.♗d1 173

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**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5**

5.♙g5 182

5.♙d2 (4.♗f3 ♙g7 5.cxd5 ♗xd5 6.♙d2 183) 5...♗b6 (5...♙g7 183)

6.♗f3 185

6.♙g5 186

6.♙f4 187

5.♗a4 190

5.♖b3 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♙g7 7.♙a3 191

7.♗f3 193

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**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.e4 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♙g7**

7.♙b5+ 201

7.♖a4+ 203

7.♙a3 205

7.♙g5 309

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**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.e4 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♙g7 7.♙e3 c5** (8.♗f3 236; 8.♙c4 213)

8.♙d2 cxd4 9.cxd4 ♗c6 10.♙d1 0-0 11.♗f3 213 (11.d5 213; 11.♙e2 214)

8.♙c1 ♙a5 9.♙d2 0-0 10.♗f3 213 (10.♙c4 215; 10.d5 215)

**Part 9. The Exchange System with 7.♗f3**

**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.e4 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♙g7 7.♗f3 c5**

8.♙b5+ 234

8.♙e2 235

8.h3 236

8.♙e3 236

8.♙b1 0-0 9.♙e2 ♗c6 10.d5 (10.♙e3 cxd4 238) 10...♗e5 11.♗xe5 ♙xe5 12.♙d2 (12.♙b3, 12.♙d2, 12.c4 238) 12...e6 13.f4 ♙c7 (13...♙g7) 14.0-0 (14.♙c4 240)

14...exd5 15.exd5 ♙a5

16.g4 240

16.♙b5 241

16.♙b3 241

16.♙a3 242

16.f5 242

16.d6 243

9...b6!? 245

**Part 10. The Exchange System with 7.♙c4**

**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.e4 ♗xc3 6.bxc3 ♙g7 7.♙c4**

**0-0 8.♗e2 c5 9.♙e3 ♗c6 10.0-0** (10.♙c1 267) **10...♙c7** (10...e6 269) **11.♙c1**

(11.♙f4 270; 11.d5 271; 11.♙c1 271; 11.♙b1 272; 11.h3 273) **11...♙d8** (11...

e6 274) 12.f4 274 (12.d5, 12.h3 274; 12.♙e1, 12.♙a4 275)

12.♙d2 a6 (12...♙a5 276)

12.♙f4 ♙d7 13.dxc5 281

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**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5**

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4.cxd5 ♖xd5 5.e4 ♖xc3 6.bxc3 ♙g7 7.♙g5 309

1.♖f3 ♖6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 d5 4.cxd5 ♖xd5 5.h4!? 310

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#### 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.f3

3...♖c6 4.d5 ♖e5 5.e4 d6 6.♖e2 318

6.f4 318

6.♖c3 319

4.♖c3 320

4.e4 322

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1.c4 ♖f6 2.♖c3 d5 3.cxd5 ♖xd5 4.g3 g6 5.♙g2 ♖b6 6.♙g2 ♙g7 7.♙e3 ♖c6

8.♚d2 331

8.♙xc6+ 333

8.♚c1 333

8.♚c1 334

8.♖f3 0-0 9.0-0 (9.♚c1, 9.♚d2 334) 9...e5 (9...♚e8 334) 10.♚d2 334

10.♚c1 334

10.a4 335

10.♚c1 335

10.b4 335

1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.b4 336

1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 d5 4.♚a4+ 336 (4.cxd5 ♖xd5 5.♚a4+ 336)

4.cxd5 ♖xd5 5.♚b3 (5.e4 336) ♖b6 6.d4 337

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♖f3 g6 3.♖c3 d5 4.♙f4 339

## **Other CHESS STARS Books**

### **Repertoire books:**

Opening for White Acc. to Kramnik 1.Nf3 by A. Khalifman  
Volume 1a: Old Indian, rare lines in the Classical Variation, 2006  
Volume 1b: The Classical Variation, 2006  
Volume 2: Anti-Nim-Ind, Anti-Queen's Indian, English, 2008  
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