



COLUMNISTS

Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen

**Reviewed this month:**

The Sicilian Sozin
by Mikhail Golubev

The Petroff
by Lasha Janjgava

The Main Line French: 3 Nc3
by Steffen Pedersen

New in Chess Yearbook 61
by Genna Sosonko, Paul van der Sterren et al

Knock-Out Openings!

This month we will take a look at some new books covering true knock-out openings. Knock-out in more than one way. First the Sicilian Sozin, which since its introduction in the 40's has dealt Black many heavy blows in the Classical Sicilian, Scheveningen and Najdorf. Then we will look at the Petroff and the main line French, both of which have proven to be essential tools for Black in today's knock-out tournaments, where an equaliser as Black against 1 e4 is a must. You can always discuss whether this makes chess particularly interesting, but among top players these openings are definitely gaining ground.

Last, but not least, we have the latest Yearbook from our Dutch friends at New in Chess. They claim that White is okay! We'll see about that. Enjoy!

The Sicilian Sozin by Mikhail Golubev, 2001 Gambit Publications, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 272 pp., \$22.95



To most people, Ukrainian GM Mikhail Golubev is known as a specialist in the Sicilian Dragon, about which he wrote an excellent book in 1999, *Easy Guide to the Sicilian Dragon*. The present book is his first book since then, and when you look at the scope of it, you cannot help be impressed. With 272 pages, it is longer than most other opening books that are published these days.



In the foreword Golubev tells us that he has played the Sozin for 18+ years, so we can expect him to know what he is talking about.

The material in the book is divided up as follows:

- Introduction (15 pages)
- **6 Bc4 Scheveningen**
- 1 5...e6 6 Bc4 Be7 (5 pages)
- **Fischer Attack**
- 2 5...a6 6 Bc4: Introduction to the Fischer Attack (6 pages)
- 3 5...a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 0-0 (7 pages)
- 4 5...a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3: 7...Be7 and 7...Qc7 (4 pages)
- 5 5...a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 b5: Sidelines (16 pages)
- 6 5...a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 b5 8 0-0 Be7 9 Qf3! (35 pages)
- 7 5...a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 Nbd7! (23 pages)
- **Sozin and Velimirovic Attack**
- 8 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 a6 (14 pages)
- 9 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 a6 8 Be3 Be7 without 9 Qe2 (20 pages)
- 10 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 a6 8 Be3 Be7 9 Qe2 (38 pages)
- 11 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Be3 a6 without Bb3 (9 pages)
- 12 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 e6 7 0-0 a6 without Bb3 (7 pages)
- 13 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 e6: Sozin and Velimirovic without ...a6 (18 pages)
- **Anti-Sozin Lines**

- 14 Anti-Sozin: 5...Nc6 6 Bc4 Qb6 and 6...Bd7 (46 pages)

A true labyrinth of different lines which, in addition to everything else, is highly transpositional. Although tools to avoid too much confusion have been created, it can still be quite daunting for an author.

In the introduction, Golubev tells us how he first got acquainted with the Sozin back in 1982 through a magazine article, where he managed to find an improvement for White, that so far has helped him score 3½ in 4 games. He also tells us that his win-to-defeat ratio in the Sozin is 45 to 8 in about 80 games, which comes close to a 75% score, well above the average that White normally scores in the open Sicilian. This of course sets off a few alarm bells for me, as he then easily could tend to favor White's chances, when matters are not quite as clear-cut as he may present them to be. However, Golubev says something about that himself: "Actually, the Sicilian Sozin and also this book are intended primarily for chess-players who, like me, enjoy attacking without thinking twice. Nevertheless, I do not wish to discourage the supporters of Black still more - the defence is not easy but it is certainly not hopeless and I shall try to be objective throughout."

Next follows fairly light coverage of the theoretical basis of the lines covered, then a fairly interesting discussion on the strategic features and finally the historical background of these lines. While this is well-done, I personally think that the historical section with its lightly annotated games should have been replaced with a broader discussion of strategy and practical examples in order to make this book more available to a wider audience. The reason why I say this is because of the very dense theoretical section where explanations are not as widespread as they maybe ought to be.

When I was an active 1 e4 player myself, I too played the

Sozin, and while I can't claim a score as impressive as Golubev's, I don't think I ever lost with it. What still strikes me is the depth of the theory and the sheer mass of information that is required study in order to materialize from playing this ultra-sharp opening. Back in 1990 I remember spending the better part of a weekend with four friends, with two of us defending and three attacking from the following position that we considered critical at the time: 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bb3 Be7 8.f4 0-0 9.Be3 a6 10.Qf3 Qc7 11.0-0-0 Na5 12.g4 Nxb3+ 13.axb3 Nd7 14.g5 b5 15.f5 Ne5 16.Qg3, a position which was mentioned as interesting by Kasparov and Nikitin in their excellent treatise on the Sicilian ...e6, ...d6 Systems. Analysing like that may not be particularly productive in advancing theory, but nonetheless your understanding of this type of position increases manifold. Incidentally, I got a chance to use it in a tournament a couple of weeks after our training session. My opponent had already lost twice in this tournament as Black in the Fischer Attack, one of losses occurring the round before to my room mate and analysis partner in the above session.

Hansen,C (2305) - Tella,J [B88] Danish Open Ch jr (6), 1990

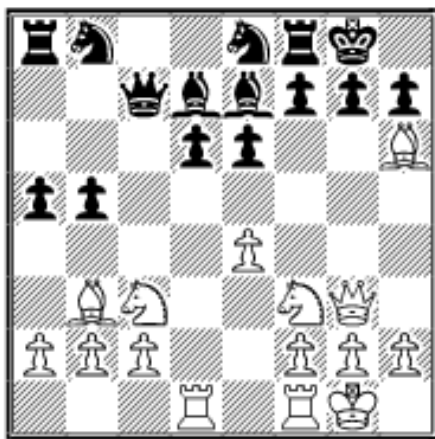
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bb3 Be7 8.f4 0-0 9.Be3 a6 10.Qf3 Qc7 11.0-0-0 Na5 12.g4 I had a really difficult time remembering the initial moves, and had at this point already spent 30 minutes. But after reaching this position, everything became clear to me and I only spent another 30 minutes on the rest of the game. **12...Nxb3+ 13.axb3 Nd7 14.g5 Re8?** This is a loss of a vital tempo that Black cannot afford. **15.h4 b5 16.g6! hxg6 17.h5 Bf6 18.hxg6 fxg6 19.Qh3 Nf8 20.e5 dxe5 21.Ne4! Re7 22.fxe5?!** Here 22 Ng5! ends the game; my computer claims mate in 10! **22...Qxe5 23.Nxf6+ gxf6 24.Nc6?!** At this point 24 Qh8+ Kf7 25 Bh8 would have ended the game, but White also wins after my move. **24...Rh7 25.Qxh7+ Nxh7 26.Rd8+ Kg7 27.Bh6+ Kf7 28.Nxe5+ fxe5 29.Rf1+ Ke7**

30.Rh8 1–0

By the way, my opponent Jussi Tella is the co-author of *An Explosive Opening Repertoire for Black* that I will review in next month's column.

As with Golubev's book on the Dragon, this book is jam-packed with his own analysis and suggestions. You can open literally any page in the theoretical section and this will be evident. I have some quibbles with the fact that every now and again some moves are given without being attributed to anybody, although sometimes having been played in several games. Although I'm sure it may not hurt anyone, this isn't the correct way to do things. Another problem, which I think could be trouble for the weaker players in his audience, is that he often fails to attach an evaluation to a series of moves or analysis. An example of both is the following:

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bb3 b5 8.0–0 Be7 9.Qf3 Qc7 10.Qg3 0–0 11.Bh6 Ne8 12.Rad1 Bd7 13.Nf3 a5



Now Golubev gives: "14.e5?! gives White a draw at the most: 14...a4 15.Rd4 axb3 (Black may try to improve via 15...g6!? 16 Bd5 Ra5 or 15...Kh8!?, but not 15...dxe5 16.Rg4 Bf6 17.Ne4 g6 18 Bxf8!) 16 Bxg7 Nxc7 17 Rg4 bxa2 18 Rxg7+ Kh8 19 Ne4!?" (19 Rxh7+ =), and now 19...Qc2! is simpler than 19...a1Q 20


Rxh7+ Kxh7 21 Neg5+ Bxg5 22 Nxc7+ Kg6 23 Nxe6+!? Kf5 24 Nxc7."

It would have been reasonable to quote the game Vavra-Danner, Bohemians Prague 1994, in which Black played the 15...dxe5, although Golubev doesn't think very highly of it and although the position after 18 Bxf8! isn't particularly

clear after 18...Kxf8. White has to give up his b3 bishop and although White may have some initiative, it's questionable if it's sufficient to compensate for the material. There are many such cases throughout the book.

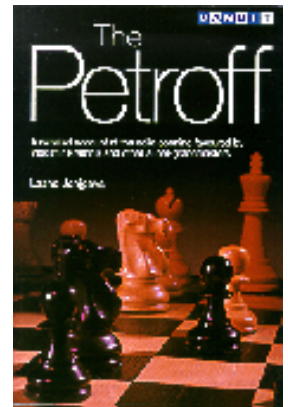
Overall, I think this a brilliant book, this is a must for anybody playing or facing the Sicilian Sozin and related lines. Even with the development a popular line such as this is experiencing, the present book will be an excellent companion for White or Black for years to come.

However, I do find that due to the state of the material, especially the lack of narrative explanations, players under 1900-2000 will have a hard time making sense of all the lines.

My assessment of this book: 

The Petroff by Lasha Janjgava, 2001 Gambit Publications, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 240 pp., \$21.95.

To me it seems as if the Petroff (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6) has been in constant focus since Karpov and Kasparov had their battles in last part of the 1980s. Several books have come out on this popular opening. In 1999 we saw Yusupov's ECO style monograph, Forintos/Haag also put a volume and so did Karpov with the amusing title *Winning with The Petroff*.



Some people may remember the name of the author; last year I reviewed his previous book on the Catalan and Queen's Gambit for Black. The present book is written in the same style, which means a lot of theory, plenty of independent ideas and original analysis, but almost no text or

explanations of typical ideas, strategy etc. This of course makes the book less accessible for weaker players who may not care anyway what I write and will buy the book anyway...

The material is divided up as follows:

- 1 Unusual Third Moves for White (11 pages)
- 2 3 d4 without 3...Nxe4 (15 pages)
- 3 3 d4 Nxe4: Sidelines for White and Black (15 pages)
- 4 3 d4 Nxe4 4 Bd3 d5 5 Nxe5 Nd7 (33 pages)
- 5 3 d4 Nxe4 4 Bd3 d5 5 Nxe5 Bd6 (27 pages)
- 6 3 Nxe5: Sidelines (12 pages)
- 7 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4: Sidelines (23 pages)
- 8 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bd3 Nc6 (13 pages)
- 9 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bd3 Bd6 (33 pages)
- 10 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bd3 Be7 (34 pages)
- 11 The Main Line: 7 0-0 Nc6 8 c4 Nb4 (16 pages)

The division looks well-balanced and reasonable given the relative popularity of each line.

As mentioned above, the narrative side of the book is found wanting, but for people looking for new ideas and original analysis, this book is a sea of interesting ideas. I will take a look at a couple of them as well as the coverage provided by the author.

The first thing I came across was in Chapter 1, line A, which features the interesting gambit 3 Bc4. He does mention that now 3...Nc6 transposes to the Two Knights Defence, but for some reason he has left out 4...Nc6! after 3...Nxe4 4 Nc3!?. It does again transpose to the Two Knights Defence. In my opinion, 4...Nc6 represents White's biggest problem in this line, yet Janjgava fails to mention it, while Yusupov did refer to it. Furthermore, after 4...Nd6 5 Bb3 Nc6 6 0-0 Be7, Janjgava mentions that "it is more dangerous, but also riskier" to play 7 d4!? exd4 8 Nd5, which is mentioned as played by S. Christensen-Guldberg, Aalborg 1995. It could

have been worthwhile looking into this as it definitely more critical for Black than 7 Re1 e4! 8 Nxe4 Nxe4 9 Rxe4 d5 10 Re1 0-0 with equality, Albin-Hodges, New York 1893, which is what Janjgava quotes.

Also after 4...Nf6!? 5 Nxe5 d5 6 Bb3 c6 7 d4 Be7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Bg5! Nbd7 10 f4 +=, which I think was first given by Jussupow, yet Janjgava makes no reference to him.

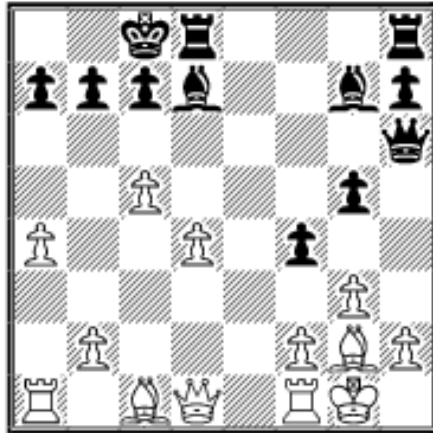
However, Janjgava does to some extent make up for this by suggesting a new move for White after 4...Nxc3 5 dxc3 c6 6 Nxe5 d5 7 0-0 Bd6 8 Re1 Be6. His new move is 9 Qh5!? which improves over 9 Bd3 as played in Boden-Morphy, London 1858. After 9 Qh5!?, he gives 9...Bxe5 10 Qxe5 0-0 11 Bd3 Nd7 12 Qg3 +=. Interesting!

In Chapter 2, I found a couple more examples of ideas not originating from himself, but no credit is given to the people behind the moves: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 d4 exd4 4 e5 Ne4 5 Qxd4 d5 6 exd6 Nxd6 7 Bg5 f6 8 Bf4, and now: a) 8...Nc6 9 Qd2 Bf5 10 Be2 Qe7 11 0-0 0-0-0 12 Re1, and here he recommends 12...Qf7! with an unclear position, as first suggested by Steinitz; b) 8...Qe7+!? 9 Be2 Nc6 10 Qa4 Bd7 11 0-0 Qxe2! 12 Re1 Ne5 13 Qxd7+ Kxd7 14 Rxe2 Nxf3+ 15 gxf3 Nf5, which was first given by Forintos/Haag, and although Janjgava adds 16 Nc3 Bd6 =/=+, it reminds me of simple theft! Similar examples can be found throughout the book. This practice is simply not acceptable, not giving other authors credit for their analysis, and thereby presenting it as one's own.

It would have been nice to know which books he had used for reference, so you could compare the analysis given in this book with what can be found in the other works, but unfortunately no bibliography is given in this book. This makes it very difficult to judge how much he has lifted from these other works.

Let's have a look at one of the pieces of analysis that definitely should bear Janjgava's stamp:

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.Bd3 d5 5.Nxe5 Nd7 6.Nxd7 Bxd7 7.0-0 Qh4 8.c4 0-0-0 9.c5 g5 10.Nc3 Bg7 11.g3 Qh6 12.Nxe4 dxe4 13.Bxe4 f5 14.Bg2 f4 15.a4



About the last move Janjgava writes: "this is a new move that I am recommending over 15 d5?! Rhf8 16 Re1 Kb8 with an unclear position, Arencibia-Vladimirov, Lyons 1991". First he discusses the moves 15...Bc6?, 15...Bd4?, 15...Qg6?, 15...Qf6?!, 15...c6?! and finally 15...Rhf8, which according to Janjgava's analysis

appears to be the critical test. His analysis continues as follows [CH: my additions are given in brackets such as this]: **16.Ra3**, and then:

1) **16...Bxd4? 17.Qxd4 Bc6 18.Qc4 Bxg2 19.Kxg2 f3+** (19...Qc6+ 20.f3) **20.Rxf3 Qc6 21.Qg4+** and White wins

2) **16...Bh3! 17.d5 Bxg2 18.Kxg2 Qg6** [CH: 18...Rf5 is much better - please see the comment underneath this analysis] **19.Rd3 Qe4+** (19...fxg3 20.hxg3 Qe4+ 21.f3 Qb4 22.Bxg5 and White wins) **20.f3** (20.Qf3!? [CH: 20...Qxa4!? looks okay for Black]) **20...Qb4 21.c6!** (21.Qc2 Bd4 22.Bd2 [CH: 22 c6!? looks better for White] 22...Qxc5 23.Qxc5 Bxc5 24.b4 Bd6 25.Re1 with equal chances) **21...bxc6 22.dxc6 Bxb2** [CH: 22...Qc4!?, not opening the b-file, which only can be taken advantage of by White, seems better] **23.Bxb2** (23.Rxd8+ Rxd8 24.Qc2 Bxc1 25.Qf5+ Kb8 26.Rxc1 Ka8! [CH: 26...Rd2+ 27 Kh1 a5 is probably Black's best leaving White with a small edge] with an unclear position [CH: 27 Qxg5! looks simple and good for White]) **23...Qxb2+ 24.Rf2 Qb6 25.Rc2 fxg3** [CH: 25...g4!? is likely to cause White

headaches] **26.hxg3 h5** [CH: 26...Qb4!/? may be better, taken White's improvement on move 28 into consideration] **27.Rxd8+ Rxd8 28.Qh1!/?** [CH: 28 Qe2! looks far more critical, threatening 29 Qe6+ Kb8 30 Qf6 with dual threats on b2 and d8] **28...Qb3 29.Rf2 Qxa4 30.Qxh5 Qxc6 31.Qxg5+=.**

When people write that they have come up with this or that novelty, I always run my computer to see if they are telling the truth. In this case I did find a game from 1997, the correspondence game Vagenknecht-Pesa, which can be found on the excellent *MegaCorr 2* CD-ROM, which I had the pleasure of reviewing this past summer. That game ended in a quick draw, which obviously made me even more curious. It went as follows: **15...Bh3!/?** (which was not mentioned by Janjgava) **16 d5 Rhf8 17 Ra3 Bxg2 18 Kxg2** (at which point it merges with the line given above) **18...Rf5!** (allowing Black to at least equalize easily, which basically makes the above analysis pointless) **19 Rd3** (19 c6!/? is possibly better, but not causing Black too many problems) **19...Rdxd5 20 Rxd5 Qc6**, and a draw was agreed upon, but in the final position, it is clear that Black has the initiative. 1/2-1/2.

My little search also revealed another move that possibly improves over Janjgava material in the book. Instead of 16 Re1 as played in the Arencibia-Vladimirov game, White can play 16 Qb3!?. In the game *Carlqvist-Dahlgren, J, Corr. 1992*, White won smoothly: **16.Qb3 Bd4 17.d6 Bc6 18.Bxc6 bxc6 19.Qc4 Qf6 20.Qa6+ Kd7 21.dxc7 Rc8 22.Rd1 Rfe8 23.Qa4 Re4 24.Be3 fxe3 25.fxe3 Rxc7 26.Rxd4+ Rxd4 27.exd4 Qe6 28.Qa3 Rb7 29.Qc3 h5 30.Re1 Qf6 31.Qe3 Rb8 32.b4 a6 33.d5 cxd5 34.Rf1 1-0**. It's of course possible to improve on this, but it may be White's best line against 11...Qh6!/?.

The above is not given to criticize the author, but it is clear that Larsen's old idiom "long analysis, wrong analysis" still

applies, and also that it is important we check the analysis carefully before we start playing a line given in a book. Finally, it also shows why any opening book author should invest in *MegaCorr 2* (or 3 when that comes out next year?!); there is so much material and interesting ideas that are ignored in many books, simply because the author didn't bother to check an excellent and easily accessible resource such as *MegaCorr 2*.

The present book is a joint effort of three people. First, it is written by Janjgava, then translated by Graham Burgess, and finally John Nunn has added material to Janjgava's original text, which mostly seems to have consisted of updating it in accordance with the development in theory since Janjgava delivered the manuscript. It has been some months since this book came out and the developments in theory have already made sure that some of the material in the book is outdated. This of course is inevitable when any line is played constantly at top level.

Overall, this book, despite its lacking narrative, lifting of ideas from other authors and missing a bibliography is a good solid work that players facing or playing the Petroff will not want to be without.

My assessment of this book: 

The Main Line French: 3 Nc3 by Steffen Pedersen, 2001
Gambit Publications, Figurine Algebraic Notation,
Paperback, 256 pp., \$22.95.

The present book is the first volume of two by Danish International Master Steffen Pedersen on the French Defence. This volume covers, as the title indicates the lines starting with 3 Nc3, including 3...dxe4. The second volume will feature 3 Nd2 and is due later this year.



In the past, Pedersen has produced a number of excellent opening books on a great variety of openings, while his book prior to this one was *Test Your Chess*, where he took a well-deserved break from writing opening manuals.

It's been a few years since we last saw a general book on the French, although there have been several books on specific lines in the French. Pedersen also mentions this in his introduction: "I have divided the book into four parts: 1) The Rubinstein and Burn Variations (3...dxe4 and 3...Nf6 4 Bg5 dxe4); 2) The Classical French (3...Nf6); 3) The Winawer (3...Bb4); 4) Rare 3rd moves. I could easily have written a whole book on each of the first three parts. Hence, in many lines, I have ruthlessly cut down on non-relevant lines and endeavoured to give the most important lines for both sides."

Still I think that 256 pages is a bit on the short side with a topic as big as this. With reference to Pedersen's comment, it should be mentioned that Kindermann and Dirr wrote no less than 342(!) pages on a line in the Winawer that arises after 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 bxc3 Ne7 7 Qg4 0-0. This line is covered by Pedersen in a mere 18½ pages. The difference in pages is staggering, but also tells you how much material Pedersen had to trim away, not only in this line, but in every chapter.

The material is divided up as follows:

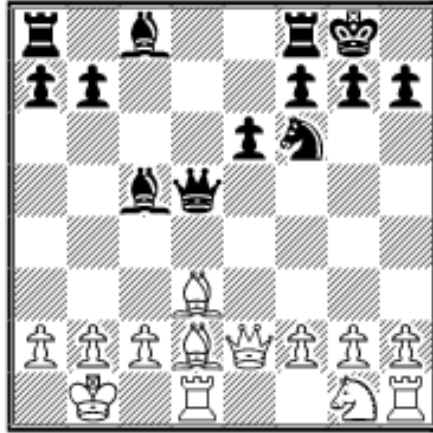
- **Part One: Rubinstein and Burn Variations**
- 1 Rubinstein Variation: 4...Bd7 and others (9 pages)
- 2 Rubinstein Variation: 4...Nd7 (17 pages)
- 3 Burn Variation: 5...Nbd7 (7 pages)

- 4 Burn Variation: 6...gxf6 (16 pages)
- 5 Burn Variation: 6...Bxf6 (10 pages)
- **Part Two: The Classical French**
- 6 Steinitz Variation: Introduction (7 pages)
- 7 Steinitz Variation: Main Line (7 Be3) (23 pages)
- 8 Shirov/Anand Variation (5 Nce2) (9 pages)
- 9 Classical Variation (15 pages)
- 10 Chatard-Alekhine Attack (13 pages)
- 11 MacCutcheon Variation (18 pages)
- **Part Three: The Winawer**
- 12 Main Line Winawer: 7 Qg4 Qc7 (18 pages)
- 13 Main Line Winawer: 7 Qg4 0-0 (19 pages)
- 14 Modern Main Lines: 7 a4, 7 Nf3 and 7 h4 (18 pages)
- 15 Armenian Variation (5...Ba5) (13 pages)
- 16 Winawer: Early Deviations (29 pages)
- **Part Four: Odds and Ends**
- 17 Rare Third Moves for Black (4 pages)

With the emergence of more and more knock-out tournaments with more money than ever involved, many have looked to the French as a solid reply to 1 e4, and in the lines covered in part one they found a solid option, which has by now been tried by a large group of players in the latest Fide World Championship in Moscow. The remaining players (give or take a few) have turned to the Petroff. The fact of the matter is that the lines in part one have become tremendously popular among the strongest players who cannot afford to lose as Black (and who don't play the Sicilian as well as Kasparov...).

Browsing through the pages I noticed that Pedersen hasn't found a way for White to get an edge after 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Be7!?. Odd, but true. This of course has something to do with the line being very rarely played, but surely Pedersen could have come with a suggestion or two for White.

In order to test Pedersen's coverage, I looked at the line which ended in two terrible defeats for Black at the recent Corus tournament in Wijk aan Zee: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nd7 5 Bd3 Ngf6 6 Qe2 c5 7 Nxf6+ Nxf6 8 dxc5 Bxc5 9 Bd2 0-0 10 0-0-0 Qd5 11 Kb1

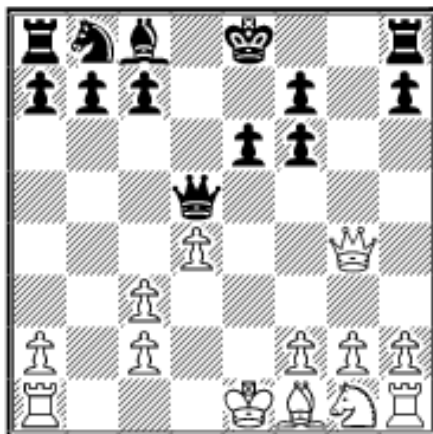


Since Pedersen couldn't have included games that were played after the book was published, so he quoted the game Ivanisevic-Supatashvili, Panormo Z 1998, which went 11...Qxg2 12.Nf3 Qxf2 13.Qe5 Qxf3 (in Khalifman-Bareev, Black tried 13...Be7 at this point, while in Morozevich-van Wely, Black opted for

13...Nd7)14.Qxc5 b6 15.Qg5 h6 16.Qh4 Qh5 17.Qg3 Kh8 18.Rhg1 Rg8 19.Rdf1 Bb7 20.Bc3 (Pedersen ends here with the comment "gave White a devastating attack") e5 21.Bxe5 Rae8 22.Rf5 Rxe5 23.Rxe5 Qf3 24.Qxf3 Bxf3 25.Re7 Bd5 26.Rxa7 Re8 27.c4 Be6 28.Rb7 Nd7 29.Bc2 Ne5 30.b3 Nf3 31.Rg2 g5 32.Rxb6 h5 33.Be4 Bh3 34.Rg3 Rxe4 35.Rxh3 g4 36.Rxh5+ Kg7 37.c5 Re2 38.c6 1-0.

All this is pretty bad for Black, but Pedersen suggests the logical 11...e5! as an improvement. His line goes 12 Bb4 (threatening 13 Bxh7+) 12...Qc6 13 Bb5 Qb6 14 Bxc5 Qxc5, which according to Pedersen "is fine for Black". I haven't found anything wrong with it, e.g., 12 Bg5 e4! 13 Bxf6 exd3 14 Rxd3 Qc6 15 Bc3 Bf5 16 Rg3 f6 with excellent compensation for the pawn. Maybe subsequent play in this line will show problems for Black, but for now he is theoretically okay.

I came across another line: **1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Bb4 5 exd5 Qxd5 6 Bxf6 Bxc3+ 7 bxc3 gxf6 8 Qg4!?**



which, according to Pedersen, is more dangerous for Black than his main line, which continues with 8 Qd2 Qa5 9 g3. He gives three alternatives: 8...Qg5 (quoting a piece of analysis by Keres), 8...Ke7 (quoting van den Doel-Visser) and 8...Nd7 (quoting Turov-Glek). In the last line, he only mentions 8...Nd7 9

Bd3 Kf8 which rapidly went downhill for Black, but surely 9...f5!? could have been suggested, which subsequently has been played. However, more surprising is it that 8...Bd7, which was tried in the game Jenni-Glek, Bad Wörishofen 2001 (played in March 2001, and therefore well before the deadline) and led to a victory for Black, isn't mentioned at all, when the alternatives are clearly not sufficient for Black. The game continued like this: 9.Qg7 Rf8 10.Qxf6 Ba4 11.Qf4 Qa5 12.Qd2 Nc6 13.Bd3 0-0-0 14.f4 f6 15.Nf3 e5, and Black had ample compensation for the pawn.

In Chapter 10, the Chatard-Alekhine Attack, Pedersen has an interesting piece of analysis of his own:

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.h4 0-0
7.Bd3 c5 8.Qh5 g6 9.Qh6 cxd4 10.f4**



This move is Pedersen's own. He now gives the following analysis:

a) 10...dxc3 11.Nf3 cxb2 12.Rb1, and now

a1) 12...Re8? 13.h5 Qa5+ 14.Ke2 Bf8 15.Qxh7+!! Kxh7 16.hxg6+ Kg8 17.Rh8+!! Kxh8 18.gxf7 and White is winning. Pedersen

writes "This line may not be that relevant but it was a pleasure to work out!"

a2) 12...f6!? 13.h5 fxg5 14.hxg6 Bb4+ 15.Ke2 Qe7 16.g7 Qxg7 17.Qxe6+ Kh8 18.Bxh7 "gives White an irresistible attack, but 13...Rf7! appears to defend".


a3) "Black's safest course is to play 12...Nxe5! 13.fxe5" which transposes to line b below.

b) 10...Nxe5 11.fxe5 dxc3 12.Nf3 cxb2 13.Rb1 f5 (13...Qc7 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.h5 Nc6 16.hxg6 fxg6 17.Bxg6 hxg6 18.Qh8+ Kf7 19.Rh7+ Ke8 20.Rxe7+ Nxe7 may be defensible for Black) 14.h5 (14.exf6 Bxf6 15.Bxf6 Qxf6 16.h5 Qg7 "and Black defends") 14...Bxg5 (14...Bb4+ 15.Kd1 Qe8 16.Bf6 Rxf6 17.exf6 Bf8 18.hxg6 Qxg6 19.Qxg6+ hxg6 20.Ng5 Nd7 21.f7+ Kg7 22.Nxe6+ Kxf7 23.Nxf8 with a slight edge for White) 15.Nxg5 Qe7 16.hxg6 Qb4+ 17.Kf2 Qf4+ 18.Kg1 Qe3+ 19.Kf1 Qf4+ "with a perpetual check". But is really so?

As far as I can see White can run away from the checks with 17.Kd1! Qg4+ 18.Be2 Qd4+ 19.Ke1 Qb4+ 20.c3! Qxc3+ 21.Kd1 Qd4+ 22.Kc2 Qc5+ 23.Kxb2 Qb4+ 24.Kc2 Qc5+ 25.Kd1 Qd4+ 26.Ke1 Qc3+ 27.Kf1, and the party is over.

Aside from the conclusion possibly being wrong, I think that it's a little excessive to spend so much space on a new idea in a line that is not played particularly often, especially since the main line 10 Nf3! leads to a better game for White according to Pedersen's own analysis.

In conclusion, the present book is a good addition to the existing books on the French. Pedersen has put together a one-volume book on the French with 3 Nc3 which everyone who has interest in the French should not be without. However, that being said, I think that it should have been at least 100 pages longer in order to provide deeper coverage and better satisfy both weaker and stronger players alike.

My assessment of this book: 

New in Chess Yearbook 61 by Genna Sosonko, Paul van der Sterren et al., 2002 Interchess BV, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Hardcover, 235 pp., \$33.00

It's again time for a yearbook from our Dutch friends at New in Chess. This time I was fortunate enough to receive the durable hardcover, which makes the present volume very easy to work with as it opens flat on the table and it stays on the page you're at, unlike the softcover edition.



As usual the material can be divided as into three categories: NIC Forum and Sosonko's Corner, the opening surveys and NIC Service.

To start with the last first, this essentially contains the classification summary, the code system, statistics of the games played since the previous volume and last, but not least the review section. In the review section, I noticed some changes. First and foremost, there is a full review of *Pirc Alert!* (by Albur/Chernin), which is the first step away from the ultra-short reviews that normally characterized this section. Next follows some reviews on other recent books. Although not as in-depth as the *Pirc Alert!* review but still of a more respectable length than previously done. Furthermore, it seems like they may have listened to my complaints as they are now attributing the reviews to the person who actual reviews the book. However, for some reason, the review of the videotapes of Kinderman's *Französisch I + Französisch II Winawer* isn't attributed to anybody.

Jumping back to the beginning we find NIC Forum, where readers send in their letters with interesting opening ideas & games. This time there are some interesting contributions from altmeister Gligoric on the Nimzo-Indian and Hungarian Tibor Karolyi on the Polugaevsky Variation in the Sicilian Najdorf, as well as several others.

Next follows Sosonko's Corner, where Editor Genna Sosonko, who also authored the excellent *Russian Silhouettes* that was nominated for Chesscafe.com's Book of the Year Award, takes a look at the development of the line 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 c5 4 d5 exd5 5 cxd5 b5, which recently was played Kasimzhanov-Kasparov in the Europe vs Asia rapid match played in Batumi, Georgia last year.

The biggest chunk of pages of course goes to the opening surveys of which 35 have found their way to this volume.

The theme of this volume according the cover is "White is OK!", probably with a strong reference to Adorjan's claim a few years back that "Black is OK!", a claim he backed up with two books, one on mainstream openings and more recently one on unusual openings. The three examples the yearbook editors have picked to show that White is OK, are in three lines that generally are considered to be better for White, although in one of them, Black has made some noise recently:

1) **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Be7 6 Bf4 0-0 7 Qd2 d5 8 Ndb5 c6**

2) **1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Nbd7 5 Nf3 c6 6 cxd5 exd5 7 e3 Bd6 8 Bd3 Nf8 9 Ne5**

3) **1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 dxc4 5 a4 Na6 6 e4 Bg4 7 Bc4 Bxf3 8 gxf3 e6**

According to the surveys, it seems like White is quite a bit more than okay. Particularly impressive is the survey of line

1, which is conducted by Tibor Karolyi, who has added substantially to the theory of the present line. The same goes for his surveys on the Open Spanish and Sicilian Najdorf Polugaevsky Variation.


In this volume, the surveys are split up as follows:

Sicilian (10), Pirc (2), French (2), Caro-Kann (1), Alekhine (1), Ruy Lopez (2), Philidor (1), Queen's Gambit Declined (2), Slav (4), Tarrasch (1), Catalan (1), The Black Knights Tango (1),

King's Indian (1), Volga Gambit (1), Old Indian (1), Schmid Benoni (1), and English (3).

Generally speaking the surveys in this volume are very well done, and none are at a level where they should not have been included, while several are truly excellent.

This volume represents the New in Chess Yearbooks at their very best. Good work guys!

My assessment of this book: 

The Ratings

 — A poor book, not recommended.

 — Not a particularly good book, but perhaps useful for some readers.

 — A useful book.

 — Good book, recommended.



— **Excellent book, highly recommended.**

Copyright 2002 Carsten Hansen. All rights reserved.

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

 [ABOUT THE
CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[The Chess Cafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Reviews\]](#) [\[Bulletin Board\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)

[\[Endgame Studies\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)

[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About The Chess Cafe\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

Copyright 2002 CyberCafes, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

"**The Chess Cafe®**" is a registered trademark of Russell Enterprises, Inc.