

GAMBIT KILLER

by

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KEY TO SYMBOLS

!	a good move
?	a weak move
!!	an excellent move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
□	only move
=	equality
∞	unclear position
≈	with compensation for the sacrificed material
±	White stands slightly better
∓	Black stands slightly better
±	White has a serious advantage
∓	Black has a serious advantage
+ -	White has a decisive advantage
- +	Black has a decisive advantage
→	with an attack
↑	with initiative
↩	with counterplay
Δ	with the idea of
⊃	better is
≤	worse is
N	novelty
+	check
#	mate

PREFACE

What Can You Expect from This Book?

In the beginning, books were the place where you could find information. We did not have the Internet, so a place was required to store information in case we needed to check something.

Things have changed dramatically over the years. Every year, the amount of information increases. It's impossible to know everything, because we don't have the time or the ability to store all the information in our heads.

Chess is, after all, a game. It's important to find the best moves. You don't need to know everything about chess; what you need to know is the right things! This is why children now learn the game more quickly – they get the right information. Even if they don't know many things, they have the right patterns in their heads!

This is my first goal in this book. I want to give you **ONLY** the information that you need, no more, no less. Of course, this was not an easy task, but I tried my best.

Another thing I consider important is how the information is organized. The same information can be presented in many different ways; sometimes we will understand it perfectly, sometimes not. In my opinion, it is very important that a chess book should follow pedagogical principles to improve the learning process! I therefore decided to separate the material as follows:

1. **Introduction.** Before entering the main lines, I think it is a good idea to show you some basics about the line. If I give you loads of lines, and you haven't met the line before, everything will be much more difficult.
2. **Historical games.** When we were kids, we loved stories. Let's go back to those times. I will show you some games I consider important; I will show you chess patterns. If you remember them, it will be much easier for you to understand what follows.

3. **One page of theory.** How can you know what to do if you don't know where you're going? On this page I will show you briefly the path we will follow later.

4. **The theory.** You know some history, you know the patterns, now it's time to know the good moves! I have tried to show you the most important lines. Of course everything was checked with a computer, so normally you can trust my analysis, although I'm a human and can make mistakes!

5. **Understand it!** In some variations, we will get typical middlegames where the concrete lines are not so important. Here I would like to check some positions more deeply, so that if you get them, you will have a clear plan.

6. **Complete games and try it!** I have given some model games and exercises which you can solve or not. The idea of these exercises is that you don't just follow a game passively. At some point, I will ask you something and you should be ready to answer!

It would be easy for me to provide you only with opening knowledge, but you probably wouldn't understand most of it, so this book will be your trainer. I will not only teach you how to kill these gambits, I will teach you middle-game and endgame principles; I will teach you why some moves are better from a practical point of view, no matter what the engine says; I will tell you some funny stories from time to time, just to make the book more interesting.

Most of the opening information was ready a year ago, but I have been checking and adding to it constantly. The result is the book you have in your hands right now. I gave it my best; I hope you appreciate it!

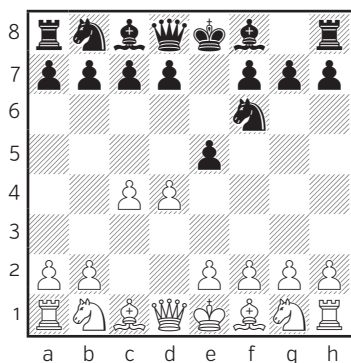
*Ivan Salgado
May 2018*

CHAPTER 1.

THE BUDAPEST GAMBIT

INTRODUCTION

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e5



The Budapest Gambit! It is very popular at the amateur level, which is understandable. By playing it, you don't have to study the Nimzo-Indian, Grunfeld or King's Indian! You immediately get an open game with some tactical tricks if White is not careful enough!

White is often not ready for this gambit. He may know some variation but not very deeply, while black players know the tricks of the position quite well so White can quickly end up in trouble! But once you have

read my book, believe me, this is not going to happen to you anymore!

3.dxe5 ♘g4

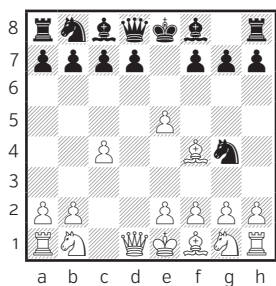
3...♘e4 is the Fajarowicz which is simply bad. We will have a look at it later.

4.e3!

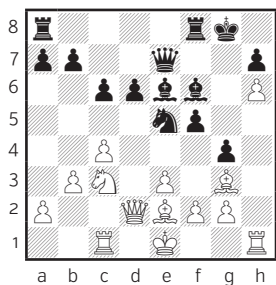
This is my concept! We push e3 and f4 and only then develop the pieces. Our pawns easily take control of the center! In the theoretical chapter we will see how powerful this concept is. I will also share with you why the other options don't convince.

a) 4.♘f3 ♙c5 5.e3 ♘c6 The ideas here are similar to my recommendation but there is one big difference: I cannot play f4, and I should exchange at least one pair of knights. This makes Black's defense easier, in my opinion.

b) 4.♙f4 This is White's try to keep the pawn. The problem is that things are not so easy and Black has some interesting lines.



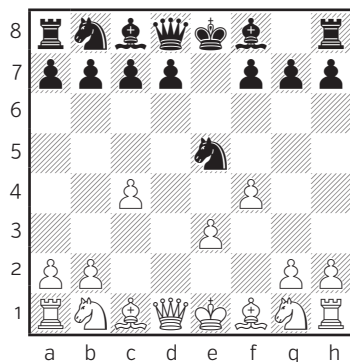
4...♘c6 (4...g5!? It's a tricky line. In theory White should be completely fine, but in a practical game things are not so easy. 5.♙g3 ♙g7 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.h4 ♘gxe5 8.♘xe5 ♘xe5 9.♘c3 g4 10.e3 d6 11.♙e2 ♙e6 12.♖c1 o-o Both sides played very normal moves and the computer considers White better, but even a great player like Wojtaszek misplayed the position. 13.b3 c6 14.h5 f5 15.h6 ♙f6 16.♚d2 ♚e7



17.f4?! Creating a weakness. From here on, Jobava plays excellent. 17... gxf3 18.gxf3 ♙h8 19.f4 ♖ad8 20.♚c2 ♘g4 21.♙xg4 ♖g8 22.♘e2 ♖xg4 23.♙f2 d5 24.♖cd1 ♖e8 25.c5 ♙f7 26.♚c1 ♙e4 27.♘d4 o-o (27) Wojtaszek,R (2711)-Jobava,B (2710) Wijk aan Zee 2014. This can happen if

you follow a computer main line; you get an interesting position but it turns out to be not so easy to play in practice. Black is more familiar with the position and outplays you. We will avoid this.) 5.♘f3 ♙b4+ 6.♘c3 ♙xc3+ 7.bxc3 ♚e7 8.♚d5 f6 This is a very famous variation where, in my opinion, Black has good compensation.

4...♘xe5 5.f4!



This is the main point! What will we do now? First, let's look into the history of the variation, checking some of the most important games in the development of this gambit. I suggest doing this first for a few reasons:

1. The Budapest Gambit is the kind of gambit that you will likely face quite often. In my practice I have faced it twice in long games... and I'm normally an e4 player! We should have a deep knowledge of the things we play the most. To under-

stand something deeply you need to know more than just the moves. You also need a feeling for the positions, something you can get by learning the history of the variations. This will also help you memorize everything!

2. The games where not chosen by chance. You will always gain valuable ideas from the best chess players in the world. Moreover, it's a very entertaining way to show you the strategical subtleties of the position, and maybe you will learn them without realizing! I will do something very similar in the chapters about the Blumenfeld and the Von Hennig-Schara, because I consider them to be the most popular and correct gambits. Without further ado, let's get to the games.

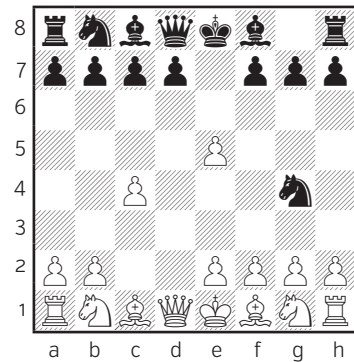
THE FIRST IMPORTANT GAME IN THE BUDAPEST

▷ J. R. Capablanca

▷ J. H. White

London, 06.08.1919

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 ♘g4



The World Champion Capablanca faces the Budapest Gambit. How to play against it for the first time?

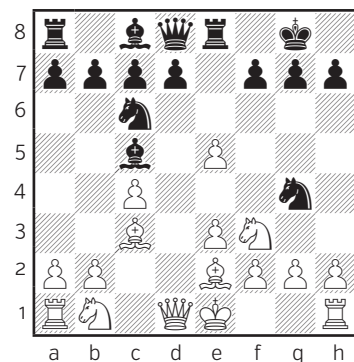
4. ♖f3

He follows the rule, first the knights, then the bishops!

4... ♙c5 5.e3 ♘c6 6. ♙d2!?

Very interesting move. Capablanca is looking for harmony. He understood that the bishop on c1 is the most difficult piece to develop.

6...0-0 7. ♙c3 ♖e8 8. ♙e2

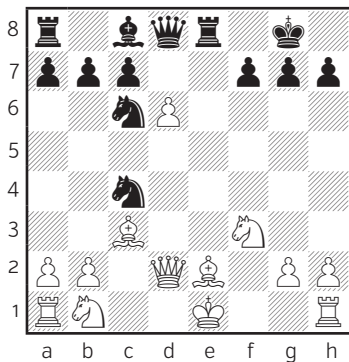


14. ♖xe5 dxe5 15.c5 with a slightly better position for White, although not much.

10.fxe3!

10.o-o!? was good enough and now Black doesn't have the possibility to develop the rook on the third rank. But Capablanca didn't see any reason not to take the piece, or maybe he was overconfident! He almost didn't lose any games during this period of his chess career!

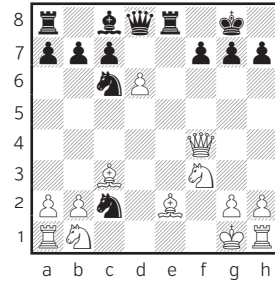
10... ♖xe3 11. ♔d2 ♖xc4



Now comes one of these difficult moments in chess when you have two interesting moves with the queen and you don't know which one to play. At the end of a think you often decide almost randomly to play one of them and only then see what happens. Here the choice was not easy.

12. ♔g5!?

12. ♔f4! seems to be more accurate 12... ♖e3 White has a fantastic zig zag manoeuvre now that reminds me of many different sports, but not chess! 13. ♖f2 ♖g4+ 14. ♖f1 ♖e3+ 15. ♖g1! ♖c2



Now Black wants to take the rook to gain some compensation. 16. ♖g5! Counterattack! 16... ♖e6 17.dxc7 ♔d7 18. ♖f2! Again!! White's king steps out of the way to get the rook into the game. 18... ♖xa1 19. ♖d1 ♔e7 20. ♖d3 and at the right moment White will play ♖a3 and take the knight on a1. The attacking ideas on the kingside would still be there. But who is mating who?

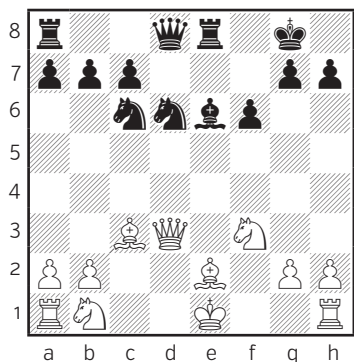
12...f6 13. ♔d5+

Very risky but interesting.

13. ♖xf6 This was the calmest way. 13... ♔xf6 14. ♔xf6 gxf6 15. ♖c3 ♖e3!? or maybe not so calm! Now the queens disappear, but the tactical ideas are still in the air! 16. ♖b5! ♖xg2+ 17. ♖f2 ♖f4 18. ♖f1 and White seems to be slightly better in

this position, but this was really difficult to see after 12...f6.

13...♙e6 14.♚d3 ♘xd6!



Now ...♙c4 is coming, and ...♙f5 at some point. The position is not funny. Maybe the Cuban now regretted his move ♚g5. He decided to get his king to safety and give material back.

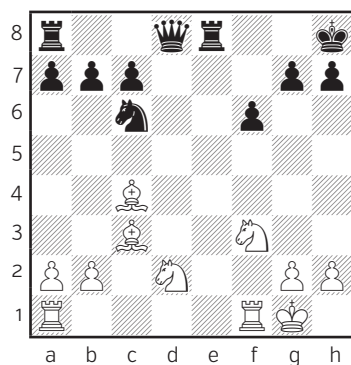
15.0-0!?

Giving the queen, which is a very interesting concept, but in this position it doesn't seem to be enough.

15.♘bd2 ♙f5 16.♚d5+ ♔h8 17.♙f1 Capablanca probably didn't like this kind of position; it was not clear enough for him.

15...♙c4 16.♚xc4+ ♘xc4 17.♙xc4+ ♔h8 18.♘bd2

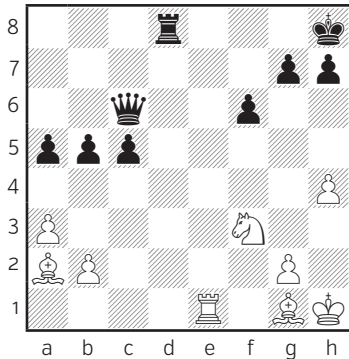
Now we get a position where Black has a queen and two pawns for 3 pieces.



Shouldn't that be enough for an advantage? I'm not sure at all. The computer always overestimates the queen, but right now the white pieces are extremely well coordinated, and if they are able to create threats on the kingside the position could be very dangerous for Black. I find it quite amazing that Capablanca came up with this concept as early as 1919. Capablanca won the game even though he was probably lost at some point. These positions are very difficult to play simply. The most important result is that after this game, the best players in the world understood that the Budapest Gambit was not so stupid! They should take it seriously! Let's check what happened till the end, mainly because of its historical interest!

18...♚d6 19.♙h1 ♖ad8 20.♖ae1 ♚c5 21.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 22.a3 b5 23.♙a2 a5 24.♘b3 ♚c4 25.♘fd2 ♚e2 26.♘c1 ♚e3 27.♘f3 ♖d8 28.♖e1 ♚c5 29.♘b3

♔b6 30. ♘bd4 ♘xd4 31. ♙xd4 c5
32. ♙g1 ♖c6 33. h4



The engine gives a decisive advantage for Black. The easiest way was to push the kingside with 33...c4 or 33...b4. Black decided to make some air for his king and after that, everything went wrong!

33...h5 34. ♙f7 f5?

More holes!

34...c4!

35. ♘g5 ♖c7 36. ♙xh5+-

One wrong move with ...h5 and everything went wrong!

36... ♖g3 37. ♘f3 ♖d6 38. ♘e5 ♖f6
39. g3 ♙d2 40. ♙xc5 ♖c2 41. ♙d4
♖a6 42. ♘f7+ ♔h7 43. ♘g5+ ♔h6
44. ♙f3 ♖c8 45. ♖e6+ g6 46. ♖e7
♖c1+ 47. ♔h2 ♖c2+ 48. ♔h3 f4+
49. g4 ♖g8 50. ♘f7+ ♔h7 51. ♘e5+
1-0

UNDERSTANDING THE BUDAPEST THANKS TO ALEKHINE

▷ A. Alekhine

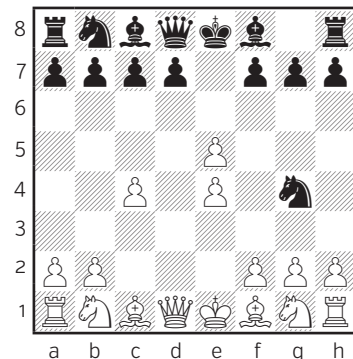
▷ M. Euwe

Amsterdam, 1921

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e5

Euwe is playing against the great Alekhine a sharp opening? Looks quite risky. Probably he thought that it was better to get the initiative against Alekhine than give it to him. Did he manage?

3.dxe5 ♘g4 4.e4!?



Alekhine comes with a new concept! It's clear that he was aware of Capablanca's game, so he presumably thought that playing with e3 was too passive and that he should roll his center as fast as possible.

4...h5!?

Black continues to play aggressive and wants to provoke h3, which makes a lot of sense. Anyway, this move could create weaknesses at some point.

5.♘h3!?

I would never play such a move, but it actually looks quite strong! At some point, the knight can jump to g5, making way for f4... By the way, this is considered really good by the engine! It is important to notice that Euwe, after this game with Alekhine, employed Alekhine's way of playing!

5...♖c6

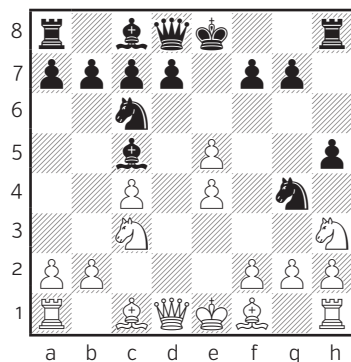
5...♖xe5?! This makes the things easier for White. 6.♖c3 d6 7.♖f4 ♖bc6 8.♙e2 g6 9.♖fd5 Euwe simply places the pieces in the most normal squares, and that's sufficient. 9...♙e6 10.♖b5 ♖c8 11.f4! and White was clearly better in Euwe, M-Spielmann, R Bad Pistyan 1922 HCL.

6.♖c3

6.♙g5 ♙e7 7.♙e7 ♖xe7 8.♖c3 seems stronger than the game. The point is that the f8 bishop is stronger than the one on c1 because, af-

ter e4, some weaknesses were created on the g1-a7 diagonal.

6...♙c5



7.♖d5!?

Playing according to his active style, he puts his pieces in the most active squares. Normally this is a good policy, but here it is not so good.

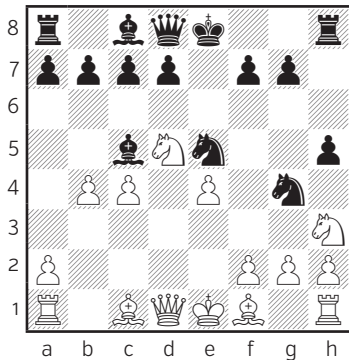
7.♙e2 was easier. After 7...♖gxe5 8.♙g5! f6 9.♙d2 White is better here. Now we see that the pawn on h5 is misplaced.

7...♖cxe5

7...♖gxe5?! This was played in a later game. 8.♙g5! f6 9.♙e3 First, White creates weaknesses, then he develops. 9...d6 10.♖hf4 ♙g4 11.♙e2 Very simple again. 11...♖d7?! (11...♙xe2 12.♖xe2 ♙xe3 13.♖xe3 and Black would be worse, but the position is holdable.) 12.f3 ♙xe3 13.♖xe3 ♙e6 14.♖xe6! ♖xe6 15.0-0 0-0 16.♖d5

and White was falling apart positionally, again, in Euwe,M-Mieses,J Hastings 1923.

8.b4!?



We see the difference between Capablanca and Alekhine. The first played as calm as possible, the second as active as possible! Now this is rather typical of the manner in which Alekhine played his games. He put pressure on his opponents all of the time, and every move was very important. Euwe played careless with his next move. Who would think that a bishop move would decide the fate of the game?

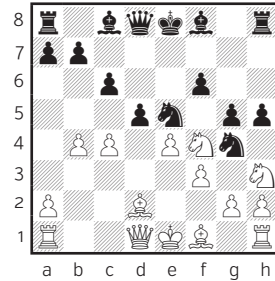
8... ♖e7?

Allowing White the advantage of the bishop pair.

8... ♖f8! with the idea of ...c6, would give Black an interesting game. This was the best, but they couldn't find it yet. In 1920s they were not think-

ing about these kind of moves... But, in 1925, a French player called Gaudin found the idea! 9. ♖b2

[9. ♖g5?! f6 10. ♖d2 c6 11. ♘df4 g5! 12.f3 d5!?



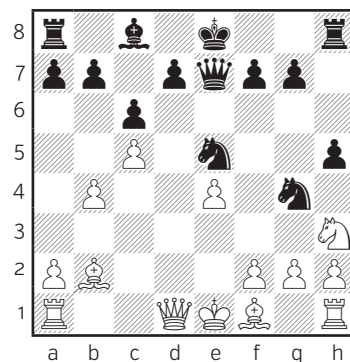
Gaudin is playing like Alekhine!! 13.cxd5 gxf4 (13... ♖b6 was the best) 14.fxg4? ♖xg4+ Black was better in Renaud, G-Gaudin, R Nice 1925]

9...c6! and now White cannot take the bishop on e7, as in the game.

9. ♖b2! c6?!

9...d6 was more stubborn.

10. ♘xe7 ♖xe7 11.c5!



Please, friends, don't allow yourself to end up with a bishop on c8 like this one!

11...a5 12. ♖d4 axb4 13.f3

And soon White won. It looks like Alekhine simply destroyed the gambit, but objectively things were not so easy. Anyway, we should pay attention to the concept of playing as active as possible. Not only in this gambit, but in chess in general!

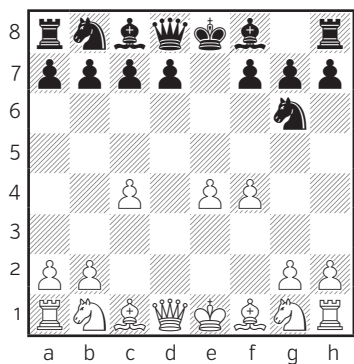
1-0

▷ A. Alekhine

▷ Kralicek

Czechoslovakia [simul], 1925

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 ♘g4 4.e4
♙xe5 5.f4 ♘g6!?



6. ♘f3

6. ♘c3 ♙b4 7. ♘ge2 This would be much better. It's important for

White to protect the weakest point in the position, the e4 pawn.

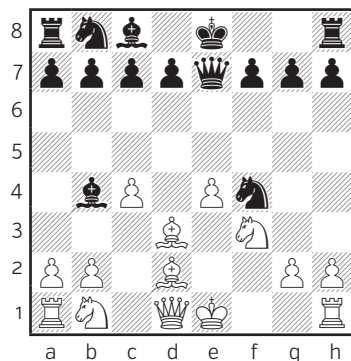
6... ♙b4+ 7. ♙d2 ♖e7!

White's center is under attack!

8. ♙d3?

8.g3! It was the only move but a great resource! 8... ♖xe4+ 9. ♙e2 ♙xd2+ 10. ♖xd2 White is clearly better. White is a pawn down but the black queen is completely misplaced. After ♘c3 White can decide where to castle, either on the queenside or on the kingside. Then, at some point, play f5 and mate Black!

8... ♘xf4



Black won a pawn and, later on, the game. Did this really happen? Maybe the colours are wrong? Would be interesting to know if Alekhine really blundered like this, even in a simul. Anyway, the concept is important: The central pawns can be weak!