



Attacking 1...d5

Volume 2

Kiril Georgiev

Chess Stars Publishing

Attacking 1...d5 Volume 2

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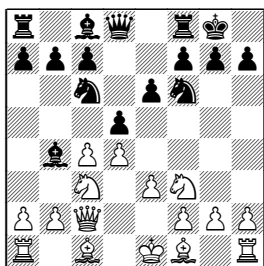
Chess Publishing (www.chesspublishing.com)

Introduction

When I started writing *Attacking 1... d5*, I planned to analyse only gambit treatment of the Slav and the Semi-Slav. Then I added also some ideas against 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5, planning to stop at that. Apparently I hit a hot theme since the publisher got many letters asking to complete the work by building a full repertoire. Thus a second volume became necessary.

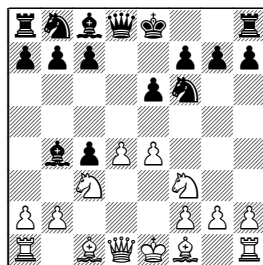
I took for a base the English move order 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 to be consistent with my book *The Modern English* vol. 2. This approach helps us to avoid the Queen's Gambit Accepted, which has been a very tough nut to crack lately.

The most complex opening in this new book is the Ragozin Defence. It is abundant with long forced variations, which often finish with forced draws. The best way to get a playable position is probably the line 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘f3 ♗b4 5.♖a4+!? ♘c6 6.e3 0-0 7.♖c2.



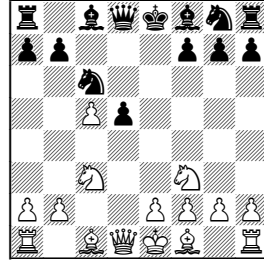
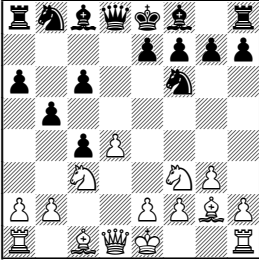
It looks like a Nimzo, but the knight on c6 hampers Black's counterplay with ...c5. He can prepare ...e5 instead, when we can choose between allowing an isolated pawn on d4 and castling long. In the latter case the plan with h3 and g4 demands from Black utmost precision and difficult decisions early in the opening stage.

Chapter Four deals with the Vienna Variation – 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘f3 dxc4 6.e4 ♗b4.



I analyse here the pawn sac 7.♗xc4!? ♘xe4 8.0-0. It is the latest trend, bringing White a series of notable victories. Just to mention that the fireproof Anand has scored 0 out of 2 against it!

The Chebanenko 1.c4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♘c3 a6 has the reputation of a very reliable opening, but our patent approach works well against it – 5.g3! dxc4 6.♗g2 b5

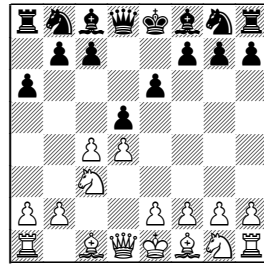
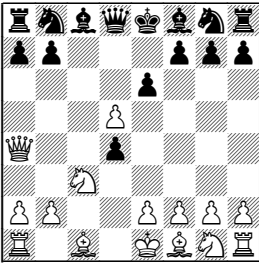


7.b3!! . Amazingly, this thematic break is a novelty here, but we have seen such ideas in the first volume.

In any case White will enjoy the bishop pair advantage in a totally safe position.

Chapter 6 deals with the Hennig-Schara Gambit 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 c5 4.cxd5 cxd4?! 5.♙a4+!

Then I discuss the weird move 3... a6, which has become very topical lately after its adoption by Magnus Carlsen.



It is the only dubious system I cover in this book. I could not ignore it as it is a frequent guest at lower levels. Lately Black has been trying to revive it castling short and relying on his activity in the centre.

The most sensible choice here is 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f3 ♖f6 6.♗g5, entering the so-called Carlsbad pawn structure. I propose a specific set-up, which keeps all options open – depending on Black’s moves White can launch a minority attack on the queenside or shift the focus to the other wing with f4.

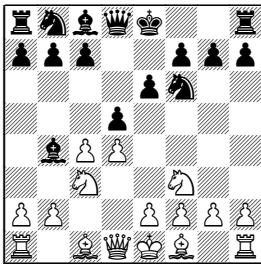
Of course the Tarrasch is a bigger challenge. After 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f3 ♘c6 I propose the fashionable 6.dxc5. It poses serious practical problems, and the books do not offer adequate coverage to help Black. Second players will probably need a few years to discover the best defensive set-ups.

Finally, I analysed 3...♗b4 4.a3!. Play is likely to transpose to the Sämish Variation of the Nimzo.

*Kiril Georgiev
Sofia, December 2021*

Main Ideas

1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘f3 ♗b4



This system is a hybrid between the Nimzo and the QGD, but it is much more aggressive than the latter. The pin allows ideas with ...♘e4, ...c5, ...♔a5 or ...g5, which involve long forced variations. Although play often transposes to other openings, as the Vienna Variation or the Nimzo, White can also try to use the particular move order to discoordinate Black's pieces with:

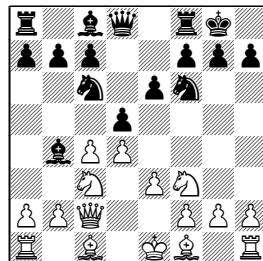
5.♔a4+!?

In the 1920s Alekhine wrote: "...by the reply 5.♔a4+! White can force 5...♘c6, which makes it significantly more difficult for the opponent to achieve the important task of opening lines in the centre". In my youth the check was still considered the strongest retort. Nowadays the engines manage to level almost any sensible opening, so we tend to base

our repertoire choices on psychological and practical considerations. I like the fact that 5.♔a4+ is perhaps the only way for White to achieve a normal playable position without taking any strategic or tactical risk (if you stick to plans with short castling of course). Moreover, you need to remember just a few basic lines. To be fair, any attempt to extract an opening edge should be based on a deep knowledge of the subtleties of the different move orders. But that is the reason to have separate chapters for "Main ideas" and "Step by Step".

You might ask why I do not recommend 5.g3 instead. Indeed, it is the most consistent with the first volume move. However, I do not like the arising positions, although I do provide some analysis. After all, a player like Dubov stubbornly defends it and even wins occasionally.

5...♘c6 6.e3 0-0 7.♔c2!

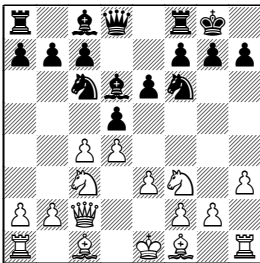


Remember this move order! We do not want to open the enemy light-squared bishop with cxd5 , but we also prefer to avoid $7.\text{♕d3 dxc4}$ $8.\text{♕xc4}$. The only other reasonable way to fight for the tempo is $7.\text{♕d2}$, but $7...\text{♕d6}$, followed by $...\text{dxc4}$ and $...e5$ equalizes.

In the diagram position Black has many possibilities, and his choice will define the character of play. $7...b6$ and $7...\text{♞e8}$ are covered in the next chapters, while here I started with:

$7...\text{♕d6}$

Black's general plan is to open the centre with $...e5$. If he does it promptly, I propose to castle short. Otherwise we could contemplate a direct attack with $g4$. The latter consideration makes me choose **8.h3** over the more popular $8.a3$. Its only drawback is the possibility of the still untested $8...\text{♖b4}!$? $9.\text{♞b1 c5}$ $10.\text{dxc5 ♕xc5}$ $11.a3 ♖c6$ $12.b4$. On the other hand, $8.a3$ also has a flip side – White will need $h3$ anyway, when the tempo spent on $a3$ will enable Black to open the centre with $...e5$ and sacrifice a piece on $h3$ after $...\text{♕d7}$, $...\text{♞c8}$. I'll return to this sac later in this section.

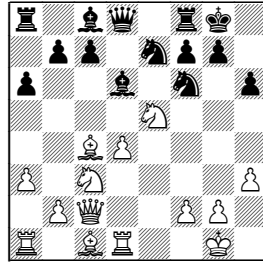


Practice has seen $8...a6$ $9.a3 dxc4$

$10.\text{♕xc4 e5}$ $11.0-0 ♕d7$, which transposes to **Game 5** Ibragimov-Onischuk, New York 2006, while $11...h6$ $12.\text{♞d1 exd4}$ $13.\text{exd4 ♖e7}$ $14.\text{♖e5±}$ leads to:

IQP pawn structure

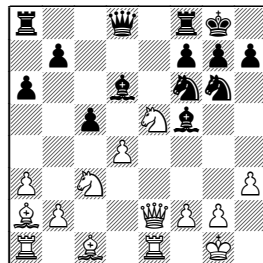
Game 3 Nakamura-Gavrilescu Caleta 2019



This is White's **main positional goal** in the Ragozin with $5.\text{♞a4+}$. His pieces are much more active. The threat is $15.\text{♞b3}$, and after $14...b5$ $15.\text{♕d3}$ both bishops target the black king.

Let me show you another example in the same pawn structure:

Analysis



$17.\text{♖xf7! ♞xf7}$ $18.\text{dxc5 ♕e5}$ $19.\text{♕g5}$, with strong pressure and full material compensation. For instance,

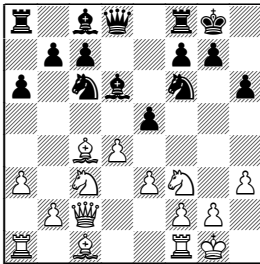
19... ♖c7 20. ♗xf6 gxf6 21. ♖h5 ♗xc3
22. bxc3 ♗c2 23. ♖e2 ♗f5 24. ♖f3+-.

If we analyse the cause of Black's misfortunes in the last two diagrams, we'll notice that the e-file opened in White's favour as he was able to take it with a rook and plant a dominant knight on e5. That prompts many players to adopt a waiting game with Black, **avoiding to take on d4**. What should we do in that case?

Pawn structure 4:3 on the kingside

In the general case changing the pawn structure with dx5 leads to a balanced game as White's pieces are too passive to support the advance e4+f4.

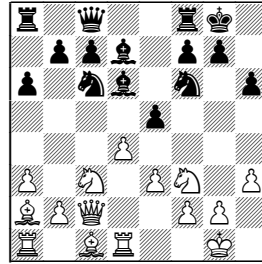
Analysis



Black obtains nice places for his pieces after 12.dxe5 ♗xe5 13. ♗xe5 ♗xe5 14. ♗d2 b5 15. ♗a2 ♗b7 16.f4 ♗xc3=, clamping on e4.

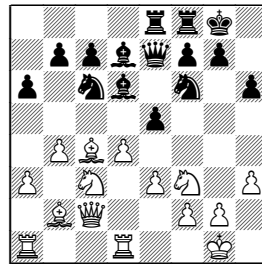
But suppose that the second player delayed ...exd4 for too long. Then we can mount an attack, building on the weakness of g6:

Analysis



Black's queen is misplaced, his waiting game ...a6 and ...h6 allowed White to make two more useful moves (♗d1, ♗a2). Thus, 14.dxe5! ♗xe5 15. ♗h4!± underlines White's space advantage as he keeps all the minor pieces on the board. That would enhance the effect of f4+e4.

Analysis

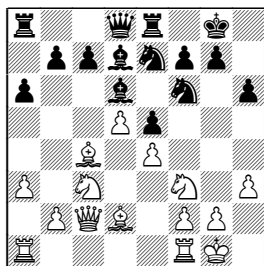


15. ♗h4! ♖h8 16.dxe5 ♖xe5
17. ♗xd6!! ♖xd6 18. ♗d1 ♖e7 19. ♗a2!
with a debacle on the b1-h7 diagonal.

Pawn structure with d5

Closing the centre with d4-d5 at once is commonly ineffective. Black obtains good practical results by piling up pieces against the white king. Breaking the centre with ...c6 is also a solid equalizer.

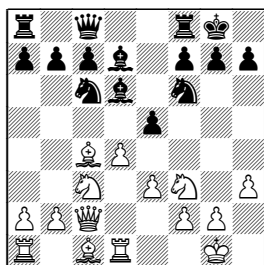
Timman-Leko
Douglas 2017



The simplest treatment is to undermine White's centre with ...c6 (although ...f5 is also a legitimate option) – 15...b5! 16.♔d3 (the game actually saw 16.♔a2?! ♖g6 17.♗fe1 ♘h5↑) 16...♗c8 17.♗fd1 c6 18.dxc6 ♗xc6=.

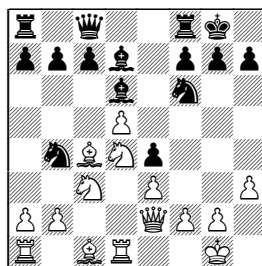
However, if Black builds a ♗♔ battery against h3, I propose to take space with d5. This is the case in my main theoretical line:

7...dxc4 8.♔xc4 ♔d6 9.0-0 e5
10.h3 ♔d7 11.♗d1 ♗c8



12.d5!? ♘b4 (we meet 12...♘e7 by 13.♔f1, then e4, ♔e3, and if ...f5, we take and install a knight on e4) 13.♗e2 e4 14.♘d4.

This position has never been tested. Pert evaluates it as unclear.

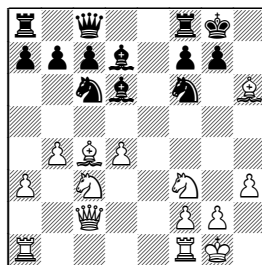


My analysis shows that White's game is preferable as his pieces are well coordinated for an attack on the queenside. The awkward knight on b4 will remain out of play for long.

Sacrifices on h6 and h3

Sacrifices on h3 and h6 are recurring motifs in the IQP structure. They commonly lead to an extra pawn for White, which is rather weak and difficult to convert. Some nuances, for instance, the placement of the king's rook, play considerable role in the sidelines:

Analysis



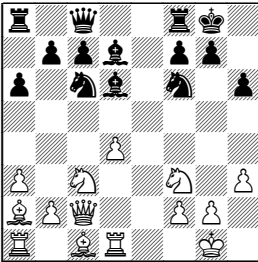
Here White's rook is on f1 – he should be aware that 14.♔xh6 is a real sacrifice due to 14...♔f5.

After 14...♔xh3 15.♗g6 ♗g4
16.♗xg7+ ♗xg7 17.♔xg7 ♖xg7

18.gxh3 ♜h8 19.♔g2 ♞ag8
20.♞h1 ♞h5 21.♔f1 Black is still a
pawn down, although his activi-
ty might be sufficient for a draw.

15.♖d2 gxh6 16.♖xh6 ♘h7 17.♞fe1
The point is 17.g4? ♔h8! 18.gxf5?
♞g8+ ♚.
17...♔h8 18.♘e4 ♖d8 19.♞ad1 with
sufficient compensation.

Analysis



15.♔xh6 ♔xh3

Here the f1-square is free, so the
line 15...♔f5? walks into 16.♖d2

gxh6 17.♖xh6 ♘h7 18.g4 ♔h8
19.gxf5 ♞g8+ 20.♔f1+- . The
rook on d1 proves useful also in
the line:

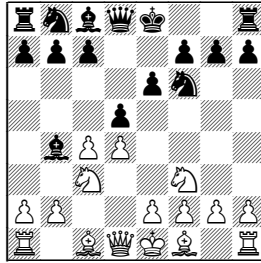
16.♖g6 ♖g4 17.♖xg7+ ♖xg7 18.♔xg7
♔xg7 19.gxh3 ♞h8 20.♘g5 (20.
♔g2±) 20.♘g5 ♔f4 21.♘xf7 ♞xh3
22.♘e2 ♞h4 23.d5.

Conclusion

The main repertoire I propose
against 7...♔d6 and 7...dxc4 brings
about calm positional play with
some initiative for White. The main
focus of the opening battle is which
pawn structure to choose and the
best timing for that. I especially like
the fact that White can play for a
win without having to commit him-
self with permanent strategic weak-
nesses or unclear sacrifices. I'll also
note that you should not remember
any lines beyond 15-20th move.

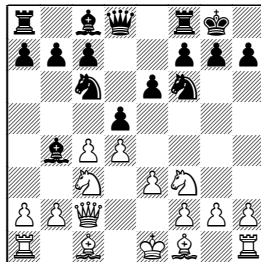
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5.♞a4+ (5.a3 12; 5.♞c2 12; 5.♙g5 12) 5...♗c6 6.e3 (6.a3 14) 6...0-0
 7.♞c2 ♘d6 17 (7...♗e4 16)
 8.a3 17
 8.h3 21
 7...dxc4 22

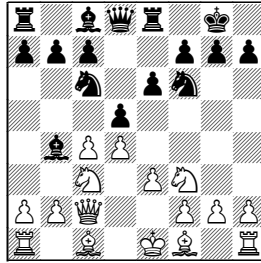
Chapter 2. 1.c4 e6 2.♖c3 d5 3.d4 ♗f6 4.♗f3 ♘b4 5.♞a4+ ♗c6 6.e3 0-0 7.♞c2 b6



8.♙d2 (8.cxd5 50) 8...♙b7 50 (8...a5 50; 8...♙a6 51)

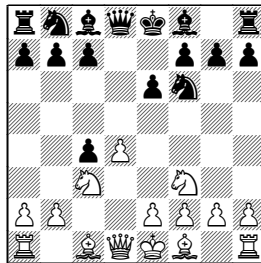
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8.♟d2 a6 70 (8...e5 70; 8...♟f8 71; 8...♟d6 72)

Chapter 4. 1.c4 e6 2.♞c3 d5 3.d4 ♞f6 4.♞f3 dxc4



5.e4 (5.♟g5 93) 5...c5 94

5...b5 96 6.e5 ♞d5 7.♞xb5 ♞b6 8.♟e2 ♞c6 9.♟e3 96

9.0-0 99 9...♟e7

10.♞d2 0-0 11.♞f4 100

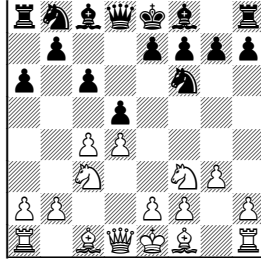
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5...♟b4 103 6.♟xc4 (6.♟g5 104) 6...♞xe4 7.0-0 ♞xc3 104

7...♞f6 107

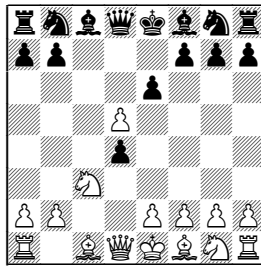
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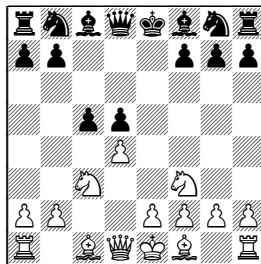
- 5.g3 (5.c5 128) 5...e6 129
 5...♙f5 131
 5...g6 132
 5...b5 133
 5...dxc4 136

Chapter 6. 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f3



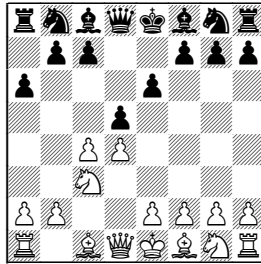
- 5.♙a4+! ♙d7 (5...b5 155) 6.♙xd4 exd5 7.♙xd5 ♘c6 155
 7...♘f6 157

Chapter 7. 1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♘f3



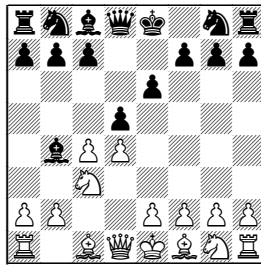
- 5...♘c6 (5...♘f6 167) 6.dxc5 168

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4.cxd5! exd5 5.♘f3 188 (5.♙b3 188)

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4.a3 ♕xc3+ 5.bxc3 ♘f6 205 (5...♘e7 205; 5...c6 205; 5...dxc4 206)
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