



COLUMNISTS

Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen



Reviewed this month:

The Classical Dutch

by Simon Williams

Classical Dutch

by Jan Pinski

Understanding the Leningrad Dutch

by Valeri Beim

Dutch Defence A90-99 (CD-ROM)

by Boris Schipkov

The Cambridge Springs

by Krysztof Panczyk and Jacek Ilczuk

If They Want to Play the Dutch...

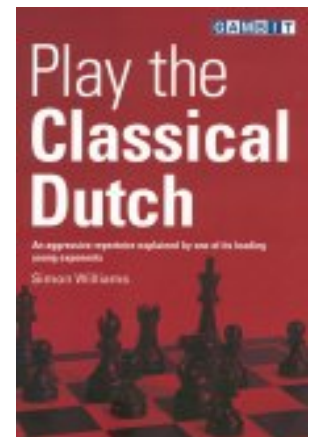
The late world champion and one of my favorite players of all time, Tigran Petrosian allegedly once said, "If they want to play the Dutch, there is no reason to prevent it!" When I was younger and did not know much about Dutch (and even less about Petrosian), I used to be terrified of the Dutch and other set-ups involving an early ...f7-f5, but later on I learned to embrace the weaknesses left by



pushing the f7-pawn two squares forward. This month I will look at four recent works on the Dutch, as well as a book on the Cambridge Springs Variation in the Queen's Gambit Declined.

The Classical Dutch by Simon Williams, 2003
Gambit Publications, Figurine Algebraic Notation,
Paperback, 128 pp., \$18.95

There is always something special about books from first-time authors writing about their favourite opening. This is such a combination. Simon Williams is a young English International Master from London, and the opening complex he is covering is the Classical Dutch, which he plays avidly with the black pieces. It's a fairly slim volume, only 128 pages overall, but other great books in the past have taught us a lot more than other books with many more pages; for example, Golubev's relatively slim volume on the Dragon is much better than the two-volume *Ultimate Dragon* work by Gufeld & Stetsko.



On the back cover blurb, we are told that "Few opponents will be ready to take on the Classical Dutch, since it has received little attention in chess literature in recent decades. For an opening that has been played by all-time greats such as Kortchnoi, Tal and Larsen, the Classical Dutch's current lack of popularity is puzzling."

It takes far more than a few chess greats to make an

opening popular, particularly one that weakens the kingside like the Dutch does. If we compare various lines in the Classical Dutch with the Leningrad Dutch and the Modern Stonewall (with ...Bd6), then we will quickly see the difference. Both the Leningrad and the Modern Stonewall were taken up by many world-class grandmasters at the same time creating more interest and coverage of these lines. That has yet to happen for the Classical Dutch, and the three named luminaries didn't exactly play the Classical Dutch regularly:

- Kortchnoi: 5 games between 1950-1955
- Tal: 3 games between 1953-1988 (but only once since 1957)
- Larsen: 16 games over the period 1958-1994 (although a win against Botvinnik is included; but only three games since 1973)

Aside from Larsen, these examples are clearly not terribly convincing, so if these are the best known examples the author and publisher could come up with, maybe it isn't so surprising that the Classical Dutch is played so rarely...

Let's take at how the material is divided up:

- Introduction (11 pages)
- **Part 1: The Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System** (3 pages)
- 1 The Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System with 7...a5 (13 pages)
- 2 The Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System with 7...Qe8 (13 pages)

- 3 The Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System with 7...Ne4! (6 pages)
- 4 Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System: Deviations for White (10 pages)
- **Part 2: Classical Dutch with ...Bb4(+)** (1 page)
- 5 Classical Dutch with ...Bb4(+): White Avoids Fianchettoing (8 pages)
- 6 Classical Dutch with ...Bb4(+): White Fianchettoes (10 pages)
- **Part 3: Other Lines**
- 7 Alekhine's Variation: 6...Ne4!? (6 pages)
- 8 The Staunton and Other Gambits after 1 d4 f5 (8 pages)
- 9 Early Deviations after 1 d4 f5 (15 pages)
- 10 White Avoids d4 - the English Set-Up (8 pages)
- 11 1 Nf3 Without c4 or d4, Including the Lisitsyn Gambit (6 pages)
- 12 Other Lines (4 pages)
- Index of Variations (2 pages)

I find it curious that so many books on the Dutch cover anti-Dutch lines as well. As we will see below, the Leningrad Dutch book does the same, and so does the book by Pinski.

Williams immediately starts with the Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System, which generally is accepted as the most important line in the Classical Dutch. In comparison to the Pinski book below, Williams covers several lines that Pinski doesn't, since Pinski almost exclusively focuses on the Ilyin-Zhenevsky-System.

In the introduction, Williams states: "I have played the Classical Dutch for about fourteen years and until I undertook this project I didn't appreciate how unique and unexplored the Classical Dutch is. I found in the process of writing this book that many of the positions which I believe are critical to the whole assessment of the Classical Dutch have never been played before. This shows the possibilities available to a player who takes the Classical Dutch to his heart."

This is certainly an excellent promise at the very beginning of the book. The remainder of the introduction also serves as a look into and about the Classical Dutch, covering subjects such as: History, Organization of this Book, Basic Strategic Ideas and Move Order. All are reasonably well-done, and in particular I found the piece about Basic Strategic Ideas particularly useful and informative. I believe that there is plenty for most players to learn from in this particular piece; some of the key ideas in the Classical Dutch are explained with some well-chosen examples and adequate explanations. The same, by the way, can be seen in the introduction to Part One. Oddly, there is not anything similar at the beginning of the Parts Two and Three. On the other hand, the explanations accompanying the theoretical run-through are generally quite excellent and perfectly support the presentation, giving the reader an perfect basis for taking up this line, both in regards to the theory as well as the positional understanding of the lines that are covered in the present book.

That having been said, I noticed on several occasions that Williams did not name the players who played the game that he quotes. In addition, there are many instances where a move is dismissed, particularly for Black, without analysis or game example. However, for people who play this, it might be useful to know exactly what to do in this given line. A case in point is the line 1 d4 f5 2 c4 e6 3 g3 Nf6 4 Bg2 Be7 5 Nf3 0-0 6 0-0 d6 7 Nc3 Qe8 8 Re1, where he about the move 8...Nc6 writes the following about the move 8...Nc6: "The immediate 8...Nc6 may be a mistake since it gives White the option of playing 9 d5". Yet in the game P.H. Nielsen-Boe from the Danish Championship 2001, White, a 2600+ grandmaster, chose not to play 9 d5. Tyomkin, commenting on the game in ChessBase Magazine and Pinski in the book below, don't comment on the 9th move, neither indicating that Black's 8th move was a mistake, nor that White's 9th move, 9 e4, was inaccurate. That is not objective coverage in my point of view. In addition it should be also noted that 8...Nc6 has been played on several occasions by strong players. This example is as I said far from an exclusive one. Of course more thorough coverage would have taken up more pages, but merely dismissing the moves because you as an author don't like it isn't doing your job.

While this book may mainly be written from Black's point of view, it contains so much new information on variations that are so sparsely covered elsewhere that it would be naïve to think that players on White side wouldn't also buy this

book too to obtain the latest information on this line, at least to be prepared for what they may face, particularly given that there now is so much new relevant material.

When looking through recent games between higher rated players and the annotations to these games, it is clear that most annotators prefer the white side of these Dutch lines, but these annotators usually don't play these lines either, and therefore they don't really do much more than scratch the surface in their annotations and often make statements like White is clearly better after 7 Nc3, when that is just the starting point for authors like Williams and Pinski.

Despite its occasional shortcomings, I certainly recommend this book for players who want to spice up their repertoire as Black. I don't know if all lines are equally sound, but they definitely deserve more tests among stronger players and they are definitely playable on lower levels. The fact that the author still plays these lines himself against IMs and GMs is one of the best recommendations you can get.

My assessment of this book: 

Classical Dutch by Jan Pinski, 2002 Everyman Chess, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 160 pp., \$19.95

Polish IM Jan Pinski has previously written one book for Everyman Chess, The Kalashnikov Sicilian, albeit together with **ChessCafe.com**'s book of the year winner, Jacob Aagaard, who is also thanked in the introduction of the present book. Pinski is also the co-author of the **ChessCafe.com** e-book about the fantasy variation (3 f3) in the Caro-Kann Defence.



Although this book is supposed to cover the same lines as the above book by Williams, a quick look at the contents page makes it quite clear that this isn't so:

- Introduction (6 pages)
- **1 d4 f5 2 c4 e6 3 g3 Nf6 4 Bg2 Be7 5 Nf3 0-0 6 0-0 d6**
- 1 Main Line: 7 Nc3 a5 8 b3 Qe8 (23 pages)
- 2 Main Line: 7 Nc3 a5: Eighth Move Alternatives (14 pages)
- 3 Main Line: 7 Nc3 Qe8 and 7 Nc3 Ne4 (31 pages)
- 4 Main Line: White Plays b2-b4 (17 pages)
- 5 Main Line: White Plays Nbd2 (11 pages)
- **Other Systems**
- 6 Systems with Qc2 and/or e3 (19 pages)
- 7 Systems with Nh3 (8 pages)
- 8 Second Move Alternatives (21 pages)
- Index of Complete Games (2 pages)

As we can see, there is no coverage of the ...Bb4+

lines, nor the Alekhine Variation with 6...Ne4. This is both odd and disappointing. But the troubles don't end here. Given that several of the lines covered in the first three chapters are somewhat transpositional, the lack of an index poses problems for the reader. Instead I have to deal with three separate chapter indexes at the end of the three chapters, something I find highly annoying.

In addition to this, I found that not all moves are covered, e.g., after 8 b3 in chapter 1, Pinski only covers 8...Qe8, and doesn't offer any alternatives in the next chapter either, although several other moves have been tried. Another curiosity is that the above-mentioned P.H.Nielsen-Boe game is annotated in some detail in the games section, yet Black's 8th move isn't listed in the chapter summary/index of variations at the end of the chapter.

This book, like most other books from Everyman Chess, is built around complete games rather the variation trees we are familiar with from, for example, the books from Gambit. I have in past reviews stated my opinion about this; I think this approach makes it possible for authors to leave out important material, in some cases without even knowing that they did so. I also find that often it is unnecessary to cover the end of a game that has no particular relevance to the opening at all and therefore take up space that could have been used in a much more productive and informative fashion elsewhere. Pinski does fall into this trap on several occasions, using space and diagrams on something

that isn't remotely relevant to the opening.

Sometimes his annotations also leave something to be desired. For example in his annotations to game 35, he gives Black's 22nd move a '?!' which means a dubious move, and writes "This more or less loses on the spot." He then gives a line which would have given Black chances of escaping with a draw. However, the game doesn't end as abruptly as the comment might indicate; it lasts until move 63, apparently without further errors from either side as none is pointed out.

Pinski's original analysis by far is the book's best part. He offers us plenty of new ideas supported by a great deal of his analysis. In this analysis, Pinski is not partial and generally offer suggestions and improvements for both sides, making this book a very worthwhile effort on the part of the author and an attractive choice for those who employ or wants to employ the Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation as Black as well as those who have to face it.

Personally I enjoyed reading and studying this book, and I think many others will too. Pinski's enthusiasm for this line easily rubs off on you and you will be inspired to give this line a try if not to take it up as a regular part of your repertoire.

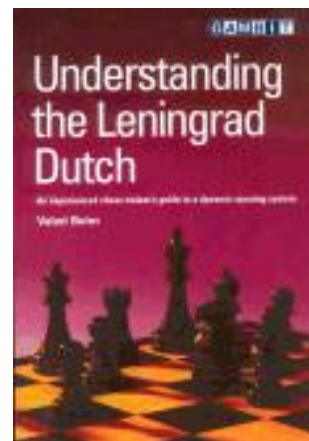
However, let's not forget that the book is mislabeled and should have contained coverage of more lines. But what's inside the book is generally of good quality and will be enjoyed by those who choose to buy it.

My assessment of this book: 

[Order](#) *Classical Dutch* by Jan Pinski

Understanding the Leningrad Dutch by Valeri Beim, 2002 Gambit Publications, Figurine Algebraic Notation, paperback, 192 pp., \$21.95

Last year grandmaster Valeri Beim debuted as a chess author with *Chess Recipes from the Grandmaster's Kitchen*, which I reviewed on the pages of **ChessCafe.com**. Although I have seen other reviewers who liked the book, I clearly didn't. I found the book rather pointless, mainly covering things that had been covered better by other authors. With that in mind, I started in on the present book.



The Leningrad Dutch, is a set-up for Black against 1 d4, which includes 1...f5, 2...Nf6, 3...g6, 4...Bg7, 5...0-0, 6...d6. It is a very dynamic defence, but one which wasn't seen particularly often until a group of Soviet players, especially Malaniuk, but also other strong players such as Bareev, M.Gurevich, Vyzhmanavin, Dolmatov and others began playing it regularly.

Needless to say that with such strong representation, the variation quickly gained a large

following among players of all strengths. Even I got caught up in the frenzy, and started playing the Dutch, hoping to play the Leningrad Variation. I only did so twice, in quickplay games, then I abandoned the opening. Not that the results were bad, but I simply couldn't get my thoughts away from having weakened my kingside so dramatically from the get-go. With such thoughts roaming in my head throughout the opening, this was clearly not the debut for me. Although much of the hype has disappeared, the fact remains that the Leningrad Variation still is a viable weapon for Black against 1 d4. The contents include:

- Preface (3 pages)
- Introduction (5 pages)
- 1 1 Nf3 f5 without 2 d4 (8 pages)
- 2 1 d4 f5: Gambits (21 pages)
- 3 White Avoids g3 (19 pages)
- 4 Leningrad Dutch: Early Deviations (17 pages)
- 5 Leningrad Dutch with an Early b3 or b4 (18 pages)
- 6 White Plays c4: Sidelines (11 pages)
- 7 Main Line with 7...c6 (30 pages)
- 8 Main Line with 7...Qe8 (28 pages)
- 9 Exercises (7 pages)
- Solutions (13 pages)
- Index of Variations (4 pages)

I am curious: why would you call a book *Understanding the Leningrad Dutch*, and then spend the first three chapters on something entirely different. In my humble opinion, these chapters, if

they must be included at all, should have been tucked away towards the end of the book. In addition to that, I also think that the author invests far too many pages on these relatively insignificant lines, although they may be of use in the Leningrad and other variations of the Dutch.

I should also make it clear at this point that this book doesn't attempt claim that it covers the entire Leningrad Variation Complex, but only a selected repertoire with some additional options for Black. The idea is to explain the basic ideas, strategically, positionally and tactically as well as some theory. This can in some way be compared to the *Starting Out* series by Everyman Chess, but only somewhat, as that series is far more basic and doesn't really attempt to present a repertoire such as this one. This approach used in the present book was first used by Jonathan Rowson in his excellent *Understanding the Grünfeld Defence*.

From the chapters that do cover the Leningrad Variation, it is quite clear that Beim knows what he is talking about and that he has had his share of experience on the Black side of this opening. Although 7...Qe8 is the main line in the Leningrad, Beim also covers 7...c6 which is a more solid line and also less exciting line compared the dynamic queen move. At first I found it somewhat strange that he had chosen to cover 7...c6 in more detail than 7...Qe8, but this of course stems from the author playing and mastering 7...c6 himself. With this line, he has beaten former Candidate finalist Yusupov, drawn against strong players such as

Portisch, Epishin and Kortchnoi as well as many other good results, so the move is clearly not without bite, something he ably demonstrates in the book.

Overall I didn't see too much original analysis and new ideas from Beim, but despite this, I must admit I really like this book as an introduction to the Leningrad, which can otherwise be a difficult opening to learn. In addition to his explanations in the introduction and throughout the chapters, the author has also added a welcome chapter of exercises as well as solutions to positions that arise from this interesting opening.

This book will be an excellent investment for those wanting to learn the Leningrad Variation or for those that have played it for a while but who don't feel that they are familiar with all the intricacies of the variation. Those who are also looking for a reply to various anti-Dutch set-ups will find something worthwhile in this book, although the material in the books by Williams and Pinski on some levels is equally good.

For those on the White side, facing the Dutch, there are also many lessons to be learned from the study of this book. However, for the stronger players on either side that have been playing or facing the Leningrad for years, the material will likely not be sufficiently detailed.

My assessment of this book: 

Order *Understanding the Leningrad Dutch*
by Valeri Beim

Dutch Defence A90-99 by Boris Schipkov, 2002
ChessBase GmbH, Figurine Algebraic Notation,
CD-ROM, \$29.95

I have in the past reviewed several opening CD-ROMs from ChessBase. The quality of these works have varied quite a bit. In my opinion, the strongest representative so far has been Martin Breutigam's CD on the King's Indian with h3. The presentation was interesting and thorough, and to me it seemed obvious that the student would really get quality for the money spent on the product.



The question is of course whether this standard can be maintained on CDs by other authors, such as the present one, Boris Schipkov. I must admit I know very little about this author, but I believe he is an IM. and from the back cover of the CD case, I have learned that he has already published several books and articles as well as one previous CD on the Queen's Gambit Accepted, by ChessBase. He is also editor in chief of the online magazine *Chess in Siberia* (www.chessib.com).

From the back cover blurb, we are told: "Choosing the Dutch Defence with the black pieces is a clear

signal that you are willing to go for the full point. There are no such things as exchange variations or an early trade of queens. What's more, limited theoretical knowledge will get you along quite well here, for a change. What both parties do have to know in the Dutch Defence, however, is a couple of good ideas and manoeuvres - then a successful opening is guaranteed. On his CD, Boris Schipkov deals with the variations in which Black plays e6, mainly the Stonewall (with d5) and the Iliin-Shenevsky [sic - oddly the spelling of the this variation is different on the CD] Variation (with d6 and eventually e5). Defined by the pawn moves f5, e6 and d5, the Stonewall doesn't carry its name by chance. It can't be taken by storm, it is only by long siege that White might possibly make progress. Boris Schipkov's database contains more than 14,000 games, 300 of which annotated, 17 database texts feature introductions to the variations, furthermore, 57 sample games have been annotated by the author. A training database includes 20 games with 70 training tasks to check you [sic] freshly aquired [sic] knowledge."

This sounds reasonable. But let's see how the material is presented. The database texts are listed as follows:

- 01 Dutch Stonewall - General Introduction
- 02 Basic Strategic Ideas
- 03 Modern Stonewall I
- 04 Modern Stonewall II: Variation 7 b3
- 05 Variation 4...Bb4+
- 06 Variations 4 g3 c6 5 Nh3 and 4...d5 5 Nh3

- 07 Rare Variations after 4...Be7
- 08 Alekhine Variation
- 09 Classical Stonewall I
- 10 Classical Stonewall II
- 11 Classical Stonewall III - Variation 8 Ba3
- 12 Classical Stonewall IV - Variation 7 Nc3 c6
- 13 Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation I
- 14 Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation II: 7...Qe8
- 15 Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation III: 8 Qc2
- 16 Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation IV: 8 b3
- 17 Dutch Stonewall - Conclusion

From this overview, it seems a bit odd that the "Dutch Stonewall - Conclusion" isn't immediately following the Stonewall database texts, but instead after those that cover the Ilyin-Zhenevsky Variation. However, when checking the contents of text 17, it turns out that it is overall conclusion of the entire CD, not just the Stonewall. By the way, before I forget, I should add that the code A90-99 is the Chess Informant Code that covers these particular lines in the Dutch.

Taking a closer look at the general introduction (text 1), it is mainly non-specific text and a lot of diagrams, really with no particular aim in mind, and hence it does not really achieve anything. This was less than impressive.

As for text 2, Basic Strategic Ideas in the Dutch Stonewall and Other Variations A90-99, the author attempts to explain the basic ideas of these wildly different variations, using only 7 games and 8

diagrams, which of course is nowhere near enough to do the job properly. The author ends that text with the comment "Other strategic plans and tactical ideas for Black and White are examined in the texts and in the model, stem and essential games." This is not acceptable, because we have paid for him to show us the way. This is also in sharp contrast to the book by Danish Jacob Aagaard on the Dutch Stonewall, in which the author spends more than 50 pages on the introduction, also using the argument that understanding the positions that arise is far more important than memorizing the theory of these lines.

Moving on to the theoretical texts, I found further disappointments. Each text covers a number of variations, not in detail, explaining typical ideas, strategy etc, but just touching on the basic theoretical tracks and then quoting some games that are linked to the database. Some of the games have been annotated, but most of them are completely without annotations, punctuation or anything that could assist the student in understanding them. I have criticized this approach before, and I will not hesitate to do so again, because it makes no sense to show the student a game if the student is not explained what is important in the game and why the players are playing like they do. This unfortunately is repeated over and over and over again on this CD. Therefore I also find the theoretical coverage anything but acceptable.

Finally, I looked at the training games, which ought to have been both informative and well chosen as

on some other CDs, including for example Curt Hansen's on the Scandinavian Defence, where his annotations really made a difference. On this CD, there are hardly any annotations to the games. In fact they are so limited, they might as well not have been there. In addition, there seems to be something wrong with the point scoring function. For example in the game, Shabalov-Naumkin, USSR 1987, I managed to score 40 points of 31 available! I sometimes think I'm good, but usually not better than 100%.

Overall I found the material on the present CD lacking in many respects, and this I think is entirely to be blamed on the author who has not put enough work of his own onto this CD.

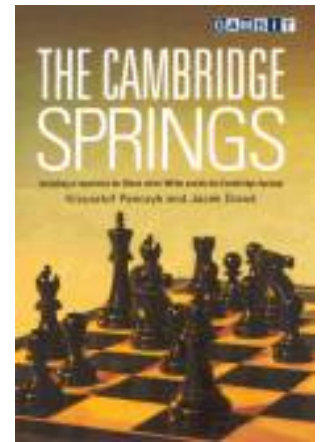
I therefore cannot recommend this CD. People with interest in these lines, should instead opt for Aagaard's book on the Stonewall accompanied by for example Williams' on the Classical Dutch.

My assessment of this book: 

[Order](#) *Dutch Defence A90-99* by Boris Schipkov

The Cambridge Springs by Krzysztof Panczyk and Jacek Ilczuk, 2002 Gambit Publications, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 192 pp., \$18.95

What is the Cambridge Springs?
 And who are the authors? The first question is more easily answered than the second one: Cambridge Springs is a town in the United States that hosted a chess tournament in 1904 in which a certain line in the Queen's Gambit Declined was formally introduced and played on a couple of occasions. The starting position is the following: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Nbd7 5 Nf3 c6 6 e3 Qa5 [diagram].



This position had of course been reached on a couple of occasions prior to this tournament, but it was here that the Cambridge Springs "movement" started gaining momentum.

Of the authors I had acquainted myself with the former, Panczyk, with his work with Emms on the *Archangel and New Archangel* of the Ruy Lopez. That book was in many ways very interesting and several new ideas and analysis of the authors saw the light of day. The second gentleman is a completely blank piece of paper to me, but the back cover of the book tells me that he is a strong correspondence player who has been a semifinalist in the e-mail world championship. For the normal over-the-board player, that may not sound like anything particular with the emergence of strong computers etc, but here it is important to remember that many of the games contain strategic ideas and tactical wizardry that reaches far beyond the scope

of what a computer can calculate unless aided by human hand. It wasn't more than a few years ago that Peter Leko of Hungary lost a correspondence game where he admitted he mostly only checked the lines on his computer; his opponent was not particularly well-known, not even to people with interest in correspondence chess, such as myself.

Not too long ago, **ChessCafe.com** released an electronic book by me on the Cambridge Springs Variation, so I know a little more about this opening than usual. However, while my CCR (**ChessCafe Reader**)-book is somewhat cheaper, it isn't quite as detailed as this one and it doesn't quite contain as much original analysis as the present book. I instead chose lines that I found to make sense and suggested new ideas, moves and offered some pieces of analysis where I found it necessary or suitable.

The present book by Panczyk and Ilczuk is a completely different matter. But before discussing the content, let's see how the material has been divided up:

- Introduction (5 pages)
- 1 Rare 7th Moves for White (10 pages)
- 2 7 Bxf6 (18 pages)
- 3 7 cxd5: Introduction and Minor Lines (15 pages)
- 4 7 cxd5 Nxd5 including 8 Qd2 N7b6 (15 pages)
- 5 7 cxd5 Nxd5 8 Qd2 Bb4 (14 pages)
- 6 7 Nd2: Introduction and Minor Lines (8

- pages)
- 7 7 Nd2 dxc4 (17 pages)
- 8 7 Nd2 Bb4: Minor Lines (25 pages)
- 9 7 Nd2 Bb4: Main Line (8 Qc2 0-0) (30 pages)
- 10 White Avoids the Cambridge Springs: Minor Lines (15 pages)
- 11 White Avoids the Cambridge Springs: Exchange Variation with Bg5 (14 pages)
- Index of Variations (2 pages)

It is worth noting that the last two chapters include lines that do not allow Black to play the Cambridge Springs Variation. This may seem odd, but for those playing the line as Black, it is very important to be prepared for this possibility as White normally is very likely to avoid it, usually by playing either 4 Nf3 followed by 5 Bf4 or the exchange variation with either Nf3 or Nge2. Those two anti-Cambridge Springs Chapters take up 29 pages of coverage, but that aside, there is an astounding 155 pages of coverage of this interesting opening. The authors have included an inordinate amount of original analysis and ideas of their own. I found it almost unbelievable to encounter so much original material in one opening book. That this book is a labor of love is beyond any shadow of doubt.

Throughout the book there are plenty of examples of the authors' own games, and they too contribute to changing the current standing of some of the sub-variations of the Cambridge Springs.

But returning to their analysis; as mentioned there

is a lot of it, but I found when working on my CCR-book, that they at times are not particularly accurate in their analysis, they don't always pick the best moves for White, and in a few cases for Black too, and sometimes they reach a position where they stop their analysis, when more is clearly left to be explored and their conclusions don't always make sense. That, however, is a minor complaint in the light of what they have uncovered and are offering to us for the first time.

A more serious complaint is the lack of narrative throughout the book. For the improving player there is very little guidance in regards to typical ideas and the reasoning behind various moves. Usually all we get are game examples, analysis and evaluations built up in variation trees, in a fashion not very different from the books by Janjgava on the Petroff and Queen's Gambit Declined and Catalan for Black, both also published by Gambit. That isn't particularly inspiring; however, I think a lot of people who are looking for a solid choice for Black against 1 d4 and yet still wants to play for a win, may find this defence a very attractive one and therefore will make good use of the present book, although the analysis-based approach may appeal more to stronger players. For those that would like a softer presentation and introduction to the Cambridge Springs Variation, there is a cheap alternative in my CCR book.

My assessment of this book: 

Order *The Cambridge Springs* by Krzysztof
Panczyk and Jacek Ilczuk

<p><i>The Ratings</i></p>
<p> — A poor book, not recommended.</p>
<p> — Not a particularly good book, but perhaps useful for some readers.</p>
<p> — A useful book.</p>
<p> — Good book, recommended.</p>
<p> — Excellent book, highly recommended.</p>

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