



BOOK REVIEWS



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Without a Good Opening Don't Expect Much Out of Life in Chess

By Lance Martin

ChessBase Opening Encyclopaedia 2010, by DVD, ChessBase, \$131.95 (ChessCafe Price: \$125.95)

According to one Internet definition, an encyclopedia is a comprehensive written compendium that holds information from either all branches of knowledge or a particular branch of knowledge. Based on this I have to say that ChessBase has created an encyclopedia of chess openings as of the year 2010. However, while some of the material is from 2010, the special Theory databases, which would be a major reason for making this purchase are from past issues of *ChessBase Magazine* and have not been updated since the year in which they were written. These begin at *CBM #1* and go as far as *CBM #134* (February 2010).

The advertising literature states "The ChessBase Opening Encyclopaedia 2010 features the complete coverage of all opening sectors, offering an optimal start for opening training. Many well-known specialists have made contributions in their field of expertise, such as Anand, Avrukh, Dr Huebner, Jussupow, Kortschnoj, Krasenkow, Marin, Postny, Ribli, Rogozenko and Stohl. The DVD contains a separate directory with 506 (69 of them are new) special theory databases from the CBMs. For each of 500 opening sectors according to ECO standard there is at least one opening survey, so that the database is the ideal tool for building up a complete opening repertoire. The game database includes 3.7 million games, about 79.000 of them with annotations."

However, it would be nice if there was something that specified which were the new theoretical surveys. For, aside from some installation instructions for the ChessBase Reader, there is no manual. It seems that a pricey piece of software should include a manual of some sort, even if it is just page or two long.

Now, I don't need ChessBase Reader, but I thought I would install it for the purpose of this review. It works pretty well and is simple enough to use. Yet, if you have [ChessBase 10](#), this is how you should access the material. Once I launched the *Opening Encyclopaedia* in ChessBase, I had an entirely different set of options that made the contents much more manageable:

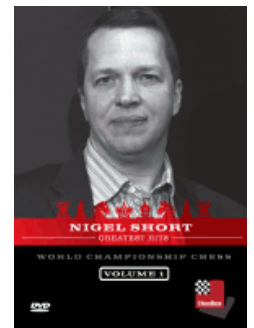
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by Nigel Short



OPENINGS

Links to the theory databases from ChessBase Magazine

(more informations and access: [Info](#))

[A00: 1.b4 - Sokolsky](#) Leisebein/Bangiev
[A00: 1.Nh3 Amar Opening](#) Konikowski
[A01: 1.b3 Lane-Defence](#) Leisebein/Bangiev
[A02: Froms-Gambit](#) Leisebein/Bangiev
[A04: Anti-Dutch](#) Hazai/Lukacs
[A05: King's Indian Attack](#) Langrock
[A10: Basman-Gambit](#) Bangiev
[A10: English Opening](#) Marin
[A14: English](#) Ribli
[A16: Anti-Gruenfeld](#) Postny
[A16: Anti-Gruenfeld 4.Qa4+](#) Stohl
[A16: Anti-Gruenfeld 4.Qa4+ \(2\)](#) Stohl
[A16: Anti-Gruenfeld 5.h4](#) Stohl
[A17: 4.g4](#) Konikowski
[A17: 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.g4](#) Krasenkow
[A18: Mikenas-System](#) Ribli
[A18: English Opening 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4 d5](#) Karolyi
[A19: English Opening 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4 c5](#) Karolyi
[A20: English 1.c4 e5](#) Ribli
[A22: English Bellon-Gambit](#) Leisebein/Bangiev
[A23: English Pantaleev-Gambit](#) Leisebein/Bangiev
[A26: English 1.c4 e5](#) Grivas
[A28: English 1.c4 e5](#) Ribli
[A29: English 1.c4 e5](#) Ribli
[A29: English 1.c4 e5 ... 4...Nd4](#) Ribli
[A29: English Opening 1.c4 e5](#) Skembris
[A30: English 3...d5 4.d4](#) Marin

This list shown above actually goes down to include a long list of the theory databases. When I click on one of these items I am taken to a list of games. There is also a tab for TEXT. This text is written by an expert on the opening in question and is of significant use to the person trying to learn or better understand the opening. The text will point to games that are used as examples. All you have to do is click on the game and you are taken directly to it. This is the way I expected the product to work and it did not disappoint.

I am impressed by this product and find myself using it quite a bit. The theory databases are very well written and the games provide me with a tremendous memory jog, as sometimes all it takes is a two or three minute look at the overview and the opening in question comes right back to my sixty-two-year old memory.

I use the *Opening Encyclopaedia* for a great deal more as well. Right now, I am reviewing Andrew Martin's DVD on the [Spanish Exchange Variation](#) and am looking at his 5...Qd6 variation. I have a pretty good amount of knowledge in this line, so a red light went off in my head when I saw the number of white wins and the arrogance with which he treated black in this opening. Martin's DVD gives the impression that it is a sure-fire way for white to win in the Ruy Lopez. But I know from my own losses that this is not the case. So, off I went to the Opening Encyclopaedia, where the survey from CBM#127 is rather complete:

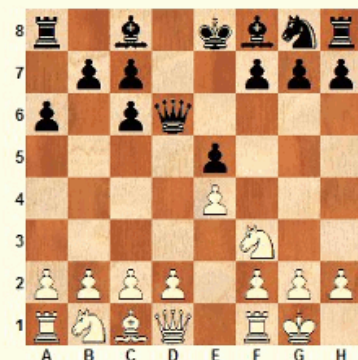


OPENINGS

Both sides have their chances in the 5...♙d6 line

by *Tibor Karolyi*

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙xc6 dxc6 5.0-0 ♗d6 6.♘a3 b5



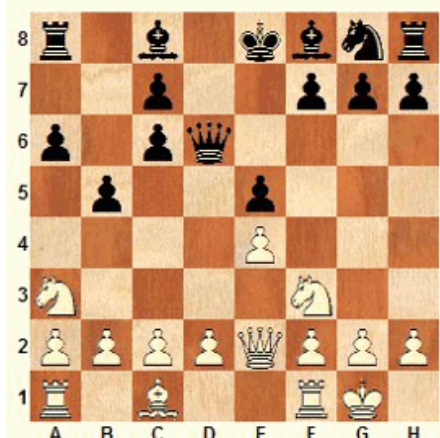
But this is only the beginning.

A) 7.b3



Here is the 7.b3 variation, but I keep going.

B) 7.♙e2



While all of Martin's games in this line end in a win for white, the Encyclopaedia survey has white scoring 0 -5 =5. Now, this is just one author's opinion of a line in an opening, but it does provide me with a start. Make that a great start, because the theory section comes directly from *CBM* and we do not have to question the quality of those authors. We may question their opinions, but not their quality. What makes this story even more interesting is

that I have that particular issue of *CBM* and I would not have thought to look there. I needed the Encyclopaedia to point me to it.

Club players looking to expand their opening repertoire could benefit greatly from this Encyclopaedia. The best way to learn openings is by going through plenty of games and, with a database of nearly four million games, the Encyclopedia makes this task a lot easier than it was before. If you are a club-level player who does not have a recent edition of this Encyclopaedia, then I recommend this product without reservation.

[Order](#) *Opening Encyclopaedia 2010*
by ChessBase

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