



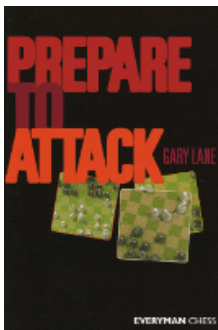
COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane

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Scream

Anyone who plays the Petroff must like dull chess, so how do we best annoy them?

This seems to be the inspiration for a question by **Almerio Castro** from **Brazil**. He e-mailed to ask, "What do you think of Bronstein's suggestion in the Petroff Defense: **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nxf7?!.**"

This variation has been played regularly for over one hundred years but still continues to both bemuse and trap opponents. If you are not familiar with the sacrifice, the first reaction is to chuckle with glee, but you might end up screaming with horror as your position disintegrates. It has been employed by top grandmasters who prefer to play something different in the opening. The current feeling is that it is very tricky because White can even conduct his attack on positional grounds by gradually advancing his wall of pawns, and it has plenty of success at club level. I suspect it might not be good enough if you come across Magnus Carlsen, who can defend like a computer, but it is certainly appealing to attacking players, especially as a surprise weapon.

**Sarunas Sulskis – Thomas Michalczak**  
Warsaw 2005  
Petroff Defense [C42]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nxf7!?**



[FEN "rnbqkb1r/ppp2Npp/3p1n2/8/4P3/8/PPPPPPP/RNBQKB1R b KQkq - 0 4"]

Introducing the Cochrane Gambit – perfect to play against players of the black pieces who hate defending. It certainly looks crazy, but I reckon it is still suitable for rapid games where there is little time to think about the absolute correct defence. In this game White is an established grandmaster so it can't be that bad, and in the past a long list of famous names have occasionally given it a go. White relies on the poor position of the black king and his pawn centre to make up for the loss of the knight. At the highest level, the elite will just defend superbly and hang on to the extra material. Then again, I have witnessed plenty of games where players rated below 2200 have really struggled as Black. **4...Kxf7 5 d4 c5!?** A key move because in the past it has been warmly recommended and played by chess stars such as Kramnik against Topalov and Shirov against Short. The idea is to break up White's pawn centre otherwise Black will have to contend with a sharp initiative. Also possible is a) 5...g6 6 Nc3 Bg7 (or 6...Qe8 can be met by 7 Qf3 when as usual Black must endure complications) 7 Bc4+ Be6?! (7...Kf8 gets in the way of the king's rook but when you are a piece up one should put up with such an inconvenience) 8 Bxe6+ Kxe6 9 f4 Kf7 10 e5 Ne8 11 Qf3 c6 12 Ne4 Qa5+ 13 Bd2 Qd5 14 f5 Rf8 15 f6 Kg8 16 Qb3 Qxb3 17 axb3 Nxf6 (the line 17...Bh8 18 Bh6 Rf7 19 Ng5 is good news for White) 18 exf6 Bxf6 19 Nxd6

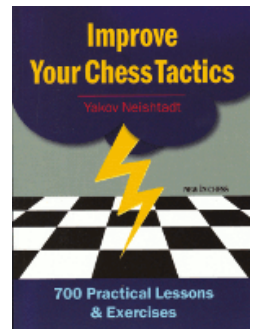
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Bxd4 20 0–0 gave White the superior ending in G.Makropoulos-B.Toth, Rome 1981. b) 5...Be7 and now b1) 6 Nc3 is sometimes played by those who seek to control the d5-square before trying their luck with Bc4+: 6...c6 7 Bd3 Re8 8 0–0 Kg8 9 h3 Na6 10 a3 g6 11 f4 Bf8 12 f5 gxf5 13 Bg5 Bg7 14 Kh1 Nc7 15 Qf3 Qd7 16 Rae1 d5 17 e5 Ne4 18 Nxe4 dxe4 19 Rxe4 Qf7 (maybe 19...fxe4 20 Qxe4 Bf8 is worth a chance but over the board it is hard to resist 21 Rf3) 20 Rh4 (20 Rg4! Looks like a neat solution when 20...Kh8 21 Rg3 gives White an edge) 20...Be6 21 c4 with the game finely balanced. White went on to eventually win in K.Shanava-.Mchedlishvili, Tbilisi 2008. b2) 6 Bc4+ Be6 (6...d5 looks sensible) 7 d5 Bg4 8 f3 Nxe4? (there is no need to be generous and return a piece, especially when your king is still poorly placed on f7, so 8...Bd7 needs urgent attention when a sample line runs: 9 e5 dxe5 10 d6+ Be6 11 Bxe6+ Kxe6 12 dxe7 Qxd1+ 13 Kxd1 Kxe7 is about equal) 9 fxg4 Re8 10 0–0+ White's attack is warming up nicely and the bonus is that he is also a pawn up) 10...Kg8 11 Bd3 Bf6 12 Qf3 Ng5 13 Bxg5 Bxg5 14 Qf7 + Kh8 15 Qh5! Bh6 16 g5 Re5 17 Qf7 1–0, A.Wohl-G.Bondielli, Arco 2006. c) The former world championship contender David Bronstein pointed out that 5...Nxe4?! can be met by 6 Qh5+ g6 7 Qd5+ winning back the piece. **6 Bc4+**



[FEN "rnbq1b1r/pp3kpp/3p1n2/2p5/2BPP3/8/PPPPPPP/RNBQK2R b KQ - 0 6"]

White acts quickly to pose Black further problems in the opening. If 6 dxc5, Black has to take the initiative. Play might continue a) 6...Nc6 and now a1) 7 Nc3 Qe8 8 cxd6 g6 9 Bg5 Qe6 10 Bxf6 Qxf6 (10...Kxf6 is the best chance but 11 f4 gives White the superior attacking chances) 11 d7 and White is already winning in K.Kratochvil-J.Bartos, Brno 2010. a2) 7...Be6 8 Bxe6+ Kxe6 9 0–0 dxc5 (9...d5 should be considered when 10 Nc3 dxe4 11 Qe2 looks wild, which will suit White) 10 Qe2 (you have to like weird and wonderful openings to enjoy playing such a position a piece down) 10...Kf7 11 Nc3 Nd4 12 Qc4+ Ke8 13 Bg5 (the Australian playing White is doing the right thing by trying not to rush things, but keeping to the right principles by improving the position of his pieces before trying to exploit the poorly placed black king) 13...h6 14 Bh4 g5 15 Bg3 Qd7 16 Rad1 b5 17 Qd3 Rd8 18 Be5 Bg7 19 Bxd4 cxd4 20 e5 (surely 20 Nxb5 is simple and good) 20...Ng4 21 f4 gxf4 22 Rxf4 Nxe5 23 Re1 Qc6? 24 Qf5! Rd7 25 Rxe5+ and White is on the verge of victory, C. Depasquale-S.Solomon, Melbourne 1998. b) 6...d5 7 e5 Qe8 8 f4 Bg4 (8...Bxc5 looks encouraging for Black) 9 Be2 Bxe2 10 Qxe2 Ne4 11 Be3 Na6 12 Nd2 Nxd2 13 Qxd2 Rd8 14 0–0–0 Bxc5 15 Bd4 Rf8 16 f5 Rg8 17 Rhf1 Qa4 18 Bxc5 Nxc5 19 Kb1 (19 Qc3! is more in the spirit of the opening because then White does not have to waste attacking time by meekly moving his king) 19...Ne4 20 Qd3 (20 e6+ Ke7 21 Qe3 still gives White some hope) 20...Qc4! 21 Qe3 (21 Qh3 might look like the aggressive option but it fails big time because of 21...Nd2+! 22 Rxd2 Qxf1+ 23 Rd1 Qxd1#) 21...Rde8 22 Qf4 g5 23 Qe3 Rxe5 24 g4 d4 25 Qc1 Nc3+! (a clever way to secure victory) 26 bxc3 Rb5+ 0–1, A.Savko-C.Bauer, Vejen 1993. **6...d5** Black wishes to negate the power of the bishop on c4. It also makes some sense to try 6...Be6 in order to exchange White's potent light-squared bishop but 7 Bxe6+ Kxe6 does leave Black in a strange position even if the odds are in his favour. In the game L.Rodi-R.Murray, Internet 2009, White continued sedately with 8 0–0 and Black soon went wrong: 8...cxd4 9 Qxd4 Nc6 10 Qc4 + Ke7 11 Nc3 (sometimes the rules of attack are the same in that castle and develop should be White's mantra in order to improve his tactical options) 11...Ne5 12 Qb4?! (12 Qe2 preparing f2-f4 offers equal chances) 12...Qb6 13 Qa3 Qc5 14 Qb3 Rb8?! 15 Bg5 (I reckon 15 Be3! Qa5 16 Rad1 is good for White) 15...Nc6? (15...Nf3+! 16 gxf3 Qxg5+ 17 Kh1 Qf4 is fine for Black)

16 Nd5+ Kd7 17 Bxf6 gxf6 18 Qh3+ Kd8 19 Nxf6 Be7 20 Qd7 checkmate. 7  
**exd5 Bd6 8 0-0 cxd4** The option of bringing the king's rook into play is  
 obviously a major option: 8...Re8 9 Nc3 Bg4 10 f3 Bf5 11 dxc5 Bxc5+ 12  
 Kh1 Bd6 (perhaps 12...Kg8!? 13 Bf4 Kh8 is worth considering) 13 Nb5 Kg8  
 14 Bg5 a6 15 Nd4 White needs strong nerves to play such positions but the  
 three pawns for the piece certainly helps. The game continued 15...Bd7 16  
 Ne6 Bxe6 17 dxe6 Qc7 18 Qd4 Be5 19 Qh4 Nc6 20 c3 Ne7 21 Bd3 Ned5 22  
 f4 Bd6 23 c4 Nb4 24 Bf5 Qc5 25 Qh3 Re7 26 Bxf6 gxf6 27 b3 Kh8 28 Rad1  
 Bc7 29 Rd7! Rxd7 30 exd7 Qe7 31 Qc3 Nc6 32 Re1 Ne5 33 fxe5 with a huge  
 advantage, D.Stellwagen-I.Smirnov, Heraklio 2002. **9 Qxd4 Bf5 10 Bf4 Re8**  
**11 Nc3 a6 12 Rae1**



[FEN "m1qr3/1p3kpp/p2b1n2/3P1b2/  
 2BQ1B2/2N5/PPP2PPP/4RRK1 b - - 0 12"]

Sulskis is doing an excellent job of increasing his tactical chances by  
 converging his pieces towards the black king. **12...Rxe1** Other moves are a)  
 12...Kg8 13 Bb3 b5 14 f3 favours White. b) 12...Bxc2 13 Bxd6 (13 Re6!? is  
 also interesting) 13...Qxd6 14 Re6 Qd8 15 Rfe1 b5 16 Rxe8 Nxe8 17 d6+  
 bxc4 18 Qd5+ Kf8 19 Qxa8 Qxd6 20 h4 when White must have an edge  
 because black's pieces lack harmony. **13 Rxe1 Qc7** Instead 13...Bxc2 runs  
 into 14 Bxd6 Qxd6 15 Re6 Qd8 16 d6 Kf8 17 d7! Qxd7 18 Qc5+ Kf7 19 Re7  
 +! Kg6 20 Bf7+ when White has the happy choice of closing in on a  
 checkmate net or simply take the black queen.. Of course, 13...Kf8 is a better  
 choice but White is still on top after 14 Ne2 (watch out for the logical line that  
 is a dud: 14 Bxd6+ Qxd6 15 Re5? Nc6! is a knockout blow) 14...Bxc2 15  
 Qc3 intending Nd4. **14 Bxd6 Qxd6 15 Re5!**



[FEN "m6/1p3kpp/p2q1n2/3PRb2/  
 2BQ4/2N5/PPP2PPP/6K1 b - - 0 15"]

White steps up the pressure and the black defence is poor mainly because he  
 has still not developed pieces on the queenside. **15...Bxc2?** If the bishop  
 retreats with 15...Bc8, it looks like he wants to start again by setting up the  
 pieces, which might be a good idea because his position is very difficult upon  
 16 Ne4 when a sample line runs 16...Nxe4 17 Rxe4 Bd7 18 Re6! when Black  
 should give up. **16 Re6 Qd8** Or 16...Qd7 17 d6! Qxe6 18 Bxe6+ Kxe6 19  
 Qc4+ Kxd6 20 Qc8 with victory in sight. **17 d6**



[FEN "rn1q4/1p3kpp/p2PRn2/8/2BQ4/2N5/PPb2PPP/6K1 b - - 0 17"]

The threat of discovered check by the rook spells doom and gloom for Black. **17...Kf8 18 Nd5** White has a superb position so it is no wonder that there is another way to win: 18 d7! Qxd7 (or 18...Nbx d7 19 Qd6+ Kf7 20 Rxf6+ Ke8 21 Bf7 checkmate) 19 Qc5+ Kf7 20 Re7+ Kg6 21 Bf7+ Kh6 22 Re5! Qg4 23 f3 Qh4 24 g3 and Black can resign. **18...Nc6** Or 18...Nbd7 19 Nxf6 Nxf6 (19...gxf6 20 Qd2 Bg6 21 Qh6+ Kf7 22 Re4 checkmate) 20 d7 Bf5 21 Qd6+ Kg8 22 Re8 checkmate. **19 Qf4! Bg6 20 Nxf6 gxf6 21 Qh6+ 1-0**



[FEN "r2q1k2/1p5p/p1nPRpbQ/8/2B5/8/PP3PPP/6K1 b - - 0 21"]

5...c5 is still a viable weapon but I did notice in my research that recently a top class grandmaster went instead for 5...c6, so lets take a look.

### Shanglei Lu – Weiqi Zhou

Xinghua 2010

Petroff Defense [C42]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nxf7!?** It is time for the history lesson about the origins of the name of the variation. It is called the Cochrane Gambit after the Scottish play John Cochrane (1798–1878), renowned for his attacking style, and who adopted the opening in the 1840s. His good friend, the renowned English player Howard Staunton, apparently observed that White should not seek an instant attack but a positional game aiming to advance his phalanx of pawns. It later gained an improved reputation after it was endorsed by David Bronstein (as pointed out by Mr. Castro) who also liked aggressive openings. **4...Kxf7 5 d4 c6**



[FEN "mbq1b1r/pp3kpp/2pp1n2/8/3PP3/8/PPP2PPP/RNBQKB1R w KQ - 0 6"]

I like to think that the Chinese grandmaster had spent many days pouring over the various possibilities before deciding the c-pawn being nudged forward was the best response. Then again, he might have thought I am a piece up and just need to hang on. **6 Nc3** White routinely develops but **6 Bd3** is also popular to support the e-pawn and get ready to castle kingside. **6...g6** (**6...Be7** is also possible) **7 0-0 Be7 8 Nc3 Kg7 9 f4 Rf8 10 f5 gxf5 11 exf5 Kh8** it makes sense to hide the king in the corner **12 Ne2** (**12 Re1!**? is roughly equal) **12...Na6 13 c4 Bd7 14 Nf4 Qe8 15 Qf3 Qf7 16 Bd2 Nc7 17 Rae1 d5 18 Qg3 Nce8 19 Ng6+!**? **hxg6 20 fxg6 Qg7 21 Qh4+ Kg8 22 Re5 Ne4** (perhaps **22...Nd6** looks like a tougher defence when **23 Bg5** still gives White plenty of play) **23 Qh7+ Qxh7 24 gxh7+ Kh8 25 Rxe7 Rxf1+ 26 Kxf1 Bf5 27 Bf4** gave White all the winning chances, G.Mahia-N.Diaz Hollemaert, Buenos Aires 1998. **6...Be6** Black guards against the potential threat of a white bishop occupying the c4-square. Or **6...Be7 7 Bc4+ Be6 8 Bxe6+ Kxe6 9 Qf3** (**9 f4** also looks promising to me) **9...Qa5 10 g4 h6 11 Bd2 Rf8 12 h4** (charge!) **12...Kd7 13 g5 hxg5 14 hxg5 Ne8 15 Qg4+ Kd8 16 0-0-0** led to excellent attacking chances and White eventually won in I.Shkuro-A.Savvopulo, Alushta 2005. **7 f4** White is making the most of his eight pawns by making sure his pawn centre looks impressive. **7...g6 8 Bd3 Qb6** Or **8...Bg7 9 0-0** intending e4-e5 or even f4-f5 at the right moment. **9 e5 dxe5 10 dxe5?**! A puzzling decision; the attack slows down with this tepid response. Surely **10 fxe5** is the way forward, because the f-file is opened for the benefit of White's king's rook, which potentially would pile on the agony for Black. For instance, **10...Nd5 11 0-0+ Kg7 12 Ne2** (yes, time is needed just to defend the d-pawn) **12...Nd7** threatening **...Nxe5** because of the pin on the a7-g1 diagonal **13 Kh1** with equal opportunities. **10...Ng4**



[FEN "r3b1r/pp3k1p/1qp1b1p1/4P3/5Pn1/2NB4/PPP3PP/R1BQK2R w KQ - 0 11"]

If you sacrifice a piece in the opening for an attack and it is your opponent who ends up threatening checkmate within ten moves, then something has gone wrong. **11 Qf3 Nd7 12 Ne4 Be7 13 h3 Nh6 14 g4** White enjoys the usual surge of pawns on the kingside associated with this variation. However, the white king is still stuck in the centre, which means his rooks lack co-ordination and have difficulty joining in the onslaught. **14...Kg8** Perhaps **14...Rh8** preparing **...Kg8** is even better because at least the king's rook is more involved compared with a rook on h8 in the actual game. **15 Qg3 Bd5!**



[FEN "r5kr/pp1nb2p/1qp3pn/3bP3/4NPP1/3B2QP/PPP5/R1B1K2R w KQ - 0 16"]

Black is poised to exchange White's most active piece further reducing his ability to attack. **16 c4 Bxe4 17 Bxe4 Nc5 18 Bc2 Qb4+ 19 Bd2 Qxb2 9...**

Qxc4 is also good when 20 0–0–0 Qxa2 is hardly inspiring for White. **20 Qc3**  
 If you are going to exchange queens on c3, then do it the move before and  
 save yourself a pawn. **20...Qxc3 21 Bxc3 Kf7 22 0–0–0 Ke6 23 f5+ Nxf5**  
 Instead 23...gxf5 is met by 24 Bd2 Bf8 25 Rhf1 fxg4 26 Rf6+ Ke7 27 Bxh6  
 Bxh6+ 28 Rxh6 g3 and Black is still on top. **24 gxf5+ gxf5 25 Rhe1 Rhg8 0–1**

I hope more players have the courage to give the Cochrane Gambit a go and  
 then send the game to me.

And finally **Zhong Shaofeng** from **China** has a question that is  
 understandable to anyone who has watched junior tournaments. He writes,  
 "My son likes to play the Scotch game. He encountered some kids playing **1**  
**e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 Bd6** with black. As a six-year kid, he did not know how  
 to refute this move. How can white get an edge in this position and what is the  
 name of this line?"

This is a typical move at junior tournaments or by any player new to the  
 game. I am not aware if the variation has a name (if someone knows, tell me)  
 but the key is that White should not seek a refutation but carry on with the  
 basic chess dictum of concentrating on development. The games that I  
 examined were generally by improving players because Black either has to  
 have a sense of humour or minimal knowledge of the Scotch. Still, here is a  
 game that I hope will be inspiring:

### **Cristinel Sorbun – Dragos Misca**

Timisoara 1999

Two Knight's Defense (by transposition from the Scotch) [C56]

**1 e4 e5 2 d4 Nc6 3 Nf3 Bd6**



[FEN "r1bqk1nr/pppp1ppp/2nb4/4p3/3PP3/5N2/PPP2PPP/RNBQKB1R w KQkq - 0 4"]

The bishop defends the e-pawn but gives away the fact that Black is new to  
 the game because the big problem with this move is that it hinders Black from  
 smoothly developing the queenside. Ideally, at some point the d-pawn is  
 moved allowing the bishop on c8 to be developed, but in practical terms the  
 bishop on d6 will soon move, which wastes a move. No prizes for knowing  
 that 3...exd4 is the usual move in the Scotch. **4 Bc4** A standard response  
 because the bishop is often deployed here to step up the pressure on the f7-  
 pawn, which is only defended by the black king. There are a number of moves  
 available to White but the following two are particularly popular: a) 4 d5  
 Nce7 5 Bg5 f6 6 Be3 the bishop retreats having done a good job of depriving  
 black's king's knight from developing to the usual f6-square 6...c6 7 c4 (White  
 wants to play c4-c5 but has to be careful because ...Qa5+ would help win a  
 pawn on c5) 7...Qa5+ 8 Nc3 Bb4 9 Qb3 cxd5 10 cxd5 Bxc3+ 11 bxc3 Qd8  
 12 Bb5 b6 13 0–0 a6 14 Bxb6! Qxb6 15 Bxd7+ Bxd7 16 Qxb6 soon led to  
 victory in A.Yuksel-I.Cursaru, Aviles 2007. b) 4 Bg5 Nf6 5 Nc3 h6 6 Bh4  
 exd4 7 Nxd4 Be5 (as usual in this line Black has to admit that 3...Bd6 is a bit  
 odd and must move the bishop to allow him to advance his d-pawn) 8 Nde2  
 g5 9 Bg3 Qe7 10 Qd2 d6 11 0–0–0 Be6 12 f3 (12 Nd5!? is worth a try  
 especially if Black responds with 12...Nxe4? when 13 Nxe7 Nxd2 14 Nxc6  
 Bxg3 15 Kxd2 favours White) 12...Nh5 13 Nd5 Qd7? (the problem of a  
 knight fork on f6 is underestimated by Black) 14 Bxe5 Nxe5 15 Ng3 Bxd5 16  
 Nxb5 1–0, M.Hofmann-H.Arold, German Team Championship 2005. **4...Nf6**  
**5 0–0 0–0** Not 5...Nxe4, which does allow White to win with ease. For

instance, 6 dxe5! Nxe5 (or 6...Bc5 is well met by 7 Qd5 when the threat of checkmate on f7 and the possibility of taking on e4 is terrible news for Black) 7 Re1 Nxc4 (or 7...f5 8 Nxe5 Bxe5 9 Rxe4! fxe4 10 Qh5+ g6 11 Qxe5+ winning) 8 Rxe4+ Ne5 9 Nxe5 and it is time for Black to count the pieces. **6 Re1 Re8 7 dxe5** Instead 7 d5 can also be considered but I like the move in the actual game, because it is more in keeping with the style of the Scotch, which promises an open game. **7...Nxe5 8 Nxe5 Bxe5 9 f4** White is content to pose some problems in the opening by advancing the f-pawn and preparing e4-e5. **9...Bd6 10 e5!?** An ambitious move, which works out but 10 Nc3 is more sensible. **10...Bc5+ 11 Kh1 Ng4?**



[FEN "r1bqr1k1/pppp1ppp/8/2b1P3/2B2Pn1/8/PPP3PP/RNBQR2K w - - 0 12"]

A move that is just too clever. Black gambles on White playing 12 Qxg4, so he can reply with 12...d5 to reveal a discovered attack on the white queen via his bishop on c8, and then have time to take on c4. The only snag is that he has missed an in between move. Actually 11...d5! is the move that Black missed. **12 Bxf7+! Kxf7 13 Qxg4 d6 14 f5!**



[FEN "r1bqr3/ppp2kpp/3p4/2b1PP2/6Q1/8/PPP3PP/RNB1R2K b - - 0 14"]

A good move and a classic predict-a-move. This is a proven method of winning more games. Quite simply you try to anticipate what your opponent is about to do next and then find a move that conceals a deadly trap if he just blindly carries on with his plan. In this position White is assuming that Black will take back on e5 and if so has a treat in store for him. **14...dxe5?** Oh dear! After 14...Rxe5, the same trick works as well: 15 Rxe5 dxe5 16 Qc4+ Ke8 17 Qxc5 Qd1+ 18 Qg1 wins. **15 Qc4+ Kf8 16 Qxc5+** White is a clear piece up and the rest is a formality. **16...Kf7 17 Nc3 Kf6** A sign that Black has totally given up. My tip is always to resign such positions and get mentally right for the next game. Playing on in a totally lost position just encourages a crowd to watch and snigger. **18 Nd5+ Kxf5 19 Nxc7 b6 20 Qf2+ Kg6 21 Nxe8 Qxe8 22 Qg3+ Kf5 23 Qg5+ Ke6 24 Qxe5+ Kd7 25 Qxe8+ Kc7 26 Bf4+ Kb7 27 Re7+ Ka6 28 Qa4# 1-0**

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**Opening Lanes** is based on readers' questions. Do you have a question about a particular opening line? Baffled by a branch of the Benoni or Budapest? Submit your questions (with your full name and country of residence please) and perhaps Gary will reply in his next [ChessCafe.com](http://ChessCafe.com) column.

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