



COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane

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Opening Lanes is based in large part 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 you full name and country of residence please) and perhaps Gary will reply in his next *Chess Cafe* column...

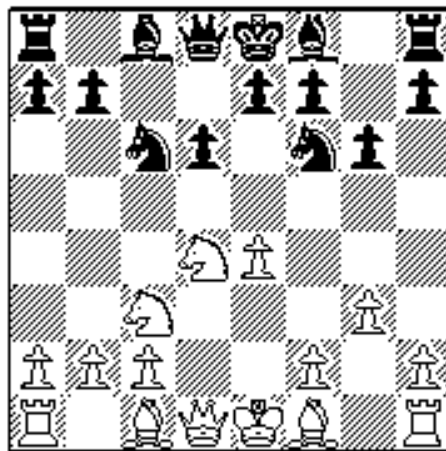
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Crouching Tigran Hidden Dragon

When **John Brooks** (USA) complained that his friend was always avoiding the ultra sharp Sicilian Dragon by playing a quiet line with an early g3 followed by kingside castling. I thought it was time to find a solution by studying the latest games of aggressive Dragon experts. Therefore, I was pleasantly surprised when I found an old, but good example by the former World Champion Tigran Petrosian who was renowned as a positional player.

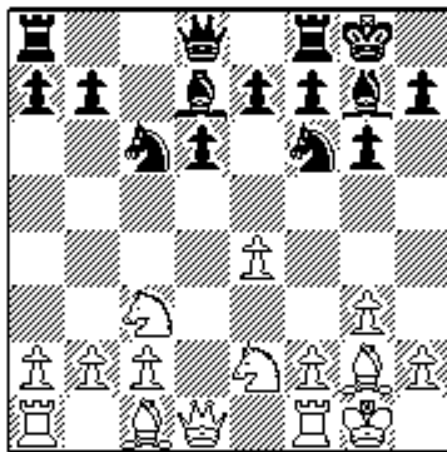
Gabuniya-Tigran Petrosian Tbilisi 1945

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 d6 6 g3 g6 (See Diagram)



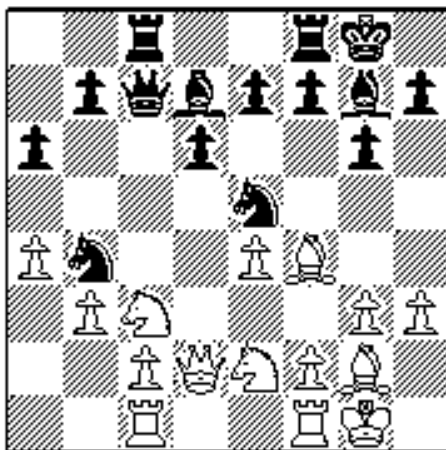
This is the line that has been boring John and consequently leading to bad positions for Black. The idea is to fianchetto on the kingside and use the space advantage to make steady progress. Naturally, Black is geared up for a fight and there are ways to avoid White getting it all his own way. The position can also arise after 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6

5 Nc3 g6 6 g3 Nc6. **7 Bg2 Bd7 8 0-0 Bg7 9 Nde2** Now that the Bishop is on g7, White has to watch out for tactics associated with ...Nxe4 and a hidden attack on the d4-Knight. **9...0-0** (See Diagram)

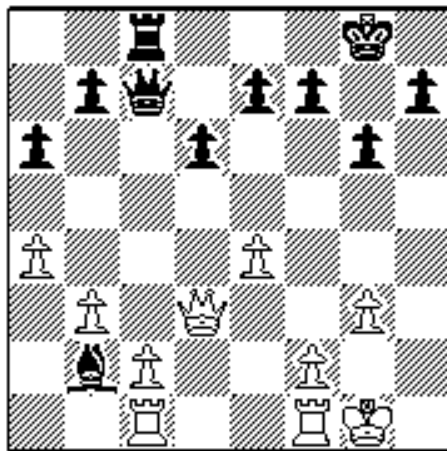


10 a4 Gabuniya wishes to curb Black from advancing the queenside pawns. The double fianchetto with 10 b3 is considered rather slow. For example: 10...Qc8 (this is one of the ideas behind an early Bd7 so that Black can try to exchange the Bishop on g2, which is White's key piece in the position. It also means h2-h3 is no longer a possibility) 11 Re1 Bh3 12

Bh1 Ne5 (White might have avoided the exchange of light-squared Bishops but it means that Black can activate his pieces) 13 Rb1 (the tempting 13 f4 to kick away the Knight merely exposes the King especially now that h3 is not available to chase the black Knight. For instance 13...Nc4 14 Ba3 Nxd2! 15 Kxh2 Ng4+ 16 Kg1 Bxc3 and Black is much better) 13...Bg4 14 Bb2 Bf3 15 Bg2 Qg4 (in typical Dragon fashion Black jumps at the chance to increase the pressure by threatening 16...Bxg2 17 Kxg2 Nf3 18 Rf1 Nxe4) 16 h3 Qh5 17 Nf4? (17 Nd5!? still leaves Black with the better chances) 17...Bxd1 18 Nxd5 Bxh5 19 f4 (19 g4 wins the piece back but 19...Nexg4 20 hxg4 Bxg4 leaves White two pawns down for nothing) 19...Nf3+ 20 Bxf3 Bxf3 21 Kf2 Bh5 22 Nd5 Nxd5 23 exd5 Bxb2 24 Rxb2 f5 and Black was winning easily in S.Winge-L.Schneider, Stockholm 1992. **10...Rc8 11 Be3?!** This makes it easy for Black to seize the initiative. 11 Nd5 is a better choice when 11...Nxd5 12 exd5 Ne5 is roughly equal. **11...Ng4 12 Bf4** White preserves the bishop pair but now the Armenian legend can conjure up active play. **12...Nb4 13 Rc1 a6 14 Qd2 Qc7 15 h3 Ne5 16 b3** (See Diagram)



16...Bxh3! A great sacrifice that heralds multiple exchanges. Gabuniya must have thought he had this tactic covered but Black has seen more deeply into the position. **17 Bxe5** Or **17 Bxh3?** when 17...Nf3+ wins the white Queen. **17...Bxe5 18 Nd5 Nxd5 19 Bxh3 Nc3 20 Bxc8 Rxc8 21 Nxc3 Bxc3 22 Qd3 Bb2** (See Diagram)



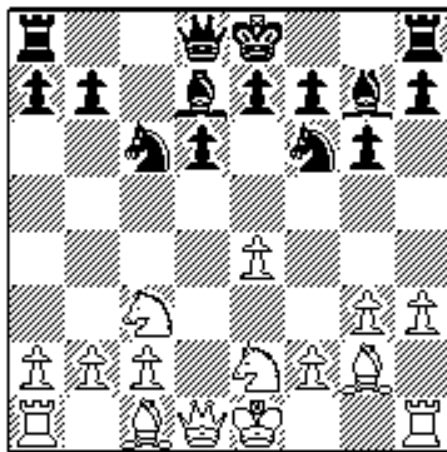
This has to be the position Black considered when he sacrificed his Bishop on move 16. For the exchange he will be rewarded with a couple of pawns, a better pawn structure and an active Rook. It is a difficult position to hold but White soon goes astray. **23 Rcd1 Qxc2 24 Qxc2 Rxc2 25 Rd3 b5 26 Rfd1?!** White wishes to play R3d2 to exchange the Rooks

but never gets the chance. Instead of losing a pawn he should have tried 26...bxa4 27 bxa4 Rc4! 28 Rb3 Be5 29 a5 Ra4 30 Rb7 Kf8 31 f4 Bc3 32 Rd5 Bxa5 33 Rb8+ Kg7 34 Ra8 Be1 35 Rd3 Rxe4 36 Rxa6 h5 37 Ra1 h4 38 gxh4 Bxh4 39 Rf1 Bf6 40 Kg2 Ra4 41 Kf3 g5 42 fxg5 Bxg5 43 Rg1 f6 44 Rb3 Kg6 45 Rb7 e5 46 Rd1 e4+ 47 Ke2 Ra2+ 48 Ke1 Bh4+ 49 Kf1 Bg3 50 Re7 f5 51 Re8 Be5 52 Re1 Kg5 53 Re6 f4 54 Rxe4 Kf5 55 R6xe5+ dxe5 0-1

In this era of computer databases it sometimes pays to look at old games for inspiration. Indeed, this line is still doing well for Black after many years.

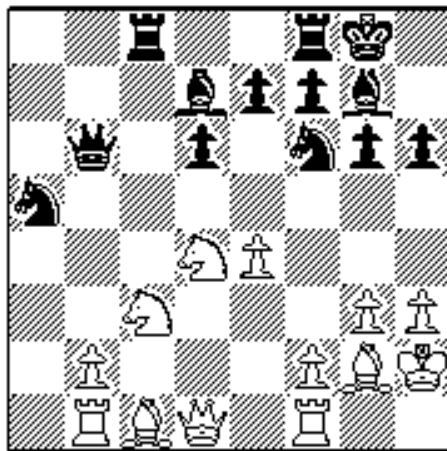
Richard O'Donovan-Alexander Motylev Linares 2000

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 g3 Nc6 7 Nde2 Bd7 8 Bg2 Bg7 9 h3 (*See Diagram*)



This is the difference compared to the previous game because now the awkward ...Ng4 is ruled out. **9...0-0 10 0-0 Rc8 11 Kh2 Na5** This is slightly unusual in that 11...Ne5 is often preferred but both prepare the advance ...b7-b5. **12 a4 a6 13 Rb1 b5 14 axb5 axb5 15 Nd4 b4 16 Nce2 h6 17 c3** White's queenside pawn structure is weakened after

this but it is not easy to find another reasonable course of action. For instance: 17 f4 is met by 17...e5! 18 Nb3 (18 Nf3 exf4 19 Bxf4 Nxe4 is much better for Black) 18...Nxb3 19 cxb3 Bc6 with a superior game. **17...bxc3 18 Nxc3 Qb6** (*See Diagram*)



White has done nothing dramatically wrong but already he is under intense pressure. The latest threats are 19...Rxc3 due to the pin on the b-file and 19...Nxe4 revealing an attack against d4. **19 Nce2 e5 20 Nf3** If 20 Nc2 then 20...Ba4 21 Be3 Qb3 is winning for Black. **20...Bb5 21 Nfg1 Rfd8** A sign of a good player because Motylev takes his time to bring another

piece into the action by preparing the advance ...d6-d5. **22 Be3 Qb7 23 f3 d5 24 exd5 Nxd5 25 f4** 25 Bf2 runs into 25...Ne3! winning. **25...Bc6 26 Bxd5 Bxd5 27 Qa4 Nc4 28 Qa7 Qxa7 29 Bxa7 Nd2 0-1**

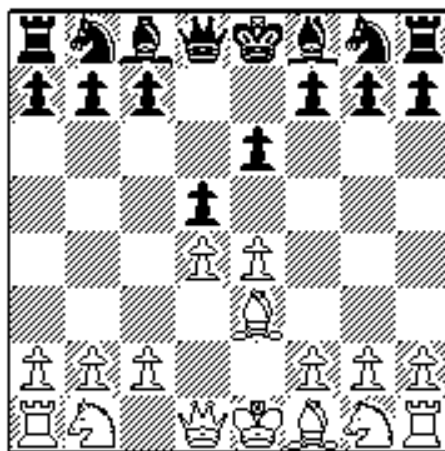
John Enock (United Kingdom) asks, "Do you know anything about 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Be3???"

The only game I know of using this is an old game of Keres in Chernev's *1000 Short Games of Chess*. Is it any good or anything to do with Alapin?

I have to say that I first came across this intriguing gambit when I was writing my book on the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit because it is often used as a way to transpose to the opening. It is usually known as the Alapin opening because he played it in the 1890s although I suspect it has had a few other names in the past. Indeed, devotees of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit refer to it as the Alapin/Diemer. For a wider audience here is the game that sparked your interest.

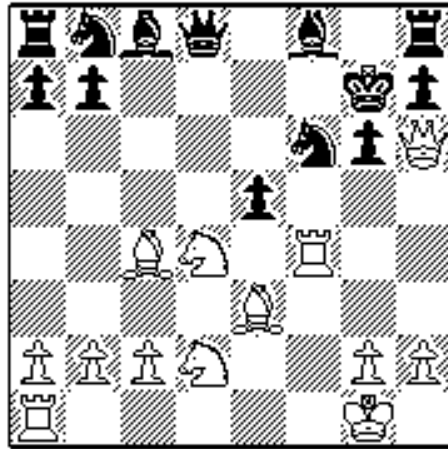
Paul Keres-Verbac Berlin 1939

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Be3 (See Diagram)



This is the starting point of the gambit. I don't know the exact background to this game but if it was a serious encounter, I assume Keres knew his opponent was weak. **3...dxe4 4 Nd2 f5 5 f3 exf3 6 Ngxf3 Nf6 7 Bd3** In the game S.Alapin-J.Noa, Dresden, 1892, White tried 7 Bc4 and soon created a kingside attack. There followed 7...Nd5 8 Qe2 Be7 9 0-0-0

0-0 10 Rhg1 c6 11 g4 b5 12 Bb3 a5 13 c4 a4 14 Bc2 bxc4 15 Nxc4 Ba6 (15...a3! is an improvement because 16 b3 allows 16...Nc3 winning) 16 Bd2 Bxc4 17 Qxc4 a3 18 b3 g6 19 gxf5 exf5 20 Bh6 Rf6 ½-½. **7...c5 8 0-0 cxd4 9 Nxd4 f4 10 Rxf4 e5 11 Bb5+ Kf7 12 Qh5+ g6 13 Bc4+ Kg7 14 Qh6+!** (See Diagram)



A wonderful move that deserves a diagram 1-0

One might think that this gambit is rarely played at tournament level but quite a few people have given it a go.

Endre Lenart-Peter Dlauchy Harkany 2000

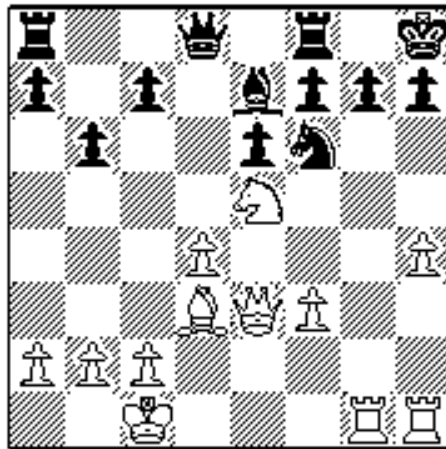
1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Be3 dxe4

Of course, the best way to test a gambit is to take the pawn.

However, a lot of players

seem to be wary of entering the unknown and prefer to keep the game in the style of a normal French with 3...Nf6. In one weekend tournament English club player Peter Halmkin had the nerve to play the opening not once but twice and the result was two draws. For instance: 4 e5 Nfd7 5 f4 b6 (a couple of rounds later Black tried an improvement with 5...c5 there followed 6 c3 Nc6 7 Nf3 Be7 8 Be2 {Alapin preferred 8 Bd3} 8...cxd4 9 Nxd4 Nxd4 10 Bxd4 0-0 11 Nd2 P.Halmkin-J.Wood, Exeter 1999) 6 Nf3 Ba6 (Black wishes to exchange the Bishop on d3 that often has an attacking role and White needs to make up for it by having a development advantage) 7 Bd3 Bxd3 8 Qxd3 c5 9 c3 Nc6 10 a3 Na5 11 Nbd2 Rc8 12 0-0 Be7 and now 13 f5! would have given White an edge, P.Halmkin-S.Owen, Exeter 1999. **4 Nd2** Also possible is 4 Nc3 intending to transpose to the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit after 4...Nf6 5 f3 but 4...Bb4 soon puts a stop to that idea. **4...Nf6** The old Keres game must have been an inspiration in T.Bullockus-P. Sturm, Wch Seniors Bad Liebenzell 1996, because after 4...f5 White found a way to go the rampage upon 5 f3 b6 6 fxe4 fxe4 7 Nxe4 Qh4+ (the natural 7...Bb7 fails to 8 Qh5+! g6 9 Qe5 so a better alternative is 7...Qe7 meeting 8 Qh5+ with 8...g6 9 Qe5 Bg7 and Black is fine) 8 Nf2 Bb7 9 Nf3 Bxf3 10 Qxf3 c6 11 0-0-0 Qd8 12 Bc4 If you have ever wondered why the emphasis in the openings is generally geared to rapid development then this is the perfect example. White has many more attacking options thanks to Black's pieces still being in their starting places. 12...Qc8 13 Qh5+ Ke7 (the start of a king hunt but 13...g6 14 Qe5 is an easy win for White) 14 Bg5+ Nf6 15 Rhe1 Kd6 16 Rxe6+ Qxe6 17 Bxf6 Qxf6 18 Ne4+ 1-0. **5 f3** The simple idea is to accelerate development and if Black takes

on f3 then the f-file will be opened for White's Rook once he castles kingside. **5...exf3** If players of the Black pieces are trembling at the prospect of facing the Alapin then I recommend 5...Nd5 as a way of combating the defence. It tends to be positive news for Black although R.Gervasio-L.Roos, Vichy 2000, saw an upset when a French master eventually lost a complicated game after 6 Qe2 Nc6 7 c3 exf3 8 Ngxf3 Be7 9 Qf2 e5 (perhaps 9...0-0!? should be considered rather than hand back the extra material) 10 dxe5 0-0 11 Bc4 Be6 12 Rd1 Nxe3 13 Qxe3 Bxc4 14 Nxc4 Qc8 15 Qe4 (15 0-0 intending 16 Rfe1 to secure the e5-pawn is another possibility) 15...Qe6 16 a4 Rad8 17 0-0 f6 (Roos wishes to open the position to avoid his pieces being cramped) 18 h3 Bc5+ 19 Kh1 Bd6 20 Rde1 Rde8 21 b4 h6 22 b5 Nd8 23 Qd3 fxe5 24 Ncxe5 with roughly equal chances. **6 Ngxf3 Be7 7 Ne5 0-0 8 Bd3 b6 9 Qe2** White wants to put off the exchange of Bishops after 9...Ba6. If 9 0-0 with the idea of Qe1-h4 then 9...Ba6 10 c4 c5 gives Black good play in the centre. **9...Bb7 10 0-0-0 Nd5 11 h4** One has to admire White attacking spirit but it should be no surprise considering the adventurous opening. **11...Nxe3 12 Qxe3 Nd7 12...c5** is a sterner test of White's play. **13 Ndf3 Bxf3 14 gxf3 Nf6 15 Rdg1 Kh8** (See Diagram)



16 Rxc7! Lenart's aggressive play is rewarded with a chance to play an impressive mating combination.

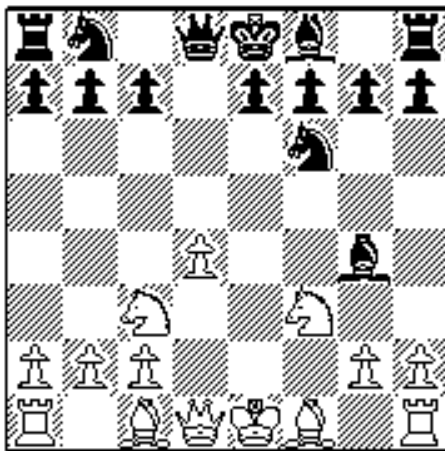
16...Kxc7 17 Rg1+ Kh8 18 Qh6 1-0

At various points I have mentioned the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, which gives me the opportunity to answer a question by **Cesar Riquelme**

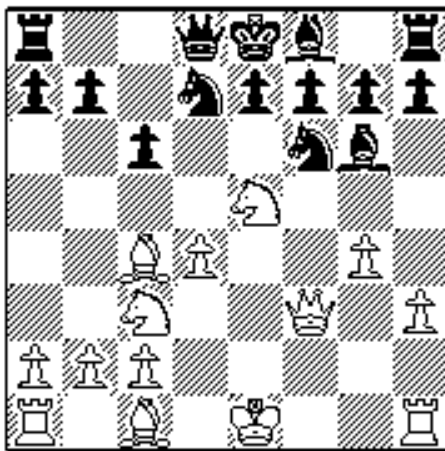
(Panama). He wanted to know some more about this opening that has a legion of fans that like to give away their pawns! In the following encounter, an English International Master tries his luck with the swashbuckling opening.

Miroslav Houska-Suzanne Connolly British Chess League (4NCL) 2001

1 d4 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 f3 The pawn is offered in the knowledge that if taken White will have a lead in development and it will open the f-file ready for castling kingside. In general, Black can waste a lot of time trying to work out how to respond to this relatively little known opening. It is worth noting that the position can also be reached upon 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nc3 d4 3 e4 dxe4 4 f3. **4...exf3 5 Nxf3 Bg4** (See Diagram)



The pin of the Knight is a sensible way to treat the position, which is known as the Teichmann Defence. **6 h3 Bh5** It is also perfectly possible to play **6...Bxf3** to eliminate a potential attacking piece. For instance: **7 Qxf3 c6 8 Qf2** (an odd little line called the Ciesielski Variation but **8 Be3** is the standard continuation) **8...e6 9 Bg5 Be7 10 Bd3 Nbd7 11 Rf1** (11 0-0 looks a logical response) **11...Qa5 12 Bd2 0-0 13 0-0-0 Nd5 14 Nxd5 Qxd5 15 c4 Qh5?!** (The Queen quickly runs out of decent squares on the kingside, which indicates that, the superior **15...Ne5!** would have been better for Black) **16 Be2 Qg6 17 Qe3 Bd6 18 Bd3 Qh5 19 g4 Qh4 20 g5 c5 21 Be1 ½-½** W.Szenetra-V.Chuchelov, Boeblingen 1988. An impressive performance considered that Black is one of the strongest grandmasters on the European tournament circuit. **7 g4 Bg6 8 Ne5 Nbd7 9 Qf3 c6 10 Bc4** (See Diagram)



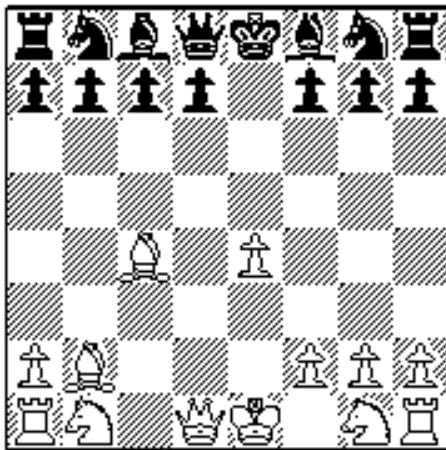
Miroslav is relying on his active pieces and space advantage to give him attacking opportunities. I think a computer would hate being a pawn down but the practical chances over the board are good. **10...e6 11 Nxb6 h6 12 0-0 Nb6 13 Bb3 Qd7** Connolly is worried about **g5** deflecting the Knight and revealing an attack on **f7**. Against a gambit player there is a need to limit the onslaught otherwise one might grab the pawn with **13...Qxd4+** and after **14 Be3 Qd7 15 Rad1** and hope to hang on to the extra material. **14 Be3 Bd6 15 Ne2 0-0 16 c4** The obvious threat is **17 c5** but it also emphasises White's space advantage. I know that Miroslav has consistently played the opening but I suspect Black would have little experience with this sort of position. **16...Bc7 17 Rad1 Rad8 18 Bg5 Qd6 19 Rf2 c5?** Connolly is an experienced Irish international but here she misses the best way to continue with **19...Nbd7** to defend the Knight on **f6** when **20 Bf4** (**20 c5 Qe7** is uncomfortable but playable) **20...e5!** **21 dxe5 Nxe5** is better for Black. **20 Qxb7** White is now on equal terms in terms of material and also has the more active pieces. **20...cxd4 21 Rxd4 Qc5 22**

Be3 Qe7 23 Kg2 Rxd4 24 Bxd4 e5 25 Be3 Qd7 26 Nc3 Houska continuously improves his pieces. **26...Rb8 27 Qf3 Rf8 28 c5 Nc8 29 Ne4 Nxe4 30 Qxe4 Qe7** Or **30...Kh7 31 Rd2** when the strong passed pawn and centralized pieces give White the advantage. **31 Qxg6 e4 32 Bd4 1-0**

And finally a question from **Ronald Baleterewa**, who is a Ugandan student studying in Germany. He writes, "Do you happen to know any variations in the Müller gambit? Some thing along the lines of: **1e4 e5 2 d4 exd4 3 c3 dxc3**. A friend of mine used to play it a lot."

My first reaction is to question the name of the opening. When I first started playing it was known as the Hawthorne opening by a friend of mine. However, when I progressed I realised why my opponent Chris Hawthorne always used that name. I just hope that your opponent was not called Müller! In fact, it is generally known as the Danish Gambit. The opening allows White to establish a big lead in development if your opponent is greedy and takes all the pawns on offer.

Mike Closs-Nick Jakubovics British Team Ch (4NCL) 2000
1 e4 e5 2 d4 exd4 3 c3 The emphasis in this opening is White getting his pieces into the action as soon as possible by offering pawns to gain time. **3...dxc3 4 Bc4 cxb2 5 Bxb2** (See Diagram)



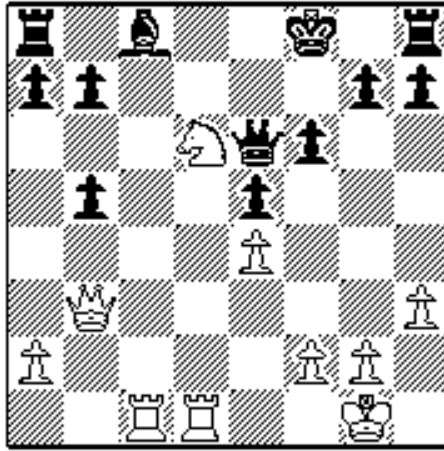
White is two pawns down but his pair of Bishops point ominously towards Black's kingside. **5...d6?!** A typical response to try and activate the light-squared Bishop in a bid to catch up on development. A sterner test is **5...Bb4+** or **5...d5**. **6 Nf3 Nc6 7 Qb3** A standard response to increase the pressure on the a2-g8 diagonal. **7...Qd7 8 Bc3 Nh6**

9 h3 f6 The point of the opening is evident after this compromise. It is difficult for Black to get his pieces out so the threat against **g7** is cancelled out but now castling kingside will be awkward. **10 0-0 Nf7 11 Na3 Nce5 12 Nxe5 Nxe5 13 Bxe5 dxe5 13...fxe5** is better because it keep the d-file closed although **14 f4** maintains the initiative. **14 Rfd1 Bd6 15 Bb5! c6 16 Nc4** Closs has managed to loosen the defence of the Bishop by forcing **...c6** and now finds a way to enter the heart of Black's position. **16...cxb5 17 Nxd6+ Kf8 18 Rac1 Qe6** (See Diagram)

19 Rxc8+! 1-0

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