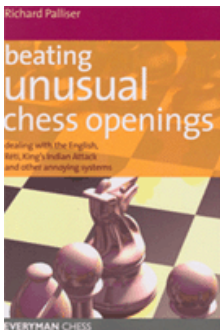




COLUMNISTS

From the Archives

Hosted by Mark Donlan



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The Miles Report by Tony Miles

The Holey Wohly?

It has been brought to my attention that so far this column has not exactly been on the cutting edge of opening theory. Well, fair comment I suppose, so this month I intend to remedy that.

About twenty years ago U.S. IM John Watson wrote an excellent set of four volumes on the English opening. In a brave effort at total completeness he even considered in reply to 1.c4, 1...g5, 1...a6, 1...Na6 and even 1...Resigns (as in Fischer Panno Palma de Majorca 1970).

Well, believe it or not, not long after that I was genuinely intending to play 1...g5 against Karpov should he open 1.c4. Sadly he never did.

1...a6 was included solely so that "when Basman or Miles starts using it, I won't be accused of overlooking the possibility".

Of 1...Na6 he was even more dismissive: "A player approached me just recently and asked if my book had anything on 1...Na6. He then explained that he'd been playing it with great success and that there were some "really interesting ideas" behind it. I should be the last to deny this, and 1...Na6 may now be considered officially entered in the manuals of opening theory..."

I have never yet tried 1...Na6, but I promise you, I will.

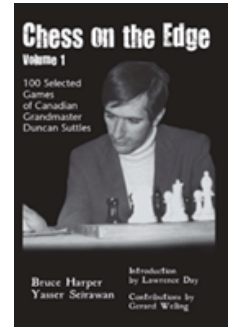
Well, gentle reader, to change subject a little, how many games would you think Alex Yermolinsky loses with white in a year? Not a lot I guess, the fingers of one hand might well be sufficient. And what about Jesus Nogueiras? Probably not many more...

So how would you react if they both lost in the space of one week to the same opponent - not named Kasparov - in the same opening? Must be a good line, huh?

Well, without further ado, let me present to you - with apologies to Belgian aficionado de Bruycker - the Holey Wohly.

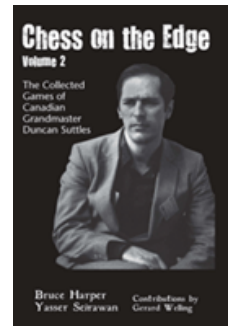
Nogueiras Santiago, Jesus (2559) - Wohl, Aleksandar (2440)
Carlos Torre Memorial op 12th Yucatan (3), Merida 1999

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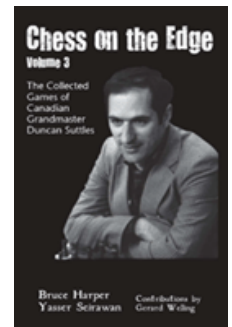
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1.Nf3 g6 2.d4 Na6!



"If anyone wants to clap" said Eeyore, "now is the time to do it." (*The House at Pooh Corner* - A.A. Milne) For those not *au fait* with the latest theoretical developments, I should point out that this is an all-purpose defence (suicide is a defence to a lot of things...) to anything extensively researched by its Australian inventor and myself. (If 1.d4 Na6! or 1.e4 c6 2.d4?! Na6) If you think it's a total joke, I would point out the game Yermolinsky-Wohl, Los Angeles (0-1) played a week before this one!

3.e4 c6 4.c4 d6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be2 Nc7 7.O-O Nh6!

This was my donation towards theory. If you are going to look silly, you might as well do it properly!

8.h3 O-O 9.Re1 f5 10.Bd3

This is not a success.

10...f4

Given another move black will play e5 with a favourable King's Indian set-up.

11.e5 de 12.de

If Ne5 Qd4.

12...Ne6



And black has an excellent position. The white e-pawn is definitely weak rather than strong.

13.b3 Nf7 14.Bb2 Qc7 15.Qe2 Bd7 16.Nb1 Rad8 17.Nbd2 Nc5 18.Bc2 Bf5 19.Bf5 gf 20.Bd4 Ne6 21.Bc3 Qd7 22.Rac1 Qd3 23.Nh4 Qe2 24.Re2 Nfg5 25.Ndf3 Ne4 26.Bb4 N6c5 27.Ba3 e6 28.Ne1 Rf7 29.Nhf3 Rfd7 30.Rcc2 Rd1 31.Kh2 Ra1 32.Bc5 Nc5 33.Rcd2 Rd1 34.Rd8+ Rd8 35.Nc2 Ne4 36.Kg1 Rd1+ 37.Re1 Rd7 38.Ncd4 Kf7 39.Nc2 Ke7 40.Kf1 Nd2+ 41.Ke2 Nf3 42.Kf3 Rd2 0-1



If 43.Re2 Rd3+ 44.Kf4 Bh6 mate!

A strange game... Which side looked like the experienced grandmaster?? A week later came Hodgson-Wohl, Las Vegas, 1/2- 1/2, and on the same day and place Browne-Hjorth (a recent expatriate Aussie convert) 1/2-1/2, and even more recently Rashkovsky-Wohl and Delchev-Wohl Linares 2000, both 1/2-1/2. As jokes go, its not clear if it's funny!

My own first experience of this system came about twenty years ago. With white against the Yugoslav GM Sahovic I essayed - unusually - 1.e4. My opponent sank into fifteen minutes thought before producing 1...c6 2.d4 Na6!! Why?? Well, his two main defences to e4 were 1...Nc6 and 1...b6!!

So, what is the point? Indeed, is there any point? Well, Na6 is a developing move, and if White adopts the e4, d4, c4 centre its quite easy to reach a respectable King's Indian set up. If White avoids c4, then Black gets a slightly odd Modern (or 'Rat' as it was christened in Canada when Suttles played it thirty years ago). A curious feature, which is my main donation to the line, is the possibility of developing the g8 knight on h6 and playing a Basmaniac Dutch with f5.

My first serious attempt with it was against Gufeld in Beijing 96. The opening went **1.e4 c6 2.d4 Na6 3.Nf3 g6 4.c4 d6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be2 Nc7 7.0-0 Nh6 8.d5 0-0 9.Bf4 f5 10.Qd2 Nf7 11.ef Bf5 12.Rad1 e5 13.de Ne6 14.Be3** and now after ...Qf6 Black stands well, though I went on to lose. What really sticks in my mind, though, is that at breakfast the next morning Gufeld spent fully two hours yelling at me "I hate you, my friend." (Honestly!!) "You are destroying chess with your stupid ideas!"

You may think that I exaggerate, but there were several witnesses! You may also wonder at my sanity for listening, which I would understand, but frankly I was so shocked I just sat transfixed. Goof has not spoken a civil word to me since, and at our only subsequent encounter even the customary handshake was missing. Such a reaction is surely testament to the openings surprise value... Heaven help me if I had have won. I would probably not still be alive...

A slightly more amusing conversation followed the game Wahls- Wohl, Arco 96. That game opened **1.e4 e5 ...** and Black eventually won the game and the tournament.

Afterwards a well-prepared Wahls asked "But why didn't you play 1...c6 and 2...Na6?"

The reply was "Well, I was afraid you would play 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 preventing Na6" (no Qa5+ after Ba6). The German muttered "Our minds work in very different ways!" and wandered off to the bar shaking his head.

Well, since this is my column, and I wouldn't like to miss the chance to print one of my wins, here is my best donation to date:

Suetin,Alexey (2415) - Miles,Anthony (2550)
Cappelle la Grande (4), 1997

I should point out that this was a bit of a grudge match for me. Our only

previous meeting had been at the tournament where I got my GM title, and a late loss to Suetin almost cost me it!

1.e4 c6 2.d4 Na6 3.c4 d6 4.Nc3 g6 5.Be3 Bg7 6.Qd2 e5 7.Nge2 Qe7 8.0-0-f5 9.ef gf 10.de de 11.f4 e4 12.Nd4 Nf6 13.h3

Blacks problem is that castling kingside will inevitably run into g4. I came up with an original solution.

13...Bd7 14.Qf2 b6 15.Be2 Nc7 16.Kb1 0-0-0 17.Rd2 c5



And the better central control gave black the edge.

18.Nc2 Be6 19.Rhd1 Qf7 20.Na3 Rd2 21.Rd2 Rd8 22.Bf1 Nfe8 23.Rd8 Kd8 24.Qd2 Kc8 25.Be2 Qg6 26.Bd1 Bf8 27.Qe2 Nd6 28.g4 Qg8 29.b3 Bg7 30.Kc2 Na6 31.Nab5 Nb4 32.Kb1 Nb5 33.Nb5 Qd8 34.Bd2 a6 35.Bc3 Bf8 36.Na3



Now then, who has the silly knight??

36...Nd3 37.Bc2 Nf4 38.Qe3 Nd3 39.gf Bf5 40.Qg3 Bd6 41.Qg7 Qd7 42.Qg8 Kb7 43.Qd5 Ka7 44.h4 Nb4 45.Qd2 Nd3 46.Bd3 ed 47.Kb2 Qe7 48.Qf2 Qe4 49.Qe1 Qe1 50.Be1 Bg3 0-1

So, the opening for the next millennium?? Well, maybe not...

What about its name? As I said, the Belgian player de Bruycker has been playing it for years, but personally I think these recent results take precedence. In view of the Australian connection one suggestion was the Didgeridoo, as in "Did-ya-really-do-that?" Alex suggested the Drunken Roo, leading to the Double Roo if Nh6 comes, but personally I am going for the Holey Wohly!

This article first appeared at ChessCafe.com in January 2000.

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