



COLUMNISTS

ChessBase Cafe

Lance Martin



Rating Chart



Play through and download
the games from
ChessCafe.com in the
[DGT Game Viewer](#).



A Short Exchange and an O'Kelly

O'Kelly Sicilian, by Andrew Martin, Running Time: Four Hours

Count Alberic O'Kelly de Galway was not the first player to play the opening that bears his name. That distinction belongs to Dr. Savielly Tartakower who played 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 against both Réti and Spielmann. This opening is so flexible that subsequent moves can transpose into many other Sicilian variants, such as the Alapin, Kan, Paulsen, Taimanov, or even a Najdorf. Indeed, many of the games on this DVD do not carry the B28 Chess Informant code for the O'Kelly Sicilian. Quite a few other codes are attached to Martin's sample games, simply because of the incredibly elastic nature of this opening.

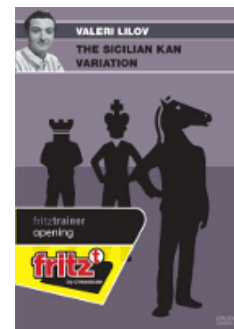


There are a total of thirty-three lectures on this DVD:

- 01: Introduction
- 02: Inspiring Game: Paulsen-O'Kelly de Galway
- 03: c3 Game One: Tomasian-Romanov
- 04: c3 Game Two: Ventosa-Barlov
- 05: c3 Game Three: Stets-Romanov
- 06: c3 Game Four: Van den Heever-De Villiers
- 07: c3 Game Five: Vogt-Hort
- 08: c3 Game Six: Georgiev-Kurejica
- 09: c3 Conclusion: Savic-Blesic
- 10: c4 Game One: Voicu-Gaponenko
- 11: c4 Game Two: Hagara-Baklin
- 12: c4 Game Three: Obodchuk-Kabanov
- 13: c4 Game Four: Velimirovic-Martinovic
- 14: c4 Game Five: Horvath-Csom
- 15: c4 Game Six: Zolotukin-Kopylov
- 16: c4 Summary
- 17: d4 Game One: Pacis-Dimakiling
- 18: d4 Game Two: Adam-Ikonnikov
- 19: d4 Game Three: Maechel-Ikonnikov
- 20: d4 Game Four: Navarro-Khamrakulov
- 21: d4 Game Five: Thorhallson-Roozmon
- 22: d4 Game Six and summary: Lotero-Urbe
- 23: Nc3 Game One: Kalod-Walach
- 24: Nc3 Game Two: Kaplan-Kudischewitz
- 25: Nc3 Game Three: Nguyen-Vinh
- 26: Nc3 Game Four: Thavandiran-Milicevic
- 27: Nc3 Game Five and Summary: Prandstetter-Kalod
- 28: Morra: Hugot-Tartakower
- 29: 3.Be2: Zigura-Giffard
- 30: Closed Setup: Kubasky-Blaasberg
- 31: Wing Gambit One: Planninc-Ljubojevic
- 32: Wing Gambit Two: Rietveld-Epishin
- 33: Outro

The material is separated into lectures based on White's third move. There are no top ten players here. Martin makes clear that this is an opening for the club player who does not have the time to study theory. He has only chosen games where Black scores the victory, because he wants to make sure that the viewer knows how to win with black. I have to admit the game by Alberic de Galway was fascinating and I enjoyed Martin's annotations.

Purchases from our [shop](#) help
keep ChessCafe.com freely
accessible:



Sicilian Kan Variation
by Valeri Lilov



Power Play 13: The Squeeze
by Daniel King



Opening Encyclopaedia 2010
by ChessBase

Martin begins his lecture series with no less than seven lectures on 3.c3. The idea behind the move is to push d2-d4, fight for the center, and try to show that 2...a6 was simply a loss of tempo. As for Black, he is out to prove that 2...a6 is actually beneficial. Martin does a fair job of explaining the moves normally played by both White and Black in this variation. The move order Martin follows in these lectures is 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.c3 d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.d4 (Nf6 or e6) 6.Bd2 or Be3. If you know the theory for either side of this opening better than your opponent, then you will likely win. Martin not only presents the theory of the opening, but gives the rationale behind the moves. If you listen closely, you will become a better Sicilian player.

The next series of lectures are on the 3.c4 variation of the O'Kelly Sicilian. Martin recommends the following move order, which transposes to the Sicilian Kan: **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Qc7 5.d4 cxd4 6.Nxd4 Nf6**



[FEN "rnb1kb1r/1pqp1ppp/p3pn2/8/2PNP3/2N5/PP3PPP/R1BQKB1R w KQkq - 0 7"]

Next up is six lectures on the 3.d4 line, which is the most commonly played according to my database, and it shows a significant advantage for Black. The following variation is considered the mainline: **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb3 Nf6 6.Nc3 Bb4 7.Bd2 0-0 8.Bd3 Nc6 9.0-0 Bxc3 10.bxc3**



[FEN "r1bq1rk1/1p1p1ppp/p1n2n2/4p3/4P3/1NPB4/P1PB1PPP/R2Q1RK1 b - - 0 10"]

In his summary for this line, Martin warns against Black overestimating his chances. Being cocky can be Black's downfall. Black gets a more comfortable game than he usually does in the open Sicilian and Martin admits that 3.d4 is not a good move for White in the O'Kelly Sicilian. Martin considers the 3.Nc3 line as dangerous for Black. He recommends transposing into the Kan variation, which normally arises from the following move order: **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Nc3 Ne7.**



[FEN "mbqkb1r/1p1pnppp/p3p3/8/3NP3/2N5/PPP2PPP/R1BQKB1R w KQkq - 0 6"]

Martin recommends that you research this line further on your own. In his next lecture, he illustrates how the O'Kelly Sicilian can turn into a Morra Gambit via the move order **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.d4 cxd4 4.c3 dxc3 5.Nxc3 e6**. This is followed with a 3.Be2 line for the O'Kelly. What he comes up with is "not a Kan, not a Paulsen, not a Taimanov, it is a Hybrid of all three." This is a very interesting lecture that presents some new ideas that need to be played through on your chessboard.

In what was supposed to be the last game of the DVD, Martin presents the O'Kelly with 3.g3. In this case, he recommends that you place your pawns on c5 and e5. As the closed Sicilian was announced as the last lecture, one can only assume that the coverage of 3.b4 was a late addition. Martin presents two lectures for Black to meet this possibility and shows how Black can break up White's control of the center.

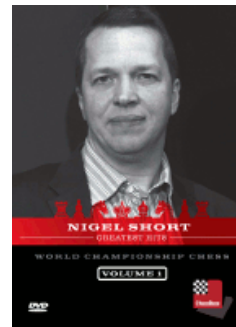
This is an excellent DVD that more than meets Martin's stated goals. In addition to teaching you how to play the O'Kelly Sicilian, he has tried to show you how to think when playing the Open Sicilian. I recommend this DVD for the club player who is willing to put in the time to really understand the lectures. I also recommend it for the higher level player who is looking for new roads to travel in the Sicilian, while still using the theory that he has already amassed. Moreover, I have to also recommend it to players of the French Advance Variation to which it was associated in a very positive light in the [ChessBase Opening Encyclopedia 2010](#).

My assessment of this DVD: ♦♦♦♦

Order O'Kelly Sicilian
by Andrew Martin

Nigel Short : Greatest Hits, Volume 1, by Nigel Short, Running Time: Four Hours

Since the age of fourteen, when he won the brilliancy prize at Hastings and became the youngest international master in chess history, Nigel Short has been one of England's leading chess players. Perhaps his major contribution to chess in general was as part of the triumvirate who initiated the English Attack that became a major part of Sicilian Najdorf theory. However, it is unfortunate that we never get to hear about the evolution of the attack on this DVD. Still, this DVD makes a great addition to the ChessBase autobiographical series.



This DVD contains fourteen games:

- 01: Short-Lein
- 02: Short-Timman
- 03: Short-Kasparov

- 04: Short-Ponomarev
- 05: Short-Anand
- 06: Short-Ljubobojevic
- 07: Short-Karpov
- 08: Short-Mchedlishvili
- 09: Short-Cheparinov
- 10: Kramnik-Short
- 11: Topalov-Short
- 12: Mamedyarov-Short
- 13: Short-Smyslov
- 14: Short-Akopian

The DVD begins with a game against Anatoly Lein, which is the chronological beginning of Short's long career as a chess player. This game won Short the brilliancy prize at the tournament in which he was to become an international master. This first game is indicative of the rest of the DVD. It is an extremely good game and well annotated. Short's annotations range from the extremely interesting to the outstanding.



One of the high points of the DVD is the game against Jan Timman in 1991, which starts out as an everyday Alekhine and ends up as one of the most memorable games in chess history. It features a brilliant king march, and to hear Short annotate the final moves of the game really makes you understand why you love this game so much.

Included on the DVD is a Scheveningen against Kasparov from 1986 when Short had entered the FIDE top ten. It is a good game and the annotations are well thought out. Short admits that he is not as familiar as he would like with current theory in the line, but annotates based on the theory at the time the game was played. I, for one, would like to have seen his current thinking on many of the openings and middlegames, considering he is still a top player. This game was one of the very few victories he has over Kasparov.

Next, we have another high point of the DVD. A game that was part of a secret match against Ruslan Ponomarev, when Ponomarev was FIDE world champion and preparing for an upcoming match with Kasparov that never came about. It was an Evan's Gambit, which is rarely seen at the highest levels of chess, but it was and is a part of Short's 1.e4 repertoire. Short's annotations are enlightening with regards to his thoughts during the game.

The next game on the DVD is against Anand in 1993 after FIDE stripped Short of his ELO rating because of his upcoming match with Kasparov. It is a Petroff, which Short calls a "dull opening." However, his annotations make it an interesting game. He makes a concerted effort in this game to explain the ideas behind his moves. You can learn a great deal by listening to Short's annotations. But you have to know the general ideas of the positions in order to make full use of them. This is a DVD for chess players of every level. However, the higher rated you are, the more you will learn from it.

Short's game against Cheparinov was interesting for its context if not its

content. It seems that the day before the game was played Cheparinov had been forfeited for refusing to shake Short's hand before their regularly scheduled round. The forfeiture was eventually overturned during an appeal process. Short was not going to take a loss in this game and he took his time taking Cheparinov apart.

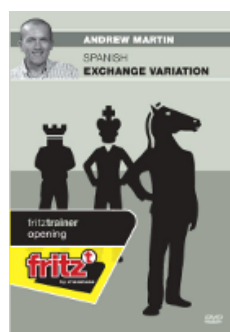
This DVD is a personal history of Nigel Short's rather distinguished career. If you are a fan of Nigel Short, then it must be a part of your library. If you are a fan of autobiographies, then it is also a must have. In fact, I have no problem recommending this DVD to just about anyone interested in the world of chess.

My assessment of this DVD: ♦♦♦♦

**[Order](#) *Nigel Short : Greatest Hits, Volume 1*
by Nigel Short**

Spanish Exchange Variation, by Andrew Martin, Running Time: Four Hours

What makes the Spanish Exchange Variation different from most other openings is that White gets to determine the structure that arises and in essence forces Black to fight on the terrain of White's choosing. The line is positionally sound and if all goes according to plan, then an endgame arises that is very favorable for White. The price of all this is White parts with his bishop-pair and consents to an early exchange of queens. One of the earliest proponents of the Exchange Variation of the Ruy Lopez was Emanuel Lasker. But it was Bobby Fischer who turned this opening into an art form.



I have to admit that I began looking at the DVD with a bias, because I had found that Martin had only played three games in the Spanish Exchange Variation, and the last one played was in 1992. However, he is a terrific teacher, with a tremendous knowledge of theory, and I eventually came to the conclusion that this is an excellent DVD.

There are thirty-one lectures on this DVD:

- 01: Introduction and Game One
- 02: The Pawn Ending
- 03: Game Three Vallejo Pons – Sasikiran
- 04: 5...Qd6 Game Four
- 05: 5...Qd6 Game Five
- 06: 5...Qd6 Game Six
- 07: 5...Qd6 Game Seven
- 08: Summary 5...Qd6
- 09: 5...Bg4 Game One
- 10: 5...Bg4 Game Two
- 11: 5...Bg4 Game Three
- 12: 5...Bg4 Game Four
- 13: 5...Bg4 Game Five and Summary
- 14: 5...Bd6 Game One
- 15: 5...Bd6 Game Two and Conclusion
- 16: 5...f6 Game One
- 17: 5...f6 Game Two
- 18: 5...f6 Game Three
- 19: 5...f6 Game Four
- 20: 5...f6 Game Five
- 21: 5...f6 6.d4 Bg4 Game One
- 22: 5...f6 6.d4 Bg4 Game Two
- 23: 5...f6 6.d4 Bg4 Game Three
- 24: 5...f6 6.d4 Bg4 Game Four
- 25: 5...Be7 Game One
- 26: 5...Ne7 Game One

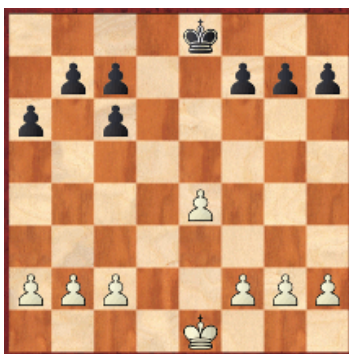
- 27: 5...Ne7 Game Two and Summary
- 28: 5...Qe7
- 29: 5...Qf6
- 30: 4...bxc6
- 31: Outro

The Exchange Variation of the Spanish begins with the moves **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0**:



[FEN "r1bqkbnr/1pp2ppp/p1p5/4p3/4P3/5N2/PPPP1PPP/RNBQ1RK1 b kq - 0 5"]

Martin elected to include only victories by White on the DVD. However, a victory or two for Black might have provided examples of maneuvers that White could learn to thwart. Martin's first real lecture is on the pawn structure of this opening.



[FEN "4k3/1pp2ppp/p1p5/8/4P3/8/PPP2PPP/4K3"]

The lecture is geared towards the player who is not familiar with typical king and pawn endgame play, but it is a useful introduction to the pawn structures that we can expect from this system. The rest of the DVD is about Black's reaction to White's play and the recommended theory for White in this opening. I compared a great deal of the DVD with the [ChessBase Opening Encyclopedia 2010](#) and not all is roses for the white side. It is quite obvious that the caliber of play and knowledge of theory will have a large part in determining the victor in any opening system.


Martin's first series of lectures is on the 5...Qd6 line. All but one of his lectures cover 6.Na3 b5. He does an exceptional job explaining the moves and the reasons for making them. Martin chose 5...Bg4 as the subject of his next five lectures. Aside from 5...f6, this is the most popular response in the Spanish Exchange. The next major line that Martin considers is 5...f6. Martin believes that after this move Black has protected his central pawn. He has not committed any of his minor pieces as yet and "left to his own devices he will attempt to cement the d4 square by going c5 Ne7 and then Nc6." According to Martin, this plan is so strong that "black should not be permitted to effect it."

The next four lectures involve the 6...f6 7.d4 Bg4 variation of the Spanish Exchange. The following move order is recommended by Martin: **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.0-0 f6 6.d4 Bg4 7.c3**



[FEN "r2qkbnr/1pp3pp/p1p2p2/4p3/3PP1b1/2P2N2/PP3PPP/RNBQ1RK1 b kq - 0 7"]

In all his recommendations, Martin arms you with the theoretical knowledge required to meet Black's position, and he will always tell you why a particular move is made. In the Outro, Martin explains that the Exchange Variation is an "excellent practical bet" and I believe that this DVD will only add to the number of players who employ it. I recommend this DVD without reservation.

My assessment of this DVD: 

[Order](#) *Spanish Exchange Variation*
by Andrew Martin

© 2010 ChessCafe.com All Rights Reserved.

Comment on this month's column via our [Contact Page](#)! Pertinent responses will be posted below daily.

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

 [ABOUT THE
CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[ChessCafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Review\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)
[\[Endgame Study\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)
[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About ChessCafe.com\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

© 2010 BrainGamz, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
"ChessCafe.com®" is a registered trademark of BrainGamz, Inc.