



COLUMNISTS

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The World of the Repertoire

"Opening theory is a strange, speckled animal" - Bent Larsen

Last year I was strongly chastised by a chess expert for employing the Colle-Zukertort system against him. His argument was that I was hampering my long-term chess development by employing system-based openings that let Black equalize easily. He strongly encouraged me to get down to business and learn "grown-up" openings that fight for the advantage with White. Nonetheless, I was able to draw my game against him, not to mention my excellent results with the Zuk, or that I had a full-time job with family responsibilities limiting my study time. In his opinion, I was heading for doom if I didn't start playing 1.e4 and the Sicilian Defense against it - specifically the Sveshnikov or Scheveningen systems. As most players know a few months into learning the game, there is no shortage of advice out there on what openings to employ.

This month's column features four ChessBase opening trainers that cater to a wide variety of audiences - from pragmatists to theory junkies. If you wish to never read another opening book for the rest of your life, then *A Busy Person's Opening System* by GM Nigel Davies might be your holy grail. Davies does venture some specific opening suggestions for further study down the line if desired. However, by "down-the-line" he means as in retirement or after the children move out of the house. These opening suggestions are a natural extension to Davies's suggested repertoire - it is a bit like purchasing a laptop with the hope of upgrading its memory and hard drive later on.

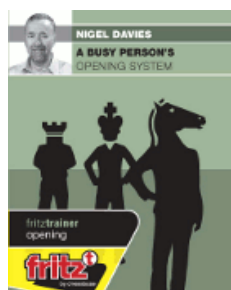
If you believe in Fischer's "best by test" comment regarding 1.e4, then IM Sam Collin's *1.e4 Repertoire: Grandmaster Lines Explained for Club Players* might be what you are looking for. His recommendations are slightly less theoretical but regularly played at top level. My wife, who was passing by as I was viewing one of the lectures, came to a screeching halt curious to know who the "extremely handsome man" in the video was.

If you relish the adrenaline rush when playing the black side of the Classical Dragon, but keep getting slain upon losing your way in the jungle of theory, then IM Andrew Martin's *The ABC of the Sicilian Dragon* could be the perfect antidote. His recommendation of the line known as the "Dragondorf" is surely bound to attract a legion of fans craving to adopt an opening with the coolest name on the planet.

If you enjoy active piece play and counterattacking potential, GM Lubomir Ftacnik is ready to introduce you to the *Grünfeld Defence* through a seven and a half hour marathon in fifty-four video lectures. This being only a superficial introduction to the accompanying 3,500 plus games you are advised to study if you wish to excel at this hypermodern opening.

A Busy Person's Opening System, Nigel Davies, Running time: four hours

With *A Busy Person's Opening System*, Davies adds to his growing list of engaging DVD presentations. These productions generally shy away from sharp theoretical struggles. Jacob Aagard refers to this, in his "holiday style" production on the Queens Indian Defense, as "chess for gangsters, for swindlers, for people who basically don't want to learn a lot of theory but want to understand where the pieces

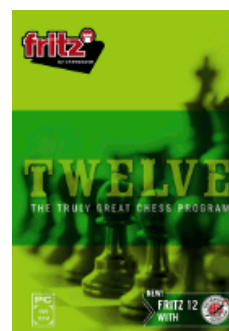


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[The Grünfeld Defence](#)

by Lubomir Ftacnik

belong." This is exactly what Davies offers. His aim is to help you reach a type of position, regardless of piece color, that you can play and understand without having to study any opening theory. His audience is people who are too busy to study, but still want to play a decent game of chess without being massacred in the opening stages. For this reason he suggests adopting highly non-theoretical openings. Why learn to drive a Formula One car, he tells us, if we can only drive on the streets.



Davies's suggested playing structure has us placing our pawns on e4, d3, and c3 (or e5, d6, and c6 as black). Thus, we are basically playing an Old Indian Defense as black or an Old Indian Reverse as white. For instance, the first illustrative game features Joerg Hickl (2500) vs. Ivan Sokolov (2580), Dortmund 1989. After **1.e4 c5 2.c3 e6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.Be2 Nf6 5.d3** we reach the desired pawn structure.



Old Indian or Philidor-type of pawn structure with white

Upon **5... Be7 6.0-0 d5 7.Nbd2 0-0 8.Re1 e5**, Davies points out that White has reached an Old Indian with colors reversed and two extra tempi, one by virtue of being White, and the other by Black having played e6 and e5. Hickl played **9...a3** here, employing one of the common plans of queenside expansion, preparing b4. The game is beautifully presented by Davies, making sense of White's maneuvers while introducing standard plans and ideas in these types of positions.

One of the many examples of Black constructing this position is featured in the game YUCO-Kasparov from a 1998 Internet blitz game, where we see the former world champion playing **1.e4 c6 2.d4 d6 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.h3 Bh5 5.c4 Nd7 6.Nc3 e5**. All the games are from IM-level and above, and you'll find familiar names such as Pachman, Larsen, Lbujovevic, and more, including several games by German GM Joerg Hickl, who has frequently played this system.

The lectures are organized in a very practical manner; first instructive games highlight the main strategical ideas, followed by Black's handling of this system - mainly through Philidor-type positions (e.g., 1.d4 d6 2.e4 c6 3.Nc3 Qc7 4.Nf3 e5). Davies then moves on to explore how to reach these positions with White, culminating with some opening expansions on the Ruy Lopez, King's Indian Defense, and others. There are a total of twenty-three lectures:

- 01: Introduction
- 02: Strategy 1 - Central exchange
- 03: Strategy 2 - Little centre
- 04: Strategy 3 - Queenside pawn advance
- 05: Strategy 4 - Lever with f2-f4 or f7-f5
- 06: Strategy 5 - Attack with g2-g4 or g7-g5
- 07: Strategy 6 - Space gaining with e4-e5 or e5-e4
- 08: Strategy 7 - Space gaining with f2-f4 & e4-e5 & e5-e4
- 09: Philidor Nc3; Nf3
- 10: Philidor Nc3; f4
- 11: Philidor Nf3; Bg4; h3
- 12: Philidor Nf3; Bg4; Nc3
- 13: Philidor Nf3; Bg4; Bd3
- 14: Old Indian d4; c4; e4

- 15: Flank Openings
- 16: White vs e5
- 17: White vs e4 Black plays a5
- 18: White vs e4 Ponziani queen exchange
- 19: White vs French
- 20: White vs Sicilian
- 21: White vs Alekhine or Pirc
- 22: White vs Caro Kann
- 23: Retirement option

The sample games feature plenty of maneuvering, as well as some wild games such as the Kosten-Luciani 1993 encounter: **1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 d6 4.d4 Nbd7 5.Bc4 Be7 6.0-0 0-0 7.Re1 c6 8.a4 b6 9.Bg5 a6 10.dxe5 Nxe5 11.Be2 h6 12.Bf4 Ng6 13.Be3 Ng4 14.Bc1 Bf6 15.Nd4**



Black to Move - What would you play?

Kosten played the speculative **15...Nxf2** and went on to win after **16.Kxf2 Bxd4+ 17.Qxd4 Qh4+ 18.Kf1 [18.g3 Qxh2+ 19.Ke3 Qxg3+] 18...f5 19.Bf3 Ne5 20.Qf2 Qxh2 21.Ke2 fxe4 22.Nxe4 Bg4 23.Be3 [23.Ra3 Rae8] 23...Qh5 24.Nd2 Rae8 25.Ra3 d5 26.Kd1 Bxf3+ 27.gxf3 Nxf3 28.Qe2 [28.Nxf3 Rxf3 29.Qe2 d4] 28...Qh3 [28...d4 29.Rf1 dxe3 30.Nxf3] 29.Rf1 Nxd2 30.Rxf8+ Rxf8 31.Kxd2 [31.Bxd2] 31...Qh4 32.Rb3 [32.Qxa6 Qb4+ 33.Kd1 Qxb2; 32.c3 c5] 32...d4 33.Qc4+ Kh8 34.Bxd4 [34.Qxd4 Rd8] 34...Rf2+ 35.Kc3 Qg3+ 36.Kb4 Qd6+ 37.Kc3 Rf3+ 38.Kd2 Rxb3 39.cxb3 c5 0-1**

It is pointless to in these positions to study individual theoretical moves. To succeed one must have an understanding of how to play these positions, and Davies lectures are aimed at presenting plans and ideas. This is a fine effort by Davies and highly recommended to anyone looking to expand their opening stock.

Order *A Busy Person's Opening System*
by Nigel Davies

1. e4 Repertoire: Grandmaster Lines Explained for Club Players, by IM Sam Collin, Running time: eight hours

Back in the days of chess VHS videos, an opening video would be about an hour or two in length. Today, for almost the same price, one often gets much more. *1. e4 Repertoire* by Collins is a massive undertaking that attempts to provide a complete repertoire for White, spanning no less than eight hours and fifty-four video segments. Collins rationale for his repertoire is based on his recommendation to play highly theoretical openings with black, and less theoretical (but still mainstream) as white. For instance, Collins recommends the Giuco Piano over the Ruy Lopez and the Alapin Sicilian instead of the Open Sicilian. His recommendation is to play something you enjoy, were you understand the resulting positions, and

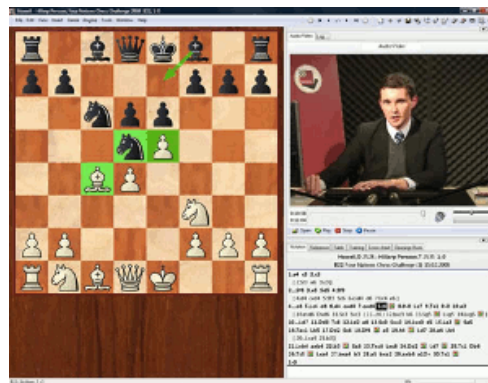


score well.

1.e4 Repertoire has many strengths, one of which is undoubtedly Collin's sincere and thoughtful demeanor. This is Collin's first Chessbase DVD and I was very pleased with his effort. He is highly articulate and speaks slowly and clearly. He also has a very calm and thoughtful delivery approach, and one never feels that he is trying to sell you a line. Overall, his style makes the contents of the DVD very accessible.

The first twenty lectures are devoted to Collin's pet line against the Sicilian Defense, the Alapin Sicilian. This is a subject he has written extensively in the past, including in books such as [*Understanding the Chess Openings*](#) and [*Chess Explained: The c3 Sicilian*](#).

Against 1.e4 e5 2.Nf6 Nc6, he recommends the Italian game with 3.Bc4 and here we get ten lectures split between Black's classical 3...Bc5 response and the Three Knight's Defense with 3...Nf6. You'll often see Collins gravitating towards less theoretical lines. Thus, instead of 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5, where there is a lot to know, he opts instead for 4.d3, which often reaches similar pawn structures as in the 3...Bc5 recommendations.



There are two lectures in the Petroff Defense in which he recommends 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.dxe5 d5 5.Nbd2. This leads to an asymmetrical pawn structure, and is a line that has received a lot of attention recently. There is even an opening survey by Alexei Kuzmin in [*Chessbase Magazine #132*](#) containing seven annotated games in this line.

There is an eleven-minute lecture on the Philidor Defense, which seemed sufficient, though it did leave out some minor f5 lines like 1.e4 e5 2.d4 d6 3.d5 f5. On the French, we get six lectures advocating a line of the Tarrasch Defense where White sacrifices the d-pawn, say, in the line 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.c3 c5 6.Bd3 Nc6 7.Ngf3 Qb6 8.0-0 cxd4 9.cxd4 Nxd4 10.Nxd4 Qxd4 11.Nf3 Qb6, with a brief discussion on how to handle the position when Black avoids the normal routes.

Six lectures cover the Caro-Kann Defense, and his proposed method is the Panov-Botvinnik Attack after 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 which leads to isolated-pawn positions similar to Alapin Sicilian lines with 3...d5. We also get three lectures on the Alekhine Defense, where Collins suggests 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3. There is one short lecture on the Scandinavian, where he suggests avoiding the usual placement of the knight on c3, and to play Nf3 instead. His model game is Morozevich-Rogers, Bundesliga 1999, which went **1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.Be2 Nc6 5.d4 0-0-0 6.Be3 Nf6 7.c4 Qh5 8.Nbd2 e5 9.d5 Nd4 10.Nxd4 exd4 11.Bxg4+ Nxg4 12.Bxd4 Bb4 13.h3 Bxd2+ 14.Kxd2 Qg5+ 15.Kc3 Ne5 16.Qe2 Nxc4 17.Qxc4 Rxd5 18.Rad1 Rhd8 19.Be3 Qe5+ 20.Kc2 b5 21.Rxd5 Rxd5 22.Qg4+ f5 23.Qf4 Qe6 24.Kb1 g5 25.Qxg5 Qe4+ 26.Ka1 1-0**

The final two lectures cover the Pirc/Modern Defense placing the dark-squared bishop on e3 and engaging in classical development as in 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Be3 a6 5.Qd2 Nd7 6.Nf3 b5 7.Bd3 Bb7, or angle for an Austrian Attack after lines such as 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 c6 5.h3 Nbd7 6.f4 b5 7.a3 Nb6.



Index format

The video lecture index is nicely designed. Instead of having to look for the game in the appended database, a link to the game featured in the lecture is included as part of the index. You can click on this link and study the game prior to viewing the lecture, and then reinforce your learning of that particular lecture by reviewing the game again afterwards. Personally, I've found the training tab to be very useful when going through these games, in order to compare my own moves with the moves played during the game. The ChessBase trainer format is a fun tool for anyone willing to sit down and do the hard work.

Overall, an outstanding work by Collins, who makes these lines accessible and easily understood for players at all levels.

Order *1.e4 Repertoire: Grandmaster Lines*

Explained for Club Players

by Sam Collins

The ABC of the Sicilian Dragon, by Andrew Martin, Running time: four hours

While the Sicilian Dragon often leads to thrilling games featuring opposite-flank attacks, the players - in particularly Black - needs to be fully prepared for the theoretical struggle ahead of him. As Martin points out, it is easy to be wiped off the board without making an original move, and overall the play requires an excellent memory to keep up with the latest theoretical updates.



The alternative approach is one suggested by GM Simon Williams and presented in Martin's DVD. After 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3, instead of following up with ...Nc6 and castling short, Black plays the Najdorf-like move 7...a6. Black delays castling for as long as it takes in order to generate queenside counterplay. In certain positions, Black plays ...h6 before castling to slow White on the kingside. One sample game of the "Dragonorf" on this DVD is Leake-Ward, which went **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 a6 8.Bc4 Nbd7 9.Qd2 b5 10.Bb3 Bb7 11.0-0 h6 12.Kb1 Rc8 13.h4 h5 14.Rhe1 Qc7 15.Bg5 Nb6 16.Qe2 0-0 17.g4 hxg4 18.fxg4 Nc4 19.Rd3 Qc5 20.Red1 Rfe8 21.h5 Qxg5 22.hxg6 fxg6 23.Rf3 e6 24.Rdf1 Nd2+ 25.Ka1 Nxb3+ 26.axb3 b4 27.Qh2 bxc3 28.Rh1 cxb2+ 29.Kxb2 0-1**

Incidentally, Christopher Ward is often featured on this DVD, and he is someone who has written extensively on the Classical Dragon. One of my all-time favorite slug-fests of his, and a good illustration of what Black tries to avoid in the Dragonorf is the game Brink-Claussen vs. Ward, which went **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 Nc6 8.Qd2 0-0 9.Bc4 Bd7 10.h4 Ne5 11.Bb3 Qa5 12.0-0-0 Rfc8 13.Kb1 b5 14.Nxb5 Qd8 15.Bh6 Bh8 16.Nc3 Rab8 17.g4 a5 18.a4 Rb4 19.h5 Rcc4!? 20.hxg6 hxg6 21.Be3 Bg7 22.Nf5! gxf5 23.gxf5 Nxf3 24.Qg2 Nxe4 25.Nxe4 Bxf5 26.Bh6** White starts to circle around Black's king. **26...Qf8 27.Rxd6! Rxc2?** [27...exd6 28.Nf6+ Kh8 29.Bxg7# doesn't work, but Black needs to return to c8 to defend the back-rank)] **28.Qxg7+? [28.Bxc2!] 28...Qxg7 29.Rd8+ Kh7 30.Bxg7+ Rh2! 31.Rxh2+ Nxh2 32.Bc3 Rxb3 33.Ka2 Rb7 34.Rh8+ Kg6 35.**

The content is organized through thirty lectures, focusing not only on the sharper lines, but also looking at lines where White castles kingside or featuring a kingside fianchetto.

- 01: Introduction
- 02: Intro Yugoslav Attack, Evans - Zuckerman, New York 1967
- 03: Dragondorf intro
- 04: Karkajin - Romero, Pamplona 2003
- 05: Leake - Ward, London 2005
- 06: Lohr, Germany 1996
- 07: Variation 9.Bh6, Kristjansson, Hastings 2006
- 08: Variation 9.Bh6, Volkmann - Pilaj, Gmunden 2005
- 09: Variation 9.0-0-0, Hartikainen - Volodin, Tallinn 2008
- 10: Variation 9.0-0-0, Shirov - Williams, West Bromwich 2004
- 11: Variation 9.0-0-0, Satyapragyan - Fedorov, Parsvnath 2006
- 12: Variation 9.g4, Erenburg - Sakaev, Khanty Mansyisk 2005
- 13: Variation 9.g4, Al Sayed - Cheparinov, Andorra 2004
- 14: Variation 9.g4, Kobalia - Chuprov
- 15: Variation 9.g4, Ishkhamov - Ehlvest, Berkeley 2005
- 16: Dragondorf conclusion, Littlewood - Botvinnik, Hastings 1961/62
- 17: Classical intro
- 18: Classical, Mkrtchian - Kosintseva, Fuegen 2006
- 19: Classical, Castro - Postny, Evora 2007
- 20: Classical, Kramnik - Navara, Prague 2008
- 21: Classical, Krivec - Kosintseva, Calvia 2004
- 22: Classical, Jessel - Mestel, Sunningdale 2007
- 23: Levenfish intro
- 24: Levenfish, Ljubojevic - Miles, Skara 1980
- 25: Levenfish, Gonzales de la Torre - Argandera Riviera, Elgoibar 2005
- 26: Fianchetto line, Babula - Civin, Czechia 2003
- 27: Sixth move alternatives for white: Makka - Kosintseva, Goa 2002
- 28: 6.Bc4, McShane - Hansen, Copenhagen 1999
- 29: 6.Bc4, Zelic - Kovacevic, Zadar 2007
- 30: 6.Bc4, Sadvakasov - Kortschnoj, Astana 2003
- 31. Outro

Some of Martin's advice, while verbally convincing, fails for tactical reasons. Thus, it is important to take a critical view of the recommended lines. For instance, in the first game Karkajin-Romero, after **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 a6 8.Qd2 Nbd7 9.Bc4 Qc7 10.Bb3 h6 11.0-0-0**, Romero played **11...Nb6**. Martin instead recommends **11...b5 12.Rhe1 Bb7 13.Kb1 Nb6** as a better way of handling Black's position. This has been played before, but the only problem is that instead of **12.Rhe1**, White has **12.Nd5**, with the idea of **12...Nxd5 13.Nxb5!** and if **13...axb5**, **14.Qxd5** simultaneously attacks f7 and the hanging rook on a8. After **12.Nd5 Nxd5 13.Nxb5 Qb8 14.Qxd5 0-0 15.Nd4** or **15.Nc3**, White is a pawn up and Black still needs to organize his queenside play.

There is plenty of material here to get thoroughly acquainted with the Dragondorf, and Martin never fails to entertain and educate. The theory on the Dragondorf will most likely expand very quickly, but at present there seems to be plenty of room for originality and experimentation.

ABC of the Sicilian Dragon

by Andrew Martin

The Grünfeld Defence, by Lubomir Ftacnik, Running time: seven hours

Prior to reviewing Ftacnik's Grünfeld DVD, my knowledge of this opening was limited to the **1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc4 6.bxc3** line as played in the 1990 World



Championship Match between Kasparov and Karpov. Thus, imagine my surprise to see thirty ECO codes for this opening! The Grünfeld is not for the theory-weary. Ftacnik points out that one of the challenges for Black is that White decides which variation to play in the Grünfeld, so Black needs to be prepared for a wide variety of ideas and lines. On the positive side, the Grünfeld Defense offers very active positions with counterattacking potential. Ftacnik also recommends the Grünfeld to players who enjoy active piece play and don't mind incurring structural weaknesses, then this might be the ideal opening for you.



The DVD is a massive undertaking by Ftacnik, who devotes no less than fifty video lectures discussing main Neo-Grünfeld and Grünfeld lines, plus a couple of lectures on typical endgames and common structures that arise from this opening. There are also 3,854 appended games, including games from 2009. You'll find many annotated games, but also some junk as well. For instance, there isn't any educational value in a blitz game between Radjabov and Svidler, which only contains the first four moves, or in short GM draws. On the other hand, one can't be too stereotypical and decide that shorts games are worthless. For example, the game Yegiazarian (2455) - Aronian (2455), Ciocaltea Memorial 1988 is heavily annotated with specific variations, even though the game was drawn on move eleven.



Given that there are fifty-four video lectures, it would have been really helpful to show the specific line on the index, as is done on most ChessBase opening DVDs. For instance, instead of "20: 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5" you only see "Grünfeld 20: D80." D80 is the ECO code, which is great to know for further research, but an inconvenience if you are searching for a specific video lecture. The list below is meant as a rough guide to get an idea of the DVD contents according to the ECO code structure. The number in parenthesis following the ECO code represents the number of video lectures dedicated to that line.

- Intro
- Structures
- Endgames
- Neo Grünfeld Lines
- D70 (1): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 d5
- D71 (1): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 d5
- D72 (2): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 de5 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nb6 7.Ne2
- D73 (1): 5.Nf3
- D74 (1): 5.Nf3 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.0-0
- D75 (1): 5.Nf3 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.0-0 c5 8.dxc5
- D76 (7): 5.Nf3 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.0-0 Nb6
- D77 (2): 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0
- D78 (2): 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 c6
- D79 (1): 5.Nf3 0-0 6.0-0 c6 7.cxd5 cxd5
- Grünfeld
- D80 (2): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5
- D81 (1): 4.Qb3
- D82 (2): 4.Bf4

- D83 (1): 4.Bf4 Bg7 5.e3 0-0
- D84 (1): 4.Bf4 Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Nxd5 Qxd5 8.Bxc7
- D85 (5): 4.cxd5 Nxd5
- D86 (1): 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bg7 7.Bc4
- D87 (3): 7... 0-0 8.Ne2 c5
- D88 (1): 7... 0-0 8.Ne2 c5 Nc6
- D89 (1): 7.Bc4 c5 8.New Nc6 9.Be3 0-0 10.0-0 Bg4 11.f3 Na5
- D90 (1): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3
- D91 (3): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bg5
- D92 (1): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bf4
- D93 (1): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bf4 0-0 6.e3
- D94 (1): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.e3
- D95-96 (1): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.Qb3 and 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3
- D97 (2): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 6.Qxc4 0-0 7.e4
- D98 (1): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 4.Qxc4 0-0 7.e4 Bg4
- D99 (1): 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 6.Qcx4 0-0 7.e4 Bg4 8.Be3
- Outro

The introductory lectures are devoted to understanding typical structures and endgames in the Grünfeld, but they left me sort of befuddled. The video on structures begins with a blitz game between Kramnik and Ivanchuk from the Moscow Tal Memorial Blitz. Here Ftacnik probably scrolled through the moves faster than the players at the blitz tourney - so fast that at times I couldn't even see the moves! I think this completely defeats the purpose of the video lecture format, and I would much rather pick a book on the Grünfeld and learn at my own pace instead of being subjected to visual abuse. Speeding through games in such a manner quickly tired my eyes, and took some of the enjoyment out of the experience. This was really disappointing because I was expecting to be mesmerized by Ftacnik who did a wonderful job on his Scheveningen DVD.

The main content is better paced and interesting. Ftacnik does not make any specific recommendations, as his goal is to deepen your overall understanding of the Grünfeld, so do not expect to be spoon-fed specific variations. Overall, Ftacnik's analysis is balanced, but heavy-handed.

[Order](#) *The Gruenfeld Defence*
by Lubomir Ftacnik

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