



## COLUMNISTS

### Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen



### Reviewed this month:

#### *Winning with the Sicilian Dragon 2*

by Chris Ward

#### *The Ultimate Closed Sicilian*

by Gary Lane

#### *Scandinavian Defense - The Dynamic 3...Qd6*

by Michael Melts

### Special Feature

*Chesspublishing.com*

Part 3

## Dragon Slayers Wanted

Before we get going with this month's presentation, I would like to wish you all a happy, healthy and blessed 2002!

*Winning with the Sicilian Dragon 2* by Chris Ward, 2001  
Batsford Ltd., Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 224 pp., \$22.95





Back in 1994, English GM Chris Ward had his first epic on the Dragon, *Winning with the Dragon*, a thoroughly enjoyable and highly popular book, which didn't try to cover the entire theoretical complex of the Sicilian Dragon (something we have seen Gufeld unsuccessful at a couple of times), but focused more on presenting a playable repertoire for Black in the open Sicilian, with a lot of illustrative games and a lot of explanations, allowing everybody to benefit from the coverage.



This second edition of the book follows the same recipe, but the material has been rewritten and re-arranged, so even if you have Ward's first book on the Dragon, you will benefit from this volume.

I will have to confess that I have a deep love for the Dragon, with which I have scored incredibly well, producing many memorable games over the years. Nowadays I don't play it as much anymore, mainly because I don't play as often as I used to, and secondly because I now only enter it via the Accelerated Dragon or if I know my opponent plays a particular line that I would like to face.

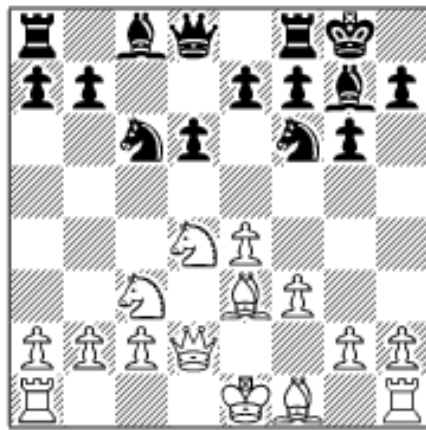
In the introduction of this book, Ward makes a mentions the following: "I have discovered that even players who don't include it [the Dragon] in their repertoire enjoy following the games, almost religiously, and even carry out their own home investigations. Yes, while perhaps playing the Petroff or Alekhine by day, in the evenings it's as if Dragon bishops and exchange sacrifices take centre stage in their fantasies!"

Before moving on to the contents of the book, I have to mention a little amusing detail. When I reviewed the Gufeld books on the Dragon, I mentioned that the position pictured on the cover was flipped around and therefore did not reflect the actual Dragon position. With this book on the Dragon,

did Batsford get it right? No, of course not. The position shown in two of the pictures is one that can only occur in the Pirc after 1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 g6. The third picture is a bit unclear, but appears to be the one arising after 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Bc4 Qb6, again not a Dragon, but a Sozin (which by the way is the topic for a new book by the Dragon (!) specialist and GM, Golubev of Ukraine). I don't know what to think other than Batsford badly needs somebody to design their book covers properly.

The material in the present book is arranged as follows: Introduction and key themes (16 pages), early deviations (1 chapter - 13 pages), Yugoslav Attack (4 chapters - 107 pages), Classical Dragon (1 chapter - 29 pages), other lines (3 chapters - 39 pages), Tips in the Anti-Sicilians (1 chapter - 8 pages) and indexes (10 pages).

As you can see, the main focus is on the Yugoslav Attack, which generally arises (there are different variants) after **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**



The Yugoslav Attack is in my opinion the only threat to the Dragon, but also what a real Dragoneer likes to play against the most.

I have mentioned Gufeld several times because he had a two-volume series in 2001 on the Dragon published by Batsford.

The comparison ends really with the same topic and the same publisher. This book is everything that Gufeld's books aren't. The differences are substantial:

1. Ward presents a selective repertoire; Gufeld tried to cover everything.
2. Ward's presentation is based on main

games; Gufeld's on variation trees.

3. Ward presents a lot of new analysis and ideas of his own; Gufeld next to none.

4. Ward has a lot of narrative material; Gufeld mainly variations.

5. Ward is very humorous and at times wildly entertaining; Gufeld...yawn!

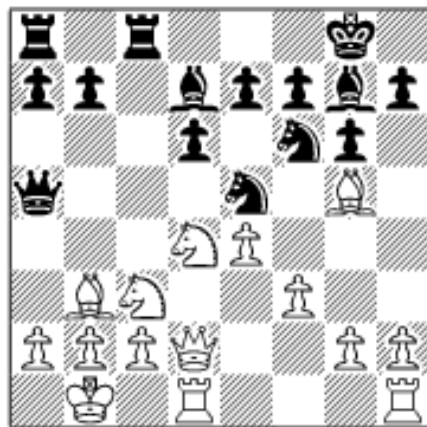
6. Ward's book is great; Gufeld's isn't.

The above should give you some idea of what to expect. In the Yugoslav Attack main line (9 Bc4) for example, Ward only focuses on lines with ...Qa5, whereas the otherwise popular lines involving the immediate ...Nc6-e5-c4 or the Soltis Variation (with 9 Bc4 Rc8 10 Bb3 Ne5 11 h4 h5) are barely mentioned. The same pattern can be found throughout the book. With an opening such as the Dragon, it is a choice you have to make as an author. Gufeld, without much success, tried to cover everything, something that is barely possible in two volumes. Ward doesn't claim to have similar intentions, but wants to present a playable, interesting repertoire, combined with instruction and entertainment. All of which works amazingly well.

Generally speaking, I don't fancy the idea of presenting theory built around main games, as it is relatively easy for the author to "forget" a critical line if it doesn't fit into the repertoire that the author has planned. But if properly executed, it certainly has its advantages too, as the student can see whole games with plans executed in their entirety.

As an illustration of the material presented in the present book, I will show you the following game:

**A. Schekachev-C. Ward Gran Canaria Open 1993** (the annotations are condensed from those in the book by Ward)  
**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 10.0-0-0 Qa5 11.Kb1 Rfc8 12.Bb3 Ne5 13.Bg5**



A positional approach that I occasionally see recommended, though, as far as I can make out, with little justification.

Essentially White ditches plans for a serious attack in favour of trying to reach a good endgame. Not presumably what the Yugoslav Attack was intended for, but if that's the way that

White wants to play, then so be it! The bishop puts pressure on the e7-pawn which could be useful if he can ever get in f4 and e5. However, the truth is that White also has a more mundane sequence in mind. In an ideal world he will simply swap on f6 and then recover the bishop for knight deficit by Nd5xf6. If he can achieve this - involving a queen trade and a Black ...exf6 recapture - then, granted, he would stand comfortably better. Rest assured, though, that this sort of idealistic simplicity isn't going to occur in a month of Sundays!

I didn't have much to say about 13 Qe2 in *WSTD* [Winning with the Dragon], and in fact I still don't! The move is useful for the control of c4, but significantly reduces attacking options. If Black is ever considering an exchange sac on c3, he should bear in mind the sneaky Bd2 and should probably choose between the pawn sacrifice 13...b5 or, first, the slower 13...a6. More typically, of course, there is no time for the latter quiet move but 13 Qe2 changes the face of the whole variation.

### 13...Rc5!? 14.Rhe1

This move, offering some protection to the e-pawn, shows that White has no intention of taking the usual route down the h-file. The need for it is well illustrated after 14.f4 Nc4 15.Bxc4 Rxc4 16.Nb3 Qxc3!! 17.bxc3 Nxe4. This is a position I've had before and it is extremely good fun for

Black. Though currently a queen down for a piece (well ... and a pawn!), Black will zap the c3-pawn, the a2-pawn and, with all of his pieces getting in on the act, in all likelihood the c2-pawn too. Important to note is that White's uninspired approach of 14.Bxf6 Bxf6 15.Nd5 Qxd2 16.Nxf6+ is foiled by 16...Kg7! and, if White continues to elicit a doubling of Black's pawns by 17.Nh5+, then 17...Kh6!? 18.Rxd2 Kxh5 is consistent.

### **14...b5!? 15.Bxf6**

I certainly remember in *WSTD* giving the game Sievers-Ward, Guildford Masters 1991, which continued instead with 15.f4 Nc4 16.Bxc4 bxc4 17.e5 Rb8 18.exf6 exf6 19.Bh4 Qb4 20.Qc1 Qxc3 21.Nb3 cxb3!! 22.bxc3 bxa2+ 23.Kxa2 Ra5+ 24.Qa3 Be6+ 25.Rxe6 Rxa3+ 26.Kxa3 fxe6, and I converted the endgame of this thoroughly enjoyable encounter.

### **15...exf6!?**

15...Bxf6 16.Nd5 Qxd2 17.Rxd2 Kg7 18.Nxf6 Kxf6 19.f4 Nc4 20.Bxc4 Rxc4 21.e5+ dxe5 22.fxe5+ Kg7 23.e6 fxe6 24.Nxe6+ Bxe6 25.Rxe6 is worse for Black than the very similar previously discussed endgame, since having the a-rook on c8 is more useful than the detrimental pawn on b5. Nevertheless, though more of a struggle, I would have thought that Black was favourite to hold the draw. The text, of course, is rather more ambitious. White achieves the crippling of the pawn structure that he was after but Black retains his favourite bishop. The d6--pawn is obviously weak but White can't attack it with his major pieces and at the same time occupy the d5-square.

### **16.Bd5**

16.Nd5 Qd8 17.f4 is perhaps more critical when Black has potentially dominant (in the absence of its enemy counterpart) Dragon bishop to compensate him for his weak d-pawn. Logically, White should try to shut this out by

getting his own pawn to f5 before Black, but 17...a5!? exploits the frailties of his own bishop. Now 18.fxe5 fxe5 19.c3 a4 20.Bc2 exd4 21.cxd4 Rc4 is very good for Black and thus 18 a3 may be necessary, when the position remains unstable.

### **16...b4! 17.Nce2**

17.Bxa8 bxc3 18.Qe3 Qb4 19.Nb3 Nc4 20.bxc3 Na3+ 21.Kb2 f5! is one reason why taking the rook wasn't appealing!

### **17...Nc4 18.Qc1**

18.Bxc4 Rxc4 19.Nb3 nets the d-pawn but Black has the bishop-pair on an open board. His own king is safely tucked away and he can consider thrusting his a-pawn well into enemy territory on order to intimidate the opposing monarch and the defending knights.

### **18...Rxd5 19.exd5 f5 20.Qf4 Qb6**

Despite the material deficit, Black is in no real hurry. While the white knights are in a tangle, Black has all of the key squares covered and can seriously consider a plan of ...a5-a4 and ...b3.


### **21.Nc6 Nxb2 1/2-1/2.**

Alas, I'm afraid that this is a very tame finish to the game, but, as you know, I'm very good at excuses. Perhaps I hadn't quite appreciated just how much better Black's position is, e.g., 22.Qxd6 (Perhaps White must try the visually unattractive 22 Rd2) 22...Nxd1 23.Rxd1 Bxc6 24.dxc6 Rc8. However, as I recall, a draw gave me a great final tournament placing and, in a rare example of copping out, the game was halted prematurely. Sorry about that, but anyway a chapter can only take so much excitement!"

This should give you fairly good idea what Ward is up to.

My only objection to the book is that the book's cover blurb states: "A Complete Repertoire Against 1 e4 For The Attacking Player". Although Ward in the introduction tells us it isn't quite so by writing "You will note that a new section has appeared, but do not get too excited by the existence of chapter 12. It is a rough guide to the Anti-Sicilians from a Dragon player's perspective and will not show you how to beat all those spoil-sport White Anti-Sicilian exponents. By the way, if you do discover exactly how that is done, please let me know!".

Obviously these two statements are not consistent, but I will not blame Ward for that. All in all, this is very worthwhile book that all Dragon players will want even if it doesn't cover everything in the Dragon. Even if you don't have any particular interest in the Sicilian Dragon, there will be plenty for you to enjoy in this book: entertaining games and annotations, lucid explanations, entertainment and much, much more. I highly recommend this book to everybody.

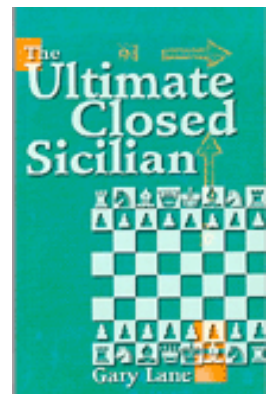
**My assessment of this book:** 

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*The Ultimate Closed Sicilian* by Gary Lane, 2001 B.T. Batsford, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 176 pp., \$19.95

Recently I reviewed another book by Lane, *The Ultimate Colle*; the present book is another presentation of an opening that he has had years of experience with.

A few years ago Lane wrote *Winning with the Closed Sicilian*, but the frequent use of this opening by top players such as Adams





and Short has thrown this opening back into focus and more people are showing interest in the Closed Sicilian. In another recent book, *Attacking with 1 e4* (Everyman 2001), British GM John Emms used the Closed Sicilian as his weapon of choice against the Sicilian.


In the fairly recent past the main line used to be: **1 e4 c5 2 Nc3** (this move combined with an early g3 signifies the Closed Sicilian) **2...Nc6 3 g3 g6 4 Bg2 Bg7 5 d3 d6 6 f4 e6 7 Nf3 Nge7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Be3 Nd4 10 e5**, a line which has been fiercely debated the last several years. But the constant attention on this line has also meant that a lot of Black players now know how to sufficiently meet this line. Therefore many White-players have switched their attention to 6 Be3 which has yet to "suffer" the same destiny; it's noteworthy that both Emms and Lane have this move as their preference for White.

The present book has 12 chapters, covering all lines of the Closed Sicilian, and I think that Lane, despite his favoring White, does a pretty good job at being objective throughout. Each chapter has a number of complete main games around which the theory is discussed, much like Ward's book above, Lane's book on the Colle or for that matter nearly all of the opening books being published by Everyman these days. As mentioned above, I don't like this approach very much, but it can work, if the author is honest and doesn't try to hide problematic lines.

Although some variations are not covered, the most important material is there, including very up-to-date material that arose after Emms' deadline, but the labelling "The Ultimate" is something of an exaggeration. Nonetheless, he presents a playable repertoire for White as well interesting options for both sides in all major lines, though with the main focus on lines for White.

On balance, if you play the Closed Sicilian either as White or

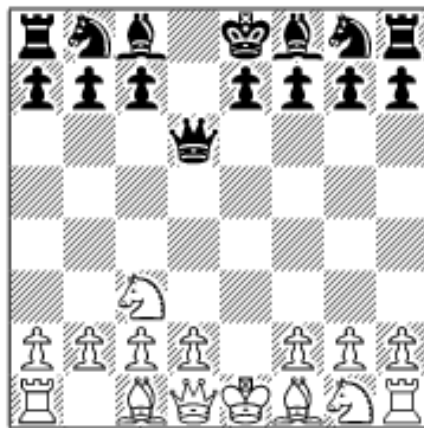
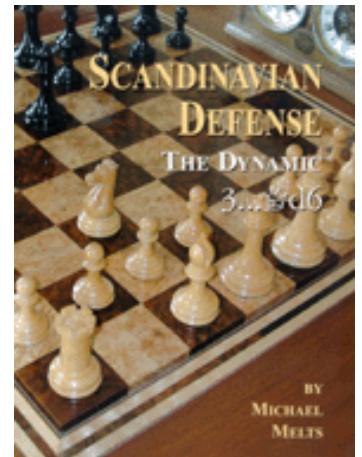
against it as Black, you will not want to be without this book.

My assessment of this book: 

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*Scandinavian Defense - The Dynamic 3...Qd6* by Michael Melts, 2001 Russell Enterprises, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 214 pp., \$19.95.

In July 2000 I wrote the July update on Chesspublishing.com on 1 e4..., which covers a great variety of openings such as the Caro-Kann, the Pirc, Owen's Defense, Nimzowitch's Defense, and also the Scandinavian Defense. Not knowing exactly which approach to choose, I decided to cover a little bit of everything. When deciding which game to choose on the Scandinavian, I started going through the most recent updates from TWIC, and found that Black more and more often in the Scandinavian Defense (a/k/a. Center Counter), after 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5 3 Nc3, was choosing 3...Qd6



a move which I quite frankly didn't and still don't like very much. Although I often offer my opinion, I'm not necessarily always right. Therefore, despite my dislike, I annotated the game Solak-Nadanian, European Championship (St. Vincent) 2000, which ended in a draw.

Then for a while nothing happened (at least as far as I was concerned) until Australian GM and regular Scandinavian Defense player, Ian Rogers, played 3...Qd6 against no less

than Kasparov in the Europe-Asia Rapid match (Batumi) 2001, a game which went to Kasparov, who was better most of the way, but allowed Black some drawing chances, only for Black to blow them and in the end lose the game. In his annotations to the game in the *British Chess Magazine* 11/2001, Rogers wrote, when commenting on 3...Qd6!?, "Something in Kasparov's demeanour made me think that I would be walking into some serious preparation if I played 3...Qa5. In any case, I had just finishing writing an introduction for a new book on the 3...Qd6 Scandinavian and decided to put my new knowledge to some use." Needless to say, the book he is talking about is the present book. By the way, the game Kasparov-Rogers is given in a postscript in this book; the annotations are the same as those in BCM.

My first thought, when I received the present book was how on earth it is possible to fill 214 pages with the material on this line. But filling the pages seems to have been a relatively small concern of the author as they are jam-packed with examples and analysis, and very little when it comes to narrative, explanations and game annotations.

The main material in the book is divided up as follows:

- Introduction (8 pages)
- Part I 3 Nc3 Qd6 4 d4 Nf6 5 Bc4 (44 pages)
- Part II 3 Nc3 Qd6 4 d4 Nf6 5 Nf3 (86 pages)
- Part III Fifth Move Alternatives for White after 3 Nc3 Qd6 4 d4 Nf6 (27 pages)
- Part IV Fourth Move Alternatives for Black after 3 Nc3 Qd6 4 d4 (7 pages)
- Part V Fourth Move Alternatives for White after 3 Nc3 Qd6 (12 pages)
- Part VI Miscellaneous Ideas (6 pages)

Starting with the introduction, Melts gives us a historical introduction to 3...Qd6, which, according to Melts, was first recommended by William Potter, a compatriot of Steinitz.

(By the way, both Forster and Harding have written some very interesting articles about Potter here at [ChessCafe.com](http://ChessCafe.com).) Next there follows something Melts calls "For the Skeptics", a part which I really don't like. He starts comparing what's good against 3...Qa5 and 3...Qd8 with how Black can counter this if White tries similar approaches 3...Qd6. This is a waste of space and quite pointless. Of course, in the theoretical part, he could make these observations, where it would be perfectly appropriate, but not really in the introduction. The last part of the introduction makes more sense: there he discusses some basic set-ups for Black and the Nb5 + Bf4 constellation, which, as illustrated by Melts, can lead to rapid losses for Black.

The most important part of the book is of course the theoretical chapters - Parts I-VI. As mentioned above, they are packed game examples, many more than I have on my databases, and analysis, much original analysis by Melts himself, as very little else exists on this variation. Each part starts with a little verbal introduction, usually outlining the main alternatives covered in the particular part. The theory is build up around some main games, mostly by players that I think the majority of whom are not well known. Melts makes up for this by analysing the games in detail, offering a lot of new ideas and analysis in the process. After each game follows a summary, where he not only discusses the game, but also draws comparison with similar positions arising from other openings, with a discussion of the merits pawn structures, piece coordination etc.

Occasionally these summaries become a bit confusing, but generally, they are excellent and with carefully study, you will not only learn to play this line in the Scandinavian well, but expand your knowledge about chess in general. Not bad for an opening book.

On the back cover, it's mentioned that "GMs Roman Dzindzichashvili, Kiril Georgiev, legendary world championship contender David Bronstein and

dozens of other top players have called on this variation for important encounters." While it didn't surprise me particularly that Dzindzi and Bronstein had tried this line, I was more suspicious about Georgiev, so I decided to check it out in the present book. I found the game, which is a last round game from an open tournament in 1992. To me it looks like a pre-arranged draw, but I will leave that up to you to decide:

***Tzermiadianos,A (2300) - Georgiev,K (2610) [B01]***

**Katerini op Katerini, 1992**

**1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd6 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.Nf3 a6 6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 Bb7 8.Ne5 e6 9.Bf4**



**9...Nc6 10.Ng6 Qxd4 11.Qxd4 Nxd4 12.Nxh8 Bxg2 13.Rg1 Nf3+ 14.Ke2 Nd4+ 15.Ke1 Nf3+ 16.Ke2 Nd4+ 17.Ke1 ½–½**


I find it a bit odd that Melts, as an alternative to 15 Ke1, only mentions 15 Kd3 (which is answered with 15...Rd8) and 15 Ke3 (met by 15...Bc5), but the more obvious 15.Kd1 isn't mentioned. On top of that I think White has seriously good winning chances, e.g., 15...0–0–0 16 Kc1! or 15...Bf3+ 16.Ke1 Bg4 17.Rg3 Nf3+ 18.Kf1 and the black attack seems to be a non-starter.

Earlier on in the game, as alternatives to Black's 9th move, the author only analyses 9...Qd8 and 9...Qb6 ('!' Melts), but fails to mention the highly interesting 9...c5!?, e.g. 10 Ng6 Qxd4 11 Qxd4 cxd4 12 Nxh8 dxc3 and now possibly 13 bxc3 g5! 14 Bxg5 Bg7 and Black seems to be doing very well or 13 Be5 Nbd7 14 Bxc3 Bc5 intending ...Ke7 and ...Rxh8. Also after 9...Qb6, which Melts meets with 10 Qe2 (and only mentions "10 0-0!?" as an alternative, but with no analysis), after which the only two moves discussed are 10...Qxd4 ('?' Melts) and 10...Bb4, but both 10...b4 and in particular 10...Bxg2 deserve attention, even if they are not stronger. After 10...Bb4, he continues with: "11 0-0 0-0 12 Rfe1 (12 Rad1): B2b1) 12...Qxd4 13 Nxf7 Qxf4 14 Qxe6 (14

Bxe6 Rxf7 15 Bxf7+ Kxf7 16 Qe6+ Kf8 with a clear edge for Black) 14...Bc8 (14...Bc5!? [CH: this move and 14...Nfd7!?, intending 15 Nd8+ Kh8 16 Nxb7 Qxf2+, cast a serious doubt over White's play in this line]) 15 Nh6+ Kh8 16 Nf7+ Kg8 =; B2b2) 12...Nc6 13 Be3 Nxd4 14 Bxd4 Qxd4 15 Nxb5 (15 Nxf7 Rxf7 [CH: I think Black can even try 15...Kxf7!? here!]) 16 Qxe6 Raf8 17 Rad1 Qg4 [CH: 17...Qh4! is better] 18 Qxg4 Nxg4 19 Bxf7+ [CH: This is premature. Better is 19 Rd4!?, e.g. 19...Bxc3 20 bxc3 Nf6 21 Re7 and now for example 21...g5 22 Rxc7 Kg7 23 Bxf7 Rxf7 24 Rxf7+ Kxf7 25 c4! after which White with a rook against the traditionally unhappy bishop and knight pair has excellent chances of even winning the game!] 19...Rxf7 20 Re8+ Bf8 21 f3 Nf6 =+) 15...axb5 16 c3 Bxc3 17 bxc3 Qxc3 18 Rac1 Qa5 19 Nxf7 (19 Rc5 Bd5 20 Rxb5 Qa6 -/+, Reinke-Labahn, Lippstadt 1994) 19...Rxf7 20 Qxe6 Bd5 [CH: This cannot be Black's best! What about 20...Raf8, e.g. 21 Qe5 Qa8 with a big edge for Black?] 21 Bxd5 Nxd5 22 Qxd5 Raf8 unclear (22...Qxa2? 23 Re8+)." Hmmm!

However, this is the kind of thing I always expect to find in highly original works such as the present one. What I don't like is that there next nothing in regards to narrative in the body of the games, i.e. the theoretical presentation, in comparison to the introductions and the summaries, which do contain the expected verbal explanations.

In general, the book is quite good and present a lot of new material on this still fairly little-played variation, and there is plenty of worthwhile material to study for players of all levels.

**My assessment of this book:** 

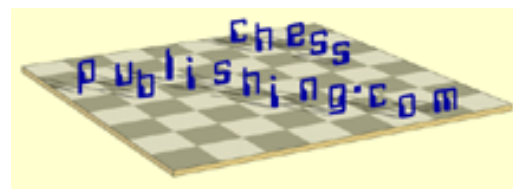
[Order](#) *Scandinavian Defense - The Dynamic 3...Qd6*  
by Michael Melts

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***Chesspublishing.com - Part 3***

***King's Indian by IM*****Andrew Martin**

On this always topical opening, Andrew Martin does an excellent job at presenting the material to his subscribers. Each monthly update contains from 20 to 30 games of which 6-10 are annotated very well, giving good insight as well as some analysis. These annotated games are also separated in the introduction, by being presented first and with diagrams showing key positions as well beautiful combinations.



The remainder of the games are pretty much a database dump, though with some game references and occasional evaluations. A representative of Martin's annotated games is the following game:

***Krasenkow,M (2570) - Antoniewski,R (2445) E90 TCh-POL, Glogow POL (6), 2001***

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 h3**

A Krasenkov favourite. Despite the slow appearance of White's sixth move play is always rich and complex in this variation.

**6...e5 7 d5**

White can try for an 'improved' Exchange Variation, i.e., 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 Qxd8 Rxd8 9 Bg5 Here's one good response : 9...Na6! 10 Nd5 Rd6! 11 Bxf6 Bxf6 12 Rc1 (12 Nxf6+ Rxf6 13 Nxe5 Re6 14 f4 f6) 12...Bd8! 13 c5 Re6 14 a3 c6 = Black is very comfortable in this line so if White wants to play for a win he has to block the centre.

**7...a5 8 Bg5**

So now it's a kind of Petrosian System where White substitutes the move h2-h3 for Be2. I feel the difference must favour White because he wants to play g2-g4 anyway and gains a kind of 'half tempo' by this procedure. Sometimes the sequence g2-g4, h3-h4, g4-g5 and finally Bf1-h3! can prove useful. In general, Black's light-squared Bishop is a prize possession for White in this type of position.

## 8...Na6 9 Nd2 h6 10 Be3 Nd7!?

He's going for the traditional ...f7-f5 but this move doesn't feel right. Sometimes one has to probe further though. Let's say 10...Nd7 provokes a position which is very tough for Black to play. There's nothing wrong with the normal

10...Nc5 eg 11 g4 Bd7 (11...h5!? J Watson 12 g5 Nh7) 12 Qc2 (12 Be2 a4 =) 12...h5! 13 g5 (13 f3 Nh7 14 Be2 h4 15 0-0-0 Bf6) 13...Nh7 14 Rg1 f6! 15 gxf6 Rxf6 16 0-0-0 Qf8.

## 11 g4! Ndc5 12 h4 Bd7 13 h5

Krasenkov was probably more than happy now. He has his usual Kingside initiative and the Black Knights seem to have drifted a long way away from the action. However....

## 13...f5 14 g5 f4?

Well, here's the critical moment. Antoniewski had to bite the bullet with 14...hxg5! and although this exposes the Black position to obvious risk I don't see anything clear. For instance : 15 hxg6 g4! (15...f4 16 Qh5) 16 exf5 (16 Be2 Qf6 17 exf5 Bxf5) 16...Bxf5 17 Nb3 Black threatened ...Nb4 17...Nb4! 18 Nxc5 Nc2+ 19 Kd2 dxc5! 20 Bxc5 Qg5+ 21 Be3 Qxg6 The conclusion must be that the White pawn at g6 can be attacked and rounded up before any attack crashes home. Meanwhile Black has counterchances with ...Nb4. Black didn't play with enough courage here- Krasenkov psyched him out.

## 15 Bxc5 Nxc5 16 gxh6!

Signalling the difference. White has two open files instead of one.

## 16...Bxh6 17 hxg6 Kg7 18 Qf3 Qg5 19 Bh3! +-



There goes the key piece. Eventual penetration on f5, e6 or d7 will follow as surely as day follows night. (Nice cliché)

**19...Bxh3 20 Rxxh3 Rf6 21 Ke2**

21 0-0-0 Rxxg6 22 Rdh1 Rh8

**21...Rxxg6 22 Qh1!**

Lots of players would have doubled rooks but Krasenkov gives priority to introducing a Knight into the attack.

**22...Qf6 23 Nf3 Kf7 24 Nh4 Rg5 25 Nf3**

A typical play when the opponent has nothing to do. White repeats, wearing the other guy down. He has absolutely no intention of agreeing to a draw. Obviously 25 Nf5 Bf8 26 Rh5 was also strong.


**25...Rg6 26 Rh5 Ke8 27 Qh3**

Black has no defence on the light squares.

**27...Rd8 28 Rf5 Qg7 29 Rh1 Nd7 30 Rh5 Bg5 31 Nxxg5 Rxxg5 32 Qe6+**

Black only made one real mistake here but it was a pretty serious mistake. 10...Nd7 therefore seems playable but risky. The rest of the game serves as a warning to those who think they can do without the light-squared Bishop. Krasenkov's handling of the position after 19 Bh3 will repay study. **1-0**

Aside from wishing that there would be more annotations in the games that are presently mainly database dump, I think this page is one of the best.

My assessment of this section: 

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## ***Nimzo & Benoni* by GM John Emms**

The monthly updates from Emms on this topic, which by the way also covers the Bogo- and Queen's Indians, usually contain 8 very recent (from the last 3-4 TWIC updates) games. The introductory text is quite thorough with reference to statistics, which, however, does not take into consideration which level the games are played on, so games by weaker players may distort the overall statistics. The games that are presented have fairly loose comments, which can be seen from the following example, which is fairly representative.

***Bacrot, E (2653) - Anand, V (2770) E20 Corsica Masters Rapid Bastia FRA (1.1), 29.10.2001***

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Nf3 c5 5 g3 cxd4 6 Nxd4 0-0**

Black has other moves, including 6...Ne4, but this is the main line.

**7 Bg2 d5 8 cxd5 Nxd5 9 Qb3**

This move was first made popular by the Russian Grandmaster Vadim Zviagentsev, who has had some success with it. The older move is 9 Bd2.

**9...Nc6 10 Nxc6 bxc6 11 0-0 Qa5 12 Bd2 Bxc3 13 bxc3**

13 Bxc3 Nxc3 14 bxc3 Ba6 was meant to be harmless, but the game Ribli-Wahls, Bundesliga 1998, provides us with some food for thought. After 15 Qb4 Qxb4 16 cxb4 Rab8 17 a3 Bxe2 18 Rfc1 bb5 19 Bc6 Bxc6 20 Rxc6 Rfc8 21 Rac1 White held a small endgame advantage, which was ultimately converted into a win. If Black has no improvements here, then this whole line will become much less appetising for the second player.

**13...Ba6 14 Rfd1!**

Ignoring the threat to the e2-pawn and introducing the idea of c3-c4. This is still all theory.

**14...Qc5!**

The safest move.

14...Rab8 looks good, but is well met by 15 c4! (see the game Nielsen-Savon, Pardubice 1995 in ChessPub - ECO code E20).; 14...Bxe2 15 c4 has also been proven to be good for White.

### **15 e4 Nb6**

This is new, but it doesn't really alter the assessment of the position, which is somewhere between "slightly better for white" and "equal". A previous example in this line was 15...Bc4 16 Qa4 Nb6 17 Qb4 Qh5 18 Be3 Be2 19 Rd2 Rab8 20 Bxb6 axb6 21 Qd6 Rfc8 22 h3 Bf3 23 Rb1 xg2 24 Kxg2 Qa5 and the players agreed a draw in Van Wely-Short, Wijk aan Zee 2000.

### **16 Be3 Qh5 17 Rd6?!**

This creates complications which are not favourable for White. The straightforward 17 Bxb6 may be worth a try. Scherbakov gives the line 17...Rfb8 18 Be3!? Rxb3 19 axb3 Be2 20 Rxa7! with an advantage for White.

### **17...Nc4 18 Rxc6 Nxe3**

18...Na5 wins material, but following 19 Qa4 Nxc6 20 Qxa6 White has reasonable compensation for the exchange in the form of a pawn and the bishop pair.

### **19 Rxa6?**

This move looks very natural but danger is lurking, although it's difficult to see where it's coming from at the moment. 19 fxe3 (Scherbakov) is what White should play. Here White's weak pawn structure on the kingside compensates for the extra pawn. In *Chess Today* Scherbakov gives the possible continuation 19...Qe2 20 c4 Rad8 threatening ...Rd2 21 Bf1 Qf3 22 Bg2 Qe2 23 Bf1 with a draw by repetition of moves.

### **19...Rab8 20 Qa4 Rb2**

With a major threat of ...Qe2. This is also decisive against fxe3.

## 21 Re1

Defending against the threat...or is he?

## 21...Qe2!!

Anand plays the move anyway and it is still decisive! Capturing the queen allows mate in two with ...Rb1+ and so there is no defence. Brilliant play from Anand. I wonder how much was preparation? **0-1**

While I find Emms' page quite good, I would have liked to have seen more games, which should be no problem, given the highly topical openings that he covers. The game annotations while sufficient, could also be better.

My assessment of this section: 

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## ***Daring Defenses* by GM Neil McDonald and GM Jon Tisdall**

The Daring Defenses section is different from the other in so far as having two hosts, Neil McDonald, who also hosts the excellent French page, and Jon Tisdall, who is the author of one of my favourite books, *Improve Your Chess Now!*, a book that is packed with excellent advice for anybody who wants to improve his game.

The material is divided so that McDonald covers the “mainstream” daring defenses: Dutch, Gruenfeld and Old Indian Defenses, while Tisdall cover the more unusual ones, the "maverick" daring defenses: systems with 1...a6, 1...b6 & 1...Nc6 as well as the English Defense, the Benko, Blumenfeld, Fajarowicz, Budapest Gambits and the Albin Countergambit. It is furthermore divided with McDonald covering the mainstream update one month and Tisdall the maverick update the next. Otherwise, these updates would get out of hand, something which indeed happened for while when McDonald was sitting in

for Tisdall, who originally was the sole caretaker of this page.

McDonald's updates are very similar to his French site, very thorough introductions and 10-12 games per update, all with excellent annotations. A real treat.

Tisdall's updates are quite different. The updates are different from time to time, some only containing 15 games, while other times the total is up to about 30 games. His monthly round-up focuses on the more recent games. As we can see from the example below, Tisdall's game annotations focus on the openings and then become fairly loose after that, though not sinking to the level of Fedorowicz's annotations.

*Hoang Thanh Trang (2439) - Biro, S (2360) A52 FSGM October Budapest HUN (11), 16.10.2001*

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ng4 4 Bf4 g5 5 Bg3 Bg7 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 Nc3 Ngxe5 8 Nxe5 Nxe5 9 e3 d6 10 Be2 Be6 11 Qb3 Nd7**

11...Rb8!/? keeps up the pressure on c4 and is a far more active alternative. 12 Qa4+ Qd7 13 Qxa7 0-0 14 Bxe5 Bxe5 Black's activity and unopposed dark-squared bishop is very attractive compensation for the pawn. 15 e4 Bxc3+ (15...b6!/? ) 16 bxc3 b6 [CH: and here Tisdall goes on to show the remaining moves up to move 51, where Black wins]... 0-1 Hrubant, I-Choleva, Z CZE 1996.

**12 Rd1 0-0 13 0-0 f5 14 f4 g4 15 Qc2 a5 16 e4 Bxc3!/?**

A drastic reaction, but white has a simple plan of Bd3 and sooner or later black will have difficulties dealing with his various pawn weaknesses plus the powerful option of Nd5 - so he elects to get rid of the horse while he can.

**17 exf5 Bxf5 18 Qxc3 Nc5**

18...Qf6!/?

**19 Bf2 Ne4?!**

Tempting, but this knight is doing most of the work of keeping black's queenside intact.

19...Qe8!? 20 Rde1 (20 Bxc5 Qxe2 21 Bd2 Qc2 =) 20...Qc6 and black keeps a lid on white's potentially deadly bishops, while preparing to use the e-file and e4 square for counterplay.

**20 Qb3 Nxf2 21 Rxf2 Qe7?!**


21...Kh8 22 c5

**22 Qxb7 Be4 23 Qb3 Rab8 24 Qc3 h5**

24...Qh4

**25 Qxa5 Rxb2 26 Qxh5 Rxa2 27 c5 d5 28 Rxd5+- Ra1+ 29 Rd1 Rxd1+ 30 Bxd1 Rf5 31 Bb3+ Kg7 32 Qxg4+ Kh6 33 Qh3+ Kg7 34 Qg3+ Kh6 35 Qe3 Rxc5 36 f5+ Qg5 37 Qxc5 1-0**

Overall, this is another great page, where you will get excellent value for your money.

My assessment of this section: 

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### **Flank Openings by GM Tony Kosten**

Tony Kosten is a specialist on the English Opening, which he showed in his interesting little repertoire book, *The Dynamic English*. This comes to light in these updates, where he, aside from the English Opening, also cover the Reti Opening (1 Nf3 2 c4 or 2 g3), the Nimzowitsch-Larsen Attack (1 b3) as well as some more odd lines, the Sokolsky, Grob etc, though the latter ones have not received much attention from Kosten.

The monthly updates usually consist of 9-11 games. The

introductory text is very good, giving his students good insights to what's going on in their pet lines right now. However, the games and the annotations to these are the highlight of this page. Not only is the narrative good, so is the analysis, which is not only original, but also packed with new ideas and suggestions of his own. A representative example is the following from a recent update:

*Ivanchuk,V (2731) - Sutovsky,E (2664) A20 FIDE WCh KO Moscow RUS (3.2), 02.12.2001*

**1 c4 e5 2 g3 Nf6 3 Bg2 c6 4 d4 Bb4+ 5 Bd2 Bxd2+ 6 Qxd2 d6 7 Nc3**

I still like 7 e3 first.

**7...0-0 8 e3 Be6**

This move, and the plan it entails, is a critical test of White's set-up.

**9 b3 exd4 10 Qxd4!**

In my book, *The Dynamic English* I suggest that this move 'is more pertinent' than 10 exd4 Lobron,E-Huzman,A/Budapest 1996.

**10...d5**

Black should also investigate the move 10...Qa5!? pinning the knight, 11 Nge2 d5, Jirovsky,M-Stocek,J/CZE 2000, when 12 cxd5 Nxd5 transposes to the game. (12...Bxd5 13 b4)

**11 cxd5 Nxd5**

11...cxd5!? also requires tests, 12 Nge2 Nc6 13 Qd2 Qb6 14 0-0 Rad8 with a reasonable IQP position, ; 11...Bxd5!? also has its points, 12 f3!? Na6 13 Nge2 c5 14 Qh4 Bc6 15 0-0 level, Chabanon,J-Fontaine,R/Bescanon FRA 1999.

**12...Nge2!?**

This is Ivanchuk's new idea, eschewing the possibility of isolating Black's d-pawn, e.g. 12 Nxd5 Bxd5 13 Bxd5 cxd5 14 Ne2 (14 Nf3 - Ionescu,C-Marin,M/Bucharest ROM 2001) 14...Nc6 15 Qb2 Qe7 16 0-0 Qe4!? 17 Rad1 Ne5 18 d4 Rac8 with fair chances, Kurajica,B-Fressinet,L/Solin/Split CRO 2000.

**12...Qa5 13 Qa4! Qxa4 14 Nxa4 Na6**

Black plans ...c5, and then ...b5.

**15 Nd4! Rad8**

Brazenly allowing White to capture on e6, but he is not interested.

**16 0-0 Bc8!? 17 Rfc1**

White needs both his rooks on the queenside to support his coming queenside attack.

**17...Ndc7!?**

Black needs to shift the knight from d4, to be able to exploit the open d-file, so this knight heads for e6, but he temporarily gives himself 'linked knights'.

**18 Bf1!**

Putting paid to Black's plan, as the ensuing capture on a6 would wreck his queenside.

**18...Rd5**

Black has to force-through the advance ...c5.

**19 h4 g6 20 a3 c5 21 Nf3 b6**



Black has finally managed to set-up a solid queenside structure, but he needs one more move to separate his knights.

## **22 b4! Ne6!?**

22...cxb4?! 23 axb4 opens the a-file, and the b-pawn cannot be captured because of the hanging knight on c7. This is often the problem with 'linked knights'- they are fine defending each other, but are unable to do anything else at the same time.

## **23 Nc3**

White could win a pawn by 23 e4 Rdd8 24 Bxa6 Bxa6 25 bxc5 but has reasoned that the black counterplay is significant after 25...Nd4

## **23...Rf5 24 Nd2 cxb4 25 axb4 Nxb4 26 Rxa7**

Now we can see how far-sighted White was when he put his king's rook on c1 as far back as move seventeen, and left his other rook on a1. After much effort Black has solved his knight problem, but his isolated b-pawn is a weakness and the white kingside is rock-solid.

## **26...Nc6**

26...Rd8 27 Nc4 Nc6 28 Raa1 b5 29 Nb6 also loses the b-pawn.

## **27 Raa1 Rd8 28 Nce4 Ra5 29 Rab1 Ne7 30 Rxb6**

Inevitably the b-pawn has dropped, but Black still has some drawing chances, if he reaches an ending with rook and three pawns against rook and four, for instance.

## **30...Kg7 31 Bc4 Nc5 32 Nb3 Nxe4!?**

Sheer desperation, if 32...Nxb3 33 Bxb3 Ng5 is the menace, and we see that Black suffers from the absence of his e-pawn, f7 is exposed, 33...h6 34 Nd6 and Black must permit a further deterioration of his structure.

### **33 Nxa5 Rd2**

This counterattack wins f2, but it is quite irrelevant.

### **34 Bf1!**

By controlling h3 White avoids ...Nxf2-h3+. 34 Bb3? Nxf2 35 Rc7?! Nf5 is a bit messy.; and not 34 Rf1? Bh3

### **34...Nxf2 35 Nc4 Ra2 36 Rb2**

The point, the rooks are exchanged and Black's temporary initiative vanishes.

### **36...Rxb2 37 Nxb2 Ne4 38 Rc7 Kf6 39 Kh2 Be6 40 Bg2 Nf2**

Black has a solid position, but an exchange is just too much.

### **41 Kg1 Ng4 42 e4 Ne5 43 Nd1 N7c6 44 Ne3 Nd4 45 Bf1 Nef3+**

The knight goes on a 'wild goose chase'. If he could only swap his d4-knight for the white knight on e3, and leave himself with a knight on e5, he might have a chance, but as it stands he does not have enough squares for two knights.

### **46 Kf2 g5 47 Nd5+ Ke5 48 Bg2 g4 49 Ke1 Ne1 50 Bh1 f5 51 Nf4 Nec2+**


Black has been forced to weaken his structure, and his knights have no good squares.

### **52 Kd2 fxe4 53 Rc5+**

53 Nxe6 e3+ 54 Kd3 is also more than adequate.

**53...Kd6 54 Rxc2 e3+ 55 Kc3 Nxc2 56 Kxc2 Bf5+ 57 Kc3 Ke5 58 Nd3+ 1-0**

All in all, another very good site. The only drawback is the lack of coverage of the odd, off-beat openings that also be covered under this heading, but I'm sure most people are satisfied with what they can find on this page at present.

**My assessment of this section:** 

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Chesspublishing.com as an overall product has improved since my review in 2000, with new features, improvements on the existing features as well as good games giving good or excellent updates. They are still not as well known as they should be, but that shouldn't deter you from subscribing to some of your favourite openings, or perhaps the entire package.

**My overall assessment of Chesspublishing.com:** 

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### ***The Ratings***

 — **A poor book, not recommended.**

 — **Not a particularly good book, but perhaps useful for some readers.**

 — **A useful book.**

 — **Good book, recommended.**



— **Excellent book, highly recommended.**

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