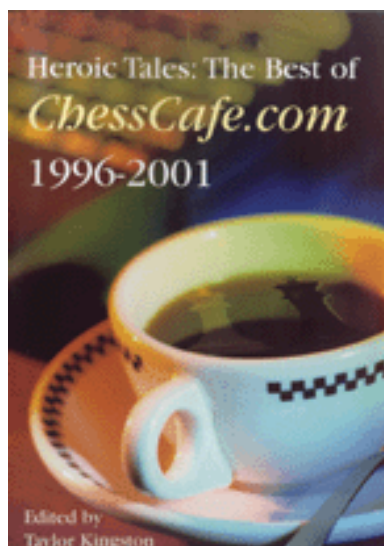




C O L U M N I S T S

Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen

**Reviewed this month:**

***King's Indian Defence
Mar del Plata Variation***
by Svetozar Gligoric

King's Indian with h3 (CD)
by Martin Breutigam

King's Indian Attack (CD)
by Don Maddox

New in Chess Yearbook 64
by Genna Sosonko
& Paul van der Sterren et al.

The Old KID in Town

In this month's Checkpoint, I have a rare opportunity to review a book written by the inventor of the variation about which he is writing. In the past, a book has been written by Polugaevsky on his variation in the Sicilian (*The Birth of a Variation*), and books have been written by Sveshnikov on both the c3 Sicilian and Sveshnikov Sicilian, both of which, however, were not invented but popularized by him. Therefore, the author of the

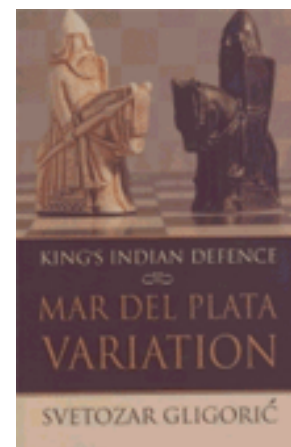


first book to be reviewed this month falls into a very rare category. The author is Svetzovar Gligoric and the variation is the ever topical Mar del Plata Variation of the King's Indian Defense. In addition to this book, we have two ChessBase CD-ROMs as well as the latest installment in the popular series of yearbooks from *New in Chess*.

All I have left to say is **Season Greetings** to everybody and enjoy!

King's Indian Defence - Mar del Plata Variation by Svetozar Gligoric, 2002 Batsford, Softcover, Figurine Algebraic Notation, 160 pp., \$19.95

The name of this variation comes from the place where it was first used, in the 1953 tournament in Mar del Plata, and the game was Najdorf-Gligoric, a game which Black won. The Mar del Plata Variation arises after the moves: **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 Be2 e5 7 0-0 Nc6 8 d5 Ne7 9 Ne1 Nd7**





At least that is the story that I think Gligoric is trying to tell us, because from this book, I don't see the position that he considers the starting one for his variation adequately described. Because if it is the one after 9 Ne1 Nd7, the

book is mislabeled, as it also contains coverage of 9 Nd2, 9 Bd2, 9 Bg5 and 9 b4.

However, I felt obliged to check the validity of this claim, and found that the statement isn't true! As far back as 1926, the position after 9...Nd7 had arisen in the game Hönlinger-Dünmann, DSV Kongres 1926, and it was tried on several occasions before Gligoric's game against Najdorf.

There are a couple of other hints, but neither makes a lot of sense. For example, in his annotations to the Najdorf game, he writes after move 19: "At this moment, the Mar del Plata Variation was born!" But given that the position has only been played a couple of times since, this is a rather odd statement. This is a less than convincing start of what could have been an excellent book.

Before moving on to how the material has been divided, I have to note with some disappointment that Batsford for some reason has gone back to a single-column format, which nowadays more or less exclusively is only used by American

publishers when there isn't enough material to make the book look otherwise attractive and worthwhile, wasting an almost endless with diagrams. This unfortunately also applies to this book. Given that no editor is listed in the credits for this book, it appears the person responsible for this decision shall for now remain nameless.

The material is divided up as follows:

- List of Illustrative Games (1 page)
- A Historical Introduction (2 pages)
- **Part One: The Development of Ideas that led to the Mar del Plata Variation** (2 pages)
- The Birth of the Mar del Plata Variation (11 pages)
- A Short Review of the Ideas in the Period 1953-2002 (2 pages)
- Variation 9 Ne1 Nd7 10 Nd3 (11 pages)
- Variation 9 Ne1 Nd7 10 Be3 (19 pages)
- **Part Two: Playable Lines after 9 Ne1 Ne8** (1 page)
- Variation 9 Ne1 Ne8 10 f4 (3 pages)
- Variation 9 Ne1 Ne8 10 Nd3 f5 11 f4 (4 pages)
- Variation 9 Ne1 Ne8 10 Nd3 f5 11 Bd2 Nf6 (5 pages)
- Variation 9 Ne1 Ne8 10 Nd3 f5 11 Bd2 fxe4 12 Nxe4 (4 pages)
- Variations after 9 Ne1 Ne8 10 Be3 f5 11 f3 (20 pages)
- **Part Three:**
- Variation 9 Ne1 Nd7 10 f3 f5 11 g4 (6 pages)
- Variation 9 Nd2 (18 pages)

- Variation 9 Bd2 (6 pages)
- Variation 9 Bg5 6 pages)
- Variation 9 b4 - "Bayonet Attack" (33 pages)
- Index of Variations (2 pages)

There are several things that can already be said about the book by looking at the contents page. First of all, it cannot only be the Mar del Plata Variation that is covered; however it arises, the lines given in Part Three have little or nothing to do with the title of the book. Furthermore, the allocation of pages is off. In my database I found roughly 10,250 games (Gligoric mentions that his database has around 8,000 games) with the position that arises after Black's 8th move, not including correspondence games. However, Gligoric, from what I have seen, does not mention any correspondence games. As we can see from the page counts above, he has paid very little attention to alternatives other than 9 Ne1, although based on what I found, there is some basis to divide up the material much differently.

In the 10,250 games I have available, 4,390 continue with 9 Ne1, 2,544 with 9 Nd2, 2,401 with 9 b4, 273 with 9 Bg5, and 180 with 9 Bd2, while White's other alternatives have each been seen less than 50 times. Given the tremendous popularity of 9 Nd2 and 9 b4 in particular, they should have received better coverage, assuming the author's aim was to present all alternatives after 8...Ne7. Gligoric doesn't mention what his intentions are, but if they had been to cover all 9th move alternatives, with a special focus on 9 Ne1, then he

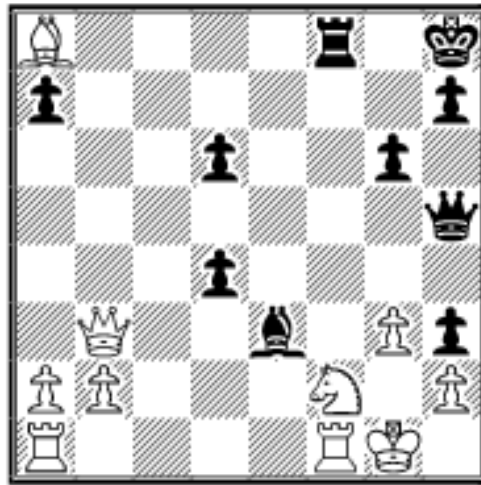
also failed, as there are interesting moves such as 9 Nh4, 9 Kh1 and 9 a4 to mention but a few (all of which are mentioned in the much more general *NCO*). Therefore already at this point, it seems like Gligoric is not doing right by us.

Moving on to the content, the next thing we find is “Illustrative Games”, which was called something different in the Table of Contents, another of many editorial mishaps in the book. There are 38 games listed, but given the way the theory inside the book is covered with many complete games in the notes, it would have been better to have an index of complete games, rather than this list.

The section entitled “A Historical Introduction” starts out with the following observation: "In chess opening theory it is common practice to name variations after the places where they have been played for the first time, instead of naming them, more justly after their creators." Say what?

He gives the example of Rubinstein's opening choice in a game in Meran 1924, where the opening now bears the name the Meran Defence instead of the Rubinstein Defence. I can't believe that someone like Gligoric would write such things. It is in fact very common that openings are named for people who created them as well as those who popularized them. Take any opening and look for yourself. In my recent book on the 4 e3 Nimzo-Indian, which is also known as the Rubinstein Nimzo-Indian, I mention the name of 24 variations; of these 16 are named after players, and only one after a place where it was played. In the King's Indian, we also see that pattern, e.g., the Averbakh, the Sämisch, the Panno and the Smyslov Variations can be mentioned. In the Sicilian Defence, you have the Scheveningen, but also the Paulsen, the Taimanov, the Kan, the Najdorf, the Sozin, the Sveshnikov, the Alapin Variations.

In Part One of the book, we first come across The Development of Ideas that led to the Mar del Plata Variation, which is a very short and not particularly interesting introduction to the next chapter, Birth of the Mar del Plata Variation. Here there is some more history behind the main line in the King's Indian, leading up to the game Najdorf-Gligoric, which I mentioned in the beginning of this review. The annotations to this game are almost identical with the notes that can be found in the author's recently released best game collection, *I Play against Pieces*. There are in total seven games which are featured as main games in the book that are also annotated in *I Play against Pieces*, and these games are generally the best annotated. This along with the game Gligoric-Fischer, Bled 1961, for which Fischer's annotations from *My 60 Memorable Games* are used, with Gligoric adding some additional comments. However, while these games are easily the best annotated, it is not very difficult to find flaws in other notes. For example in game 5, L.Schmid-Gligoric, European Team Championship, Hamburg 1965 (a game which is in both Gligoric books), we enter the game after 26 moves:



The following are
Gligoric comments:

"Black has the superior
position, although he is
a rook down."

27 Qd5

White has calculated
that this manoeuvre would destroy Black's attack.
Not 27 Bg2 Bxg2 28 Kxg2 Qf3+ 29 Kh3 Rf5."

And here I ask, why not? In the game, Black
obtained a winning position after 27...Qe2! 28
Qxd6 Kg7!! . But the above line leads to a draw
after 30 Qb8+ and the black king cannot get away
from the checks as 30...Kg7 31 Qxa7+ Kh6?? runs
into 32 Ng4+, and White is winning.

The theoretical coverage in the following chapters
is quite similar to what was found in Gligoric's
book, *Play The Nimzo-Indian Defence* (Pergamon
1985). This means that the complete games have
included a lot of longer examples and complete
games in the annotations, though with a minimum
of narrative explanation. Also suggestions from
Gligoric himself are few and far between.

Looking at the theoretical coverage, it doesn't
appear to be particularly up-to-date either; many
moves and nuances are left out and even obviously
flawed moves stand uncorrected.

In addition to this, two different size diagrams are

used, leaving everything looking terribly confusing when both sizes are used on the same page.

In the beginning of the book, there is an “Author's Foreword” (which is not mentioned in the Table of Contents) in which Gligoric mentions that this book originally was published in Serbo-Croat in 2000, a second edition appeared in German in 2001, while this book is the enlarged English edition. I would not want to see the two previous editions that made Batsford agree to this project. I simply don't understand why anybody would be interested in publishing something as disorganized, incomplete and uninspired as this book. It is a shame that we still find publishers willing to publish books such as this and expect people to buy them. Batsford does sometimes publish good opening books; Lane's books on the Closed Sicilian and the Colle, and Gutman's on the 4...Qh4 Scotch are good examples of this, but this book is at the other end of the scale, and I really recommend that people don't waste their money on this book.

If you want to buy a book by Gligoric, go for his best games collection, which is a far better book and also a better read.

My assessment of this book: 

King's Indian with h3 by Martin Breutigam, 2002
ChessBase, Figurine Algebraic Notation, CD-ROM, \$29.95

The opening CDs from ChessBase are on occasion quite difficult to compare. On one hand there are CDs covering broad subjects such as the Slav Defence (as done by Rogozenko) and then we have a CD such as the present one that covers a much more detailed area of opening theory.



The author of the present CD is German FM Martin Breutigam, who on the back cover of the case is described as one of Germany's strongest players, who aside from working as a chess journalist, also contributes to ChessBase. The back cover blurb tells us that he has successfully employed the system with h3 against the King's Indian in many of his own games, which of course always is a plus.

We are also told that this opening system has been used by such players as Krasenkow (who probably is the leading player in these lines), Bareev, Ivanchuk and Beliavsky.

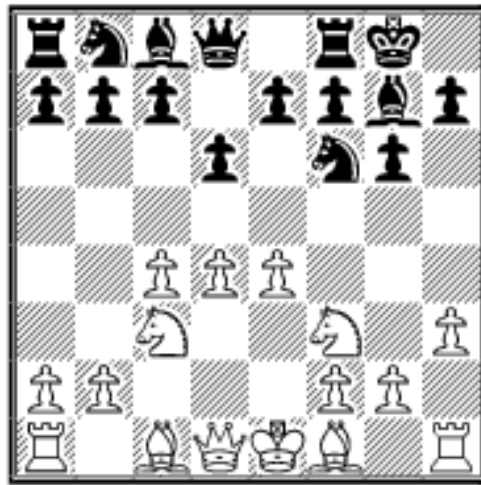
This CD contains some main sections:

- A database with 10,452 games
- A database tree
- 20 training games
- 18 database texts
- 131 annotated games

In my opinion the three last items are the most interesting, as the former two can be derived from

you own database, provided you have a good one.

The h3 King's Indian is an opening system to which I paid close attention in an earlier life, although I only managed to play it once, in a different move order and which yielded the draw I needed to win a prize in a tournament. This is a very interesting system if you like some action on the board, something that often happens in the lines where Black plays **6...e5** after **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 h3**.



As already noted, I find the database texts on these CDs some of the most important material, and this CD this is certainly no exception. The first one lists how the material has been divided and gives us a short

historical introduction. Next we find a text with which I am very impressed. It is called Basic Knowledge, and it breaks down the pawn structure of the lines in which Black plays 6...e5. The explanations are excellent and give a very good insight to the understanding of these lines. My only wish is that Breutigam had done something similar for the pawn structures in the exchange line and the lines with 6...c5, both of which require subtle positional understanding, something which all club players certainly do not possess.

The database texts are divided up as follows:

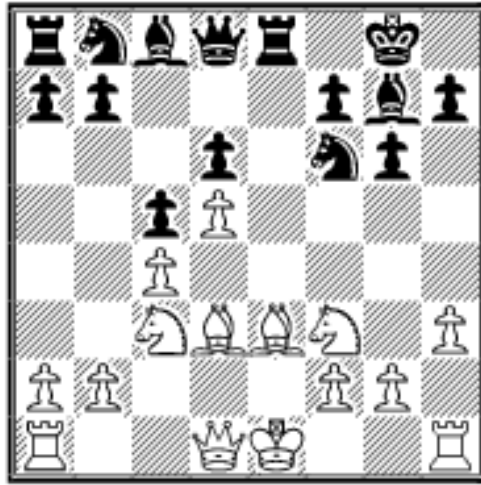
- Basic Knowledge (Main Variations with e7-e5)
 - A1) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5 Ne8
 - A2) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5 Nh5
 - A3) 7.d5 Nbd7 (or Na6) 8.Be3 Nc5
 - A4) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5 c6
 - A5) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5 Na6 8.Be3 Nh5
 - A6) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5 Na6 8.Bg5
 - A7) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 e5 7.d5 a5 (without ...Nc5)
 - A8) The Exchange Variation (7.dxe5)
 - B1) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 c5 7.d5 e6 8.Bd3 exd5
 - B2) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 c5 7.d5 Na6 or 8...Na6
 - B3) 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3 c5 7.d5 Sidelines
 - C) 6.h3 ... (without immediate ...e5 or ...c5)

Back when I studied these lines it was mainly B1, B2 and B3 I paid attention to as they had most relevance for my opening repertoire when playing Black. Therefore I will take a closer look at these particular lines.

In B1, Breutigam starts out by correctly mentioning that the lines in this chapter have lost some of their popularity on account of White having two good answers, taking on d5 with either the e-pawn or the c-pawn. Taking with the c-pawn takes the game into a very topical line in the Modern Benoni.

The main divide arises after **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 h3 c5 7 d5 e6 8 Bd3 exd5 9 exd5 Re8+** (9...Qe7+ is also covered, but 10 Qe2 as I played in my game against IM Donaldson is

just better for White) **10 Be3**



Breutigam mentions, but doesn't cover 10 Kf1 which is an interesting move, unless Black knows how to meet it, and that is by no means obvious for the uninitiated. Here Breutigam lists the

following options for Black:

- a1) 10...Bh6
- a2) 10...Nbd7
- a3) 10...Bf5
- a4) 10...b5

But these are not all of Black's options; the immediate 10...Nh5!? (instead of playing it only after 10...Nbd7) should have been mentioned, as well as Finegold's suggestion of 10...Nfd7!?.

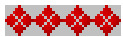
10...Bh6 is the old main line, but has, according to Breutigam, always been considered inappropriate. This, however, is not the case as players such as Spassky, Polugaevsky and the ultra-solid Swede Andersson all played the move back in the 1970s. If it was considered dubious, I doubt you would find these players taking it on. However, Breutigam's coverage focuses on 11 0-0 Bxe3 12 fxe3 Qe7 (taking on e3 with the rook is too dangerous due to the weak dark squares on the king side) or

12...Nbd7 13 e4 Qe7. In my opinion the Black queen doesn't belong on this square this early in this line, and while an amazing number of GMs seem to disagree with this observation, it can relatively easily be established by some analysis. Although Breutigam's coverage indicates that Black is doing himself a disfavour by playing 10...Bh6, I'm still of the opinion that Black is fine in this line, provided he knows what he is doing.

The move 10...Bf5 is probably the one that strikes most lower-rated players as odd-looking. Breutigam doesn't like this move either, dismissing it by giving the game Hübner-Shirov, Manila Interzonal 1990, which saw the continuation 11 Bxf5 gxf5 12 0-0 Ne4 (the idea behind 10...Bf5), and now White chose to straighten out the pawns with 13 Nxe4 (rather than the older continuation 13 Ne2, which the author dismisses based on one game where White doesn't play the critical move). Shirov played 13...fxe4, but soon ended up in trouble. However, my old idea was to play 13...Rxe4 and then answer a move like 14 Qc2 with 14...Qf6 with an interesting game. My analysis back 12 years gave Black equal play, but this is perhaps pushing it a bit, but Black is certainly not without chances.

This finger-pointing in the database text possibly makes you think that this CD is off the mark in general, but that is certainly not the case. Overall, it's a very decent product that is quite worthwhile for club players, while stronger players may want some more detailed coverage and more independent ideas from the author.

I have to add that I like his training exercises and they are quite helpful in generating a better understanding for the ins and outs in these lines. One thing, however, struck me as odd. Most of the comments are in English, but once in a while something pops up in German, which of course is not everybody's copy of tea. Overall though, for the audience at which it is aimed, this CD makes a very good choice for both players of black in the King's Indian and those who want a new weapon against it.

My assessment of this CD: 

[Order](#) *King's Indian with h3* by Martin Breutigam

King's Indian Attack by Don Maddox, 2002
ChessBase GmbH, Figurine Algebraic Notation,
CD-ROM, \$29.00

This CD, by a former editor of *Chess Life*, differs in style from the previous on several counts. For example it includes, in my opinion, terrible computer-generated opening reports which perhaps are of some statistical value, but for the most part are not. He has also small annotated 'non-games' where he describes and comments on typical scenarios in the King's Indian Attack. I quite like these, although not all alternatives are explained equally well or why other



moves were ignored at this particular juncture. He also has some insightful database texts which are very informative for those who are considering playing this opening system for the first time. In addition, he also has some 100 or so annotated games to provide further insights to this opening.


One database text is the one called Masters of the King's Indian Attack. In that text, Maddox tells us which players he thinks have mastered this system particularly well. Several world champions such as Smyslov, Botvinnik, Tal, Petrosian, Fischer, Karpov and Kasparov are mentioned, but there are no links to any games played by them. The games could have provided the student with help understanding what these players did so much better than other players in this system. Furthermore, it is not clear whether these players all played the system with White or if they in fact played it as Black. The text about Karpov, for example, leads us to believe that Karpov only plays it as Black. It was quite confusing.

The King's Indian Attack was a favourite of Fischer's with White and in addition, the opening system was heavily featured in Dvoretsky/Yusupov's excellent book *Opening Preparation*. Recently Emms also recommended its use against the French in his *Attacking with 1 e4*, while he made a point of mentioning why it is less attractive against other openings such as the Caro-Kann or the Sicilian. Maddox clearly is not dissuaded by that and recommends it against pretty much everything, with different move orders, as the

King's Indian Attack can be reached a variety of ways, usually reaching a set-up that includes e4, d3, Nf3, Nbd2, g3, Bg2 and 0-0 for White.

I must say that I think that many players will enjoy this opening if they decide to take it up. However, regarding it as a panacea would also be misguided, and it appears there may be some holes in the coverage, e.g., 1 e4 c6 2 d3 (aside from Emms, I know Larsen has expressed his doubts about the qualities of this move) and now 2...e5, after which Black can obtain equality in several ways.

For stronger players, this CD may be of very limited use, but for players rated up to about 2000-2100, there could be a lot of worthwhile material.

My assessment of this CD: 

New in Chess Yearbook 64 by Genna Sosonko & Paul van der Sterren et al., 2002 Interchess, Hardcover, Figurine Algebraic Notation, 236 pp, \$29.00

It happened again! I gave vol. 63 a favourable review, as I had given the previous volume, and it took forever for this volume to arrive. What's a reviewer to do?!

The contents follow the pattern of previous Yearbooks:

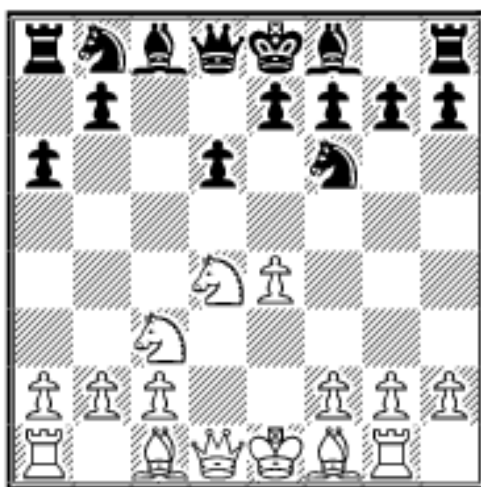


- Forum - which this time consists of eight 'letters' on various topics (to which I will return shortly)
- Sosonko's Corner - which this time, using the game Kramnik-Bacrot, Paris 2002, discusses a-pawn moves in the opening.
- Opening Surveys - 35 surveys in this volume
- Book Reviews by Glenn Flear - this time with a contribution by Jeroen Bosch on a video tape by Kindermann on the Dutch Leningrad
- Photo Gallery - eight pictures in this volume

Forum, as always, has some interesting letters. One example is one by my teammate from the British 4NCL league, Jonathan Rogers, who mentions a game in which he was the first to play 9...Bd7 in the Spanish Berlin Defence, a move that was later used by Kramnik against Kasparov in their London 2000 World Championship match. The letter was in response to Zoltan Almasi's interesting survey on the move in the previous volume, where Almasi left out any mention of Rogers' game. Zoltan Almasi does reply to Rogers in this volume, but does so quite arrogantly. Then there are some new ideas by GM Vera, the strong correspondence player Gerd Branding and Evgeny Kobylkin in the Queen's Gambit Accepted, Classical French and Catalan respectively. In addition, GM van der Sterren discusses an idea in the Lasker Variation in the Queen's Gambit Declined. The move he discusses is supposed to be a novelty, but I remember analyzing it back in 1994 along with some other ideas in the Lasker Variation. Finally René Olthof discusses the Open Ruy Lopez, where Black

increasingly is facing difficulties maintaining the balance.

Moving over to the surveys, there are, as usual, many good ones. The first survey is by Rogozenko, and features a move that would have fit perfectly into last month's column's headline, *The Key Move is g2-g4*. The move in question appears after the initial: **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6**, and now **6 Rg1!?**



By all means, don't show the move to any scholastic players as they will quickly find a reason for not ever wanting to castle kingside. Although it generally is too early to cast a final verdict on this silly-looking move,

I have a distinct feeling that Black should be doing very well after both 6...e5 and 6...b5, which is also what Rogozenko seems to believe.

Aside from that there are several good surveys by Tibor Karolyi (who, in one of his surveys, pays a tribute to the late Tony Miles), Tibor Fogarasi, Istvan Almasi (brother of Zoltan Almasi), Igor Stohl, Jeroen Bosch, Juan Morgado (whose survey on the Petroff contains a very interesting rook endgame), Lukacs/Hazai as well as several others.

The openings that are featured most often in the surveys in the present volume are:

- Sicilian (6 surveys)
- Ruy Lopez (3 surveys)
- Queen's Gambit Declined (3 surveys)
- French (2 surveys)
- Petroff (2 surveys)
- Slav (2 surveys)
- Nimzo-Indian (2 surveys)
- King's Indian (2 surveys)

The remaining openings that are covered in this volume only have one survey each. It is important to remember that not all openings are covered in each volume; in fact some openings don't appear for several volumes. This doesn't mean that the opening is at a standstill, but that the editors have preferred other openings more or that they haven't come across anything that caught the eye. The New in Chess Yearbook shows different new trends, interesting ideas, forgotten ideas that deserve attention or just the current theoretical status of a particular topical line.

Therefore you may not find what you are looking for in each volume, but personally I have found that by studying the material presented in the Yearbooks you will often find something that relates to your own repertoire and you will be able to apply some of the ideas presented there.

The Yearbook series from New in Chess is the best look into the current status of contemporary opening theory that is currently on the market. For those interested in opening theory, and I think most

of are to some extent, this is the book to buy for the latest news. Admittedly it may be a little difficult for lower-rated players, as nearly all games have no verbal comment, but only annotations by variations.

My assessment of this book: 

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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 **TOP OF PAGE**

 **HOME**

 **COLUMNS**

 **LINKS**

 **ARCHIVES**

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