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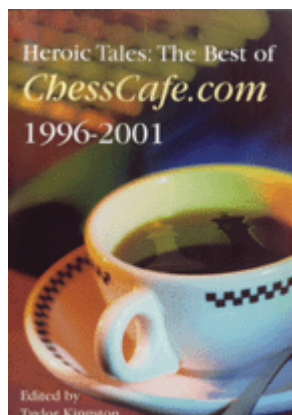
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COLUMNISTS

Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen



Reviewed this month:

The Nimzo-Indian Rubinstein

by Angus Dunnington

King's Indian Battle Plans

by Andrew Martin

Dutch Defense - New And Forgotten Ideas!

by Nikolay Minev & John Donaldson

Budapest Fajarowicz

by Lev Gutman

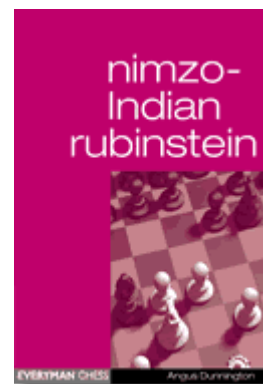
New In Chess Yearbook -Volume 70
by Genna Sosonko & Paul van der Sterren**Main Lines and Daring Defenses**

This month I will take a look at some recent books on queen's pawn openings, two of the books deal with main lines, while two others examine more off-beat lines. Finally, I will take a brief look at New in Chess Yearbook Volume 70.

The Nimzo-Indian Rubinstein by Angus Dunnington, 2003 Everyman Chess, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 160pp., \$19.95

My latest opening book was exactly on this same topic; consequently I have a reasonably well-founded idea of what was done well and what was lacking. So, let's have a quick look at the contents:

- Bibliography (1 page)
- Introduction (3 pages)
- **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3**
- **Part One: 4...b6**
- 1 4...b6: White Plays 5 Ne2 (27 pages)
- 2 4...b6: White Plays 5 Bd3 and Nf3 (39 pages)



- **Part Two: 4...c5**
- 3 4...c5: White Plays 5 Ne2 (32 pages)
- 4 4...c5: White Plays 5 Bd3 - The Hübner Variation (20 pages)
- **Part Three: 4...0-0 (planning ...d5)**
- 5 4...0-0: White Plays 5 Ne2 (9 pages)
- 6 4...0-0: White Plays 5 Bd3 and Ne2 (9 pages)
- 7 4...0-0: White Plays 5 Bd3 and Nf3 (14 pages)
- Index of Variations (2 pages)
- Index of Complete Games (1 page)


My first point of concern is with the bibliography, which only included three books: *ECO*, *NCO*, and my book: *The Nimzo-Indian 4 e3*. It is a bit worrying that he doesn't include *Chess Informant*, the *NIC Yearbooks*, or any other book on the Nimzo for that matter.

In the introduction, Dunnington recommends that “for a ‘fool-proof’ repertoire you should use this book in conjunction with other sources of information,” but this just seems to be his explanation for lapses in the coverage of 4th move alternatives for Black such as 4...Nc6, 4...d6, and other moves. These could well have been covered in rather short fashion if the author had so desired.

The present book is presented as a more digestible and easier to read alternative to my book, and to a large extent this is the way it comes across when reading through the material. However, many shortcuts were made in the coverage in order to cut down on the number of pages, while also making room for more prose. The fact that he still covers the opening reasonably well is quite an achievement, but on occasion the theoretical coverage suffers.

Several times, it seems like Dunnington has focused more on trimming the material than on giving an updated and more concise presentation. For example in the following line: **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 0-0 5 Bd3 d5 6 Nf3 c5 7 0-0 cxd4 8 exd4 dxc4 9 Bxc4 a6**, I had 10 a3 as the critical line that lead to a slight edge for White in Aleksandrov-Kunte, Dubai 2001, and this was later confirmed by the game Ramirez-Khenkin, Santo Domingo 2003. However, this possibility isn't even mentioned by Dunnington, who instead covers 10 a4, 10 Ne5, and 10 Bg5, and not with the most recent examples either.

It would be quite unfair of me to claim that this is a common thread throughout the book, but it happens every now and again. Another thing that bothered me is that while this book is supposedly easier to digest, he has not avoided huge blocks of comments and variations spanning 2-3 pages in length. Overall, this book leaves a pleasant impression, but it isn't without flaws. Especially when it comes to in-depth coverage with supporting independent analysis and improvements over existing theory, for that you must look elsewhere.

My assessment of this book: 

Order *The Nimzo-Indian Rubinstein*
by Angus Dunnington

King's Indian Battle Plans by Andrew Martin, 2003 Thinkers' Press, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 380pp., \$29.95

“Most books on chess openings are just full of variations with little in the way of guidance or plans – this huge book is different. Not only is it loaded with top notch annotated games by international master Andrew Martin, one of the world's experts on this system, but the games are peppered with hundreds of ‘ideas’.”



That's how the back cover blurb describes this massive volume from Thinkers' Press. Martin elaborates on this in the introduction with the remark: “This book doesn't make an attempt to be exhaustive. Every variation will NOT be covered although there is something for everyone here. The approach is a little different. Instead it's a compendium of King's Indian play, an unashamed collection of variety and ideas... an arsenal. It's an attempt to encourage you to become a more versatile, modern competitor with plenty of thoughts running through your brain and tricks up your sleeve.”

Before looking at whether he succeeds, let's see how he has divided the material:

- Symbols (1 page)
- Introduction (1 page)
- A Note from the Publisher (1 page)
- Celebration Games (15 pages)
- How Not to Play the King's Indian (9 pages)
- Four Pawns Attack (33 pages)
- Saemisch (50 pages)
- Averbakh (22 pages)
- Fianchetto (18 pages)
- Seirawan / Kramer / Odds & Ends (33 pages)
- Classical:
- Makagonov E90 (13 pages)
- E91 (24 pages)

- E92 (25 pages)
- Gligorich / Petrosian E93 (4 pages)
- E94 (31 pages)
- Bayonet E97 (40 pages)
- Mar del Plata E98 (7 pages)
- Mar del Plata E99 (20 pages)
- Bibliography (1 page)

It's rare to see an author being allowed by the publisher to write so much. Yet a point of criticism immediately arises upon seeing the page allocation – there aren't any indexes. Particularly an index of players would have been useful, i.e. knowing how a certain player plays the King's Indian as Black or how another player handles the White pieces. I have always found that by modeling your repertoire in a particular opening after a certain player and by carefully studying those games, you will learn a lot about the opening and how an expert handles the different lines. This book clearly doesn't allow for this.

The first two chapters, Celebration Games and How Not to Play the King's Indian are both very good. They are instructive and contain plenty of useful tips and good advice. No space is being wasted. That however changes once we come into the regular chapters. These chapters usually start out with a verbal introduction, which in some cases, such as the Saemisch Variation, is quite insightful. Yet other chapters, like the Fianchetto Variations, barely tells us anything, in fact the ½-page Martin has written almost insultingly lacks anything of value.

Another point of criticism is the almost unashamed use of database dumping. Long game examples with few or no annotations or evaluations are given everywhere, taking up valuable space that could be put to better use. In fact a lot of the formatting and editing reveals that it has been cut and pasted directly from ChessBase. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this, but how about making it less obvious? Moreover it isn't particularly easy on the eye with all those brackets and parentheses in the middle of a comment, or having the font suddenly changing to *italics*. This leaves a rather poor impression.

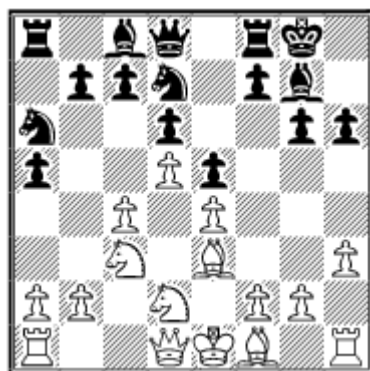
Still this criticism is relatively small compared to the overall very positive impression I got from reading the book. It is immediately obvious that Martin knows the fine points of his topic very well, and that makes for a very worthy book. It is, as promised, packed with ideas and the author's enthusiasm can't help but get across to the reader.

Let's look at a game example:

Krasenkow,M (2573) - Antoniewski,R (2446) [E90]
POL-chT Glogow (6), 13.09.2001

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 0-0 6 h3 Krasenkow's games are a great advertisement for 6 h3. **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 had to block the center. **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 favor White because he wants to play g2-g4 anyway, and he gains a kind of 'half tempo' by this procedure. Sometimes the sequence g2-h4, 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!?**



IDEA: He's going for the traditional f7-f5, but this move doesn't feel right. Sometimes one has to probe further. 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, e.g., 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 unclear) 13...Nh7 14 Rg1 f6! 15 gxf6 Rxf6 16 0-0-0 Qf8 unclear.] **11 g4 Ndc5 12 h4 Bd7 13 h5** Krasenkov was probably more than happy. He has his usual kingside initiative, and the black Knights seem to have drifted a long way away from

the action. However...

[CH: From here onwards, you will have to check out the book for the annotations, but they are as good and as instructive as the preceding comments - I have only left the punctuation and the rest of the game for your entertainment.]

13...f5 14 g5 f4? 15 Bxc5 Nxc5 16 gxh6! Bxh6 17 hxg6 Kg7 18 Qf3 Qg5 19 Bh3!+- Bxh3 20 Rxh3 Rf6 21 Ke2 Rxc6 22 Qh1! Qf6 23 Nf3 Kf7 24 Nh4 Rg5 25 Nf3 Rg6 26 Rh5 Ke8 27 Qh3 Rd8 28 Rf5 Qg7 29 Rh1 Nd7 30 Rh5 Bg5 31 Nxc6 Rxc6 32 Qe6+ 1-0

Nearly 400 pages of this can only help to increase your understanding of the King's Indian. Good luck.

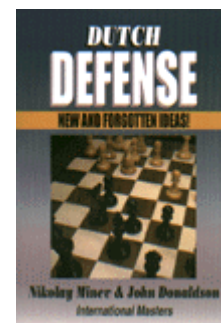
My assessment of this book: ♦♦♦♦♦

Dutch Defense - New And Forgotten Ideas! by Nikolay Minev & John Donaldson, 2003 Thinkers' Press, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 160pp., \$19.95

Both of these authors have published many excellent books and have, on more than one occasion, produced really good books together. This obviously led me to have very high expectations with regards to the present book, but I was quite disappointed once I received it.

Let's look at what they included:

- Contents (5 pages)
- Symbols (1 page)



- Introduction (4 pages)
- Chapters (1 page)
- A80 (35 pages)
- A81 (8 pages)
- A82 (14 pages)
- A83 (14 pages)
- A84 (12 pages)
- A85 (20 pages)
- A86 (5 pages)
- A87 (5 pages)
- A88 (6 pages)
- A89 (3 pages)
- A90 (6 pages)
- A92 (4 pages)
- A93-95 (3 pages)
- A96-97 (6 pages)
- A98-99 (6 pages)

As with the previous book from Thinkers' Press there isn't an index of players. A further flaw is the fact that the title really doesn't match the contents. The "new and forgotten ideas" sounds good, but I didn't find this to be a particularly fitting title once you inspect some of the material. Let's scrutinize some of the games from a randomly picked chapter: A84. The game annotations are those by Minev and Donaldson in the book:

Kurajica, B-Zorman, V
Ljubljana 1999

[CH: In Megabase 2003, Black is given as Vojko, Zorman]

1 d4 b6 2 Nf3 Bb7 3 e3 e6 4 c4 f5 5 a3 Nf6 6 Nc3 Bd6? 7 Bd3 0-0 8 Qc2 c5 9 d5 a6 10 0-0 b5 11 e4! Qc7

With his queenside frozen, Black is clearly in an inferior position. Perhaps he should try 11...b4.

[CH: After 11...b4 12 axb4 cxb4 13 e5, Black is as good as busted in this line. However, in the game continuation, Black should probably have opted for 12...bxc4 13 Bxc4 fxe4, even though that isn't particularly good for Black either.]

12 Re1 Ng4 13 h3 Ne5 14 Nxe5 Bxe5 15 exf5 Bxc3 16 Qxc3 bxc4 17 Bxc4 exd5

18 Re7 Rf7 19 Re8+ Rf8 20 Bh6! 1-0

For if 20...gxh6 then 21 Rxf8+ Kxf8 22 Qf6+ Kg8 23 Re1, or 20...d6 21 Rael, followed by 22 R1e7.

Moore-Horseman, D

Birmingham 1955

1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 3 Nf3 c5?! 4 Nc3 Nf6 5 g3 b6 6 Bg2 Bb7 7 d5! g6 8 0-0 Na6 9 Bf4 Bg7 10 Ng5! h6

Mandatory was 10...exd5, but after 11 Nxd5 White has a clear advantage.

11 Nf7!

A typical trick in many openings!

11...Kxf7 12 dxe6+ dxe6 13 Bxb7 Nb4 14 a3! Qxd1 15 Raxd1 Nc2 16 Bxa8 Rxa8 17 e3 Nh5 18 Rd7+ Kg8 19 Rxg7+! 1-0

For if 19...Kxg7 20 Be5+ and 21 Rcl.

Lange-Diener,E

Weidenau 1937

1 d4 f5 2 c4 e6 3 e3 d5 4 Nf3 c6 5 Bd3 Bd6 6 0-0 Qf6

ECO shows only 6...Nd7, 6...Nf6 and 6...Nh6.

7 Nc3 Ne7?

Correct is 7...Nh6.

8 e4!

Opening the center in the Dutch Defense is almost always in White's favor.


8...dxe4 9 Bxe4 e5? 10 dxe5 Bxe5 11 Bg5 Qd6 12 Nxe5 Qxd1

If 12...Qxe5 13 Re1! fxe4 14 Nxe4 and wins.

13 Raxd1 fxe4 14 Nxe4 Nd7 15 Nd6+ Kf8 16 Bxe7+ Kxe7 17 Nxc8+ 1-0

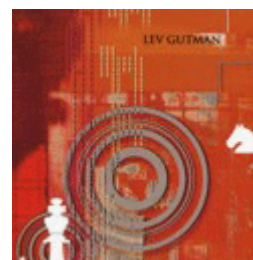
These games just do not belong in a book of new and forgotten ideas, as one side is clearly playing without an understanding of what's happening, and therefore the games should have stayed forgotten. However, if the book was about entertainingly short games in the Dutch Defense then they would fit, but then we would also be without the pretense of discovering some clever ideas that we can use to bust our opponent early on.

Not all of the games are equally useless, some are actually worth studying, but I found the vast majority to be filler material with no particularly insight given in the annotations.

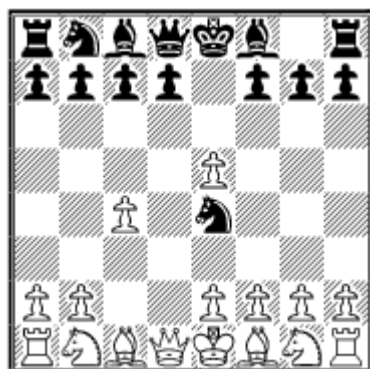
My assessment of this book: 

Budapest Fajarowicz by Lev Gutman, 2004 Batsford BT, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 287pp., \$22.95

A few years ago, Gutman wrote an impressive volume on the Steinitz Variation (4...Qh4) in the Scotch Opening, which was a bit overwhelming by its sheer volume of variations and pages. With the present book, Gutman is trying to repeat his 'success' by covering another underappreciated line, the Fajarowicz Gambit. It arises after the moves: **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 Ne4!?** (see diagram)



This gambit has not been covered in too many independent works over the years, and therefore there are, no doubt, numerous discoveries left to be made in the various variations, and Gutman is usually the right man to find such improvements.



Let's see how he has divided the material:

- Introduction (4 pages)
- Part 1 Less Popular Variations (22 pages)
- Part 2 Steiner Variation 4 Qc2 (46 pages)
- Part 3 4 Nd2 (84 pages)
- Part 4 4 Nf3 (58 pages)
- Part 5 4 a3 (75 pages)
- Index of Variations (2 pages)
- Bibliography (1 page)

Needless to say, it would have made sense to publish the material in several more chapters, if some of them need to be as long as 58, 75 or 84 pages!

In addition to this, the chapters are nearly impossible to read, since there is so much material jammed into each page that you're often left stranded, and what makes it worse is the fact that nearly half of the game quotations and pieces of analysis by Gutman are given without an evaluation of the final position.

Another problem is the extensive use of computer games, one would be hard-pressed to find two pages in a row that didn't have at least one computer game, and often the total is much higher. Is it so difficult to find material on this opening that you have to quote so many computer games? I hope not. However, this book seems to have compiled every available game, quote, or piece of analysis on this opening; and for that reason will likely find its way onto the bookshelves of many lovers of this gambit. Yet as a testament to the current status of this rare opening, it has a lot of problems. The numerous missing evaluations are often accompanied by overly optimistic analysis by Gutman, which doesn't withstand closer scrutiny; both when it comes to deciding on the best play for White or for the evaluations (when they are offered).

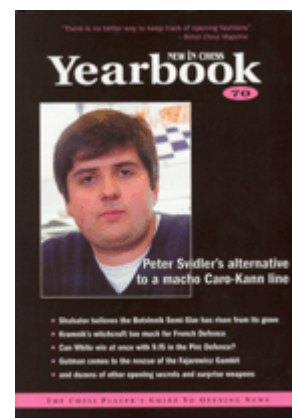
Furthermore there is hardly any prose in the book to discuss typical ideas or strategies. Therefore, despite being impressed by the author's efforts in collecting material and adding ideas and analysis of his own, I find it hard to recommend this book to other than the most ardent fans of this fascinating gambit. The book certainly deserves attention, but it could have been much better served by a far stricter editor and neater overall presentation. I personally find it hard to believe that this is a book that I will be returning to time and again.

My assessment of this book:

New In Chess Yearbook -Vol 70 by Genna Sosonko & Paul van der Sterren, 2003
Interchess BV, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 242pp., \$25.95

I will only take a brief look at this volume, as the previous volume was reviewed in last month's column. The material is divided into the usual sections:


- **Forum and Sosonko's Corner**
 - Forum (15 pages)
 - Sosonko's Corner (5 pages)
- **Surveys**
 - 33 Surveys including 5 on the Sicilian, 3 on the French, 3 on the Ruy Lopez, 2 on the Slav, 2 on the Nimzo-Indian, 2 on the English Opening as well as 16 others on various openings. (208 pages)
- **Service**
 - Book Review (5 pages)
 - Photo Gallery (1 page)
 - New In Chess Code System (1 page)



As usual there are some truly outstanding surveys; one by Lukacs/Hazai in the Anti-Marshall Ruy Lopez is particularly good with a really good introductory text that covers several pages of prose followed by some thoroughly analysed games. I wish every survey could be as good, but sadly they are not. A few contain a fair amount of database dumps, these are games without any annotation what-so-ever, not even any evaluation symbols to help the reader understand the game or its theoretical importance.

In an earlier Yearbook, Marten de Zeeuw claimed to have found the refutation of the Traxler Gambit, and wrote several supporting surveys. However, in the present volume a number of readers have submitted their analysis to prove that Black is still okay. So until the author publishes the next series of findings, we will stick with what the readers have found.

While these yearbooks are mostly for serious players, they are always worthwhile for the interesting ideas in a great variety of openings, both in the most topical lines played by the world's best players, and in the more off-beat lines that are seen more frequently in games between club players.

My assessment of this book: 

Order *New In Chess Yearbook -Vol 70*
by Genna Sosonko & Paul van der Sterren

<i>The Ratings</i>
 — 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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