



COLUMNISTS

Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen



Reviewed this month:

The Chess Advantage in Black and White

by Larry Kaufman

Chess Informant 89

by Aleksandar Matanovic et al.

Opening for White according to Anand 1 e4 – Vol. 2

by Alexander Khalifman

The Ruy Lopez Main Line

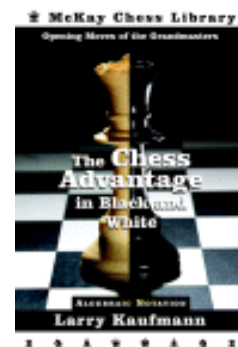
by Glenn Flear

Spanish Torture

This month I will look at a number of books featuring the Ruy Lopez, along with the latest Chess Informant.

The Chess Advantage in Black and White by Larry Kaufman, 2004 Random House/McKay, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 497pp., \$18.95

Most likely only a few people outside the United States know of the author of this fat little volume. From the back cover I found that he is an international master who has won the American Open as well as a number of more local tournaments, such as state championships. Although the back cover blurb doesn't state it directly, this book aims to present a more or less complete repertoire for both Black and White.



This is quite an accomplishment, even considering that it has 497 pages. The author doesn't seek to cover everything, but instead presents key variations and games with a good balance between narrative and variations. Repertoire books written according to this formula are usually not that interesting as they tend to be terribly biased and one-sided in the coverage. Often critical lines are left out with the expectation that the reader

will not notice until it is far too late, such as at the board when the opponent has just played a critical move.

In general I didn't find such problems with the present book, although it does have a slight bias for the side that he is covering in particular variations. This is what you can and should expect, that's just the nature of things, and as long as you don't hide it from the readers I can accept it. Kaufman is very honest and I'm sure the readers will appreciate his frankness.

However, I did find a few things that bothered me. Kaufman doesn't append bad or dubious moves with any annotation symbols ('?' or '!'). Therefore it is difficult to know which move is the more critical line and which isn't. Another issue is that when offering alternative moves, he rarely mentions who has played these lines previously. In those few instances that he does, he doesn't mention the venue of the game. Maybe this is trivial, but if you want to look up the game to play through it for yourself, these things matter.

Let's look at a game from the book. The variation is conveniently named after the author – the Kaufman Attack in the Petroff Defense. The notes are those by Kaufman, except where otherwise indicated.

Iordachescu,V (2567) - Pavasovic,D (2581)

Bled 2002

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.c4 Nc6 6.Nc3 Nxc3 (6...Bf5?? 7.Qe2 Qe7?! 8.Nd5 wins a piece) **7.dxc3 Be7** (If 7...Bg4 8.h3 Bh5 9.Qd5 Bg6 [CH: You can argue that 9...Bxf3 would make more sense given that White invested time with Qd5 in comparison with the game continuation.] 10.Be3 Be7 11.0-0-0 0-0 12.h4, White has dangerous attack) **8.Bd3 Bg4** Or 8...0-0 9.Qc2 h6 (If 9...g6 10.Bh6 Re8 11.0-0-0. White has the edge due to the potential to attack by h4-h5.) 10.Be3 Bg4 11.0-0-0 with initiative, says Iordachescu.

Or 8...Ne5 9.Nxe5 dxe5 10.Qc2 (Now Black has a potentially winning pawn ending but will have trouble getting castled without losing a pawn.) 10...Bg5 (If 10...h6 11.0-0 Be6 12.Re1 or 11...0-0 12.Rd1 planning Qe2. In both cases the defense of the “e” pawn causes Black problems) 11.0-0 Be6 12.Bf5! Bxf5 [CH: It isn't obvious why Black should play this willingly, both 12...Qd7 and 12...Qc8 to force an exchange on e6 and activate the queen are better. Black shouldn't be any worse in this line.] 13.Qxf5 Bf6 14.f4 Qe7 (If 14...exf4 15.Re1+ Be7 16.Qe4 and Black will never castle.) 15.Re1 g6 16.Qe4 0-0-0 17.fxex5 Rhe8 18.Bf4. White is a pawn up. As his majority is crippled, White can't count on victory, but he certainly has the advantage.

9.Be3! (White aims to castle long, so he doesn't mind having his “f” pawns since he'll get the bishop pair and an open “g” file.) **9...Bxf3**

If 9...Ne5 10.Be2 Nxf3+ [CH: While I agree with the final verdict of the main line move, I don't understand why Black would want to play like that. A better try is 10...Be6, e.g. 11.Qb3 0-0, and while White is better, Black still has plenty to play for.] 11.Bxf3 Bxf3 12.Qxf3, White's queen and bishop are both

more active than their Black counterparts. If you compare the number of squares attacked on the enemy half of the board (as advocated in some manuals), it's 14 to one. It's no wonder the computers like White here. Or 9...Qd7 10.Qc2 Ne5 (10...Bxf3 11.Bf5!) 11.Nxe5 dxe5 12.f3 Be6 13.0-0-0 Qc6 14.b3 0-0-0 15.Rhe1. White has potential threats against the "e" pawn and both edge pawns, as well as against the Black queen. Probably Black will lose a pawn or come under attack.

10.gxf3 (to retain the bishop pair) **10...Ne5**

Or 10...Qd7 11.Rg1 g6 12.f4 0-0-0 13.Be4. Iordachescu gives White the edge, though the computers think it's tiny. The bishop pair looks potent here, whereas the Black minor pieces are ineffective. This should count for more than pawn structure.

11.Be2 Ng6 12.Rg1 0-0

Or 12...Qd7 13.Qd5 c6 14.Qh5. White's bishops and board domination surely outweigh the bad pawns. [CH: I'm not sure, I entirely agree with this evaluation, because if Black plays 14...Qe6 and fairly quickly follows up with both ...f5 and ...c5, the range of the bishop pair is already substantially restricted, and White's damaged pawn structure with two sets of doubled pawns makes it difficult to change that.]

13.f4 Re8 14.Qd2

[CH: I like 14.Qc2 Qd7 15.Bf3 Rab8 16.0-0-0 at this point.]

14...Nh4

[CH: I think 14...Qd7 may be a better choice, e.g. 15.0-0-0 Qa4 16.Kb1 Bf6, and Black can start thinking about opening some lines on the queenside.]

15.0-0-0 Nf5 16.Bd3 Nxe3 17.fxe3 (Iordachescu and the computers all give White the edge now. He has attacking chances and Black does not.)

17...Bf8 18.Rg3 Qf6 19.Rdg1 Re7 20.Rh3 g6 (20...h6 can be met by 21.Rhg3, planning Bc2, Qd3, and h2-h4-h5, says Iordachescu.) **21 Kc2 Rae8 22.Rhg3 c6 23.Qf2 Bg7**

[CH: In my opinion Black plays far too passively; more to the point is 23...d5 24.cxd5 cxd5 25.h4 Re6, and Black has more opportunity to gain counterplay.]

24.Rf3 Bh6 25.h4 Kh8 26.h5 Rg8

Now White traded pawns, retaining an advantage, and eventually won. Instead, 27.Rfg3! would have won as there is no good defense to hxg6 followed by Qh2.


The above example shows a few of the problems I found with this book:

- Little or no relevant annotation symbols to show the value of the moves.
- No game references given, even when quoting other games.
- Little or no consideration to traditional chess grammar, such as when to use 'black' or 'Black'.
- The overall presentation looks a little disorganized and there is no consistency with regards to grammatical punctuation.

I also found the book to be missing an index of variations, something that is a

problem in almost any book, particularly one such as this, even if there is a short overview inside each chapter.

Despite these complaints I think the author has done a very good job at presenting a playable and interesting repertoire for both Black and White. In fact I felt inspired to try out several of the ideas myself. I hope to see other books from this author.

My assessment of this book: 

[Order](#) *The Chess Advantage in Black and White*
by Larry Kaufman

Chess Informant 89 by Aleksandar Matanovic et al, 2004 Sahovski Informator, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 389pp., \$36.00

It's that time again! One of the three times each year when the best or most interesting games annotated by the best players is released; the latest volume of Chess Informant is here.



In the old days, all the top players were represented with both games and annotations. Unfortunately this is no longer the case, but there are still enough of them to make it interesting. In the present volume there is a long list of absentees including Kasparov, Ivanchuk, Karpov, and quite a few others. However, there are still game annotations to be found by many other great names and numerous GMs and IMs.

As usual the volume opens with the results of the voting for the best game and for the most important novelty of the previous volume. This time around the game Anand-Bologan, Dortmund 2003 won both votes convincingly and by a large margin. Interestingly enough Anand was on the voting jury and he awarded himself the maximum score of 10 points, which was fair enough, but the eventual runner-up in that voting, P.H.Nielsen-Dreev, Esbjerg 2003, received no points from Anand!

Anyway the Anand-Bologan game apparently refutes a peculiar but popular opening scheme for Black in the Smyslov Caro-Kann: 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nd7 5 Ng5 Ngf6 6 Bd3 e6 7 N1f3 Bd6 8 Qe2 h6 9 Ne4 Nxe4 10 Qxe4 Qc7 11 0-0 b6 12 Qg4, and after the less than obvious 12...g5(!) 13 Qh3 Rg8, Anand played his novelty 14 Re1! That pulled the rug out from under Black, who must switch to 12...Kf8!?, which is currently considered perfectly

adequate for Black according to the latest theory contained in the article that accompanied the voting. Let's see how long it will be before that gets blown out of the water, too.

The meatiest part of the book is obviously the annotated games section. In the past, I have examined the novelties played at late stages in the games, as well as the development in early pawn moves on the flank. None of these trends have slowed, as in Tukmakov-Huss, Geneva 2004 we see a good example of flank chess: 1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 (so far everything is normal and at this point Kramnik normally plays the more quiet and sane 4 Qc2 as in his game against Zhang Zhong, which he annotated in this volume. But Tukmakov is going in another direction...) 4 g4 h6 5 Rg1 b6 6 Qc2 Bb7 7 a3 Bxc3 8 Qxc3 d6 9 Bg2 Nbd7 10 h4 Kf8 11 g5 hxg5 12 hxg5 Ne4 13 Qe3 a5 14 b4 with a clear advantage for White. Chess seems to get ever stranger all the time.

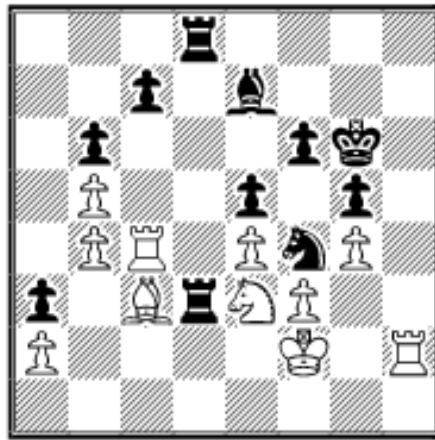
This time, however, I will look at the earliest occurring novelties in the current volume. So let's see what Informant 89 has to offer:

- 1) 1 c4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Nf3 e5 4 e3 Nf6 5 Be2 d5 6 d4 e4N
- 2) 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 c5 3 d5 b5 4 Bg5 Qb6 5 c4 bxc4 6 Nc3 Na6?!N
- 3) 1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Qc2 Be7 5 Nf3 0-0 6 d5!?N
- 4) 1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Qc2 Be7 5 Nf3 0-0 6 h3 b6!N
- 5) 1 e4 Nf6 2 e5 Nd5 3 d4 d6 4 Bc4 c6 5 f4 dxe5 6 fxe5 Be6N
- 6) 1 1 Nf3 g6 2 e4 d5 3 exd5 Qxd5 4 d4 Bg7 5 c4 Qd8 6 h3 Nh6!N
- 7) 1 d4 d6 2 e4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 Bg5 a6 5 a4 Nf6 6 Qd2N
- 8) 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 Nf3 Bg4 5 c4 cxd4N
- 9) 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 e6 4 Bxc6 bxc6 5 b3 f6 6 Ba3N
- 10) 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 e6 4 0-0 Nge7 5 Ba4!?N
- 11) 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 c5 4 Ngf3 cxd4 5 Nxd4 Ne7 6 Bb5N
- 12) 1 e4 d6 2 d4 Nf6 3 Nc3 e5 4 Nf3 Nbd7 5 g4!?N
- 13) 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e3 b6 5 f3 Ba6 6 Bd2N

Without a doubt the most spectacular novelty on the above list is number 12, which was an idea of Vallejo Pons' that Shirov used against Azmaiparashvili in Plovdiv 2003. With the development of theory these days it is an accomplishment to play a novelty on move 5 or 6 without it being complete rubbish.

The remaining sections are combinations, endgames, and studies. The latter is a new feature in Chess Informant. I will draw your attention to the first position in the combination section. This section is always interesting and good for testing your tactical ability. Some of the positions are truly testing while others are far more obvious. The example we are about to look at belongs to the former category:

Partos-Deep Junior, Graz 2003



In this game between two computers it should not be too difficult to determine that Black is better. Its pieces are more actively placed, the king is safer, and in the long run Black's a-pawn can become a problem for White because it is quite close to promotion. However, how does Black capitalize on its advantage?

1...c5!!

This move highlights the problem with White's rook on c4 – it has run out of

squares.

2 bxc6 e.p.

2 Nf5 Bf8 is analyzed extensively in the notes. Black wins in this line, too.

2...b5 3 Nf5

3 c7 bxc4 4 Nf5 Bf8 merely transposes to the game.

3...Bf8 4 c7 bxc4 5 cxd8Q Rxd8 6 Ne3 Rd3 7 Be1 c3 8 Nc2 Kg7!!

Zugzwang!

9 Kg3 Ne6 10 Rf2 Nd4 11 Kg2 Kf7 12 Kg3 Ke6 13 Kg2 Nc2 14 Rxc2 Bb4 15 Rc1 Kd6 16 Kg3 Kc5 17 Kb1, and the programmers resigned on behalf of the program on account of 17...Kc4 18 Rc1 Rxe3 19 Kf2 Bc5 20 Kg3 Bd4, and Black wins.**0-1**

Chess Informant is aimed at the serious chess player who wants to stay on top of the latest developments in opening theory and those that are keen on improving through the study of the games played by the strongest players in the world. Be warned though, all the annotations are wordless and only contain variations and a variety of symbols. This may take some getting used to, especially if you don't understand an evaluation or sequence of moves, which you then have to work out for yourself.

My assessment of this book: 

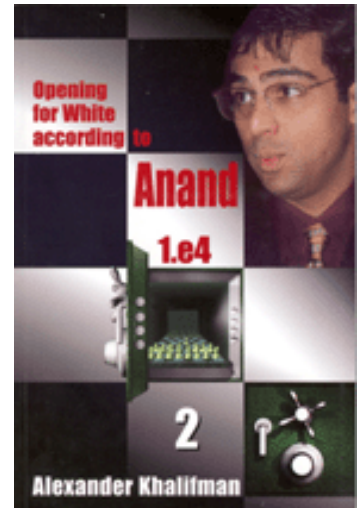
[Order](#) *Chess Informant 89*

by Aleksandar Matanovic et al.

Opening for White according to Anand 1 e4 – Vol. 2 by Alexander Khalifman, 2003 Chess Stars, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 435pp., \$29.95

This is the second of four projected volumes to cover Anand's opening repertoire as White with 1 e4. The book is divided into five parts with no less than 46 chapters:

- Part 1: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 without 4...Nf6 (5 chapters and 33 pages)
- Part 2: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 without 5...Be7 (10 chapters and 72 pages)
- Part 3: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 (7 chapters and 63 pages)
- Part 4: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 without 9...Na5 (12 chapters and 116 pages)
- Part 5: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 Na5 10 Bc2 (12 chapters and 132 pages)



As is evident from the amount of pages, this book is incredibly detailed, plus the contents are very up to date, and it's filled with original ideas and analysis. More importantly, Khalifman knows his material extremely well. There is a lot of supporting narrative that explains the typical ideas, themes, and plans. Often even unusual ideas are explained so that you constantly feel you are being educated about this opening.

One problem is that Khalifman is not very good at annotating bad and dubious moves with the appropriate punctuation. In addition some of his initial evaluations are not substantiated by the examples. In chapter 30 after the moves: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 Bb7 10 d4 Re8 11 Ng5 Rf8 12 f4 exf4 13 Bxf4 Na5! 14 Bc2 Nd5!, Khalifman writes “this is a discovery of GM I. Zaitsev – Black achieves a very favorable position.” There follows: 15.exd5 Bxg5 16.Qh5 h6 17.Nd2 Bxd5, and now Khalifman continues “and Black has an excellent position and quite safe at that, for example:” 18.Ne4 Bxf4 19.Qf5 g6 20.Nf6+ Kg7 21.Nh5+ Kh8 22.Qxf4 Qg5 23.Qxg5 hxg5 24.Nf6 Be6 25.g4 d5 26.Re5 Nc4 27.Rxg5 Kg7 28.Nxd5 Bxd5 29.Rxd5 Ne3 30.Re5 Nxc2 31.Rc1 Nxd4 “and here the adversaries agreed to a draw in the game Glek-Khalifman, Tashkent 1987”. What happened here? Black went from a very favorable position to an excellent one and then the game ended in a draw without any move receiving a question mark. This lack of consistency is a little confusing and unfortunately it happens with some frequency.

As usual the book has been written in Russian by Khalifman and then translated from Russian into English by Ermenkov and Semkov. While the English isn't perfect, the problems regarding choice of words, sentence construction, and grammar is relatively minor and not likely to confuse too many people. Nor is it bothersome enough to discourage me and cause me to

fault a book that is both well-done and a must buy for anybody playing the Ruy Lopez as White.

My assessment of this book: 

Order *Opening for White according to Anand 1 e4 – Vol. 2*
by Alexander Khalifman

The Ruy Lopez Main Line by Glenn Flear, 2004 Everyman Chess, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 176pp., \$19.95

Glenn Flear has written quite a few books on various openings in the Open Game. As the title of this book reveals, this time around he is covering the main lines of the Spanish Opening.

He has divided the material as follows:

- Bibliography (1 page)
- Introduction (2 pages)
- 1 Chigorin Defence with 12...cxd4 13 cxd4 (21 pages)
- 2 Chigorin Defence: 12th Move Alternatives (16 pages)
- 3 Black's 11th Move Alternatives (20 pages)
- 4 The Breyer System (23 pages)
- 5 The Zaitsev Variation (28 pages)
- 6 The Karpov Variation (13 pages)
- 7 The Smyslov Variation (11 pages)
- 8 Black's 9th Move Alternatives (15 pages)
- 9 White Plays 9 d4 (12 pages)
- 10 White's 9th Move Alternatives (9 pages)
- Index of Complete Games (2 pages)



This has considerably fewer pages than the Khalifman book, yet the target audience for this book is quite different. Flear aims to present just the right amount of information on the theoretical side, while explaining things very well. The present book is very useful, enlightening and informative. It will be far easier to approach for most players because less information is sometimes more, in that you immediately get a sense of what is important and why it's important for both Black and White, since Flear presents the overall theoretical situation with both sides in mind.

This has both good and bad sides to it, for example the coverage of some

variations is quite sparse, and while it may be good enough to understand the basic ideas, it will come up short against some of the lines recommended for White by Khalifman. One such line is the Graf sub-variation of the Keres Variation in the Chigorin System (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3 Na5 10 Bc2 c5 – Chigorin – 11 d4 Nd7 – Keres – 12 Nbd2 exd4 – Graf), which is almost refuted by Khalifman, while Flear finds it playable.

Nonetheless, for those who want a good general introduction to the main lines in the Ruy Lopez this book is the best available choice, but if you want to dig deeper the Khalifman book is one you will want to have.

My assessment of this book: 

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