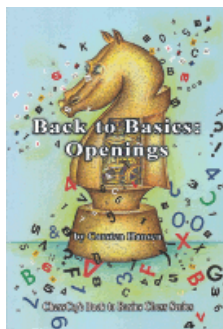




## COLUMNISTS

## Checkpoint

Carsten Hansen



## Rating Chart

- ♦ – Poor
- ♦♦ – Useful
- ♦♦♦ – Good
- ♦♦♦♦ – Excellent

CHESTHEATRE

Play through and download  
the games from  
[ChessCafe.com](http://ChessCafe.com) in the  
[DGT Game Viewer](#).



## Reviewed this month:

*Chess Openings for White, Explained:  
Winning with 1.e4, (2nd Edition)*

by Lev Alburt, Roman Dzindzichashvili,  
& Eugene Perelshteyn

*Squeezing the Gambits*  
by Kiril Georgiev

*Grandmaster Repertoire:  
1.d4, Volume Two*  
by Boris Avrukh

## Summer Repertoire Updates

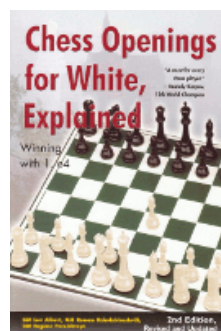
With summer approaching here in the Northern hemisphere, it is time to prepare your opening repertoire for the countless number of tournaments. However, given the amount of pages delivered in the subjects this month's column, sixty days or so may not be enough time to commit all this knowledge to memory.

*Chess Openings for White, Explained: Winning with 1.e4, 2nd Edition*, by Lev Alburt, Roman Dzindzichashvili, & Eugene Perelshteyn, CIRC 2010, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 543pp. \$29.95 (ChessCafe Price: \$24.95)

In [August 2009](#), I reviewed the "updated" edition of [Pirc Alert!](#) by Alburt, and was critical at how few changes were actually made. Thus, my level of skepticism about *Chess Openings for White, Explained* increased rather dramatically when I compared it side-by-side with the first edition and found the material was nearly identical.

The contents are divided as follows:

- Part I: Introduction (1 page)
- The Authors and the Book (6 pages)
- How to Use This Book (2 pages)
- How to Study Openings (5 pages)
- Part II: Development of the Openings (1 page)
- Our Choice – 1 e4! (28 pages)
- White's Other First-Move Choices (21 pages)
- Part III: 1 e4 e5: The Open Games (1 page)
- Chapters 6-13 Various Open Games (133 pages)
- Part IV: The Sicilian Defense (1 page)
- 14 Meeting the Sicilian Defense: The Grand Prix Attack (39 pages)
- Part V: The French Defense (1 page)
- Chapters 15-19: Various French Lines vs. 3 Nc3
- Part VI: Caro Kann & Center Counter (1 page)
- 20 Caro Kann – Exchange Variation (26 pages)
- 21 Center Counter (19 pages)
- Part VII: Pirc, Modern, Alekhine, Nimzo, & the Rest (1 page)
- Chapters 22-26 (65 pages)
- Part VIII: Illustrative Games (1 page)



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by Alexei Shirov



[Opening Encyclopaedia  
2010](#)  
by ChessBase

- Chapter 27 (23 pages)
- Conclusion (1 page)
- Table of Main Lines (6 pages)

This looks impressive and they do make a good case for many of the openings in question. However, I am disappointed to see how little effort has gone into updating the material. For instance, in the chapter on the Russian Game/ Petroff Defense, the authors recommend a line that became very popular in the intervening years: **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 Nc3!? Nxc3 6 dxc3**. This has been played in an abundance of encounters between the top players since the release of the first edition back in 2006. Yet, in the coverage in the second edition, nothing of substance has been changed. The most recent game is from 2005, just as in the first edition.

They made some changes in their coverage of the Italian Game, but nothing that leaves any particular impression. For instance, their coverage of **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Bc4 Bc5 5 c3 Nf6 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Bd2**



[FEN "r1bqk2r/pppp1ppp/2n2n2/8/1bBPP3/5N2/PP1B1PPP/RN1QK2R b KQkq - 0 7"]

**7...Bxd2+ 8 Nbd2 d5 9 exd5 Nxd5 10 Qb3 Na5** (10...Nce7 is also playable if a little passive, as covered by Marin in his [Beating the Open Games](#); the line shown by Marin has not been improved upon in the present book) **11 Qa4 + Nc6 12 Qa3** was discussed in my [review](#) of [New In Chess Yearbook 91](#), and this is not improved upon in the present book either. The authors of the present volume also appear to have overlooked the lines where Black plays the cheeky **7...Nxe4!?**, followed by **8 Bxb4 Nxb4 9 Bxf7+ Kxf7 10 Qb3+ d5**, which was discussed in detail by Glenn Flear in [Dangerous Weapons: 1 e4 e5](#).

In the remaining chapters, the authors do a better job of presenting a case against the various Semi-Open Game Variations. While not all of them are as simple or as easy to demonstrate an advantage against as they purport it to be, they nevertheless do a credible job in the attempt.

One thing that annoyed me was the volume of diagrams. It is more the rule than the exception that there are four or five diagrams on each page, leaving little space available for variations and actual discussions of the merits of the line in question. It is rather amazing to see so many unnecessary diagrams in a book.

While the first edition was pretty good, I'm not as impressed with the updated edition. If you own the first edition, it is questionable as to whether you should buy the second edition. The book is mainly targeted at players rated lower than 2100, though some of the lines can also be used against strong opposition, as is evidenced by co-author Perelstheyn's continued use of several lines given in this book.

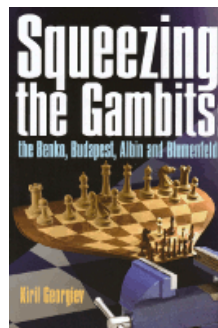
**My assessment of this book:** ❖❖

**[Order](#) *Chess Openings for White, Explained:*  
*Winning with 1.e4, 2nd Edition*  
 by Lev Alburt, Roman Dzindzichashvili,  
 & Eugene Perelshteyn**

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*Squeezing the Gambits: the Benko, Budapest, Albin and Blumenfeld* by Kiril Georgiev, Chess Stars 2010, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 192pp. \$26.95 (ChessCafe Price: \$22.95)

Unless you are properly prepared, the openings covered in this book can be somewhat of a nuisance. This volume by Kiril Georgiev, formerly Bulgaria's top player, purports to solve nearly all of White's potential problems. Though most opening books these days are rather long and heavier on the page count than necessary, the 192 pages in this "slim" volume offer plenty of material to work through on these four rare quests in tournament play.



The material is divided as follows:

- Bibliography (1 page)
- Introduction (4 pages)
- The Benko Gambit Declined
- Part 1: 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 Nf3! g6 5 cxb5 a6 6 b6 (56 pages)
- Part 2: 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 Nf3! Other 4th Moves of Black (34 moves)
- Part 3: 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 b6 e6; 5...a5 (28 pages)
- The Budapest Gambit
- Part 4: 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 (26 pages)
- The Albin Counter Gambit
- Part 5: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 d4 (16 pages)
- The Blumenfeld Gambit
- Part 6: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 c5 4 d5 b5 (22 pages)
- Index of Variations (2 pages)

Against the Benko, Georgiev recommends lines where White returns the gambit pawn immediately with either 5 b6 (after 4 cxb5 a6) or 6 b6 (after 4 Nf3 g6 5 cxb5 a6). Interestingly enough, he has had some experience on the black side of the Benko Gambit, which he played somewhat frequently from 1994 to 1998, scoring particularly well against these 5 b6/6 b6 lines, with 3½ points from four games. His recommendation goes against the top level trend of accepting the pawn on a6 and then continuing with a g2-g3 set-up. He argues against using that set-up for White in the introduction. Instead, he advocates a much more positional approach, where White chooses a solid foundation that aims to push Black off the table. In common for all of the recommended lines for White is that White doesn't need to memorize an abundance of theory to get an advantage or at least a slightly preferable position.

As you can see from contents, the majority of the book is devoted to the Benko Gambit. This seems perfectly reasonable considering that it is significantly more popular than the other gambits. While I don't consider the 5 b6 lines particularly problematic for Black, Georgiev definitely makes a good case for White, presenting lines that appear to offer White a slight advantage, though in many cases the size or even existence of the advantage is debatable. Nevertheless, by studying Georgiev's suggested lines, White has excellent chances to get a good position with the promise of obtaining a better game.

Here is a line that I have always felt strongly about for Black, because I participated in the early development of the line:

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5**

The author also covers 4 Nf3 extensively, including all of Black's fourth move alternatives.

**4...a6 5.b6 e6 6.Nc3 Bb7**

When I discovered this idea back in 1991, I thought it was mine alone.

Subsequently, I found that the German international master Mainka and the Russian Sergeev both independently meddled with this idea. The idea is to exchange on d5, play ...d7-d6, and then play ...Nb8-d7xb6 with pressure on the d5-pawn. Two of my travel mates back in 1991, International Masters Klaus Berg and Mikkel Antonsen put considerable effort into refuting the idea during a tournament in Ostende, especially after I employed the variation against Vyzhmanavin.

**7.e4 exd5 8.exd5 d6 9.g4**



[FEN "r1qkb1r/1b3ppp/pP1p1n2/2pP4/6P1/2N5/PP3P1P/R1BQKBNR b KQkq g3 0 9"]

I gave up on the line after a couple of unpleasant games where White played 9. a4, one of these was against then international master and later grandmaster Gennady Tunik. After 9...Qxb6 10.a5 Qc7 11.Nf3 Be7 12.Bc4 0-0 13.0-0 Nbd7 14.h3 Rfe8 15.Bf4 Nf8 16.Re1, Black has a difficult game, as advocated by Georgiev in this book. However, Georgiev also covers the text move, which was used against me in the aforementioned tournament by the late Russian grandmaster Vyzhmanavin. Much to my consternation it was subsequently recommended by English grandmaster Levitt in the data dump series called Trends, though without providing any analysis nor discovering that Black was actually doing fine.

**9...Qe7+**

This move was my choice against Vyzhmanavin. It goes unmentioned by Georgiev who instead discusses 9...Be7 10.Bg2 0-0 11.g5 Nfd7, and now White has a couple of options available:

a) 12.h4 Nxb6 13.Nge2 a5 14.Ng3 Ba6 15.f4 Qe8 (or 15...Re8 16 Kf2 N8d7 17 Nf5 Bf8 18 h5 "with an unclear position where White still has the initiative" – Georgiev) 16.Kf2 f5 17.Re1 Ra7 18.b3 Qf7 19.Bb2 with a better game for White, Esen-Rouhouse, Kemer 2007.

b) 12.f4 Nxb6 13.Nge2 a5 14.0-0 Na6 15.h4 f5, and Black defended successfully, Tella-Salmensuu, Helsinki 2002.

Black can also consider 9...h6 10.Nh3 Be7 11.Bg2 Nbd7, which isn't mentioned by Georgiev.

**10.Be2 Nbd7**



[FEN "r3kb1r/1b1nqppp/pP1p1n2/2pP4/6P1/2N5/PP2BP1P/R1BQK1NR w KQkq - 0 11"]

Black obviously cannot take on g4 in view of 10...Nxc4?? 11 Qa4+, winning a piece.

### 11.Kf1

This was Vyzhmanavin's choice, but I subsequently found 11.Nh3 to be more critical:

a) 11...h6 12.0-0 Qd8 13.Rb1, intending b2-b4, which more or less forces 13...a5, after which 14 f4 leaves White with the more promising position.

b) 11...Nxc4 looks logical, but turns out to be impossibly dangerous for Black after 12.0-0! Nge5 (12...Ngf6 13.Re1 isn't any better) 13.f4 Ng6 14.Re1 Qh4 15.Bxa6+ Be7 16.Bxb7 Rb8 17.Bc6, and White is winning.

c) 11...g6 12.0-0 Bg7 13.Re1 0-0 14.Bxa6 (14.g5!? is also worth some consideration) 14...Ne5 (intending 15 f4 Nf3+) 15.Be2 Nfd7 16.f4 Qh4 17. Ng5 Nxb6 18 Be3, intending 19 Bf2 Qh6 after which Black's queen looks utterly ridiculous.

### 11...Nxb6

Grandmaster Tony Miles sat in on the post-game analysis with me and Vyzhmanavin. Miles claimed Black to be much better, but this is an exaggeration. Black has very good chances for gaining the upper hand. One option is 11...h5!?, e.g., 12.g5 Ne4 13.h4 Nxb6 14.Rh3 Nxc3 15.bxc3 Bxd5 with a pleasant game for Black.


### 12.Bf3 Qd8 13.h4 Be7 14.Nge2 Nfd7 15.Ng3 Ne5 16.Nf5 0-0 17.Be4 Be8

Miles believed Black to be able to play ...g7-g6 with an advantage more or less on each of the previous moves; here Black would be doing better than okay after 17...g6 18.Nxe7+ Qxe7.

**18.f4 Bxf5 19.Bxf5 Ned7 20.g5 Re8 21.h5 Nf8**, Vyzhmanavin-Ca.Hansen, Ostende 1991. In his book *A57 Volga Gambit*, a monograph published by Sahovski Informator in 1996, Karpov calls this position unclear, but the initiative has already shifted to White.

While I'm not entirely convinced about Georgiev's weapon against the Benko Gambit, the Budapest and the Albin Gambits get much harsher treatments. The Budapest in particular is made to look very bad. Georgiev has a couple of major improvements over Moskalenko's coverage from the book [\*The Fabulous Budapest Gambit\*](#) from 2007. Regarding the Blumenfeld, Georgiev opens the chapter by showing a game of his own where he accepts the gambit pawn against Nisipeanu, who then bashes him into submission. The approach recommended by Georgiev is neither revolutionary nor particularly frightening for Black, but enough to provide White with a steady, solid advantage.

Overall, this book is very good and will provide ambitious players a good foundation to play for an advantage as white against these gambits.

**My assessment of this book:** 

**[Order](#) *Squeezing the Gambits***  
by Kiril Georgiev

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*Grandmaster Repertoire 2: 1.d4, Volume Two* by Boris Avrukh, Quality Chess 2010, Figurine Algebraic Notation, 614 pp. \$34.95 (ChessCafe Price: \$28.95)

I reviewed the first volume in this series in [April](#)





2009. While repertoire books are common these days, the scope and depth in the *Grandmaster Repertoire* series from Quality Chess is highly unusual. The first volume offered 458 pages of coverage on the Catalan Opening, the Slav Defense, Queen's Gambit Accepted, and some lesser versions of the Queen's Gambit, such as the Albin, Chigorin, and Tarrasch. The remaining openings are just as important and complicated, thus the need for a 614-page second volume.



The material is divided as follows:

- Key to symbols used & Bibliography (1 page)
- Foreword by Grandmaster Boris Gelfand (1 page)
- Bibliography (1 page)
- Foreword by the Author (3 pages)
- The Bogo-Indian Defence (4 chapters – 46 pages)
- The Budapest Gambit (2 chapters – 33 pages)
- Benoni Systems (8 chapters – 129 pages)
- The Dutch Defence (4 chapters – 76 pages)
- The Grünfeld Defence (2 chapters – 70 pages)
- The King's Indian Defence (9 chapters – 134 pages)
- The Modern Defence (2 chapters – 37 pages)
- Minor Systems (7 chapters – 63 pages)
- Index of Variations (14 pages)

As with its predecessor, this volume is a candidate for the best opening book of the year. The coverage is extremely detailed, and every relevant path, main line or otherwise, is presented in spectacular detail. All new ideas are indicated with an "N" for novelty and most of the novelties are clear improvements over existing theory. Though there are some that are merely minor corrections that allow White to reach a more comfortable.

The author's chosen repertoire consistently offers lines that are similar in structure and therefore somewhat easier to understand. As a result, most variations feature a kingside fianchetto for White. Of course, in cases such as the Dutch Defense and Bogo-Indian, the strongest set-ups for White have always involved a fianchetto, but this is not necessarily the case in the King's Indian, Grünfeld, Old Indian, and Modern Benoni. Nevertheless, the author makes a compelling case for White being able to obtain the better game or, in some cases, even a rather significant advantage.

Here is an example from his coverage on the Grünfeld Defense:

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.Nf3 Nb6 7.Nc3 Nc6 8.e3 0-0 9.0-0 Re8 10.Re1**



[FEN "r1bqr1k1/ppp1ppbp/1nn3p1/8/3P4/2N1PNP1/PP3PBP/R1BQR1K1 b -- 0 10"]

**10...h6**

After 10...a5 11.Qe2 e5 12.Nxe5 Nxe5 13.dxe5 Bxe5, the author tells us that 14.e4! started out as his improvement for the purpose of this book, but before the manuscript had been completed, it had already been played three times, e.

g. 14...Be6 15.f4 Bg7 16.Be3 Qe7 17.e5 Rab8, thus far Rogozenko - Areshchenko, Germany 2009, "and now the most accurate move would have been 18.Qf2!N. White's advantage is obvious. Aside from his superiority in the centre, he has two concrete threats in 19.Bc5 and 19.Nb5. Of course, there is also the option of slowly improving the position with ideas such as Ne4." (Elsewhere in this volume his name is spelled "Rogozenco.")

**11.h3 a5 12.Qe2 a4 13.Rd1 Be6 14.Nd2**



[FEN "r2qr1k1/1pp1ppb1/1nn1b1pp/8/p2P4/2N1P1PP/PP1NQPb1/R1BR2K1 b - - 0 14"]

**14...Ra5!?**

Here the author writes, "Black finds a remarkable way to activate his rook. Here the rook helps to control the d5-square while also supporting the thematic ...e5 break. On the other hand, with all the minor pieces still on the board, the rook might be subjected to an attack at some point." Interestingly, my chess engine calls for another idea: 14...Qd7!?, and after 15.Kh2, then 15...Red8 (At first it offered 15...f5 as best, but 16.Rb1!? Red8 17.b3 axb3 18.Nxb3! (18.axb3 Nd5 19.Bb2 Nxc3 20.Bxc3 Bd5 is obviously adequate for Black) 18...Bc4 19.Qb2! Qe8 20.Nc5, and White has control of the initiative) 16.Nde4 Bc4 17.Qe1 Qe8 18.Nc5, and once again White has the better chances.

**15.Rb1!N**

This is the author's improvement: "The idea is to prepare the b2-b4 advance to take advantage of the position of the black rook." He also offers the alternative 15.Nde4, which was played in the stem game Cvitan-Kozul, Reggio Emilia 1993, which was won for Black.

**15...Qc8**

"Another option is 15...Qa8 16.b4 axb3 17.Nxb3 Bc4 18.Qe1 Ra7 19.a4 += with pressure on the queenside."

**16.b4 axb3 17.Nxb3 Bc4**

"If 17...Ra8 18.d5 Bxc3 19.dxc6 bxc6 20.Bxc6 Bxh3 21.e4 I do not believe Black has sufficient compensation."

**18.Qb2 Ra8 19.Nc5 Rd8 20.Qc2!+=**


"White keeps definite pressure on the queenside."

As you can see, the author does not purport to refute Black's opening, but rather settles for a slight advantage, which is much more likely to be realized in a topical line. This is how he approaches every variation in this book. He finds improvements that offer White better than equal chances and in some cases refute Black's overly ambitious play.

The result is convincing and impressive. You can always argue about his evaluations in some lines, and he even states on several occasions that Black is very much in the game or has nearly equal chances, but that he prefers White's chances for one reason or another. This may not blow you or your

opponent away, but a properly prepared ambitious player is a dangerous opponent and, after all, Black must also know how to reach these semi-balanced positions. Meanwhile, there are countless ways for Black to sidestep Avrukh's main lines and enter territory that is even more advantageous for White.

This is an extremely impressive book that will serve ambitious players for years. However, it is geared towards those players who are rated 2000 and up. If you are rated above that level, you should consider buying this book, whether you play 1 d4 as white or face it with black. These two volumes on 1 d4 constitute the most serious bid for the best and deepest opening repertoire ever presented in book format. I love the author's devotion and dedication to the cause, and I'm confident that his suggested repertoire will find many followers.

**My assessment of this book:** 

**[Pre-order](#) *Grandmaster Repertoire 2*  
*1.d4, Volume Two*  
by Boris Avrukh**

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