



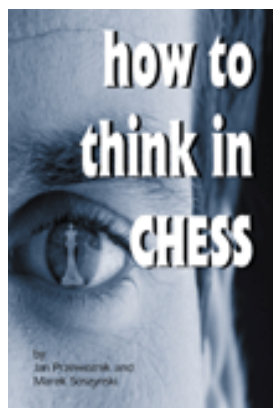
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COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane



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***Opening Lanes** is based in large part on readers' questions. Do you have a question about a particular opening line? Baffled by a branch of the Benoni or Budapest? Submit your questions (with you full name and country of residence please) and perhaps Gary will reply in his next **Chess Cafe** column...*

Yes, I have a question for Gary!

An Apology!

In last month's column I accepted questions from countries that had not qualified for the football/soccer world cup. I also mischievously suggested that the USA would be knocked out at the first opportunity. Of course, what I really meant to say was that the United States team are regarded as superstars in their own country and renowned as a major force in the world of soccer. They were destined to achieve their best result since 1930 with a stylish all round performance, distinguished by a sensational attacking force. Thank you to the numerous e-mails from soccer fans around the world pointing out my mistake and a frenzy of indifference from the United States!

Adriano Lorenzini from **Venice, Italy** has thoughtfully answered a question from last month's column, which is appreciated. He writes "In your latest column Sandy Breon wondered what is the name of the defence occurring after the moves 1 e4 e6 2 Nf3 (or 2 d4) 2...f5 and stated that it resembles more of a Dutch rather than a French Defence. That's exactly the case! After 1 d4 f5 2 e4 e6 Black is playing a minor line of the



Staunton gambit, while after 1 Nf3 f5 2 e4 we have reached the starting position of the deadly Lisitsin Gambit (a favourite weapon of GM Michael Rohde). I've been told about this gambit from a friend of mine (a chess master) who likes to play it himself now and then. Anyway since I'm not an expert in this line I'm not going to argue against the move 2...e6. Suffice to say that after a quick search in my database I found out that in this line 2...e6 has been employed just twice out of 500 games, so I suspect that's not the strongest possible answer for Black!"

I have to admit that the Lisitsin Gambit is a great attacking line, which is rarely met by 2...e6. Therefore, I thought a wider audience would be interested in the attacking chances offered by the opening and as you mentioned the New York based grandmaster Michael Rohde plays it frequently so it makes sense to discuss his games.

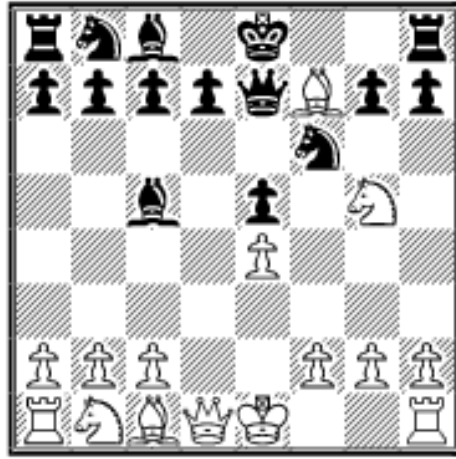
Michael Rohde-Semon Palatnik World Open Philadelphia 1990

1 Nf3 f5 2 e4!?



This is the real test of the line because 2 d4 transposes into a standard Dutch Defence. **2...fxe4** A reminder that 2...e6 is occasionally played. For instance: 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5 Nd5 5 d4 Be7 6

Bd2 0-0 7 Bc4 c6 8 h3 with an edge for White thanks to the space advantage, Stojanovic-Dubos, Saint Quentin 2000. **3 Ng5 Nf6** A couple of years later at the same tournament the same players were involved in another struggle and once again White was victorious after 3...d5 4 d3 e3 (I once tried 4...Qd6 in a simultaneously display against Botvinnik and the great man stared at me for some time before playing 5 dxe4 when 5...h6 is reasonable for Black) 5 Bxe3 e5 6 d4 exd4 7 Qxd4 Nc6 8 Qh4 Bf5 9 Bb5 Be7 10 0-0 Nf6 11 Nc3 0-0 12 Rad1 (12...Nb4!? is worth considering 13 a3 c6 {13 ..Nxc2 14 Nxd5 Nxd5 15 Rxd5 is good for White} 14 axb4 cxb5 with a double-edged game) 12...h6 13 Nxd5! Nxd5 14 Rxd5 Qe8 15 Bc4 Kh8 (15...hgx5?? 16 Rxf5+ wins) 16 Qg3 Qg6 17 Rxf5 Qxf5 18 Ne6 gave White a strong attack. Also possible is 3...e5 which was tested in Rohde-O.Castro, Philadelphia 1990. That game went 4 d4 exd4 5 Nxe4 Nc6 6 Bc4 Nf6 7 Bg5 Be7 8 Nxf6+ Bxf6 9 Qh5+ g6 10 Qe2+ Be7 11 Bd5 Rf8 12 h4 when White has compensation for the pawn due to the sharp attack. **4 d3 e5 5 dxe4 Bc5 6 Bc4 Qe7** 6...b5?! is just a panicky move that does nothing to improve Black's position 7 Bf7+ Ke7 8 Bb3 Rf8 9 0-0 (White steadily develops his pieces. This in contrast to Black who in the space of a few moves is clearly in trouble because with the king in the centre he cannot coordinate his pieces) 9...d5 10 exd5 Ng4 11 Ne4 with a winning advantage, Trevelyan-Santos, Groningen 1976. **7 Bf7+**



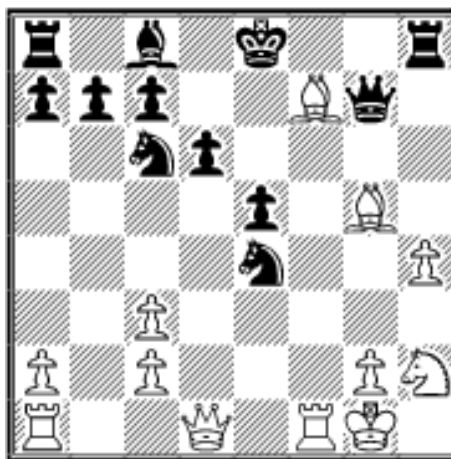
White sensibly forces Black to abandon the idea of castling creating a long-term problem. At first glance 7 Nf7 looks reasonable but after 7...Rf8 8 Ng5 (otherwise Black will be rewarded

with two pieces for the rook) 8...Bxf2+! 9 Kxf2 Nxe4+ 10 Ke1 Nxg5 and Black is winning.

7...Kf8 8 Bb3 h6 If 8...Nc6 then as usual White should not worry about securing a quick knockout but concentrate on developing with 9 0-0. For example: 9...d6 10 Nc3 h6 11 Nd5 Nxd5 12 exd5 Nd4 13 Ne4 Bb6 14 Be3 Kg8 15 c3 Nf5 (15...Qh4 merely makes sure that his active minor pieces are exchanged 16 cxd4 Qxe4 17 Bc2 Qh4 18 dxe5 dxe5 19 Bxb6 axb6 20 Re1 Qf6 21 Qh5 is good for White) 16 Bxb6 axb6 17 Qd2 g5 18 Bc2 Bd7 19 Qe2 Rf8 20 a4 (20 Ng3 is worth a go in order to try and put pressure on Black by opening the kingside: 20...Nxg3 21 fxg3! Kg7 22 Qe4 and White is winning)

20...Rh7 21 a5 bxa5 22 Rxa5 Rhf7 23 Ra7 Bc8 24 Re1 Nh4 25 Qh5 Kg7 ½-½ Del Rio Angelis-Santo Roman, Loures 1998. **9 Nf3 d6** 9...g6 is a recent example proving that Black is still trying to defend the honour of this line but the results are not encouraging 10 Nc3 d6 11 Qe2 Kg7 12 h3 Nc6 13 Nd5 Nxd5 14 Bxd5 Nd4 15 Nxd4 Bxd4 16 c3 Bb6 17 Bd2 with a slight edge and White eventually won in 54 moves Riazantsev-Kim, Russian Junior championships 2002. **10 Nc3** The American has done the right thing by

getting the rest of his pieces into the action. As usual in this line Black is under pressure because of the need to eventually activate the king's rook. **10...g5?!** The idea is to play ...Kg7 and hope to emerge unscathed from the opening. If 10...Bg4!? then 11 h3 Bh5 12 g4 (12 Qd3 another way to avoid the pin because 12...Nc6 is met by 13 Nh4 with the better prospects due to the strong outpost of f5 for the knight) 12...Bf7 13 g5 hxg5 14 Nxg5 Bxb3 15 axb3 Bb4 16 Bd2 Bxc3 17 bxc3 Nbd7 led to roughly equal chances in Varga-Markus, Budapest 2000. **11 h4!** White seizes the chance to undermine the kingside pawns as a way to try and get his pieces into attacking positions. **11...g4 12 Nh2 Bb4 13 f3 Bxc3+ 14 bxc3 Qg7 14...g3** is an attempt to blockade the kingside, which just fails to impress upon 15 Nf1 Nh5 16 f4 Nxf4 17 Qf3 and once again the black king is a cause for concern. **15 fxe4 Ke8 16 0-0** The king's rook joins in the attack but Black cannot adequately defend because his queenside pieces remain on their original squares. **16...Nc6 17 g5 hxg5 18 Bxg5 Nxe4 19 Bf7+**



1-0

Lim Shueh Hann
from **Malaysia**
writes "I play e4 and I usually have some troubles against the Sicilian Defence. I opted for Nc3 at first but I thought that it

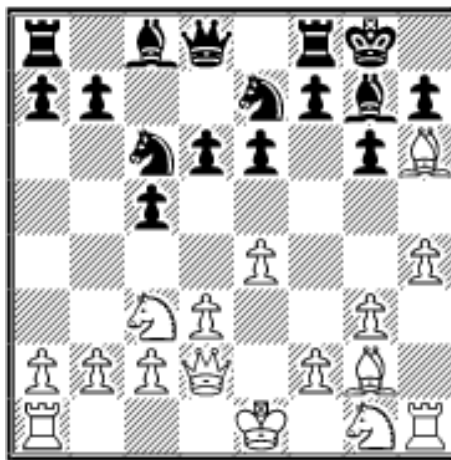
was not so aggressive. So, I switched to the c3 system but there were too many variations. Now,

I'm playing 1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Bb5. But whenever I play this Bb5 variation, I always think that white doesn't really have many alternatives. I don't really understand the main ideas and concepts about this opening. Yet I quite like it because the positions are usually simple and clear.”

I think all the openings you mentioned are good against the Sicilian at club level because there are fewer variations to learn compared with the main lines. However, sometimes it can be easy to be put off a certain opening by following a dull variation. Therefore, I have found some examples where it is White to play and win!

Daniel Bisby-Jonathan Waugh Isle of Man 2001

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 g3 The Closed Sicilian is renowned as a solid opening where White aims to avoid confrontation at an early stage and seeks to do battle in the middlegame. However, there are some lines that allow White to play more adventurously. **3...g6 4 Bg2 Bg7 5 d3 e6 6 Be3 d6 7 Qd2 Nge7 8 Bh6 0-0** Or **8...Bxh6 9 Qxh6 Kd7?! it is a bit risky to take the king for a stroll around the board (9...Nd4 is a decent alternative) 10 Nge2 Qf8 11 Qd2 Rb8 12 d4 c4 13 d5 exd5 14 exd5 Ne5 15 f4 Ng4 16 h3 Nh6 17 Qd4 b6 18 Qxc4 Rb7 19 Qa4+ 1-0**
Nikolopoulos-Holis, Patras 2001. **9 h4**



This aggressive way of playing the Closed Sicilian has revived interest in the opening. Michael Adams and Nigel Short have had success using this attacking idea. I examine it more

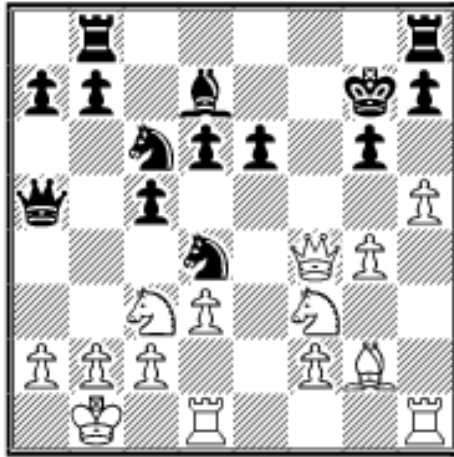
deeply in my latest book *The Ultimate Closed Sicilian* published by Batsford. Due to a number of e-mails wondering why it is not available in the United States I can confirm that the book distributor Brassey have now released it to the shops. 9 Bxg7 is the positional approach where White is content to have exchanged the bishop on g7, which is usually an important defensive piece. In the game De Vreugt-Medvegy, Zug 2001 the game continued 9...Kxg7 10 Nge2 e5 11 f4 f6 12 0-0 Be6 13 Rf2 Qd7 14 Raf1 when White had an edge. **9...f5?!** If 9...Bxh6 10 Qxh6 Kh8 11 h5 then White enjoys long-term pressure on the kingside by threatening to open the h-file for the benefit of his king's rook.

G.Charles-V.Suttor, Canberra 2001, proceeded: 11...Ng8 12 Qd2 Nf6 13 hxg6 fxg6 14 Nge2 e5 15 Nd5 Nxd5 16 exd5 Nb8 17 Qh6! Qe7 18 Qxg6 with a winning advantage. Black has also suffered after 9...Kh8, which does nothing to help the defence after 10 Bxg7+ Kxg7 11 h5 Ng8 12 0-0-0 e5 13 f4 when White has the better chances Polovnikova-Pogonina, Elista 2002. **10 Bxg7 Kxg7 11 h5 Rh8 12 Nf3**

Bisby sensibly catches up with development in

order to add another piece to the attack.

**12...Bd7 13 0-0-0 Qa5 14 exf5 Nxf5 15 Kb1
Rab8 16 g4! Nfd4 17 Qf4**

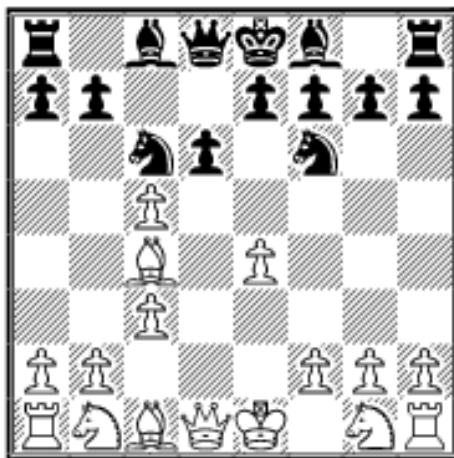


1-0 Black could see no reasonable defence to h6+ followed by Qf6 or even Qxd6 so he gave up.

The next game is a demonstration that in the right hands the there are aggressive options available in the C3 Sicilian.

Kadir Nohut-Pascal Vandervoort Belgian Team Championship 2002

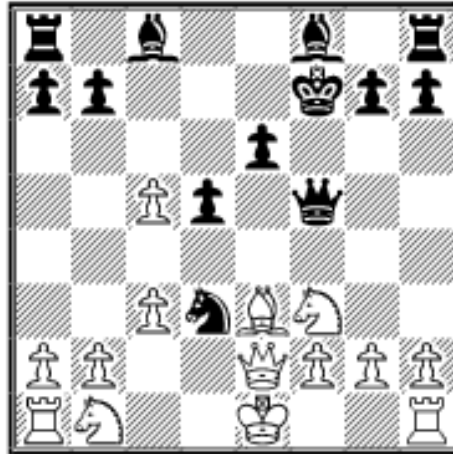
1 e4 c5 2 c3 The basic idea is to simply create a pawn with d2-d4. **2...d6 3 d4 Nf6 4 dxc5 4 Bd3** is the solid reply. **4...Nc6** The pawn grab is a bad idea because **4...Nxe4??** Is a big mistake which often happens and the latest victim is rated 2220 **5 Qa4+ 1-0 Russek-Vila Dupla, Linares 2002. 5 Bc4!?**



A sharp idea designed to provoke complications

5...Nxe4 6 Bxf7+ Kxf7 7 Qd5+ e6 8 Qxe4 d5 9 Qf3+
Also possible is **9 Qe2 Bxc5 10 Nf3 Rf8 11 0-0 Kg8**

(Black has managed to sort of castle his king the long way) 12 Be3 led to roughly equal chances in Lindfeldt-Mortensen, Nyborg 2001. **9...Qf6 10 Be3 Ne5 10...e5!?** is a decent alternative. **11 Qe2 Qf5 12 Nf3 Nd3+?**



The Belgian international is a good player but he falls for a trick. **13 Qxd3! 1-0**

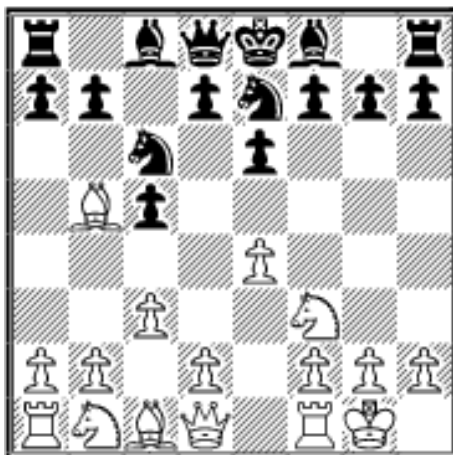
Black resigned rather than see 13...Qxd3 14 Ne5+ winning back the queen

leaving White a piece up.

Your latest opening choice is the latest fashion and the Rossolimo Attack has attracted the attention of the world's leading players. In this game it is easy to see why it is so popular.

Robert Loncar-Vlatko Marendic Pula 2002

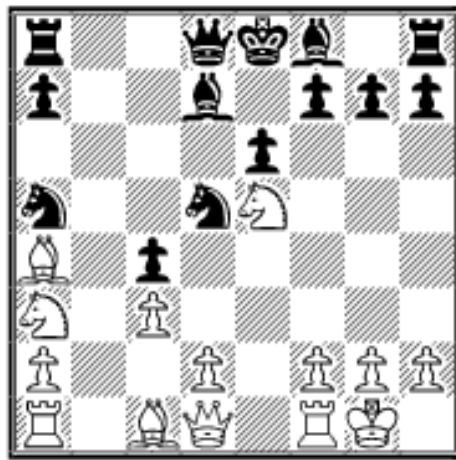
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 e6 4 0-0 Nge7 5 c3



White can play this line like a C3 Sicilian by striving to create a pawn centre by preparing the advance d2-d4. **5...d6** Various other moves have been tested: 5...b6?! is a timid response

allowing White to gain more space after 6 d4 Ng6 7 d5! exd5 8 exd5 Nce5? 9 Nxe5 Nxe5 10 Re1 Qf6 11 f4 when the pinned knight will soon leave the board, Grader-Krueger,Salzwedel 2000. One of the main lines is considered to be 5...a6 when Oral-Todor, Bratislava 1997 continued 6 Ba4 c4 an echo of the main game (or 6...b5 7 Bc2 d5 Black strikes at the centre before White can get things all his own way 8 e5 d4 9 Qe2 Bb7 10 Be4 Ng6 11 cxd4 cxd4 12 d3 Be7 13 Nbd2 Qb6 14 Nb3 0-0 15 h4! led to a strong attack in Minasian-Sriram, Ubeda 2001) 7 d4 cxd3 8 Qxd3 (White has not managed to create his cherished pawn centre but at least he has activated his queen) 8...b5 9 Bc2 Ng6 10 Nbd2 Be7 11 a4 Rb8 12 axb5 axb5 13 Nb3 0-0 14 Nfd4 b4 15 f4 with an edge for White, Oral-Todor, Bratislava 1997. 5...d5 6 exd5 Nxd5 7 d4 if in doubt White advances the d-pawn in this line to make sure he can develop his queenside 7...cxd4 8 Nxd4 Bd7 9 Nxc6 bxc6 10 Bd3 Qc7 11 Nd2 Nf4 12 Nc4 Rd8 13 Bc2 c5 14 Qg4 gave White the better prospects due to the black king stuck in the centre of the board, Rowson-Kuljasevic, Pula 2002. **6 Ba4!?** 6 d4 makes sense but perhaps White is trying to confuse Black. **6...c4** In this line the pawn advantage is a familiar sight aiming to stop White from having a pawn centre by meeting 7 d4 with 7...cxd3. **7 Bc2 b5 8 b3** White wants to undermine the c4 pawn and if cxb3 then White can get on with the plan of playing d2-d4 **8...d5 9 bxc4 bxc4 10 exd5 Nxd5** If 10...exd5 then 11 Ba3 puts Black off castling because when the knight on e7 moves White can exchange dark-squared bishops. **11 Na3 Na5?** 11...Nb6!? should be

preferred. **12 Ba4+ Bd7 13 Ne5!**



This is the move that Black missed. The knight attacks the bishops on d7 creating favourable tactical possibilities.

13...Nb6 If

13...Bxa4 then 14 Qxa4+ Ke7 15

Naxc4 wins **14 Qf3**

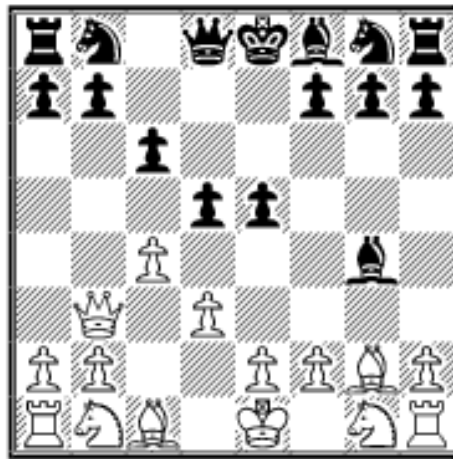
f6 14...Qe7? is no help due to 15 Bxd7+ Nxd7 16 Qxa8+. **15 Bxd7+ Nxd7 16 Qh5+ g6 17 Nxc6 1-0**

Finally, **Joel Pineda** from **Olongapo City** in the **Philippines** says “What can you say about the Grob opening? Is it O.K to use it for active chess? I usually use this opening with good results here (active non-master tournaments) can you give me more inputs about it because I really like it as my opening for White.”

The Grob is certainly a popular choice for those who wish to play something different in the openings and is a subject, which has been covered before in this column. In active chess it has the merit of upsetting opponents who cannot play their standard main-lines and have to think from move one. As a way to give you some confidence here is an example of the Grob confusing Black sufficiently to be busted straight out of the opening.

Dietmar Kessler-Wendling Bad Wildbad 2001

1 g4 e5 The main alternative is 1...d5 to immediately target the g-pawn. For instance: 2 Bg2 e5 (2 ..Bxg4 is the move that players of the Grob love to play against because they can exploit the strength of their bishop on the h1-a8 diagonal 3 c4 c6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 Qb3 Bc8 6 Bxd5 e6 7 Bxb7 Bxb7 8 Qxb7 Nd7 9 Nc3 1-0 S.Sloan-Bogos, Parsippany 2001) 3 h3 Be6 4 c4 c6 5 Nf3 Nd7 6 d4 e4 7 Ng5 Ne7 8 Nc3 with doubled-edged play, Ingvaldsen-Brakedal, Oslo 2001. **2 d3 2 Bg2** is the usual move. **2...d5 3 Bg2 Bxg4 4 c4 c6 5 Qb3**



The key to this line is that the queen now targets the b7 and d5 pawns. Or 5 cxd5 cxd5 6 Qb3 Qd7 7 Qxd5 Qxd5 8 Bxd5 Nc6 9 Nf3 Nf6? 10 Bxc6+ bxc6 11 Nxe5 gave White a winning ending in

L.Forace-C.Gowor, Kambah Open 1999.

5...Qc7 6 cxd5 Nf6 7 Nc3 White is in no rush to take on c6 because then Black can take back with the knight, which helps with development. **7...a6 8 Be3 Bd6 9 Rc1 0-0 10 h3 Bh5 11 Nf3 Rd8? Whoops! 12 Bb6 Qd7 13 Bxd8 Qxd8 14 Nd2 Qc7 15 Nde4 Be7 16 d6 Bxd6 17 Nxd6 Qxd6 18 Qxb7 1-0**

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