



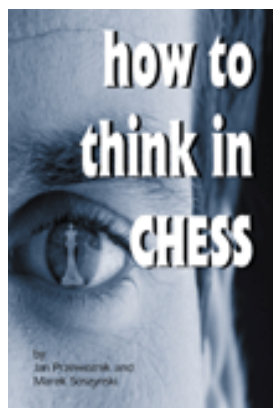
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COLUMNISTS

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!

A French Farce

It is common knowledge that the top players routinely play a lot of openings without thinking until about move 15. The only problem for those who hope to follow the great and good is what to do if your opponent decides to play the obvious move, which wins material? There is no chance at the board to consult a book or declare loudly that Anand never bothers to play that in Linares because you have to deal with the problem on your own.

Scott Poling from Martinez, California, USA

asks a question, which can make or break an opening. He writes, "I am a struggling class player. I ran across this variation of the French when analyzing a recent skittles game: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Bd3 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Ne2 cxd4 8 cxd4 f6 9 Nf4 Nxd4 10 Qh5+ Ke7 11 Ng6+ hxg6 12 exf6+ Nxf6 13 Qxh8 Kf7. In my game, after I tried the thematic 8...f6 and my opponent replied 9 Nf4 we both felt that there was no way black could survive - we backed the game up and headed down another line. But it looks like



I may have missed something - there seem to be enough high-level games to indicate that black is not as bad off as my opponent and I had assumed. Can you comment on this variation? Can this line really be OK (or even surprisingly good) for black? I have found some wins for black from the above line.”

You are quite correct in assuming that you have stumbled upon a known line and that Black should survive the onslaught. The problem arises with a few recent books on the French Tarrasch, which assumes that the reader already knows such tricks and traps and starts the chapter in the main line after 9 e4 e6 Nxf6 10 Nf3. One can have some sympathy with the author who is eager to tell every one of the latest moves but in the average tournament someone is bound to be eager to grab material and play something else. 9 Nf4 is a sharp idea particularly popular at club level because the defence for Black can be awkward if you don't know what you are doing. In reality, Black is obliged to sacrifice the exchange and leave the king in the centre. In compensation, White's centre is ruined and Black has the initiative. A recent game demonstrates some of the perils that wait for the greedy White player.

Juri Mavrichev-Mio Malmberg Helsinki 2002

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Bd3 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Ne2 cxd4 8 cxd4 f6 9 Nf4!?



9...Nxd4 Black accepts the challenge. 9...Qe7 is a little timid when 10 Nf3 is fine for White. Other moves are somewhat less impressive. For instance: 9...Qb6? A panicky move!

(9...fxe5 10 Qh5+ g6 11 Bxg6+ hxg6 12 Qxg6+ Ke7 13 Qxe6 mate) 10 Qh5+ Kd8 11 Nxe6+ Ke7 12 Nf4 Qxd4 13 Nf3 Qb4+ 14 Bd2 Qxb2 15 0-0 Kd8 16 Ne6+ Ke7 17 Nc7 Kd8 18 Rfb1 gave White a winning advantage in P.Keres-V.Menchik, Margate 1939. **10 Qh5+ Ke7 11 Ng6+ hxg6 12 exf6+ Nxf6 13 Qxh8 Kf7 14 0-0** White wishes to catch up with development. Or 14 Qh4, which has the merit of retrieving the queen from the corner when play might continue: 14...e5 15 Nf3 Nxf3+ 16 gxf3 Bf5 (16...Bb4+?? Yes it even happens to international players, 17 Qxb4 1-0 S.Sorbe-F.Buffe, Pau 2000) 17 Bxf5 gxf5 18 Bg5 Qa5+ 19 Kf1 g6 20 Bxf6 Qa6+ 21 Kg2 Qxf6 (this is a fairly well known position and is usually assessed as offering equal chances) 22 Qa4 Qe6 23 Rad1 b6 24 Rhe1 Be7 25 Rc1 Bd6 26 Rc6 e4 27 Kf1 f4?! 28 fxe4 Re8? (28...f3 intending ...Qh3+ is Black's best chance) 29 Qb3 Kf8 30 e5 1-0 E.Miroshnichenko-A.Nosenko, Ordzhonikidze 2001. Such a long, complicated line means that occasionally White forgets his move-order with disastrous consequences 14 Nf3?? Bb4+ 0-1 N.Rozkov-A.Vunder, St Petersburg 1997. In the game A.Murillo-

S.Minero Pineda, Costa Rica 1997 White tried the reasonable 14 f4 but soon went wrong after 14...Nh5 15 0-0? Ne2+ 16 Kh1 (16 Bxe2 Bc5+ 17 Kh1 Ng3+ 18 hxg3 Qxh8+ 19 Bh5 Qxh5#) 16...Qh4 0-1 **14...e5 15 f3?**



A blunder in a complicated position. It just goes to show that if you play a sharp line as White you really need to know what you are doing. 15 Nf3 is discussed in the next main game.

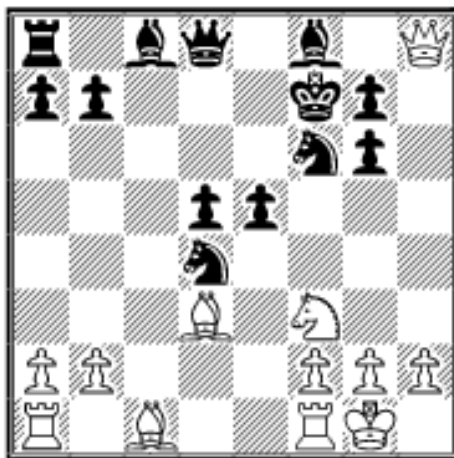
Also possible: 15 b4 e4 16 Bb2 Qb6 17 Bb1 Qxb4 18 Nb3 Ne2+ 19 Kh1 a5 (perhaps 19...Bf5!?) 20 Bc2?! (20 f3) 20...Qc4 21 Rac1 Nxc1 22 Rxc1 Bd7 gave Black a winning advantage in S.Makarichev-S.Bjarnason, Groningen 1973. Or 15 Nb3 Nxb3 16 axb3 Bf5 17 Bxf5 gxf5 18 Bg5 Bc5 19 Qh3 Qd7 with roughly equal chances. **15...Nc2!** A stunning move, which effectively ends the game as a contest. **16 Qh4** If 16 Bxc2 then 16...Bc5+ 17 Kh1 Qxh8 is an easy win. **16...Nxa1 17 Qg5 Bf5 18 Bxf5 gxf5 19 Qxf5 Rc8 20 Qxe5 Bd6 21 Qf5 Qb6+ 22 Kh1 Qc7 23 Re1 Re8 0-1**

A quick look at the main line will give you an insight into what to expect against people who have been studiously reading their books.

Nenad Doric-Emanuele D'Amore Formia 1995

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Bd3 c5

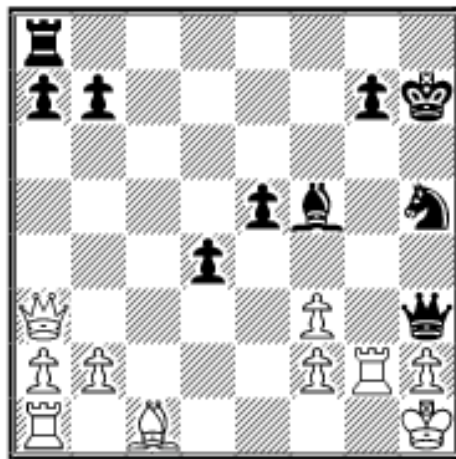
6 c3 Nc6 7 Ne2 cxd4 8 cxd4 f6 9 Nf4 Nxd4 10 Qh5+ Ke7 11 exf6+ Nxf6 12 Ng6+ hxg6 13 Qxh8 Kf7 14 0-0 e5 15 Nf3



You certainly need to know the theory in this line because on move 15 the discussion of this main line is just beginning.

15...Nxf3+ 16 gxf3 Nh5 17 Bxg6+ Kxg6 18 Kh1 Qh4! Or

18...Qf6?! 19 Rg1+ Kf7 20 Qxh5+ White wins back material and still has a strong attack
20...g6 21 Qh7+ Bg7 22 Bh6 Bd7 (22...Qxf3+ 23 Rg2 Qf6 24 Rc1 Bd7 25 Rc7 Rd8 26 Rg3 is very good for White) 23 Rae1 Re8 24 Rg5 Bf5 25 Bxg7 Qxg7 26 Rxf5+ gxf5 27 Qxf5+ Qf6 28 Qd7+ Kf8 29 Qxd5 with a winning position,
 G.Canfell-N.Kagan, Melbourne 1998; **18...Nf6** might be worth considering for example: **19 Rg1+ Kf7 20 Rxg7+ Ke6 21 Bd2 Bd7 22 Rg8 Nxg8 23 Qxg8+ Kd6 24 Bb4+ Kc7** when the black king has manages to escape from danger and it is time to start counting the material difference, E.Rutherford-A.Norris, Aberdeen 2001. **19 Qxf8 Qh3** (19...Bh3? 20 Rg1+ Kh7 21 Qf7 is much better for White; 19...Kh7 20 Qf7 Qh3 is about equal. **20 Rg1+ Kh7 21 Qa3** 21 Bh6? Bg4! (21...gxh6 22 Qg8 mate; 21...Kxh6 22 Qh8 mate) 22 Rg3 Rxf8 23 Rxh3 Bxh3 0-1 F.Illan Garcia-C.Casas Mor, Castelldefels 2001. **21...Bf5 22 Rg2 d4**



A position which for once deserves to be called unclear. My hunch is that in over the board play Black does well because White needs to play accurately. **23 Bd2 d3 24 Qe7 Qxf3 25 Qxe5 Bh3 26 Qg5**

Rf8 27 Rag1 Bxg2+ 28 Qxg2 Qxf2? 28...Qe2 is a sterner test of White's play by keeping a guard on the important g6 square. **29 Qg6+ Kg8 30 Qxh5** I think **30 Qxd3!** is the best continuation for White to get rid of the potentially dangerous passed pawn. **30...Qxd2 31 Qd5+ Kh8 32 Qxb7 Qh6 33 Qd5 d2 34 Rd1 Rf2 34...Qh3!** would really test White. **35 Qd8+ Kh7 36 Qd3+ Kh8 37 Qd8+ Kh7 38 Qd3+ Kh8 39 Qd8+ Kh7 40 Qd3+ Kg8 41 Qd5+**
 1/2–1/2

We now go across the border to **Mexico** where **Donato Torres** writes, “ I play chess at tournament level. My question to you is about a line in the French defense, if the next moves are right, i.e., 1 e4 e6 2d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 c4 c6 5 Nc3 Bb4 6 Bd2.”

I am not so sure about 6 Bd2 because there is little need to break the pin. However, I found a game which contained your continuation so I hope the following comments are useful:

Thomas Kohn-Franz Landolt Oberschwaben 1994

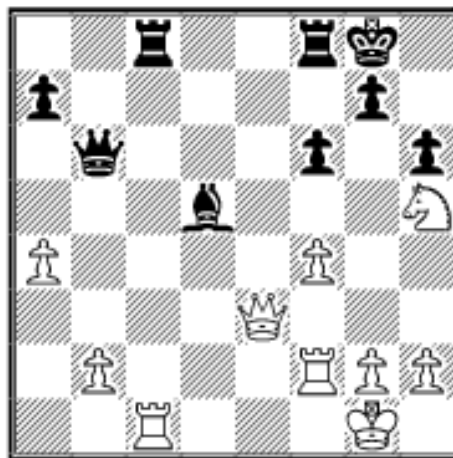
1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 c4 One of the main lines is considered to be 4 Nf3 when play might continue 4...Bd6 5 c4 c6 6 Nc3 Ne7 7 Bd3 (7 c5 is also possible) 7...0-0 8 0-0 dxc4 9 Bxc4 Nd7 10 Re1 Nb6 11 Bb3 Ned5 12 Bg5 f6 13 Bh4 Re8 14 Bg3 Bxg3 15 hxg3 Be6 16 Qd2 ½-½ M.Neubauer-J.Borges Mateos, Santa Clara 2002.**4...c6 5 Nc3 Bb4**



5...Nf6 is a reliable alternative to support the pawn on d5 6 cxd5 Nxd5 (a heavyweight encounter proceeded more peacefully with 6...cxd5 7 Bd3 Nc6 8 Be3 Bd6 9 h3 0-0 10 Nf3 Re8 11 0-0

h6 12 Re1 Bd7 13 Rc1 a6 14 Bb1 b5 15 Qd3 Ne7 16 Ne5 Bf5 ½-½ J.Speelman-E.Bareev, Hastings 1991/2) 7 Bd3 Be7 8 Nf3 Bg4 9 0-0 0-0 10 Re1 Nd7 11 Nxd5 cxd5 12 Bf4 Rc8 13 h3 Bh5 14 Bf5 gave White a slight edge in J.Speelman-V.Salov, Linares 1991. **6 Bd2** This looks a bit passive. 6 Nf3 comes into consideration. For instance: 6...Ne7 (6...Bg4 7 h3 Bxf3 8 Qxf3 Nf6 9 Bd3 dxc4 10 Qe2+ Qe7 11 Bxc4 Qxe2+ 12 Kxe2 led to equal chances in T.Reich-A.Huss, Bodensee 1995) 7 Bd3 Bf5 8 0-0 Bxd3 9 Qxd3 dxc4 10 Qxc4 Bd6 11 Re1 0-0 12 Bg5 Nd7 13 Ne4! (and now the pressure against the e7 knight will force Black to compromise his position) 13...Nb6 14 Qb3 Re8 15 Ne5 Bxe5 Black takes on e5 allowing the knight on e4 to occupy the wonderful d6 square

(15...Rf8 16 Nxd6 Qxd6 17 Nc4 Nxc4 18 Bxe7 Qd5 19 Bxf8 gives White a winning advantage) 16 dxe5 Qc7 17 Nd6 Rf8 18 Qg3 Nbd5 19 h4 Rfd8 20 h5 Qd7 21 Nxf7 Nf5 (21...Kxf7 22 e6+ wins) 22 e6 1-0 D.Lindner-J.Osmer, German Team Championship 1994. **6...dxc4 7 Bxc4 Nf6** Black is hoping to undermine the isolated d-pawn after completing development on the kingside. If 7...Qxd4 then 8 Qb3! spells trouble for Black. **8 Qb3 Qe7+ 9 Nge2 0-0 10 0-0 Bd6 11 Ng3** The position is roughly equal. **11...Qc7 12 Bg5 Nbd7 13 Rae1 h6 14 Be3?! The bishop retreats to a passive square when White should prefer 14 Bxf6 Nxf6 15 Qc2 offering equal chances. 14...Nb6 15 a4 Nxc4 16 Qxc4 Be6 17 Qd3 Rad8 18 f4 Nd5 19 Nxd5 Bxd5 20 Nh5 c5 20...Rfe8!/? looks like a decent alternative. 21 Rc1 b6 21...c4 22 Qc2 Rfe8 23 Rce1 Rd7** intending to double on the e-file is good news for Black. **22 dxc5 Bxc5 23 Bxc5 bxc5 24 Qc3 f6 25 Qxc5 Qb7 26 Rf2 26 Qf2** is a good idea to keep guard on g2 and b2. **26...Rc8 27 Qe3 Qb6**



28 Qxb6?? Hands up who thinks time-trouble is the reason for this outrage?
28...Rxc1+ 29 Rf1 Rxf1+ 30 Kxf1 axb6 31 g4 Ra8 0-1

Now a question from **India** where **Aniket**

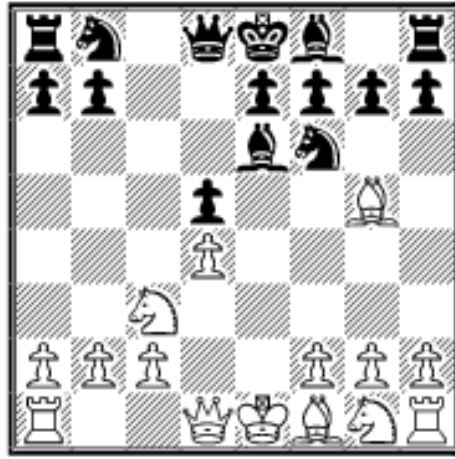
Anil Patil also known as Anjali asks, “In the Sicilian what is a suitable line to play for a national level player?”

It is difficult for me to advise a particular line because without seeing your games because I do not know if you are an attacking or positional player. My advice is to look at some of the Sicilian games played by someone who you can follow. For example: the Indian players Anand, Kunte, Sasikiran, and Sandipan are all fine exponents of the Sicilian so you should find a style suitable to you. Then instead of spending hours trying to find interesting ideas moves you can simply sit back until someone like Sandipan plays another international tournament and find out his new moves in your favourite line. Chess is easy!

Joost Retera from the **Netherlands** poses the question “I play the Caro-Kann with black and last year I was surprised in the opening by a line I couldn't retrieve in my books (perhaps my books are too old?) 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 Nc3 Nf6 5 Bg5 Be6?! (Flohr) 6 Nf3 Ne4! And black is supposedly ok. What followed was 7 Be2 (after 7 Nxe4 dxe4 I believe black is ok) 7...Qa5 8 0-0 and here 9 bxc3 Qxc3 10 Rb1! and black has some problems. Can you shed some light on the variation with Be2?

The short answer is that Flohr was right to condemn 5...Be6 and I had so much trouble trying to find a reference to it I wondered if the notation was wrong and you meant some line of the Panov-Botvinnik featuring 4 c4 where ...Be6 sometimes occur. Still, assuming all is correct I will try to answer your specific question concerning the game.

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 Nc3 Nf6 5 Bg5 Be6?!



I fail to understand the logic of this move because the d-pawn does not need any support and the bishop merely blocks in the kingside pieces. **6 Nf3 Ne4 7 Be2** This move looks to be perfectly

acceptable because White is content to get on with the job of developing the pieces. **7...Qa5 8 0-0 Nxc3 9 bxc3 Qxc3 10 Rb1**



In this position Black has managed to win a pawn but his neglect in getting the pieces out means that White has the better practical chances. The immediate worry is the b-pawn and

perhaps even 10...Bc8 is the right move to hold on to the material, which means that then the queen is the only active piece, which cannot be right. A sample line might be 11 Ne5 intending Bb5+ when 11...a6 12 Bd3 Qc7 (12...e6 fails to the surprising 13 Nxf7! Kxf7 14 Qf3+ Ke8 15 Bg6+ hxg6 16 Qxc3 wins) 13 Qf3 with a promising attack. Perhaps Black's best bet is 10...Qc7 when 11 Qd2 intending Bf4 is a chance for White to chase the black queen with an edge.

Vladimir Kozomara-Vladimir Simagin Sarajevo 1963

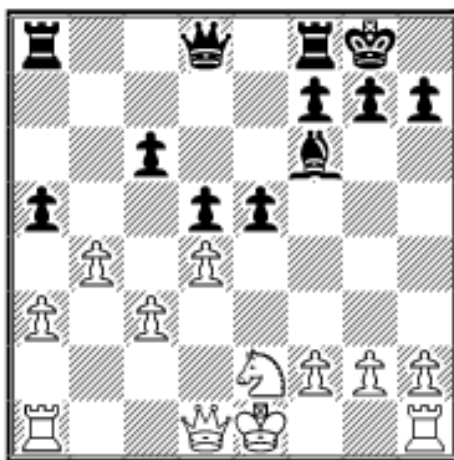
1 d4 Nf6 2 Nc3 d5 3 Bg5 c5 4 e3 cxd4 5 exd4 Nc6



This simple developing idea seems to be a simple improvement. **6 Nf3** 6 Be2 is an interesting way to stop the idea ...Bg4. For example: 6...Bf5 7 Nf3 e6 8 0-0 Be7 9 Bb5 Bg4 10 Re1

0-0 11 Be2 Bxf3 12 Bxf3 Qb6 when the twin threats against the b and d-pawns gives Black the advantage, O.Rulik-H.Schulz, Bargteheide 1989. Also possible: 6 Bb5 e6 7 Nf3 Be7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Re1 h6 (9...Qb6!? is worth considering) 10 Bh4 Bd7 11 Bd3 Rc8 12 a3 a6 13 Ne2 Ne4 (13...Qb6) 14 Bxe7 Qxe7 15 Nf4 Nf6 16 c3 Na5 ½-½ M.Kupfernagel-R.Schoenrock, Mecklenburg 1994. **6...Bg4** The bishop looks a lot happier on an active square rather than e6 as suggested in the question. 6...Ne4 7 Be3 (7 Be2 Nxg5 8 Nxg5 e5! favours Black) 7...Nxc3 8 bxc3 Bg4 9 Be2 e6 10 0-0 Bd6 11 Nd2 Bxe2 12 Qxe2 Qc7 13 g3 0-0 left White with a poor pawn structure and lost in 28 moves, P.Kohout-G.Wachinger, Bayern 1998. **7 Be2 e6 8 Ne5 Bxe2 9 Nxe2 Be7** Black is content to break the pin and carry on with developing his pieces. **10 c3 0-0 11 Nxc6 bxc6 12 Bxf6?!** There is no need for White to give up his bishop which merely encourages Black to break out with ...e6-

e5. 12...Bxf6 13 b4 a5 14 a3 e5



Simagin already has an initiative and it is White who has emerged from the opening with the need to defend. 15 0-0 e4 16 Qc2 Qd6 17 Rab1 Bd8 18 a4 f5 Black rightly begins a kingside

attack because it is awkward for White to transfer his pieces to form a decent defence. 19 b5 f4 19...Bc7 to compromise the White pawn structure looks good. 20 f3 Or 20 bxc6 f3 21 Ng3 (Or 21 gxf3 Rxf3 22 Ng3 Qxc6 23 Rbc1 Bg5 winning) 21...Qxc6 gives Black the better prospects. 20...Re8 21 Ra1 Bc7 22 Ra2 exf3 23 Rxf3 Re4 24 c4 Rae8 25 c5 Qh6 26 h3? 26 Qd1 is necessary. 26...Rxe2 27 Qxe2 Rxe2 28 Rxe2 Qf6 29 Re8+ Kf7 30 Rc8 Qxd4+ 31 Kh2 Be5 32 Rxc6 g5 33 b6 h5 34 Rc7+ Bxc7 0-1

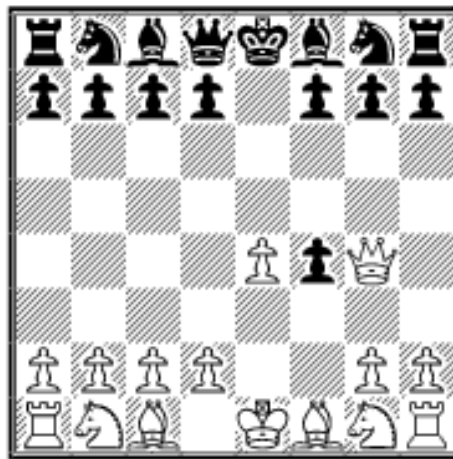
And finally, a reminder that playing chess on the Internet is a chance to make new friends, an opportunity to beat foreigners and certainly a time to play silly openings. **George Arndt** from **Harvard, Massachusetts, USA**, confesses “ I have been playing a trick for White – 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Qg4. It leaves my opponents perplexed and I do well with it on the fast Internet games. I have never seen any mention of this in any king’s gambit literature. But it is not so bad, what do you think?

My first reaction was to applaud your ingenuity

of playing a move I had never thought of in the King's Gambit. My second thought was to wonder how you could have won any games by such an outlandish idea of moving the queen out so early in the game. The whole point of the King's Gambit is to give up a pawn in order to promote rapid piece development and engineer an attacking formation. This strategy does not seem to combine well with the queen leaping out to g4 on move 3 but I can imagine in blitz games it works a treat because the opponent will spend at least a minute laughing. Just for the record I managed to track down a game featuring the idea of the queen going on holiday.

Matthias Schnabel-Paul Kloninger Bad Wildungen 1998

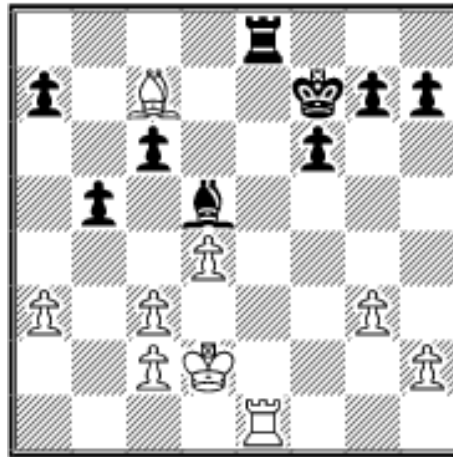
1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Qg4?



A wonderful way to shock Black. The logic is that White wishes to take the pawn with the queen and then hopefully create an attack by castling kingside and using the semi-open f-file. Of course, it

should only be wishful thinking if Black reacts sharply by finding a way to attack the exposed queen. **3...d5** The critical line is probably **3...g5** to hang on to the extra pawn although after **4 h4 d5 5 Qxg5 Qxg5 6 hxg5 dxe4 7 Nc3 Bf5 8 d3** White is presented with his favoured messy position from the opening. **4 Qxf4 dxe4 5**

Qxe4+ Qe7 The explanation for this meek move might be linked to the desire to stop a King's Gambit player from creating the usual attack. However, the change in circumstances should prompt Black to try 5...Be7 to block the check when 6 Nf3 Nf6 7 Qe3 0-0 gives Black the advantage due to lead in development with Rf8-e8 a promising continuation. **6 Nc3 Nf6 7 Qxe7+ Bxe7 8 Nf3 0-0 9 Bc4 Bf5 10 d3 Bc5 11 Bf4 c6 12 0-0-0 b5 13 d4 Bb4 14 Bb3 Bxc3 15 bxc3 Nbd7 16 Bd6 Rfe8 17 Ne5 Nxe5 18 Bxe5 Nd5 19 Kd2 Nb6 20 Rde1 Be6 21 Bc7 Nc4+ 22 Bxc4 Bxc4 23 a3 Bd5 24 Rhf1 Rxe1 25 Kxe1 f6 26 Kd2 Kf7?! 26...Bxg2 presents Black a pawn for nothing. 27 g3 Re8 28 Re1**



White assumes that the opposite coloured bishops are perfect for a draw but the prospect of creating a passed kingside pawn makes it favourable for Black. **28...Rxe1 29 Kxe1 Ke6 30**

Kd2 Kf5 31 h4 Ke4 32 Bf4 Kf3 33 Bd6 g5 34 Ke1 Bc4 35 Be7 Kxg3 36 hxg5 fxg5 37 Bxg5 h5 38 Bf6 h4 39 Be5+ Kg2 40 Kd1 h3 41 Kc1 h2 42 Bxh2 Kxh2 43 Kb2 Kg2 44 a4 a5 45 Ka3 Kf2 46 axb5 cxb5 0-1

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