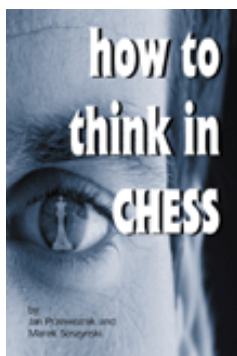




COLUMNISTS

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 Flock of Seagulls

There are some things that were big in the 1980 such as the pop band 'A Flock of Seagulls' but fashions change and where are they now? The same can be said for the gambit line in the Grand Prix Attack which 20 years ago was thought to be the next big thing after brilliant victories by Englishmen such as Hebden, Hodgson and Plaskett. The problem was that the test of time was not kind and defences were refined so that now Black was able to master the obstacles in the opening. Admittedly, it is prone to a few comebacks every now and then but has never been a hit since.

Bernard Baker from **Charlotte, NC, USA** is worried about being a dedicated follower of fashion. He writes, "I have finally crossed over to the 1800s and must move up when playing in tourneys. They tell me that the Grand Prix Attack (with Bc4) and an all out kingside pawn storm against Black's fianchettoed fortress won't work at the upper levels. I would like to know your opinion on this. Also, I would like to know if I should continue to play the Grand Prix Attack, which I have had tremendous success using at U1800 level, or should I find a more formal way of playing against the Sicilian? I love 1 e4 but have not yet found anything comfortable except the GPA."

I think you should definitely keep playing the Grand Prix Attack because you obviously like the direct attacks. After all fashions change but class is permanent and the opening is still employed by numerous grandmasters. However, it is true that you will need to drop the gambit line with Bc4 against a certain defensive system outlined in the first game. However the good news is that if Black plays 2...d6 then the Bc4 line is fine and has even been successfully employed by Nigel Short in his world championship campaign.

This is the sort of game that your friends warned you about!

Ruben Gallego Martinez-Javier Campos Moreno
Andorra 2001

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 f4 g6 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 Bc4 e6 6 f5 Nge7 7 fxe6 fxe6 8 d3 d5 9 Bb3 b5!



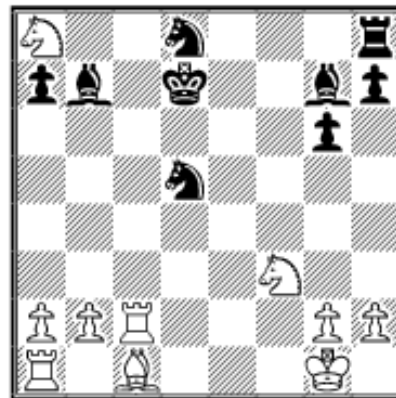
This is the move which I think has transformed this line in Black's favour. It is strange that I mentioned it some years ago when I wrote a book about the opening but there are still booklets being produced promoting this dubious line for White. **10**

0-0 The main reason it went out of fashion for years was due to the fairly well known miniature J.Hodgson-D.Strauss, London 1979: 10 exd5 exd5 11 0-0 Bxc3 12 bxc3 c4 13 Ng5 Bf5 14 dxc4 dxc4 15 Qe2 h6 (15...cxb3! is an opportunity missed when 16 axb3 Qd5 {16...Qd7! and White is struggling} 17 g4! Bd7 18 Ne4 gives White decent compensation due to the threat of Nf6+) 16 Rxf5 hxg5 17 Rxb5 cxb3 18 axb3 Qd6 19 h3 0-0 20 Bxg5 Nf5? 21 Rd1 1-0 However, as I have pointed out there is room for improvement for Black. **10...c4 11 exd5 exd5 12 dxc4 dxc4**



This is the critical test where Black gives up a rook for two pieces in a messy ending. It is still being debated who is better but I think Black has the best better practical chances because White needs to proceed very accurately.

Then again 12...bxc4 is a steady alternative. **13 Qxd8+ Nxd8** Or 13...Kxd8 14 Nxb5 cxb3 15 Ng5? (15 axb3 is the right approach) 15...bxc2 16 Rf2 (16 Nf7+ Kd7 17 Nxh8 Ba6 18 a4 Rxh8 is much better for Black) 16...Bf5 17 g4 Bxg4 18 Rxc2 Nd4 19 Nf7+ Ke8 20 Nfd6+ Kf8 21 Rf2+ Nef5 when the excitement is over and Black is just a piece up, J.Kivijarvi-A.Veingold,Turku 2001. **14 Nxb5 cxb3 15 Nc7+ Kd7 16 Nxa8 bxc2** Well, after the flurry of activity White is the exchange up. The only snag is that the white knight is marooned on a8 so White has to try and activate his pieces while Black rounds it up. **17 Rf2 Bb7 18 Rd2+ Nd5 19 Rxc2**



19...Ne6 Actually, 19...Bxa8 is also possible but it did not really work out for the grandmaster after 20 Bg5 Ne6 21 Rd1 Re8 22 Be3 a6 23 Rcd2 Ke7?! (23...Kd6 protects the knight) 24 Rxd5 Bxd5 25 Rxd5 Bxb2 1/2-1/2 P.Tishin-A.Rychagov,Tula 2002. **20 Bd2 Rxa8** Black

finally takes the knight who has two pieces for a rook and a pawn. I think White in general will have problems because it is difficult to co-ordinate his pieces. **21 Re1 Nd4 22 Nxd4 Bxd4+ 23 Kh1 Rf8** The grandmaster makes sure his rook is well placed and ready to take advantage of any back rank mate threats. **24 Ba5 Rf5 25 h3 h5 26 Rd1 Be5 27 Bc3** Or 27 Rc5 Bd6 28 Rcc1 Ne3 29 Rd3 Bxg2+ 30 Kg1 Rxa5 31 Rxe3 Rg5 is good news for Black. **27...Bd6 28 Bd4 a6 29 Kg1 h4 30 Rf1**

Bh2+! 0–1

If you still want to play Bc4 combined with a kingside attack then there is still hope against a certain move-order:

Ralf Lau-Georg Kilgus Ansfelden 2003

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 d6 The difference here is that now it will take Black two moves to play the black d-pawn to d5 and that extra move allows White to engage in the usual attack. The reason why Black chooses 2...d6 is the fear of White playing 3 Nf3 and entering an open Sicilian so they have to stick to the move-order they know. Of course 2...e6 would be nonsense for a Dragon player after 3 Nf3 and 4 d4 so Black in some ways is handicapped. **3 f4 Nc6 4 Nf3 g6 5 Bc4 Bg7 6 0–0**



6...Nf6 Or 6...e6 7 d3 Nge7 8 Qe1 and now: A) 8...Nd4 9 Nxd4 cxd4 10 Ne2 0–0 11 Bb3 Nc6 12 Bd2 d5 13 e5! f6 14 exf6 Bxf6 15 Kh1 (an echo of the main game to start operations against the vulnerable d4 pawn) 15...a5 16 a4 Qd6 17 Ng1 Bd7 18 Nf3 Nb4 19 Qf2 Qc5 20 Bc3

Nc6 21 Rae1 b6 22 Bd2 Nb4 23 Qg3 b5 24 f5! (this advance is usually a guide to White's success) 24...exf5 (24...bxa4 25 fxg6 axb3 26 gxh7+ Kxh7 27 Ng5+ Bxg5 28 Qxg5 is better for White according to Short) 25 Ne5 Be8 26 axb5 Qxb5 27 Rxf5 Kh8 28 Rxf6 Rxf6 29 Ng4 Rf5 30 Nh6 Rh5 31 Qf4 1–0 N. Short-B.Gelfand, Brussels Candidates 1991; B) 8...0–0 9 f5 exf5 10 Qh4 d5? 11 exd5 Na5 12 Bg5! (a lovely move to highlight how bad the position has become for Black) 12...f6 (12...Re8 is no help after 13 Rae1 Bf8 14 d6 Qxd6 15 Nb5 Qb6 16 Bxf7+ Kxf7 17 Qxh7+ Bg7 18 Bxe7 winning easily) 13 d6+ Nxc4 14 Qxc4+ Kh8 15 dxe7 Qxe7 16 Rae1 1–0 Rujevic-Aghamalyan, 2003 Victorian Championship 2003. **7 d3 0–0 8 Qe1 e6** Black wishes to try and reduce the effectiveness of white's light-squared

bishop. 8...a6 9 f5!? (a typical move in this line indicating the onslaught has begun although 9 e5!? also looks good) 9...Na5 10 fxg6 hxg6 11 Bb3 Nxb3 12 axb3 Nh7 13 Qh4 e6 14 Bg5 f6 15 Bd2 f5 16 Qg3 the pawn on g6 looks weak 16...e5 (if 16...Qe8 to protect the g6 pawn then 17 Qxd6 wins) 17 Nd5 f4 18 Qxg6 b6 19 Be1 Rf7 20 Bh4 Qf8 21 Nxb6 Raa7 22 Nxc8 1–0 N.Mitkov-J.Alvarez, Istanbul Olympiad 2000. **9 Bd2** The German grandmaster is content to get on with the job of developing the rest of his pieces. 9 Bb3 worked out well in M. Al Modiahki-N.Faulks, Istanbul Olympiad 2000 and has the merit of having the choice of meeting ...d5-d5 with e4-e5. That game went: 9...Nd4 10 Nxd4 cxd4 11 Ne2 Nd7 12 Qf2 Qb6 13 f5 (anyone who plays this opening is always looking for such an advance) 13...d5 14 Qh4 Bf6 15 Bg5 Qd8? Black is already in trouble but this allows a clever combination 16 fxg6 fxg6 17 Rxf6! Rxf6 18 e5 1–0. **9...Nd4 10 Nxd4 cxd4 11 Nd1 Bd7 12 Kh1** At first glance this seems a little odd but White has some ambitions to target the d4 pawn so wants the king out of the way to avoid any pins. **12...d5 13 Bb3 dxe4 14 dxe4 Bc6 15 Nf2 a5** The position is about level but it is not clear how Black can make progress. **16 a4 b6 17 e5 Nd7 18 Bc4 Nc5 19 b3 Qh4 20 Qe2 h5** Kilgus is wary of allowing a white knight to jump to the g4 square. **21 Kg1 Bh6 22 g3 Qe7 23 f5!?**



As usual in this opening the pawn advance spells disaster for Black. **23...Bxd2 24 f6** The pawn on f6 will create dangerous attacking chances. **24...Qc7 25 Qxd2 Kh7** The obvious move to stop the queen invading on h6. However, good or bad 25...Qxe5 needs to be tested.

26 Rae1 Rad8 27 h4 Ba8 28 Nh3 Lau is in complete control of the position and can gradually improve his position while Black is just a spectator. **28...Rh8 29 Ng5+ Kg8 30 Kh2 Rd7 31 Rf4 Qb7** If 31...Qd8 then 32 Rd1 maintains the pressure on the d4 pawn. **32 Rg1**

Qc7 33 Rxd4 1–0

Of course, there still leaves the dilemma of what to do against the ...e7-e6 and ...d7-d5 variation. I propose you play Bb5 and you can follow in the footsteps of plenty of strong players. For example:

Sunil Weeramantry-James Trojan New York State Championship 2001

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 f4 g6 4 Nf3 Bg7 5 Bb5



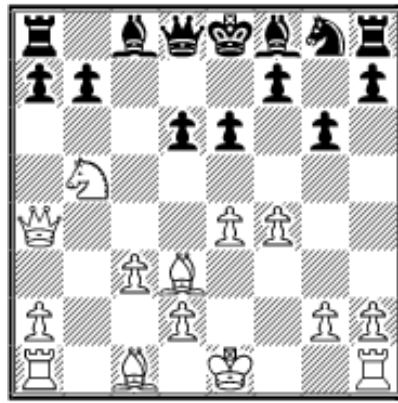
I think the best way to handle Black's move-order to play the bishop to b5. This is because on c4 the position is quickly shooed away with ...e7-e6 and ...d7-d5.

5...Nd4 Also possible:

5...a6?! White is quite happy to exchange pieces in order to double the c-pawns so

there is no need to encourage him. 6 Bxc6 bxc6 7 0–0 d6 8 d3 Rb8 9 Qe1 Bg4 10 Qg3 Bxf3 11 Rxf3 Nf6 12 Kh1 Nd7 13 e5 dxe5 14 f5 the advance of the f-pawn is a theme of the attack 14...Bf6 15 Ne4 c4 16 b3 cxd3 17 Rxd3 gxf5? 18 Nxf6+ (the start of a winning combination) 18...exf6 19 Qg7 Rf8 20 Ba3 e4 21 Rd4 Qb6 22 Rad1 Ne5 23 Qxf8 mate 1-0, N.Hoiberg-J.Nielsen, Danish Team Championship 2000; 5...e6 6 Bxc6 bxc6 7 e5 Ba6?! 8 Ne4 (the knight is perfectly placed and Black is already in big trouble) 8...Qb6 9 Nd6+ Ke7 10 d3 f6 11 0–0 c4+ 12 d4 c3 13 bxc3 Bxf1 14 Qxf1 fxe5 15 fxe5 Bxe5 16 Nxe5 Kxd6 17 Nc4+ 1–0 S.Proettel-W.Stelzer, Duisburg 2000. **6 Bd3** It seems odd to restrict White's d-pawn but is only a temporary measure, which will soon become clear. **6...e6?!** An obvious move but lack has already gone wrong. 6...d6 is a better choice. **7 Nxd4 cxd4 8 Nb5! d6 9 c3 dxc3 10 bxc3** 10 dxc3 might even be better because 10...Ne7 (10...a6 is well met by 11 Qa4!) 11 Nxd6+ Qxd6 12 Bb5+ picks up the black queen. **10...Bf8?** Black panics about the prospect of Ba3 and retreats the only piece he

has developed. **11 Qa4**



11...Qd7 **11...Bd7** **12 Qd4** is very good for White. **12 Nxd6+** The well known chess coach is spoilt for choice because **12 Nc7+** also wins. **12...Ke7** **13 Bb5** **Qc7** While **13...Qxd6** allows **14 Ba3** pinning the queen. **14 Ba3** **Kd8** **15 Qd4** **1-0**

The other question asked by Bernard was whether he should take up the open Sicilian? Well, as can be seen there are lots of top players who have faith in the Grand Prix Attack so if it is good enough for them it is bound to reap reward at local tournaments. I have to say anyone from Eastern Europe seems to hate this opening because it goes against the principles they were taught when young. I remember one Soviet master strongly arguing that the opening was a silly choice but then again he had just been beaten in 24 moves. The other argument is that some lines with correct play offer equal chances so the open Sicilian offers more options. This is true and if you have a few months to spare then learning the open Sicilian is worth it. Of course, having spent ages learning lots of different lines, you will then have someone remind you that Kasparov always equalizes in the opening when playing the Najdorf! Just play the opening you like and keep on attacking.

Phil Salathe from **Philadelphia, PA, USA**, says "I'd love some coverage of the Scandinavian Defense line 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Nxd5 3 d4 Nxd5 4 c4 Nb6 5 Nc3 e5!?, which I run into a lot in blitz games as Black. White's 5 Nc3 is sometimes called a mistake because of 5...e5, a move, which obviously isn't possible after the normal 5 Nf3. I usually do OK in lines like 6 dxe5 Qxd1+ 7 Nxd1 (or 97 Kxd1) 7...Nc6 where Black's piece play usually allows him to regain the pawn comfortably with easy equality, but after 6 d5 c6 (given an "!" in several books) 7 Nf3 cxd5 8 Nxe5 (the normal move is 8 cxd5 when

Black is fine after 8...N8d7), how should Black continue?"

I think if you are worried about 8 Nxe5 then it can be avoided. Then again, perhaps you should encourage people to play such a move:

Eric Gaudineau-Pierre Brunelliere Accession
Championship Bescanon 1999

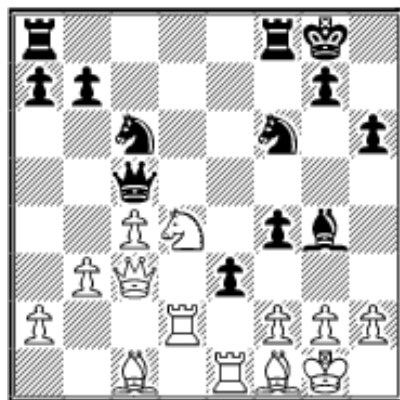
1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Nf6 3 d4 Nxd5 4 c4 Nb6 5 Nc3 e5 6 d5 c6 7 Nf3 Bb4 If you are looking for an alternative then the pin with the bishop manages to maintain the tension. After 7...cxd5 I cannot find any trace of 8 Nxe5



probably because White has no way of obtaining an advantage against 8...Bd6 9 Nf3 (9 Qe2 0-0! threatening ...Bxe5 and ...Re8 looks bleak for White. Instead 9 f4 0-0 10 cxd5 Re8 11 Be2 N8d7 might be the best continuation for White but Black has plenty of piece

play) 9...dxc4 is fine for Black. While 8 cxd5 can be met by 8...Bb4 (8...Bd6 9 Bb5+ Bd7 10 0-0 0-0 11 Re1 Re8 12 Bg5 f6 13 Bh4 Bxb5 14 Nxb5 Na6 15 Rc1 Bb4 16 Rxe5? (it seems to be a stunning idea but at the end of the combination Black has spotted a sting in the tail) 16 Rxe5 17 Nxe5 Qe8 0-1 J.Kjetzae-W.Jung, German Team Championship 1992) 9 Bb5+ Bd7 10 Qb3 Bxc3+ 1/2-1/2 R.Huebner-R.Dzindzichashvili, Chicago 1982. **8 Qb3 Bxc3+ 9 Qxc3** Or 9 bxc3 0-0 10 Ba3 Re8 11 0-0-0 (a risky venture when White queenside pawn structure is a mess) 11...Qf6 12 Bd3 Bd7 13 c5 Nxd5 14 Qxb7 e4! maybe White underestimated this which brings the black queen into the action 15 Bb2 exd3 16 Rhe1 (16 Qxa8 Nxc3 17 Rxd3 Qf4+ is better for Black) 16...Qf4+ 17 Nd2 Rf8 18 Qxa8 Qa4 the threat of mate on c2 decides matters 19 Nb3 Qxa2 20 Nd4 Qa6 21 Nb5 Qxb5 22 Qxa7 Qc4 0-1 V.Faibisovich-M.Shereshevski, Minsk 1971. **9...0-0 10 dxc6 Nxc6 11 Be3 Qe7 12 Be2 h6 13**

0–0 f5 The black pawns begins to roll forward spelling trouble for White if he is passive. The right strategy for Gaudineau is to treat the pawn centre as a potential target. **14 Rfe1 Nd7 15 Rad1 Nf6 16 b3 f4 17 Bc1 Qc5 18 Bf1 18 Bd3!?** is needed to stop the e-pawn moving forward. **18...e4 19 Nd4 Bg4! 20 Rd2 e3**



Suddenly, Black's whole strategy is rewarded with excellent attacking chances. **21 b4 Qh5?** There is no need to keep pursuing the attack when **21...exd2** is the simplest victory when **22 bxc5 dxe1Q 23 Qxe1 Nxd4** gives Black a material advantage. **22 fxe3 Ne4 23**

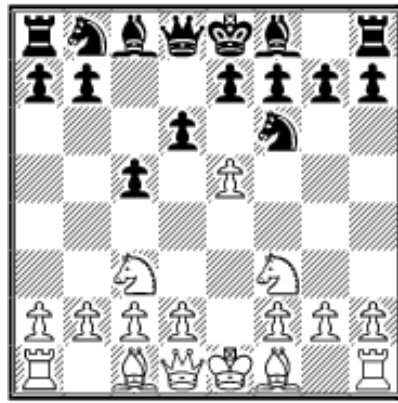
Qb2 Qh4 24 Rde2 Nxd4 25 exd4 25 Qxd4 f3 26 gxf3 Bxf3 wins. 25...f3 26 gxf3 Bxf3 27 Bg2 Bxe2 28 Rxe2 Rae8 0–1

Finally, **Eric Hongisto** writes from **Montana, USA** and modestly describes himself as a 2000 rated patzer. Well, I bet there are lots of people who would be delighted to reach 2000 so don't feel sorry for him! Anyway, his e-mail read, "V.Anand recently deployed e5 in the following line 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5!? – what are the main reasons for this? Is this just known as a drawish surprise line or are there good prospects that are about to be seen in upcoming tournaments?"

I think White just plays this to get out of the main lines. It is worth noting that although Anand has played it a few times recently, it was at a rapid tournament where opening surprises gain valuable time on the clock. Basically, White just wants to quickly develop and give Black a fresh set of problems to deal with. However, the consensus at the top level seems to be that it offers equal chances.

***Isal Berengolts-Martin Veltmann* Toronto
Championship 2001**

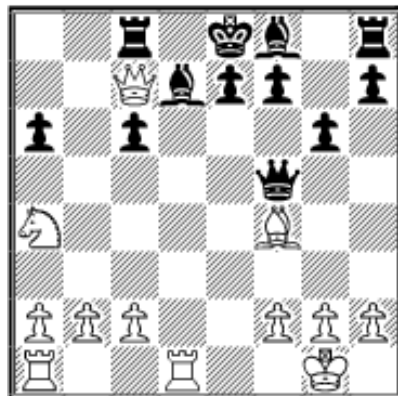
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5



I think White just plays this to get out of the main lines. It is worth noting that although Anand has played it a few times recently it was at a rapid tournament where opening surprises gaining valuable time on the clock.

4...Ng4!? 4...dxe5 is the sensible reply. For instance:

5 Nxe5 a6 6 a4 (6...e6 7 b3 {7 Bc4 looks reasonable} 7...Be7 8 Bb2 0-0 9 Bd3 Nbd7 10 Nc4 Qc7 11 0-0 b6 12 f4 Bb7 13 Qe2 Rfe8 14 Rae1 h6 15 Ne5 Rac8 16 Nxf7! 1-0 A.Lopez del Alamo-J.Ruiz Rescalvo, Mirabal 2001) 6...g6 7 Bc4 e6 8 0-0 Bg7 9 d3 0-0 10 Re1 Qc7 11 Qf3 Nbd7 12 Bf4 Qa5 13 h4 Nb6 14 Bd2 Nxc4 15 Nxc4 Qd8 16 Bf4 gave White the edge in Anand-Topalov, Bastia 2003. **5 d4 cxd4 6 Qxd4 Nc6 7 Bb5** White has a slight initiative but the position offers equal chances. **7...a6 8 Bxc6+ bxc6 9 0-0 Nxe5 10 Nxe5 dxe5 11 Qxe5 Qd6 12 Qa5 Bd7 13 Rd1 Qe6 14 Bf4 g6? 15 Na4** The knight threatens to invade the heart of Black's position and White is on top. **15...Qf5 16 Qc7 Rc8**



17 Qxd7+! 1-0

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