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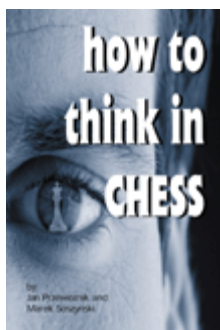
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COLUMNISTS

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!

The Vanishing

There are some openings, which are fashionable, sexy and cool. Then something happens and none of the top players play the line for years. The only problem is that there are lots of dedicated followers of fashion who are wondering why their variation has suddenly disappeared. One answer is to just forget about it, but there are always constant reminders such as old books, magazine clippings and memories of gambits that might have won spectacularly if it hadn't been for time-trouble. The ultimate test is to confront your fears when you are paired against a strong player in a tournament. This involves you employing the opening and see what happens. The loss will solve the dilemma and make you a better person. The alternative is to find out what is going on by e-mailing this column:

"My name is **Tommy J. Curry** from the **USA**. I am a Blackmar Diemar fan and play it as my opening system. There seems to have been a recent improvement in the Huebsch gambit that now seems to be a bust to the Blackmar Diemar gambit. 1 d4 d5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 e4 Nxe4 4 Nxe4 dxe4 5 Bc4 Nc6 6 c3 e5 7 d5 Ne7 8 f3 Nf5. This line was suggested by GM Eric Prie. I cannot find any games in which this was played so I am assuming this is a new move and as such has been advocated by him as a bust to a juvenile chess system whose time has come. Due to my inability to find a move for white in the 5 Bc4 system, I have been analyzing two other systems you mentioned, namely 5 Be3 and 5 Bf4. It seems 5 Bf4 shows some promise and as Glenn Budinzinski said may indeed become the most effective way of meeting the Huebsch Gambit."

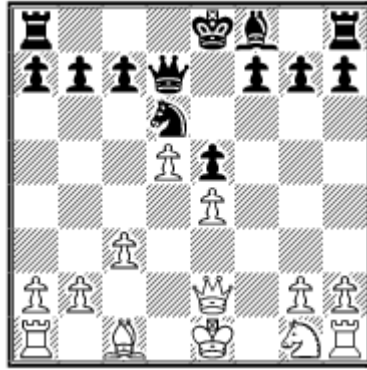
Before we condemn the line and thank the French grandmaster for adding more misery to fans of this controversial gambit line, a closer look is required.

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nc3 d5 3 e4 Nxe4 If 3...dxe4 then 4 f3 transposes to a standard Blackmar-Diemer Gambit. Actually, I have recently received lots of questions on that particular opening but cannot feature all of them in this column otherwise nothing else would ever be mentioned! **4 Nxe4 dxe4 5 Bc4 Nc6 6 c3 e5 7 d5 Ne7 8 f3 Nf5**



I assume that your comments are correct and this knight move is what the Frenchman has come up with.

However, as long as White is not silly enough to take on e4 then I think the move is harmless. **9 Bb5+!** This is the key move, which gives new life to the gambit. Sadly, I cannot promise you a forced win but at least it should solve the immediate problem. Of course, 9 fxe4? allows 9...Qh4+ leaving White in trouble after 10 Kf1 Ng3+ 11 hxd3 Qxh1. **9...Bd7** Or 9...c6 10 dxc6 Qxd1+ 11 Kxd1 Kd8 12 fxe4 Nd6 13 Bd3 bxc6 14 Nf3 f6 15 Be3 with a level position. **10 Bxd7+ Qxd7** I think 10...Kxd7?! looks daft but someone might try it so White should reply 11 Qa4+ with a favourable position upon 11...Kc8 12 fxe4 and now 12...Qh4+? invites disaster after 13 g3 Nxd3 14 Qe8+ Qd8 15 Qxd8+ Kxd8 16 hxd3 winning. **11 fxe4 Nd6 12 Qe2** (see diagram) with equal chances.



I suspect there are alternatives to improve Black's chances, but 8...Nf5 is not the answer. If anyone can think of a favourite line that has abruptly dropped off the chess map then let me know and perhaps the opening can be repaired.

The chess historians often look back at old magazines trying to work out when an important novelty was played or why an opening was deemed to be flawed. Sometimes the job is easier then that. For example, the prestigious

New in Chess Yearbook 67 contained a short article by AC van der Tak discussing how a line in the Budapest Gambit had been refuted. The good news is that this column is quoted as having first discussed the innovation, so congratulations to Greek reader Ioannis Georgiadis who e-mailed a game he played. Now he will have the satisfaction of knowing that every reputable writer on the Budapest Gambit will mention the line. Therefore, if you want to be famous keep sending in the questions!

In last month's column I mentioned that the Belle computer had made a big impact in the 1980s and asked if anyone had played the machine. **Michael Goeller** from **East Brunswick, NJ, USA** answered the appeal. He wrote "In your last article for **ChessCafe** you issued a call for games against the Belle Chess Computer. Here is my small contribution, complete with annotations."

I have taken the liberty of adding my own comments to the game to bring the opening up to date.

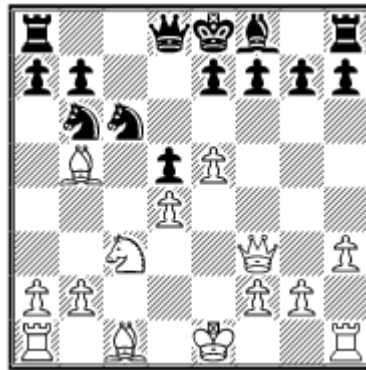
Belle COMPUTER-Michael Goeller, New Jersey 1980
Westfield Chess Club Championship

1 e4 c5 2 c3 Nf6 3 e5 Nd5 4 d4 cxd4 5 cxd4 d6 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 Bc4 Nb6 8 Bb5 d5



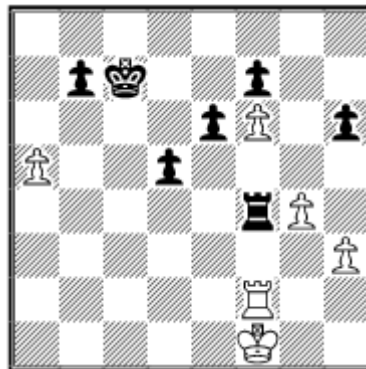
This is a good idea against a computer because closed positions tend to favour humans who can disguise their plans rather than enter an open position where tactics will triumph. Naturally, those comments are geared to 1980s computers because nowadays the top

software is simply very good in all departments. Instead R.Espinosa-A.Zapata, Merida 2003, saw the standard 8...dxe5 which continued 9 Nxe5 Bd7 10 Nxd7 Qxd7 11 Nc3 e6 12 0-0 Be7 13 Qg4 0-0 14 Rd1 with a critical position that is currently viewed as being a sound position offering White attacking chances. **9 Nc3** This is a respectable move although White might want to consider the alternatives: a) 9 0-0 Bg4 10 h3 Bxf3 11 Qxf3 e6 12 Be3 Rc8 13 Nd2 a6 14 Bxc6+ Rxc6 15 Rfc1 with equal chances, Z.Sturua-A.Minasian, Yerevan Olympiad 1996. b) 9 h3 Bf5 10 0-0 e6 11 Bg5 Be7 12 Bxe7 Qxe7 13 Bxc6+ bxc6 14 Qc1 0-0 15 Nbd2 (15 Qxc6 is not impressive upon 15...Rac8 16 Qd6 Qxd6 17 exd6 Rfd8) 15...Rfc8 led to equal chances in L.Nisipeanu-Eljanov, Dubai 2004. **9...Bg4 10 h3 Bxf3 11 Qxf3**



Michael comments: "Computers just love the two bishops, but here I think the knights will be better. Besides, an exchange of Belle's light-squared bishop for my knight seems likely, which will leave me with the 'better' bishop." **11...e6 12 0-0 Rc8 13 Qg4 a6 14 Bg5 Qd7 15 Bxc6 Rxc6 16 Rfc1?! h6 17 Qh4** "This allows me to exchange into a rather favorable ending, and computers are not very strong in that strategic arena." **17... Be7! 18 Bxe7 Qxe7 19 Qxe7+ Kxe7 20 a4?! Nc4 21 b4 a5!? 22 bxa5 Nxa5**

23 Ra3? This allows Black to swiftly create a stranglehold on the position by doubling rooks on the c-file. I think White try to relieve the pressure with **23 Ne2** although after **23...Nc4** Black still has an edge. **23...Rhc8 24 f4 Rc4 25 f5!? Kd7 26 f6 gxf6 27 exf6 Rxd4 28 Rca1 Rf4 29 Rd1!? Nc4 30 Rb3 Nd6 31 Rf1 Rcc4 32 g3 Rxf1+ 33 Kxf1 Kc6 34 a5 Ne4?! "Black should not exchange into a rook ending. Better 34...Rc5!—+ winning the a-pawn."** **35 Nxe4 Rxe4 36 Rb6+ Kc7 37 Rb5 Re5 "I'm still obsessed with winning that f-pawn."** **38 g4 Re4 39 Rb2 Rf4+ 40 Rf2?**



"And Belle is just as obsessed with protecting the f-pawn! A human would never exchange rooks in this situation, of course, since the K+P ending is an easy win. But the computer is focused on material, and this move saves the f-pawn -- at least for more plys than the computer has analyzed." **40...Rxf2+ 41 Kxf2 Kd6 42 h4 Ke5!? 43 Ke3 Kxf6 44 Kd4 Ke7 45 Kc5 Kd7 46 Kb6 d4! 47 Kxb7 d3 48 a6 d2 49 a7 d1Q 50 a8Q Qh1+?! "This requires no calculation, but Fritz quickly sees 50...Qd5+! 51 Kb8 Qe5+ 52 Ka7 Qa5+**

53 Kb7 Qb5+ 54 Ka7 Kc7! forcing mate." **51 Ka7 Qxa8+ 52 Kxa8 e5 0-1** "Seeing my pawn destined to queen, Ken Thompson resigned for the computer. Ken is very well known now in computer circles, especially as the father of UNIX and a contributor to the development of other computer languages, but I knew nothing of those things back then. Belle was the reigning computer champion and, if I remember correctly, the first to achieve a master rating. I was 15-years-old and rapidly progressing to an "expert" rating. With the win I tied Belle for first in the Westfield Chess Club Championship and the "David versus Goliath" story made for a nice

write-up in a local paper."

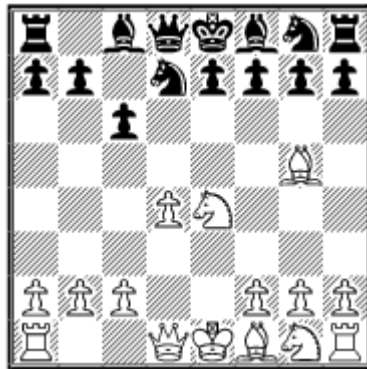
All those armchair psychologists will be intrigued to know that Michel now teaches writing and web design at Rutgers University. Of course, playing the computer might have nothing to do with it, but then again!

Mike Terrill from the **USA** is keen to know more about opening traps. He wrote "Against the ...Nd7 Caro-Kann, there are the infamous traps after 5 Ng5, but what do you think about 5 Bg5? I recently played a tournament game that went 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nd7 5 Bg5. I blundered with 5...h6?, but my opponent missed 6 Nd6+, winning the queen for knight and bishop. After 6 Qe2 Ndf6 (forced) 7 Nxf6+ Nxf6 8 Bxf6 gxf6 9 O-O-O, we had a sharp battle. I wonder what the idea behind 5 Bg5 is and what is the best play for both sides?"

Well, I have to say it is the perfect opening to employ against those people who play instantly in the opening because they might fail to notice the sneaky threat. However, Black should be able to steer the game comfortably towards equality. Even so, in the following encounter an American grandmaster rated 2545 at the time of play is rather complacent and is dramatically made to suffer:

Andrew Karklins-Maxim Dlugy, Reykjavik 1986

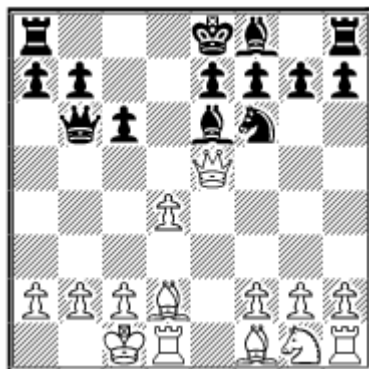
1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Nd7 5 Bg5



This is the fun move suggested and it will certainly make Black think for a while. Of course the big threat is 6 Nd6+. **5...Ngf6** In the game mentioned by Mike Terrill he blundered with 5...h6? 6 Qe2? (White misses his chance for a startling victory upon 6 Nd6+ exd6 7 Bxd8 winning easily) 6...Ndf6 7 Nxf6+ Nxf6 8 Bxf6 gxf6 9 0-0-0 with equal chances. **6 Qd3** White signals his intention to castle queenside. If you consider that the position is roughly equal then there has to be some merit

in making Black think from move five rather than being able to fluster his opponent with loads of memorised lines. If nothing else White should be ahead on the clock after the opening. It is not often you see a grandmaster having to deal with this cheeky opening but this was the case in L.Cooper-K.Arkell, Port Erin 2000. I suspect it was because the English players are great friends so White tired to bamboozle his higher rated opponent. That game went: 6 Nxf6+ Nxf6 7 Bxf6 gxf6 8 Bc4 Qa5+ 9 c3 Rg8 10 g3 Be6 11 Bxe6 fxe6 12 Qe2 with roughly equal chances although White eventually won after 74 moves. ; 6 Qe2!? is the daring reply when in the game N.Niedermowwe-S.Joris, German Team Championship 1992, continued: 6...Qa5+ 7 Bd2 Qf5?? (7...Qd5 is equal) 8 Nd6+ 1-0. **6...Nxe4 7 Qxe4 Qa5+** Or 7...Nf6 is a sound choice. For instance: 8 Qe3 Bf5 9 c3 e6 10 Nf3 Be7 11 Bxf6 Bxf6 12 Bd3 Bxd3 13 Qxd3 0-0 14 0-0 c5 presents Black with equality, J.Weidemann-R.Huebner, German Team Championship 1982. **8 Bd2 Qb6** In the game L.Betko-S.Prielozny, Slovakian Team Championship 1998, Black tried to ease any potential difficulties with an offer to trade queens with 8...Qd5 but White decided to try 9 Qe3 when play continued 9...Nf6 10 c4 (10 Nf3 Bf5 11 Bd3 Bxd3 12 Qxd3 Qe4+ is

another way that Black might exchange queens) 10...Qe4 well Black is taking no chances 11 f3 Qxe3+ 12 Bxe3 Bf5 13 0-0-0 with a level position. 9 0-0-0 Nf6 10 Qe5 Be6??



The grandmaster is oblivious to the danger and merely concentrates on developing his queenside. After all in standard lines of the Caro-Kann the tricks are well known but in this less familiar position Black suddenly goes horribly wrong. **11 Ba5!** I suspect only White was smiling at this point. The black queen is acutely embarrassed because it has no escape squares. **11... Ng4 12 Qe1 Qxa5 13 Qxa5 Nxf2 14 d5!** White has won the queen but instead of slowly consolidating he now rightly embarks on an instant attack.

14...Bd7 15 dxc6 Bxc6 16 Bb5 Nxd1 Black can really only hope at this stage but it understandable if you remember the principle that you can't try to draw a game by resigning! **17 Bxc6+ bxc6 18 Qc7** The position is just so easy for White to play because of Black's lack of development and perhaps also the extra queen does rather help. **18...Rd8 19 Qxc6+ Rd7 20 Nf3 g6 21 Rxd1 Bh6+ 22 Kb1 1-0**

Finally, **Jeffrey Reep** from the **USA** has been playing some enterprising chess recently: "In your last article you commented: 'If anyone can think of other openings that have been played with colours reversed then please let me know.' Well, about half a year ago I tried to play a reversed Sveshnikov Sicilian, if you would believe that. Allow me to explain: 1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 After reaching this position far too many times and dreading the mainlines I looked to my own crazy thoughts for a new idea. I came up with the weird 4 h3, with the intent of reversing the Sveshnikov without the possibility of the common Bg5 (1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e5 6 Ndb5 d6 7 Bg5). In my experience, about 90% of players, masters included, will choose 4 h3 d5, giving me exactly what I want. 4 h3 d5 5 cxd5 Nxd5 6 e4 Ndb4 7 d3 And here black usually becomes stumped. Not rightly so, if black chooses the reversed 7 Nd5 line, with 7 ...Nd4!, when h3 has little effect upon the position.

Before I gave up 1 c4 altogether, I also noted that instead of 4...d5, the moves Bb4 and d6 aiming for a reversed Rossolimo or closed Sicilian work more effectively. Especially in the reversed closed, when h3 has only weakened the kingside and white would probably like to play g3.

Basically the move gives a psychological advantage, although it black responds accordingly, he should have no trouble equalizing. After 4...d5, I find it harder for black to equalize, but the lines are still entertaining to play. I only got the chance in one OTB game, which I will include if you want. By the way, Black thought I was a complete patzer after 4 h3 and transposed to a favorable Sveshnikov sideline!"

I took the liberty of annotating Jeffrey's game:

JeffreyReep-Pontillo, Liberty Bell Open 2004

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Nf3 Nc6 4 h3 I like this quirky move. It is an opening

twist that would of course somebody who plays the Sveshnikov and wants to add a surprise. Jeffrey also points out another advantage "By the way, black thought I was a complete patzer after 4 h3 and transposed to a favorable Sveshnikov sideline!" Also: 4 a3 looks a bit basic but is a decent line because it stops 4...Bb4 but is similar to the main game in that White is happy to wait and see if Black can take advantage of the quiet opening play: 4...e4 (4...d5 this is the obvious reply aimed at challenging the center) 5 cxd5 Nxd5 6 Qc2 Be7 7 e3 0-0 8 Be2 Nb6 9 b4 with roughly equal play, B.Ostenstad-E.Cekro, Rethymnon 2003) 5 Ng5 Qe7 6 d3 exd3 7 e4 h6 8 Nf3 g6 (8...Nxe4 9 Nd5 Qd8 10 Bxd3 is fine for White) 9 Bxd3 d6 10 Nd5 Qd8 11 0-0 Bg7 12 h3 0-0 13 Be3 gives White an edge due to the space advantage, P. Schlosser-A.Schenk, Jenbach 2004. **4...d5 5 cxd5 Nxd5 6 e4!?**



Well you have to admire White for playing something different and plunging Black into a position where he is likely to have limited knowledge. [6 e3 Ndb4 7 d3 Bf5 8 e4 Be6 9 a3 Na6 10 Be3 (10 b4 is similar to the Sveshnikov but after 10...Nd4 Black has a slight initiative) 10...Bc5 11 b4 Bd4 12 Rc1 Nab8 (if 12...0-0? then 13 b5 forks the knights) 13 Bxd4 exd4 14 Ne2 gave White the slightly better chances due to the threat of b4-b5 in E.Perales Galino-A.Picanol Alamy, Sant Boi 1998. **6...Nxc3** The critical

test as indicated by Mr Reep is 6...Ndb4 7 d3 and now 7...Nd4 8 Nxd4 exd4 9 Ne2 c5 is fine for Black. **7 bxc3 Bc5 8 Bc4 0-0 9 0-0 b6** Or 9...Qf6 to try and stop d2-d4 is worth considering. I suspect that Black is not comfortable with the position and soon goes wrong. **10 Bd5 Bb7 11 d3** Or 11 d4 exd4 12 cxd4 Bd6 13 Bg5 Qd7 14 Rc1 gives White good play. **11...Rb8?** 11...Qf6; 11...Bd6 are necessary to defend the e5 pawn. **12 Bxc6 Bxc6 13 Nxe5** Reep is now a clear pawn up and continues in fine fashion by snubbing out any counterplay. **13...Bb7 14 Be3 Bd6 15 Nf3 Re8 16 Nd4 Qf6 17 Nf5** White is consistent with his plan of transferring the knight to the strong outpost of f5. Instead, 17 f4 is not so impressive because Black can undermine the centre with 17...c5 18 Ne2 c4! and it is suddenly Black who has the initiative. **17...Rbd8 18 Bd4 Be5 19 Bxe5 Qxe5 20 Qc2 c5 21 Ne3 Ba6 22 c4** Reep sees a threat and blocks it. This is made easier when you are a pawn up and any pressure on the d-file can be blunted by a future Ne3-d5. **22...Re6 23 Rfd1 Rg6 24 Rab1** A slow move designed to allow Qb2, 24 Nd5! is the right idea. **24...Bc8 25 Kf1?! 25 Nd5?** is a mistake after 25...Bxh3 when the g-pawn is pinned.; 25 Kh1 is probably the best bet. **25...f5 26 Qb2**



26...Qxb2? 26...Qh2! is a star move when 27 exf5 can be met by 27...Bxf5! 28 Nxf5 Rxd1 and Black is winning. **27 Rxb2** The ending a pawn up is great for White. **27...fxe4 28 dxe4 Rxd1+ 29 Nxd1 Rd6 30 Ne3 a6 31 Nd5 b5 32 Ne7+ 1-0**

This was a deserved victory for trying out an intriguing opening.

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