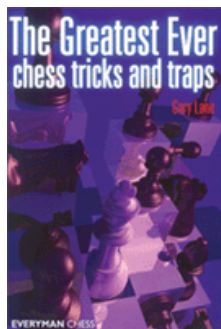




COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane



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Going Solo

This month I look at maverick openings that involve gambits or independent play that is likely to surprise an opponent. Yes, that does mean more spectacular Blackmar-Diemer Gambit games. Let's start with a line that will interest anyone who plays the London System.

Stuart Brant from the **United Kingdom** e-mailed a short, but sharp question. He asks, "After 1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bf4 Bf5 4 e3 Nb4 in the London System, how should White proceed? I don't like Bd3 because of exchange by knight on d3, which leaves Na3."

It sounds rather naive to move the knight twice in the opening, but it has been good enough to lead to a draw between a couple of French grandmasters, so it is worth taking a closer look.

Meszaros, Gyorgy (2195) - Jamrich, Gyorgy (2235)

HUN-chT 9798 Hungary, 1997

Queen's Pawn Opening [D02]

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nc6 Black wants to play the Chigorin, which commonly occurs upon 1 d4 d5 2c4 Nc6. **3 Bf4** Meszaros wishes to avoid Black's usual opening choice and favours a set-up resembling the London System. If 3 c4, then we are back to the Chigorin. **3...Bf5 4 e3 Nb4!?**



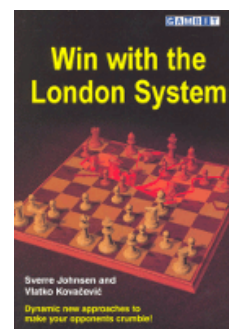
A simplistic attack on the c2-pawn, but it can be irritating for White, who is forced to play something different in the opening. It is more common to play it safe with 4...e6 when I would suggest 5 c4 to extract an advantage. For example, a) 5...Nf6 6 Nc3 Bd6 (6...Nb4 is rebuffed by 7 Rc1) 7 Bg5 Be7 8 Rc1 0-0 led to equal chances, V.Malakhatko-P.Meyssonier,Bastia 2008. b) 5...Bd6 6 Bxd6 Qxd6 7 Nc3 Nf6 8 c5 Qe7 9 Bb5 Ne4 10 Ne5 Nxc3 11 bxc3 Qf6? (11...0-0 12 Bxc6 bxc6 13 Nxc6 {13 0-0! Qe8 14 Qa4 with the better position} 13...Qe8 14 Ne5 f6 15 Nf3 Qb5 gives Black sufficient compensation because White can't castle especially because 16 Qe2 allows 16...Bd3) 12 Nxc6 0-0 13 Ne5 when the outcome is not in doubt R.

Kostadinov-K.Kopilova, Albena 2009. **5 Na3** Yes, the knight on a3 looks a bit odd, but Black has wasted time putting the knight on b4, so it is not the end of the world. I really don't like 5 Bd3 because the light-squared bishop is useful in the London System or the Colle, which has a familiar pawn structure. Therefore, White should preserve his bishop and not allow Black to have it all his own way by exchanging pieces. **5...e6** If Black tries to contest the centre with 5...c5, then 6 Bb5+ Nc6 7 dxc5 is strong when 7...e6 8 Nd4 gives White the initiative. Also possible is a) 5...c6 6 c3 Na6 7 Bxa6 bxa6 8 0-0 Qb6 9 Qa4 Rc8 10 b4 with an edge thanks to the weak doubled a-pawns, D. Bleykmans-A.Edelheim, Hannover 1902. b) 5...Nf6 6 Ne5 (6 c3! seems superior to me 6...Na6 {6...Nc6 7 Nb5 Rc8 8 Ne5 is good for White} 7 Bxa6 bxa6 8 Qa4+ Bd7 9 Qxa6 is great news for White) 6...e6 7 c3 Nc6 8 Nxc6 (I

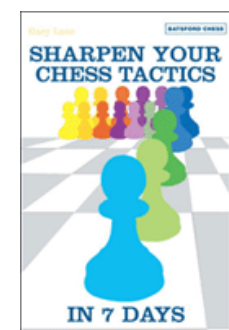
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prefer 8 Bb5 when 8...Bxa3 9 Nxc6 Qd7 is met by the surprising 10 Qa4! leaving Black in trouble) 8...bxc6 9 Nc2 led to equal chances in J.Kudera-S. Peters, Neumuenster 2004. **6 c3 Nc6 7 Qa4!?** I like the idea of pinning the knight because it sets up a variety of tricks and traps in the opening. A more positional approach was tested in a heavyweight encounter M.Apicella-E.Prie, Nantes 1993. That game saw 7 Nb5 Bd6 (it is ironic that Black played ...Nb4 to entice a bishop to d3, but when the situation is reversed Black gives up his pair of bishops) 8 Nxd6+ cxd6 9 Qa4 Nge7 (or 9...Nf6 10 Bb5 Qc7 is roughly equal) 10 Qa3 Nc8 11 Be2 h6 12 Rc1 Qa5 13 Qxa5 (I would be tempted to grab material with 13 Bxd6 when 13 ..Nxd6 14 Qxd6 Rd8 15 Qa3 Qxa3 16 bxa3 Ke7 17 c4 favours White) 13...Nxa5 14 Nd2 Rb8 15 b4 Nc6 16 b5 Na5 17 c4 dxc4 18 Nxc4 Nxc4 19 Bxc4 Ke7 20 Kd2 Nb6 21 Bb3 Be4 22 f3 Bd5 23 e4 (or 23 Rc7+! Nd7 24 Bxd5 exd5 25 h4 seems to offer White excellent chances) 23...Bxb3 24 axb3 Na8 25 Ra1 Nc7 26 Rxa7 Nxb5 27 Ra4 Ra8 28 Kd3 Rhc8 29 Bd2 ½-½ **7...Bd6?** A natural move to carry on developing and exchange the dark-squared bishops. However, it is probably best to be cautious and play 7...a6 to stop the idea tried in the main game. A sample line runs 8 Ne5 Nge7 9 g4 (9 Be2 intending to castle kingside is fine for those people who don't want to be adventurous by advancing their g-pawn) 9...Bg6 10 Be2 with equal chances and, of course, 10...b5? runs into 11 Nxb5 axb5 12 Qxb5 with a clear advantage upon 12...Rb8 13 Nxc6 Rxb5 14 Nxd8 Rxb2 15 Bxc7. **8 Ba6!**



This star move is likely to make Black use plenty of time to work out how best to defend. **8...Qc8** Other moves are a) 8...Rb8 9 Bxb7! Rxb7 10 Qxc6+ wins. b) 8...Qb8 (is probably the best of the bunch) 9 Qb5 bxa6 10 Qxc6+ Ke7 11 Nh4 (naturally in this line 11 Qxa6 is less effective because of 11... Qxb2 with equal opportunities) 11...Qxb2 12 Nxf5+ exf5 13 Bxd6+ cxd6 14 0-0 and White is on top thanks to the exposed black king and the unguarded rook on a8. **9 Bxd6 cxd6 10 Nb5**



The addition of the knight as part of the attack cranks up the pressure on Black **10...Kd7** Instead 10...Qd7 allows 11 Bxb7 Qxb7 12 Nxd6+ winning. **11 Qa3 Qb8** Black is forced to defend the d6-pawn, but it merely allows White to dictate matters. **12 Bxb7! Qxb7 13 Nxd6** It is not so clear how White can make progress after 13 Qxd6+ in view of 13...Kc8 14 Qc5 Kd7 inviting a draw by repetition. **13...Qc7 14 Nxf7** White has picked up three pawns for the piece and is ready to add the exchange to his booty. In this case, the poor position of the black king is another worry for Black. **14...Nf6 15 Nxb8 Rxb8 16 0-0** The attack has come to a halt so White sensibly brings his rook into play. **16...Be4 17 Ne5+ Nxe5 18 dxe5 Ng8** It looks awful to retreat the knight and lock in the king's rook, but to be fair to Jamrich the alternative 18...Qxe5

also leaves Black in trouble after 19 f3 Bd3 20 Qxa7+ Qc7 21 Qxc7+ Kxc7 22 Rfd1 with a great ending. **19 f3 Bd3 20 Rfd1 Bb5 21 c4!**



A little tactic that piles up the problems for Black. **21...Bxc4** After 21...Qxc4?, White has a crushing position upon 22 Rdc1 when 22...Qa4 23 Qd6+ allows Black to resign with confidence. **22 Rac1 Qc6** Instead 22...Qb6 allows 23 Rxc4 winning easily. **23 b3 Qa6 24 Qf8 Be2 25 Rd2 1-0**

It is always very hard to track down Blackmar-Diemer Gambit games because the vast majority are played by casual players at weekend tournaments and those score sheets rarely make an appearance on a computer database. This means I am very grateful to **Roald Berthelsen** from **Norway** for answering my plea to send in some games and he writes "this game (never publish) was played in an over-the-board (OTB) tournament in Vallentuna, Stockholm 2004." Here is the impressive game:

Berthelsen, Roald - Palmborg, Mats
 Stockholm, 2004
 French Defense [C11]

1 d4 d5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Bg5 e6 4 e4 dxe4 5 f3!?



A shock move for Black because 5 Nxe4 would transpose to a French Defense, which normally occurs after 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 dxe4 and now 5 Nxe4. **5...e3** The Blackmar-Diemer Gambit (BDG) usually occurs after the move-order 1 d4 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 f3 or 1 d4 Nf6 2 Nc3 d5 3 e4 dxe4 4 f3. It is probably worth repeating that I once saw the Russian grandmaster Mikhail Gurevich play this move at a rapid-play tournament in Brussels, Belgium. As he was Elo rated sixth in the world at the time, I couldn't stop myself from asking why he had played it. I suspected that the central chess club in Moscow had come up with this after a lengthy analysis of the mighty BDG. The grandmaster paused and said he had never seen 4 f3, but taking on f3 looked complicated. Now back to the main game and there are other options for Black: 5...exf3 6 Nxf3 and now a) 6...c5 7 Ne4 (I prefer 7 Bb5+ when 7...Bd7 8 Bxf6 Qxf6 9 0-0 gives White the better chances) 7...cxd4 8 Qd2? (Oops!) 8...Nxe4 9 Bxd8 Nxd2 10 Ne5 Bd6 0-1, T.Burgerhoff-M.De Mie, Haarlem 2001. b) 6...Be7 7 Bd3 (a classic BDG position with white's pieces well-placed for a kingside attack. If you can use a computer, it might not stand up to a tough defense by Black, but over-the-board a club player would have a real fight to cope with the onslaught) and now: b1) 7...b6 8 Qe2 Bb7 {not 8...0-0? in view of 9 Bxf6 Bxf6 10 Qe4 when the threat of checkmate will allow White to win the rook on a8} 9 0-0-0 Nbd7 10 Rhf1 h6

11 Bf4 0-0 12 g4 (12 Ne5 is worth a go) 12...Nd5 13 Nxd5 Bxd5 14 Kb1 c5 15 c3 cxd4 16 Nxd4 Bf6 17 Bc2 e5? 18 Nf5! ½-½, C.Thurner-R.Tischbierek, Badenweiler 1995. It is worth pointing out that White is winning in this position, but facing a much higher rated player (2495) decided to take a draw. b2) 7...Nc6 8 Qd2 h6 (8...Nxd4? does not win a pawn, but leads to a calamity upon 9 Nxd4 Qxd4 10 Bb5+ winning) 9 Bh4 Nd5 10 Bf2 (it is worth considering 10 Bxe7 Qxe7 11 0-0 with equal chances) 10...Bg5 11 Nxg5 Qxg5 12 Qxg5 hxg5 13 Nxd5 exd5 14 Kd2 Be6 15 Rae1 0-0-0 I prefer the practical chances for Black because of the extra pawn 16 Bb5 g4 ½-½, G. Kenworthy-A.Walton, Blackpool 2003. **6 Bc4** The bishop on c4 can be useful in aiding the advance d4-d5 if Black strikes out at the centre at some point with ...c7-c5. In the past 6 Bd3 has traditionally been the way to go, because it targets the h7-pawn when Black castles kingside. For example, a) 6...Be7 7 Nge2 Nd5 8 Bxe7 Qxe7 9 Nxd5 exd5 10 0-0 Nd7?! (I reckon 10...0-0 11 Re1 Qg5 is good for Black) 11 Re1 0-0 12 Ng3 Re8 13 Nf5 Qf6 14 Nxe3 led to equal chances in A.Gonzalez Freixas-V.Belles Garcia, Tarragona 2003. b) 6...Bb4 7 Nge2 0-0 8 0-0 Nc6 9 Ne4! Be7 (naturally 9...Nxd4? is terrible because of the line 10 Nxd4 Qxd4 11 Nxf6+ gxf6 12 Bxh7+ Kxh7 13 Qxd4 winning) 10 Bxe3 (maybe a more precise move-order is 10 Nxf6+ when 10...Bxf6 11 Bxe3 gives White an edge) 10...e5 11 Nxf6+ Bxf6 12 d5! Ne7 (once again 12...Qxd5? is useless because of the tactic 13 Bxh7+ Kxh7 14 Qxd5 and Black can go home) 13 c4 gave White a slight initiative, F.Fernandez Garcia-A.Eyo Castro Rial, Malaga 2009. And just for the record, 6 Bxe3 Nbd7 7 Qd2 Bb4 8 Nge2 0-0 9 a3 Be7 (9...Ba5!? looks good) 10 Nf4 c6 led to equal opportunities in the game B.Tot-J.Foltys, Ljubljana 1938. **6...Be7 7 Qd3 c6**



A passive response that is not what you should do against an impending attack. Black should play 7...Nc6, which helps to develop the pieces. **8 Nge2 Nbd7 9 0-0**



White now embarks on a model example of how to conduct such a position. Basically, the plan is to activate the pieces in preparation for tactics on the kingside. A simple idea, but with no obvious counterplay Black soon goes round in circles. **9...Nb6 10 Bb3 Bd7 11 Bxe3** Yes, time to restore the material balance and White is doing well because Black's pieces lack harmony. **11...0-0 12 Rae1** If in doubt, centralise the rooks. It just means that later on in the game White will have more options at his disposal. **12...Rc8 13 Ne4 Nbd5 14 Bc1** 14 Bd2 also seems fine to me. The main point is that White wants to avoid exchanges because that would allow Black to avoid being congested. Now c2-c4 will help force back the centralised knight on d5 making it annoying for Black. **14...a6 15 c4 Nb4 16 Qd2 a5 17 a3 Na6**

Black's merry dance with the queen's knight has seen it toppled from d5 to end up on a6 where it is doing very little. **18 Bc2 b5 19 c5 a4 20 Qd3**



Of course, the big threat is Nxf6+, followed by Qh7 checkmate. **20...g6?! A** clear concession because now the dark squares around the king are weak. It might be an automatic idea to advance the g-pawn to blockade the tactic against h7, but **20...Nxe4!** is the best choice. After **21 Qxe4** (21 fxe4 is well met by 21...e5!) **21...f5 22 Qd3 Nc7 23 Nf4** when White has an edge, but still has a long way to go and win. **21 Bf4 Nd5 22 Bh6 Re8 23 N2g3 Bf8** This is a typical response to an invading bishop on h6. However, here is a fatal error because it means White's knight will be allowed to dominate the d6-square in the heart of the black position. **24 Bxf8 Rxf8 25 Nd6 Rc7 26 Re5** I also like **26 Qd2** when **26...Kg7 27 Nge4** with the superior chances. **26...Ra7 27 Rfe1 Nac7 28 Qd2 Kg7 29 Nh5+!** A clever way to force victory, but with so many white pieces massing near the black king such a tactic is inevitable. **29...gxh5** Or **29...Kh8 30 Qh6 Rg8 31 Nxf7** checkmate and **29...Kg8 30 Qh6 gxh5 31 Qxh7** checkmate. **30 Rxh5 f5** The future for Black is bleak. For instance, **30...Qf6 31 Rxh7+ Kg8 32 Re5**, intending **Rg5+** **32...Nf4 33 Ne4 Qg6 34 Qxf4** and Black can put his coat on. **31 Qh6+ 1-0**

I think it is fair to say that **Victor Trifan** from **Canada** is not impressed by the sentimental value attached to old fashioned openings like the BDG: "In your last article, some very interesting things related to the Blackmar-Diemer gambit are presented. It should be pointed out that the main idea of this gambit is that White gets good attacking chances after Black's cooperation of opening the f-file, especially if the black monarch castles short. The problem with playing BDG as a sure recipe for a win is that Black can have a decisive saying in all this. After **1 d4 d5 2 e4, 2...e6** transposes at once to the French Defense, and **2...c6** to the Caro-Kann. Generally, it is not recommended to release the tension in the center too soon, as White gets a small plus, known as 'the little centre d4 vs. e6 or c6.' For example, the Rubinstein variation of the French Defense **1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 dxe4** is considered to be poor for Black (as far as I know), although it was played back in the day by Petrosian with some good results. And even if one does that with **2...dxe4**, they should not cooperate on opening the f-file by playing **3 f3 exf3**. It is said that better is **3 f3 e3!** giving back the pawn, but not offering White the f-file on a silver plate. I hope you don't mind my expressing such amateur remarks as the above."

Mr. Trifan makes a valid argument for avoiding such a reckless gambit and learning some proper main lines. He is certainly right that it would probably boost your results in the long-term if you played the BDG too often. Then again, who can resist gambits in the openings when they can lead to quick, stunning victories like the next game:

De Mooi, Connaugh-Joseph - Salloway, Colin
Hove, 1997
French Defense [C00]

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Be3?!



In his brief notes to the game de Mooi commented, "I was playing unsound variations of the Blackmar Diemer against anything at the time." That is the thing with BDG players: the opening might not be fully correct because you give away a pawn, but then again your opponent is hardly likely to be Magnus Carlsen, so the average player has plenty of room to go wrong. It is worth noting to BDG specialists that this game only recently became known because "CJ," as he is known, is now the President of the English Chess Federation and printed the game in their newsletter. **3...dxe4 4 Nc3** This is in keeping with the spirit of the opening. However, the annoying pin 4...Bb4 has persuaded a few connoisseurs to try their luck with 4 Nd2 and after 4...Nf6 5 f3 play might continue a) 5...Nd5 6 Qe2 c5 7 dxc5 (I rather like 7 0-0-0 to carry on developing) 7...Nxe3 8 Qxe3 Qa5 9 Qxe4 Qxc5 led to equal opportunities in R.Gervasio-J.Mullon, Guingamp 2005. b) 5...exf3 6 Ngxf3 Nbd7 7 Bd3 c5 8 c3 cxd4 9 cxd4 Nd5 10 Qe2 Nxe3 11 Qxe3 Be7 12 0-0 Nf6 13 Ne4 Bd7 14 Ne5 h6 15 Qg3 Nxe4? (15...0-0 looks like Black is castling into the attack, but I can't see how White can make instant progress) 16 Qxg7 with a clearly winning position, J.Thomas-R.Murphy, Telford 2005. Also 4 f3 exf3 5 Nxf3 Nf6 6 Bd3 (a typical set-up of a Blackmar-Diemer Gambit where White has the bonus of a semi-open f-file for his king's rook after castling. However, a pawn minus will always mean White has to prove their is scope for a quick attack) 6...Be7 (6...Nbd7 7 0-0 c5 8 c3 Qc7 9 Na3 a6 10 Nc4 b5 11 Nce5 with level chances because White has a decent attacking stance, but Black is still hanging on to the extra pawn, G.Jepps-D.Sully,Exeter 2005) 7 0-0 0-0 (there is an argument for Black to delay castling in this special circumstance to create counterplay based on a timely ...c5) 8 c4 (I like this to restrict Black from contemplating ...Nd5) 8...Nbd7 9 Nc3 c5 10 Qc2 (Heidenfeld might be a pawn down, but he is acting as though he has not noticed. This is a good policy because it allows him to activate his pieces and not worry about an instant dividend) 10...cxd4 11 Bxd4 a6 12 Kh1 (perhaps 12 Ng5 should be considered) 12...h6 13 Rae1 (White is doing well, having smoothly developed and shifted his pieces towards the black king in anticipation of an attack) 13...Bc5 14 Qf2 Qc7 15 Qh4 (the white queen is well-placed to step up the pressure and more importantly it is never easy to defend such positions when you have limited time to think) 15...b6 (maybe 15...Rd8) 16 Ne4 Bxd4 17 Nxd4 Bb7 (not 17...Nxe4? because of 18 Qxe4 with the dual threats Qxa8 and Qh7 checkmate. 18 Nxf6+ Nxf6 19 Rxf6! A key defender is exchanged and suddenly Black's position disintegrates) 19...gxf6 20 Qxh6 Rfd8 (or 20...f5 21 Qg5+ Kh8 22 Re3 and checkmate will soon follow.) 21 Bh7+ Kh8 and now instead of 22 Qxf6+?, as played in W. Heidenfeld-C.Lee, Nice 1974, White should have finished off in style with 22 Bg6+ Kg8 23 Qh7+ Kf8 and now 24 Rxe6! leads to checkmate) 7 0-0 c5 8 c3 Qc7 9 Na3 a6 10 Nc4 b5 11 Nce5 with level chances because White has a decent attacking stance, but Black is still hanging on to the extra pawn, G.Jepps-D.Sully,Exeter 2005. **4...Nf6 5 f3 exf3 6 Nxf3 Bd6 7 Bd3** As usual, White's plan is to rapidly develop the kingside and castle. **7...0-0 8 0-0 Ng4?!** It is tempting to challenge the bishop on e3, but the great thing about this opening for White is that there are plenty of traps for Black to fall into if he is not careful. **9 Bxh7+!**



9...Kh8 Instead 9...Kxh7 10 Ng5+ Kg8 11 Qxg4 gives White an excellent attack. **10 Ng5** A logical response offering to give up the dark-squared bishop in return for a tremendous onslaught. It might seem strange, but 10 Ne5! is the best move on the board with the same idea of shifting the queen to the h-file. For example, a) 10...Bxe5 11 Qxg4 Bf6 12 Qh5 Re8 13 Bg6+ Kg8 14 Bxf7+ Kf8 15 Rxf6 gxf6 16 Nd5! (White is doing very well, but as usual with the BDG there is a chance for amazing chess) 16...exd5 (16...Qxd5 17 Qh8+ Kxf7 18 Qh7+ Kf8 19 Bh6 checkmate) 17 Bh6+ Ke7 18 Re1+ winning. b) 10...Nxe5 11 Qh5! Nec6 (or 11...Ng4 12 Bg6+ Nh6 13 Bxf7 followed by Bxh6 is a winner) 12 Bg6+ Kg8 13 Qh7 checkmate. **10...f5** After 10...Nf6, then 11 Qe1 is a strong response aiming to plant the queen on the h4 and of course 11...Nxh7 is met by 12 Qh4. **11 Qf3** De Mooi maintains the idea of swinging the queen across to the h-file and Black has a bewildering choice of moves. **11...Qf6** This looks sensible to block the h-file, but it is flawed which is a reminder of how difficult it is for Black to cope with such a direct opening. Also possible is a) 11...Nxh2 12 Qh3 Nxf1 13 Bg6+ Kg8 14 Qh7 checkmate. b) 11...Bxh2+ 12 Kh1 Bd6 13 Bg6! (13 Qh3 Nh6 14 Bg6 f4 is still good for White with precise play, but gives Black a chance to wriggle out of the dire situation) 13...Qe7 (otherwise 14 Nf7+ is annoying) 14 Qh3+ Nh6 15 Nh7! with a great position. c) 11...Nxe3 12 Qh5! Ng4 13 Bxf5+ Nh6 14 Qg6 when checkmate on h7 cannot be resisted for long. d) 11...Be7 is far from obvious, but the best in the circumstances: 12 Nce4! an echo of the main game (instead 12 Qh3 Bxg5 13 Bxg5 Qxg5 14 Bxf5+ Nh6 favours Black) 12...Qe8 to stop Bg6 (12...Nc6 13 Bg6 is very good for White) 13 Qh3 Nh6 14 Qg3 fxe4 15 Bxe4 with good compensation for the piece. **12 Nce4!**



12...Qe7 Or 12...fxe4 13 Qxg4 Qe7 (13...Qh6 14 Rxf8+ Bxf8 15 Nf7+ wins easily) 14 Qh5 leads to mate. **13 Qh3** A crazy looking position, but if anyone is going to win the brilliancy prize, it is White so once again the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit has been a triumph. **13...Bxh2+** Or 13...Nh6 is met by 14 Bg6 with a dominating position and 14...fxe4 is crushed by 15 Nf7+. **14 Kh1 Nh6 15 Qxh2 fxe4 16 Qxc7**



A stunning move that relies on the threat of back-rank checkmate to grab a pawn. I also like 16 Bg6, threatening Nf7+, when 16...Kg8 17 Rxf8+ Qxf8 18 Rf1 Qe7 19 Bf7+ Kh8 20 Nxe4 will soon lead to checkmate. **16...Nd7 17 Bxe4 Ng4 18 Rae1** White is in the happy position of having a number of good options: 18 Rxf8+ Qxf8 19 Qg3 Nh6 20 Nxe6 is also very strong. **18...Rxf1+ 19 Rxf1**



19...Nxe3? Well, why not? Because people do blunder pieces, but White is too crafty for such a disaster. **20 Qh2+ 1-0**

Once against if anyone has a nice win with the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, then send it to me.

Harvey Kelly from **Scotland** created a lot of interest in the main line French Defense by asking what I think of the gambit move 12....e5. Here is a reminder of what the all the fuss is a bout:

Fleischanderl, Fritz (2330) - Myers, David (2406)

Internet (1), 07.02.2005

French Defense [C18]

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 bxc3 Ne7 7 Qg4 0-0 8 Bd3

The bishop points towards the h7-pawn in anticipation of an attack. 8 Nf3 is considered the main alternative. Of course, 8 Bh6?! fails to impress in view of 8...Nf5 defending g7 and forcing the bishop to retreat. **8...f5** If you play this line with White, then attention also has to focus on the alternative 8...Nbc6. **9 exf6 Rxf6 10 Bg5 Rf7 11 Qh5 g6 12 Qd1** Instead 12 Qh4 certainly looks logical, but 12...Qa5! is the answer when 13 Bd2 (13 Ne2 Nbc6, threatening ... c5-c4, is awkward for White) 13...Nbc6 14 Nf3 c4 15 Be2 Nf5 offers equal opportunities. **12...e5?!**



The start of a revolution in the French? A wild looking move that is guaranteed to make your opponent start thinking whether this is a free pawn or whether it is a hot new move from Wijk aan Zee. I reckon on the Internet or in a blitz game it would be perfect to unsettle an opponent, while at a weekend tournament it would make the opponent think of a plan for some time. However, I warn everyone not to play it at your local club, because after 12...e5 the friendly response will be to ask if you want to take your move back. After all, you are losing a pawn, it is not mentioned in any books so what is going on? Well, the obvious intention is to play ...e5-e4 with a good game, so White is obliged to accept the gambit. **13 dxe5** The only way to refute a gambit is to accept it. Black would argue that his light-squared bishop is now free to roam on the c8-h3 diagonal and Black will have some momentum, but I doubt if it should be enough for the pawn. **13...Nbc6 14 Bf6** After 14 f4 c4 15 Be2 Qb6, Black would argue that the queen does a useful role in stopping White castling kingside and can eye the opportunity of invading at some point on the e3-square. Still, I have faith in White's position, so maybe 16 Rb1 is worth a try when 16...Qc5 (16...Qe3 can be met by 17 Qd2 when Black would be brave to volunteer to exchange queens a pawn down) 17 Qd2! Qxa3?! (or 17...Nf5 is probably better when 18 Nf3 gives White a slight edge) 18 Nf3 the point of giving up the a-pawn is to have time to get the kingside pieces into play 18...Qc5 19 Nd4 with the advantage. **14... Qc7 15 f4 15 Nf3** is well met by 15...Bg4 when White will struggle to contain Black's active play. **15...c4 16 Be2**



16...Nf5!? This is the move recommended by the reader's computer and also occurs in this correspondence game. It could be that Myers found it himself. If 16...Qb6, then 17 Rb1 Qc5 18 Bf3! looks good for White. For example, 18...Be6 (or 18...Qxa3 19 Ne2 aiming to castle kingside seems a good play for White) 19 Rxb7 Bf5 (instead 19...Nf5 20 Rxf7 Kxf7 21 Qc1, intending to develop with Ne2, leaves White with a couple of extra pawns) I am not sure about the effort to target the b7-pawn, but it is such early days in the line that different moves are bound to be tried in the future. **17 Rb1 Qa5 18 Qd2 Qc5** 18...Qxa3 runs into 19 Nf3, intending Ng5, with the superior chances. **19 Bf3** White needs to test 19 Nf3 in the future. **19...d4?!** An attempt to complicate matters, but surely 19...Ne3 looks more tricky for White to handle. **20 Ne2 dxc3 21 Qxc3?!** The obvious 21 Nxc3 seems good for White. **21...Ne3 22 a4** Or 22 Rb3!? to shift the knight on e3, but after 22...Ng4 things are still complicated. For instance, 23 Rb2 Qf2+ 24 Kd1 Ne3+ 25 Kc1 Nxc2 26 h4 with roughly equal play. **22...a6 23 Ng3 Bf5 24 Nxf5 Nxf5 25 g4 Ne3 26 g5 Rd7 27 Be4** Or 27 e6 Rd6 28 e7 Re6 29 Qd2 Nxe7 and Black is winning. **27... Nd4!**



28 h3 Things are very difficult for White: a) 28 Rxb7 Rxb7 29 Bxb7 Rb8 30 Bxa6 Rb1+! 31 Kf2 Rxh1 32 Qxe3 Rxh2+ 33 Kg3 Nf5 + wins. b) 28 h4 Ndx2+ 29 Bxc2 Nxc2+ 30 Qxc2 Qe3+ 31 Qe2 Qg3+ 32 Kf1 Rd4 with a big advantage. **28...Ndx2+! 0-1** White resigned in view of 29 Bxc2 (29 Ke2 Nd4 + 30 Ke1 Rb8, but admittedly Black still needs to prove how to win) 29...Nxc2 +! 30 Qxc2 Qe3+ 31 Qe2 Qg3+ 32 Qf2 Qd3 33 Rc1 Rd4 winning.

Since then **Tony** from the **UK** provided me with various blogs and website where keen players are playing chess engines (such as Fritz and Shredder) against each other, so that moves like 12...e5 crop up and are actively played. I would also like to thank **Theo Jurrius** from the **USA** who commented on the gambit. And a big thank you to **Tony** from the **USA** for his comments about the column.

Incidentally, a question that is often asked by my chess students has now been repeated by **Mr. Mascarbhone** from **Italy**. He asks, "Is the Queen's Indian a complete defense or is it necessary to play it only together with the Nimzo-Indian?"

Well, if you read the back cover of many books on the Queen's Indian Defense, you would certainly think that once you have mastered the opening you could relax whenever playing against 1 d4. The truth is different and I get the impression that the reader has also come to that conclusion. It is time to have a look at the move order that generally occurs after **1 d4 Nf6** (Black stops e2-e4 being safely played) **2 c4** (getting ready for Nc3 and putting Black off from playing ...d7-d5) **2...e6** (Black signals the possibility of supporting ...d7-d5 and the king's bishop has freedom to move.



At this point 3 Nc3 can be met by 3...Bb4 with a Nimzo-Indian position, to prevent White from being able to play 4 e4 because the pin allows it to be taken. If you played 3...b6 with a Queen's Indian approach, then 4 e4 is strong. Instead the Queen's Indian Defense tends to be reached after 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 and now 3...b6. The idea is a queen's fianchetto to control the central squares d5 and e4.

I hope this helps.

Opening Lanes is based 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 your full name and country of residence please)

and perhaps Gary will reply in his next **ChessCafe.com** column...

[Yes, I have a question for Gary!](#)

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