



COLUMNISTS

Opening
Lanes

Gary Lane



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It is possible to improve your openings at any age, just ask ChessCafe.com. This is the theme from author **Andres Hortillosa** from the **USA** who writes, "I enjoy your column a lot. I have used some of the opening ideas from your column in my games. What do you think of the following opening sequence? 1 e4 e6 2 Nf3 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5 Nd7 5 d4 c5 6 Bg5?"

The reader has been kind enough to add a short game and I have used that along with his brief notes to examine an interesting line. Watch out for the excuses about not winning and I suspect a few people will be reading them with a knowing smile:

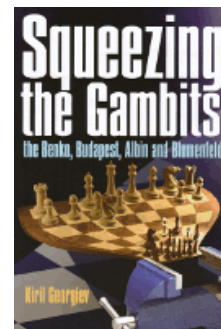
Andres Hortillosa (2068) - Prashantha Amarasinghe
Saint Paul 2010
French Defence [C11]

1 e4 e6 2 Nf3 d5 3 Nc3 The reader Mr. Hortillosa prefers this slightly unusual move-order against the French. This is probably because the standard line 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 allows potential complications associated with the Winawer Variation after 3...Bb4. **3...Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 d4** The position has now transposed to the well-known line, the Steinitz Variation. It is named after the first official World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz and it usually occurs upon 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Nf3. **5...c5 6 Bg5!?**

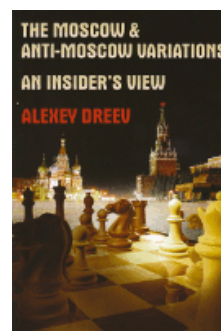


This is considered a side-line, but it is perfect for those with limited time to study, as there is not much to remember and there are traps for Black to fall into during the opening. I believe 6 Bb5 and 6 dxc5 are more popular replies. A recent game also saw another approach: 6 Ne2!? cxd4 (maybe 6...Nc6 7 c3 Be7 is another possibility for Black) 7 Nxd4 Nc6 8 Bf4 h6 9 h4 Nc5 10 c3 Be7 11 Qd2 Ne4 12 Qe3 Nxd4 13 Nxd4 Bxh4!? (Black wins a pawn at the cost of having to give up the right to castle) 14 Bb5+ Bd7 15 Bxd7+ Kxd7 16 0-0 Qb6 17 c4 Rhd8 18 f3 Ng3 19 Bxg3 Bxg3 20 cxd5 Rac8 (20...exd5 21 f4 Bh4 22 a4 with a slight initiative) 21 Rac1 (21 f4! is a clear improvement) 21...exd5 22 f4 g5 led to equal chances in D.Boros-U.Bajarani, European Championships 2010. **6...Qb6 7 dxc5 Bxc5** In his brief notes to the game, Mr. Hortillosa wrote "I have played this line against the same player (almost master) twice and both games ended in draws. In the first game, he played 7... Qxb2 and quickly got in trouble after 8 Nb5 Qb4+ 9 Bd2 (The reader points out that 9 c3 is interesting based on the tactic 9...Qa5? (I think White's ninth move suggestion is a winner and should have been played because 9...Qxc5 is well met by 10 Be3! Qc6 (10...d4 is the best chance for Black's survival, but 11 cxd4 Qb6 12 Rc1 Na6 13 a3 intending d4-d5 gives White excellent play) 11 Nfd4 Qb6 12 Nxe6 and White can still go home earlier because his opponent will resign) 10 Qa4!, which wins because if Black takes the queen, then Nc7 is checkmate) 9...Qxc5 10 Rb1 ½-½

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Mr. Hortillosa added, "We drew because I had to leave early. By the way, I suggested to him days later, the move 7...Bxc5, which he tried in the current game." I think Mr Hortillosa has a fine position with good winning chances, but having to leave after only ten moves sounds unfortunate. That is until you read why he drew the main game. **8 Qd2 Nc6 9 0-0-0 Ndx5** The alternative 9...Bxf2 is discussed in the next main game. **10 Nxe5 Nxe5 11 Bb5+** White saw the line 11 Na4 Bb4 12 Nxb6 Bxd2+ 13 Bxd2 axb6, but apparently played the bishop check because "I rejected the line during the game because I did not want to part with the queen." This is understandable, we all want to attack with the queen and the ending a pawn down requires accurate play by White to maintain equal chances. **11...Nc6?** It seems natural to block the check by developing another piece, but it soon leads to problems. 11...Bd7 or even 11...Kf8 need to be investigated. **12 Qe2!**



A fantastic move that sets up tricky tactics such as Na4 or N/Rxd5. **12...Qa5 13 Rxd5 0-0** Instead, 13...Bb6 fails miserably to 14 Bxc6+ bxc6 15 Rxa5 winning. **14 Rxc5 a6 15 Be3?! 1/2-1/2**

Surprisingly the players agreed to a draw, even though White is still on top after the expected 15...axb5. But Mr. Hortillosa explains why: "because, as in the last game, I had to be somewhere at a certain time or the world would end. I had five minutes left on the clock against my opponent's thirty minutes. He could sit for the next twenty minutes and I would be forced to resign the game because I would not be able to stay around to finish. However, had I seen the killer 15 Bf6 where White wins by force, I would have risked leaving the fate of the world to chance. I can never get him to enter the messy line starting with 8 Bxf2. Well, maybe next time."

First of all we need to confirm White's words that a change on move fifteen would have led to a quick victory: 15 Bf6! this is excellent, but should not be a big surprise because Black only has a rook defending, while White can quickly shift his pieces into the attack on the kingside 15...gxf6 (or 15...axb5 16 Qg4 g6 17 Qh4 h5 18 Rxh5 gxh5 19 Qg5+ Kh7 20 Qg7 checkmate) 16 Qg4+ Kh8 17 Rh5 Qb4 18 Ne4 Qd4 19 Bxc6 bxc6 20 Rd1 is just horrible because if the black queen moves, then Nxf6 or Qh4 leads to checkmate.

I have to say that the next time these two players compete in a game, Mr. Amarasinghe should decline any draw offer, even when losing, because his opponent is always in a rush. Now, I don't know the details of why Mr. Hortillosa only has limited time to play the actual game, but I know loads of friends who are so keen on chess that any excuse will do. I think we have all heard tales of people running for the last train after a tournament, so I am sure

plenty of other players have offered a draw in order not to avoid an important appointment. The reader is the author of the new book [Improve Your Chess at Any Age](#), which has received good reviews. I just hope that in any future edition he will recommend this website to improve your opening play.

Mr. Hortillosa mentioned that he hoped to face 8...Bxf2 next time. Just in case that happens, here is an inspirational game won by a top Indian player who is a specialist in the 6 Bg5 line:

Saptarshi Roy Chowdhury(2469) - Max Illingworth (2243)

Sydney International Open 2009

French Defence [C11]

1 e4 e6 2 Nf3 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 d4 c5 6 Bg5!? Qb6 7 dxc5 Bxc5 8 Qd2 Nc6 9 0-0-0 Bxf2



Well, it is difficult not to resist the temptation of the pawn. The plus side for White is that he can force Black into unfamiliar territory, where Black will just have to think of a defence instead of relying on book knowledge. **10 Na4 Qb4 11 Qxf2 Qxa4 12 a3** White cancels out the possibility of ...Nb4 and protects the a-pawn. This sort of position is a nightmare to defend for Black if he is not entirely sure what to do. White has active play on the kingside and it will be easy to generate more threats. **12...0-0 13 Qg3** The big threat is Bh6 to take advantage of the pinned g-pawn, so Black needs to react. **13...f6** I can't help feeling that the obvious 13...Kh8 is a good choice. **14 exf6 Nxf6 15 Bd3** This is a similar position to various French lines, but in this case White is poised to attack on the kingside, so Black needs to be positive. **15...Bd7** I prefer 15...Ne4, which takes advantage of the queen being on a4 to add protection: 16 Bxe4 Qxe4 17 Rhe1 Qg6 with the superior chances. **16 Kb1 Rae8 17 c4!** The advance of the c-pawn manages to cut off access to the action for black's queen and well as setting up various tactical tricks. 17 Qd6 looks annoying for Black although admittedly there is no clear cut way to gain the advantage. **17...Rf7** If 17...dxc4?, White calmly retreats the bishop, when 18 Bc2 Qb5 19 Bxf6 Rxf6 20 Rxd7 wins. Or 17...d4 18 Bxf6 Rxf6 19 Ng5 leads to a strong attack, because 19...h6 can be met by 20 Nh7! Rf7 21 Rdf1 Re7 22 Nf6+ Kh8 23 Qg6! winning. Maybe 17...Re7!? needs to be tested. **18 Bxf6 Rxf6 19 Ng5 Rh6** Instead 19...h6 20 Nh7 Rf7 21 Rdf1 is very promising. **20 Rdf1 dxc4**



21 Bxh7+! When you think logically about the position, White has a queen, rook, knight and bishop attacking the king, while Black has a lone rook for defensive duties. Something has to give. **21...Rxb7 22 Nxh7 Kxh7 23 Rf7**

The threat of checkmate forces Black to act to defend the g7-pawn. The most telling thing about this position is that the black queen is still marooned on the a4-square taking no active role in the game. **23...Rg8 24 Rxd7 Qb5 25 Qh3+ Kg6 26 Qxe6+ Kh7 27 Rd5 1-0**

Lev Zilbermintz from the **USA** created a great deal of interest by seeking more information on Marshall's Defence, which starts with 1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nf6. It prompted **Nahim Bin Zahur** from **Bangladesh** to email: "Thanks for covering the Marshall Defence, an opening all d4 players should know how to counter! I have a couple of comments on the analysis though: In the line 4 e4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e6 6 Nf3 Bb4 7 Bd3 O-O? White can play (instead of O-O) 8 e5 Nd5 9 Bxh7+! with a winning position. This trick is actually pretty useful to know since it seems to come up a lot at club level - I have played this many times in blitz and once even in a correspondence game!"

This opening trick is a top tip, but who was the patzer who missed it? Actually, it was world number two Veselin Topalov who failed to spot the tactic when playing in a simultaneous display. Perhaps such news should be passed on to Anand as part of his World Championship preparation. It might encourage the Indian to play weird and wonderful openings to confuse the Bulgarian. I have to be fair and mention another chap failed to spot the trick when giving a simultaneous display and that was Anatoly Karpov. Here is the opening trick:

Marshall Defence Analysis [D06]

1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nf6 3 cxd5 Nxd5 4 Nf3 e6 5 e4 Nf6 6 Nc3 Bb4 7 Bd3 0-0 8 e5!



I admit being surprised to find numerous games where White missed the winning move. I can only guess they were not expecting such an easy victory and were resolute in the principal of developing their pieces in the opening. After 8 0-0, play might continue a) 8...b6 9 e5 now the former World Champion spots his chance 9...Nfd7 10 Bxh7+! Kh8 (10...Kxh7 11 Ng5+ Kg6 12 Qd3+ f5 13 exf6+ Kxf6 14 Qf3+ Kg6 15 Qe4+ Rf5 (15...Kf6 16 Qxe6 checkmate) 16 Qxe6+ Rf6 17 Qe4+ Rf5 18 g4) 11 Be4 c6 12 Ng5 g6 13 Qg4 Qe7 14 Qh4+ 1-0, A.Karpov-P.Glauser, Zurich 1988.) b) 8...c6 (a passive response because you need ...c7-c5 to undermine the white pawn centre or reserve the c6-square for your queen's knight) 9 Bg5 Be7 10 Qc2 Nfd7 11 Bf4 c5? 12 d5 Nf6 13 d6! Bxd6 14 Bxd6 Qxd6 15 e5 and White soon won, V.Topalov-H.Pollmann, Frankfurt 1997. **8...Nd5** The knight helps to heap the pressure on the pinned piece on c3, which might be the reason that in the past White has not always taken this line seriously. Other knight moves do not help: a) 8...Nfd7 9 Bxh7+ Kxh7 10 Ng5+ Kg8 (after 10...Kg6, then 11 h4! is still the star move as in the main game analysis: 11...Nxe5 12 Qc2+ Kf6 13 dxe5+ Ke7 14 0-0 with a great position thanks to the fragile position of the black king) 11 Qh5 Re8 12 Qxf7+ Kh8 13 Qh5+ Kg8 14 Qh7+ Kf8 15 Qh8+ Ke7 16 Qxg7 checkmate. b) 8...Ne8 9 Bxh7+ Kxh7 10 Ng5+ Kg6 11 h4! and Black can put his coat on. **9 Bxh7+ Kxh7 10 Ng5+ Kg6 11 h4!**



This advance of the h-pawn represents an improvement of this opening trick, because thanks to computer software I can confirm that White is doing very well. Now Black must try to cope with the threat of h5+. In the past the focus seems to have been on 11 Qd3+ f5 12 exf6+ Kxf6, as in E.Ishier-J.D'Emilia, Internet 2007, but it is no longer clear how White should successfully proceed. **11...Nxc3** Black tries to distract White from the pursuit of the king, but it ultimately fails to impress. The alternatives are not exactly encouraging: a) 11...Nc6 12 h5+ Kh6 13 Nxf7+ Kh7 14 Qd3+ Kg8 15 Nxd8 winning. b) 11...Rh8 12 h5+ Kf5 (or 12...Kh6 13 Nxf7+ wins) 13 g4 checkmate. **12 Qg4** The big threat is Nxe6+ with a discovered check, followed by Qxg7 checkmate. **12...Ne4+** A supreme optimist might try 12...Rg8 to defend the g7-pawn, but it allows 13 h5+ Kh6 14 Nxf7+ Kh7 15 Qg6 checkmate. **13 Ke2 Nxe5** Or 13...f5 14 h5+ Kh6 15 Nf7+ Kh7 16 Qg6+ Kg8 17 Nxd8 winning easily. **14 hxe5 Rh8 15 Rh6+! gxe6 16 gxe6+ Kh7 17 Qg7 1-0**

In the next game, I once again follow Bin Zahur's message and he mentioned the line 1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nf6 3 cxd5 Nxd5 4 e4 Nf6 5 Nc3. Black can play 5...e5! with a pretty decent position - if 6 dxe5 Qxd1+ 7 Kxd1 Ng4. That's why I reckon White should play 4 Nf3 first before advancing in the centre.

Emanuel Schiendorfer (2340) - Ivan Camber

European Championship 2010

Marshall Defence [D06]

1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nf6 3 cxd5 Nxd5



After 3...g6, White has a variety of good replies such as 4 f3 and 4 g3, but arguably the toughest one for Black to defend against is 4 Qa4+. For example, a) 4...c6 is quite enterprising although after 5 dxc6 Nxc6 6 e3 Bd7 7 Nc3, the position favours White because he is a pawn up and Black's initiative should be safely contained. b) 4...Nbd7 5 Nc3 Bg7 6 e4 0-0 7 Nf3 Nb6 8 Qc2 e6 9 dxe6 Bxe6 10 Be2 Bg4 11 Be3 Re8 12 0-0 Qe7 13 h3 Bd7 14 Bd3 1-0, V. Malaniuk-M.Sedaghati,Mashhad 2010. **4 e4** 4 Nf3, intending 5 e4, is preferred by those who don't like a quick ...e7-e5, which is explored in the main game and the recommendation by reader Mr. Bin Zahur. Indeed, this is how a certain Mr. Kasparov continued when facing the opening in simultaneous displays: a) 4...e6 5 e4 when play might continue a1) 5...Ne7 6 Nc3 Ng6 7 Bd3 Be7 8 0-0 0-0 9 Re1 c6 10 Bc2 Nd7 11 e5 Nb6 12 Ne4 Nh4 13 Nxh4 Bxh4 14 Re3 Nd5 15 Rh3 f5 (if 15...Be7, then 16 Qh5 is very strong because 16...h6 is swept away by 17 Bxh6!) 16 exf6 Bxf6 17 Qh5 Bxd4 18 Bg5 Nf6 19 Nxf6+ Bxf6 20 Bxh7+ Kh8 21 Bg6+ Kg8 22 Qh8 checkmate 1-0, G.Kasparov-L.Michaud, Besancon 1999. a2) 5...Nb6 and now 6 Nc3 a21) 6

Bd3 Be7 7 0-0 Bd7 8 Nc3 0-0 9 Re1 c6 10 e5 f6 11 exf6 Bxf6 12 Ne4 Qe7
 13 Ne5 Bxe5 14 dxe5 c5 15 Bg5 Qe8 16 Nd6 Ba4 17 b3 Qc6 18 bxa4
 winning easily, G.Kasparov-B.Martins, Lisbon 1999. a22) 6 Nc3 Bb4 (6...Be7
 7 Bd3 0-0 8 0-0 c5 (8...Nc6 9 e5 in the simul games the advance of the e-
 pawn is a theme to allow White to attack the h7-pawn with his light-squared
 bishop 9...a6 10 Bf4 Re8 11 Be4 Bd7 12 Re1 g6 13 Qe2 Na5 14 Rad1 Rb8 15
 b3 Bb4 16 Qe3 Bc6 17 Bg5 Qd7 18 Bf6 Bf8 19 Qg5 Bxe4 20 Nxe4 c6 21
 Qh4 h5 22 Bg5 Kh7 23 Nf6+ when it is fair to say that Black should give up,
 G. Kasparov-J.Gaspar, Lisbon 1999.) 9 dxc5 Bxc5 10 Qe2 Nc6 11 e5 Nd4 12
 Nxd4 Bxd4 13 Rd1 f5 (or 13...Bc5? 14 Bxh7+ Kxh7 15 Rxd8 winning) 14
 exf6 Qxf6 15 Be3 e5 16 Ne4 Qh4 17 Bxd4 exd4 18 Bc4+ Kh8 19 Rxd4 gave
 White an excellent position thanks to the extra pawn, G.Kasparov-D.Paci,
 Asiag 1991) 7 Bd3 0-0 8 0-0 h6 9 Qe2 Nc6 10 Be3 Ne7 (maybe 10...f5 is
 necessary to give White something to think about) 11 Rad1 Bxc3 12 bxc3
 Na4 13 Qc2 Bd7 14 c4 b6 15 e5 Ng6 16 Be4 Rb8 17 d5 with advantage, G.
 Kasparov-E.Bohrer, Zurich 1988. b) 4...Nc6 5 e4 and now b1) 5...Ndb4? 6 d5!
 Nxd5 (I suspect Black was none too pleased to realise that 6...Nb8 fails to 7
 Qa4+ when White wins a piece) 7 exd5 Nb4 8 Nc3 and White cruised to
 victory, G.Kasparov-X.Lauper, Zurich 1988. b2) 5...Nb6 6 d5 Nb8 7 Nc3 Bg4
 8 a4 e6 9 a5 N6d7 10 h3 Bxf3 11 Qxf3 Qf6 12 Qxf6 Nxf6 13 Bf4 Bd6? (13...
 Bb4, threatening ...Nxe4, is the best move even if White still maintains an
 edge) 14 e5 Nxd5 15 Nxd5 exd5 16 exd6 led to a comfortable victory in G.
 Kasparov-B.Scherrer, Zurich 1988.) c) 4...Nf6 5 Nc3 Nbd7 6 e4 e6 7 Bd3 Be7
 8 0-0 a6 9 Re1 b6 10 e5 Nd5 11 Nxd5 exd5 12 Qc2 c5 13 e6 Nf6 (if 13...
 fxe6, then 14 Bxh7 is strong) 14 exf7+ Kf8 (not 14...Kxf7? 15 Ne5+ Kf8 16
 Nc6 and Black is in big trouble) 15 Ne5 Qc7 16 Bf4 Bd6 17 Qe2 Bd7 18 Bf5
 Bc6 19 Qf3 c4 20 Qh3 Rd8 21 Ng6+ hxg6 22 Qxh8+ Kxf7 23 Be6+ Ke7 24
 Qxg7+ 1-0, G.Kasparov-R.Scamps, Besancon 1999. d) 4...Bf5 is the main
 alternative designed to stop White safely playing e2-e4, and now d1) 5 Nh4
 e6 6 Nxf5 exf5 Black has volunteered to have double pawns in return for
 controlling the e4-square 7 Nc3 Nc6 8 e3 Bb4 9 Bd2 0-0 10 Bd3 g6 11 0-0
 Re8 12 Qf3 led to equal chances in J.Lokup-P.Keres, Tallinn 1935. d2) 5
 Nbd2 (yes, the threat really is e2-e4 to fork the black pieces) 5...Bg6 6 Ne5 e6
 7 e4 Nb6 8 Nxg6 hxg6 9 Nf3 N8d7 10 Bd3 Bb4+ 11 Bd2 Qe7 12 Rc1 Rc8 13
 0-0 Bxd2 14 Qxd2 0-0 15 Qa5 with a slight edge, G.Serper-D.Mackenzie,
 Reno 2006. d3) 5 Nc3 e6 6 e3 (6 Qb3 is a promising possibility) 6...Nd7 7
 Be2 Bd6 8 0-0 0-0 9 Bd3 Bg4 10 h3 Bh5 when the position offers equal
 opportunities, V.Heuer-P.Keres, Tartu 1953. **4...Nf6** The knight attacks the e-
 pawn. Also possible is 4...Nb6 5 Nc3, and now a) 5...g6 6 h3 Bg7 7 Nf3 0-0
 (or 7...N8d7 8 Be3 0-0 9 Be2 aiming to castle kingside with a slight edge
 thanks to the pawn centre) 8 Be2 e6 9 0-0 Nc6 10 Bg5 Qd7 11 a3? (when you
 are playing over twenty opponents in a simul the master can go wrong!
 Maybe 11 Be3 to preserve the d-pawn looks fine and makes the queen on d7
 look awkwardly placed, when 11...f5 is met by 12 exf5 exf5 13 Qb3+ Kh8 14
 d5 favours White) 11...Nxd4 12 Nxd4 Bxd4 13 Nd5 exd5 14 Qxd4 dxe4 15
 Qxe4 Re8 16 Qf3 Qf5 with an ending beckoning and White is a pawn down,
 V.Topalov-J.Gonzalez,Tenerife 1997. b) 5...e6 6 Be3 Bb4 7 Nf3 with plans to
 rapidly on the kingside, A.Adly-B.Waheed, Cairo 2009. **5 Nc3 e5** Black
 follows the reader's suggestion and aims to exchange queens in the opening.
 Also possible is 5...e6 6 Nf3, and now a) 6...Bb4 7 Bd3 (defending the e-pawn
 and White has an obvious plan of castling kingside and pinning the knight
 with Bg5) 7...0-0 8 0-0 c6 (8...b6 9 e5 Nfd7 10 Bxh7+ Kh8 11 Be4 c6 12
 Ng5 g6 13 Qg4 Qe7 14 Qh4+ 1-0, A.Karpov-P.Glauser, Zurich 1988) 9 Bg5
 Be7 (if this is best, then it highlights the folly of 6...Bb4, which effectively
 wasted a move) 10 Qc2 (the obvious threat is 11 e5 to force the knight to
 move leaving the h7-pawn vulnerable) 10...Nfd7 11 Bf4 c5 12 d5 Nf6 13 d6!
 Bxd6 14 Bxd6 Qxd6 15 e5 Qe7 16 exf6 Qxf6 17 Bxh7+ Kh8 18 Be4 led to a
 winning position in V.Topalov-H.Pollmann, Frankfurt simul 1997. b) 6...Be7
 7 Be2 (one of the advantages of the bishop being on e2 rather than d3 is that it
 gives White the option of meeting a future ...c5 with d4-d5) 7...0-0 8 0-0
 Nbd7 9 Be3 (now that there is a bishop already on e7, Topalov feels no need
 to place the bishop on g5 and instead steadily develops, allowing his simul
 opponent the chance to go wrong by not facing any forcing moves) 9...b6 10
 e5 Ne8 11 Qc2 Bb7 12 Rad1 f5? (the logic is clear because Black is wary of
 allowing a white knight to occupy the e4-square and stop any tactics aimed at
 the h7-square. In reality there is a big flaw and not surprisingly Topalov finds
 it) 13 Bc4! c6 14 Bxe6+ Kh8 15 Bxf5 led to a clear advantage in V.Topalov-
 A.Auslaender, Frankfurt simul 1997. **6 dxe5 Qxd1+ 7 Kxd1 Ng4**



This is the position advocated by Nahim Bin Zahur, who mentioned that Black should be happy here. He is probably right because Black has good drawing chances, but in this game White does well to create an initiative. **8 Nh3** Schiendorfer defends the f2-pawn and develops another piece. 8 Nd5 was tested in the old game W.Steinitz-I.Gunsberg, New York 1891, so it should be no surprise that a new move has been demonstrated: **8...Nxe5 9 f4 Bg4+** It is natural to develop another piece, but White is happy to shift his king away from the first rank to make it easier at a later stage to co-ordinate his rooks. It is certainly tempting to saddle White with doubled h-pawns upon 9...Bxh3 10 gxh3, it is not clear if this is a big weakness because white's pair of bishops will prove useful and White is able to generate an initiative 10...Ng6 (or 10...Nf3 11 Nd5 Bd6 12 Bg2 Nh4 13 e5 favours White. **10 Kc2 Nec6 11 Be3 Nd7** I prefer 11...Nb4+ to hassle the white king. For instance, 12 Kb1 (not 12 Kb3?! because of 12...N8c6, when 13 a3? is routed upon 13...Be6+ 14 Bc4 Na5+ winning) **12 Nf2 Nf6 13 h3** The tempting 13 e5 does not win a piece because 13...Bf5+ saves the day when 14 Kc1 Ng4 offers roughly equal chances. **13...Nb4+ 14 Kc1 Bd7 15 a3 Nc6 16 g4** A good, practical decision because it looks threatening, and g4-g5 gives White another option when required to oust the black knight on f6. I would also be tempted to play the straightforward 16 Kc2 just to keep my opponent guessing about my middlegame plans while improving my king's position so the rooks can co-ordinate. **16...0-0 17 b4 a6** Perhaps 17...Be6 just to provoke White committing his pawns forward, so that after 18 f5 Bd7 Black can seek to follow up with ...Bd6 and ...Rhe8. **18 Kb2** The king steps off the first rank in preparation for the white rooks to join in the action. **18...Be8 19 Bc4!**



Black's position is horribly passive with the light-squared bishop pitifully defending the f7-pawn. The problem is that it just gets in the way, so Black is effectively playing a rook down because the one on h8 is out of the action. **19...Nd4** Black is trying to be adventurous, but he really needs to get the rest of his pieces into play. If 19...Be7, then 20 Rac1 maintains the tension. **20 e5! Ng8** The position is beginning to look a little bit embarrassing and if Black could play ...Nc6-b8, he might win some kind of award. **21 Rhd1 Nb5** The spectators would have enjoyed the sight of 21...Ne6 22 f5 Rxd1 23 Rxd1 Nd8 when Black has managed the rare feat of getting all his pieces on the back rank. **22 Nce4 Rxd1 23 Rxd1 h5?**



24 a4 The black knight has no safe escape squares. **24...hxc4 25 axb5 axb5 26 Be2 Bd7 27 Ra1 Be6 28 Bxc4 1-0**

I should also add a big thank you to **Rick Kennedy** from the **USA** who sent in a game detailing the historical connections of the Marshall Defence. Indeed, it was so good it ended up in the [Skittles Room](#).

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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