



COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane



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Where the Wild Things Are

There are times you have to make a statement on the board of your intent to bamboozle your opponent. This month the openings discussed are played to confuse and annoy people who like to repeat traditional openings.

Luciano Fier from **Brazil** wrote "recently I faced 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 f5 Any thoughts? What is the reasoning behind it? Refutations?"

It seems odd, but it is not bad as it looks. It may not be the best recommendation, but there is room for improvement, as just about all the books and DVDs recommend a Karpov game from the 1970s. There is no stunning refutation, but here is a decent response:

Thomas Luther (2529) - Alberto Aranzana Areste (2001)
 Balaguer 2007
 French Defence [C03]

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 The Tarrasch Variation had a surge in popularity during the 1970s when Karpov played it numerous times. In his matches against Korchnoi in 1974 and 1978, he played it nine times, although all games ended up being drawn. Of course, 3 Nc3 is the main alternative when the Winawer with 3...Bb4 is considered a major line. One of the reasons why 3 Nd2 is so popular is that it avoids such a heavily analysed line. **3...f5**



[FEN "rnbqkbnr/ppp3pp/4p3/3p1p2/3PP3/8/PPPN1PPP/R1BQKBNR w KQkq f6 0 4"]

It looks odd, but it is guaranteed to get White thinking. The best idea would be to use it as a surprise weapon if you want to upset someone who is devoted to learning the main lines. **4 exd5** The practical problem of 4 e5 is that White might not be prepared for a kind of Advance French position if he has just played 3 Nd2. This means Black has lured his opponent into relatively unknown territory: a) 4...Nh6!? I am not sure about this idea to transfer the knight to f7. 5 Ndf3 Nf7 6 Ne2 c5 7 c3 Nc6 8 h4 Be7 9 Nf4 Qb6 10 Be2 led to equal opportunities in J.Kratochvil-T.Vojta, Ceska Trebova 2008. b) 4...c5 5 c3 Nc6 6 Ndf3 Qb6 7 Bd3 (this is a well know trick that offers a seemingly free pawn on d4, because White is trying to play a Milner-Barry Gambit, but it is harmless with the addition of ...f7-f5. The normal line runs 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 Nc6 5 Nf3 Qb6 6 Bd3) 7...cxd4 8 cxd4 Bd7 (the offered pawn is poisonous: 8...Nxd4? 9 Nxd4 Qxd4? 10 Bb5+ Kd8 11 Qxd4 and White wins) 9 Ne2 Nb4 10 Bb1 Bb5 11 a3 Nc6 12 Nf4 Nd8 13 Ng5 Nh6 14 h4 Be7 gave White a slight edge in A.Seiler-E.Schmittziel, Dortmund 1998. **4...exd5 5 Ndf3** This is the key move to remember for White if you come up against this unusual line. It has the seal of approval from Karpov and it makes sense because now the light-squared bishop goes to d3 and the king's knight emerges on e2, followed by kingside castling. Also possible is 5 Qh5+ g6 6 Qe2+ Qe7 7 Ndf3 Nf6, which is roughly equal and not that many people are

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keen to trade queens so early in the game without a tangible advantage. b) 5 Bd3 Nf6 6 Ne2 Bd6 and now b1) 7 c4 0-0 8 c5 Be7 9 b4 b6 10 Qc2 Nc6 11 a3 bxc5 12 bxc5 ½-½, J. Van der Wiel-P. Nikolic Amsterdam 1988. b2) 7 0-0 0-0 8 Nf3 Nc6 (8...c5 9 dxc5 Bxc5 10 c3 allows White to play against the isolated d-pawn) 9 c3 Re8 10 Bf4 (the idea is to fight for control of the e5-square) 10...Bxf4 11 Nxf4 Qd6 12 g3 Bd7 13 Qc2 Ne4 14 Qb3 Nf6 15 Rfe1 Na5 16 Qc2 Ne4 17 Ne5 Rf8 18 f3 Ng5 19 Re3 g6 20 Rae1 gave White a very strong initiative in R. Babaev-S. Ghane Gardeh, Iran 2005. c) 5 Ngf3 I once played this, but found that it is difficult to smoothly coordinate the pieces. After that game, I looked up what to do!) 5...Nf6 6 Bd3 Bd6 7 0-0 0-0 8 c4 with equal chances. **5...Nf6**



[FEN "mbqkb1r/ppp3pp/5n2/3p1p2/3P4/5N2/PPP2PPP/R1BQKBNR w KQkq - 0 6"]

6 Ne5!? The German grandmaster posts the knight on the e5-square and highlights the problem of having a pawn on f5, because in other lines ...f7-f6 might be possible. He might have been deliberately avoiding the well-known move 6 Bg5, which occurred in A. Karpov-J. Enevoldsen, Skopje Olympiad 1972 and has been the recommended ever since 6...Be7 7 Bd3 (7 Ne5 0-0 8 Ngf3 Ne4! and Black has no problems) 7...Ne4 8 Bxe7 Qxe7 9 Ne2 Qb4+ (9...0-0 is another possibility) 10 c3 Qxb2 11 0-0 0-0 12 c4 dxc4 (or 12...c6!? 13 Nf4 g5? {13...Nf6 is best met by 14 Qa4} 14 Bxe4! fxe4 15 Nxc5 Rxf4 16 Qh5 Qxd4 17 Qxh7+ Kf8 18 Qc7 wins) 13 Bxc4+ Kh8 14 Rb1 Qa3 15 Ne5 g6 (15...Nc6? allows a pretty finish upon 16 Ng6+ hxc6 17 Rb3 Qa5 18 Rh3 checkmate) 16 Rb3 Qe7 17 Nf4 Kg7 18 Rh3! Nc6 (18...Qg5 19 Qc1 when White is on top because of the threat of f2-f3 to oust the black knight, followed up by Ne6+ with a discovered attack on the black queen; 18...Ng5 19 Re3 Qd8 20 Rfe1 Ne4 21 f3 is strong for White) 19 Nfxg6?! (19 Rxh7+! would have been the fancy finish in view of 19...Kxh7 20 Nfxg6 Qd6 21 Nxf8 + Qxf8 22 Qh5+ Qh6 23 Bg8+ Kg7 24 Qf7+ Kh8 25 Ng6+ when Black can put his coat on) 19...hxc6 20 Nxg6 Qf6! (or 20...Qg5? 21 Nxf8 Kxf8 22 Rh8 + Ke7 23 h4 Qg6 24 f3 Ng3 25 Re1+ with a big advantage) 21 Nxf8 Kxf8 22 Rh7 Ne7? (22...Ng5! is required when White has work to do although after 23 Rxc7 Qd6 24 Qh5, I prefer White) 23 Re1 Qg6 24 Rf7+ Qxf7 (or 24...Ke8 25 f3 Be6 26 Bxe6 Qxe6 27 Rh7 Qg8 28 Qa4+ c6 29 Rxe7+ Kxe7 30 fxe4 wins) 25 Bxf7 Kxf7 26 Qh5+ Kf8 27 Qh6+ Kf7 28 Qh7+ 1-0. **6...Be7** In the game S. Fedorchuk-A. Bonsen, Frankfurt 2004, White was another heavyweight grandmaster testing the knight on e5 and Black tried 6...Bd6. White carried on developing in a similar way to the main game: 7 Bd3 0-0 8 Ngf3 c5 9 c3 cxd4 10 cxd4 Nc6 11 Nxc6 bxc6 12 0-0 Ne4 13 Qc2 Bd7 14 b3 Qe8 (maybe 14...Re8) 15 Bb2 Qh5 16 Ne5 Rf6 17 Qe2 with a small edge, S. Fedorchuk-A. Bonsen, Frankfurt 2004. **7 Ngf3 0-0 8 Bd3 c5 9 dxc5!?** 9 0-0 and 9 c3 are safe alternatives. **9...Bxc5 10 0-0 Nc6 11 c4** Maybe 11 Bf4. **11...Re8** Just for the record 11...dxc4? loses straight away: 12 Bxc4+ Kh8 13 Nf7 + Rxf7 14 Bxf7. **12 Nxc6 bxc6 13 Qc2**



[FEN "r1bqr1k1/p5pp/2p2n2/2bp1p2/2P5/3B1N2/PPQ2PPP/R1B2RK1 b - - 0 13"]

White cannot claim to have refuted the line, but having avoided Karpov's 6 Bg5 at least he can argue that he has a new position on the board. So Black cannot rely on theory. **13...Ne4** Instead 13...Qd6 14 Bxf5 Bxf5 15 Qxf5 dxc4 16 Bf4 offers equal opportunities. **14 b3 Be7!?** Black wants to contest the a1-h8 diagonal, but it strikes me as being passive. So 14...Qd6 is worth investigating; for instance, 15 Bb2 Bd7 is fine for Black. **15 Bb2 Bf6** Luther does the sensible thing and brings the queen's rook to the d-file in order to exert some pressure on the d-pawn. **16 Rad1 Be6 17 Nd4 Qb6!?** 17...Bd7 is a safe alternative. **18 c5** 18 Bxe4 dxe4 19 Nxe6 Rxe6 20 Rd7 Re7 is equal. **18...Nxc5** Not 18...Qxc5? because 19 Bxe4 wins a piece in view of 19...Qxc2 20 Bxc2. **19 Bxf5 Bxf5 20 Nxf5 Ne4 21 Bxf6 Nxf6 22 Qc3 c5?**



[FEN "r3r1k1/p5pp/1q3n2/2pp1N2/8/1PQ5/P4PPP/3R1RK1 w - - 0 23"]

A defensive move such as 22...Qc7 would maintain the tension and chances are even. **23 Rxd5! Qe6** After 23...Rac8, White can come up with 24 Rd7! Rc7 25 Rfd1 and White is definitely on top. **24 Rxc5** A two pawn deficit against a top German grandmaster is not good news for Black, but it soon gets worse. **24...Rac8? 25 Rxc8 Rxc8 26 Qxc8+! 1-0**

And now for another opening that frustrates players, the infamous Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, where the players with the white pieces expect to win in spectacular style or resign after twenty-two moves a piece and two pawns down.

Nick Larter from **Ireland** sent an intriguing message that should give hope to all gambit players when having to take on a master: "I just wanted to say thanks for some of the analysis in your Blackmar Diemer Gambit (BDG) book – specifically your assessment of Welling's line of the Ziegler defence. This gave me the confidence to play it few months ago in a game against an IM and I secured a nice draw, which considering I'm only a club player was no mean feat. The name of the IM I was playing: Gerard Welling!! BDG aficionados might find a small amount of theoretical interest in it, but they won't be able to see it online anywhere, as the score has been recorded incorrectly in the online databases."

I think it is an important new game in the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit and a great result, so it is well worth analysing. It is true that in the early 1990s I wrote a book on the BDG, which was a lot of fun The people that play it tend to love winning in spectacular style with pawns and a piece usually jettisoned in the pursuit of the black king. I was attracted to the opening because at my

local club Paul Aston played it exclusively as White with enormous success. He was a 2000 rated player, but with White seemed to elevate himself to 2300 when the BDG appeared on the board. His dismal Black results were probably not helped by his desire to play gambits at any costs and few have copied the reversed BDG, which went 1 d4 e5 2 dxe5 Nc6 3 Nf3 and now 3...f6 which failed to make an impact.

The Welling game I remember well, especially because I spoke to the player about his BDG games, which always featured fantastic attacks. After we drew a game in the Belgian team championships he revealed that a lot of players reminded him of the BDG examples, but he felt his play with White would not stand up to computer analysis. He is probably right and of course my book on the BDG was not done using computer software, otherwise I would have changed several games where the defence is now more obvious. Still, software might refute lines, but it can revitalise others:

Gerard Welling-Hans Marzik

Biel 1981

Blackmar-Diemer Gambit [D00]

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Bc4 Nf6 5 f3



[FEN "rnbqkb1r/pp2pppp/2p2n2/8/2BPp3/2N2P2/PPP3PP/R1BQK1NR b KQkq - 0 5"]

5...exf3 6 Nxf3

A Caro-Kann has turned into a BDG and this line with ...c6 is known as the Ziegler Defence. The traditional move order is 1 d4 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 f3 exf3 5 Nxf3 c6. **6...Bf5** Activating another piece, especially because the light-squared bishop can get locked in behind the pawns once ...e7-e6 is played. There is a temptation to go solid and try to shut up shop anyway with 6...e6, but this allows White to continuously build-up on the kingside in preparation for a strong attack. For instance the game G.Welling-Pardeen, Biel 1981 continued 7 0-0 Be7 8 Qe1 this theme of transferring the queen to the kingside via e1-h4 is central to the traditional attacks associated with the opening. 8...0-0 9 Bg5 Nbd7 10 Bd3 Re8 11 Qh4 Nf8 12 Ne5 c5 13 Rf4 Welling keeps faith with his attacking instincts, but 13 Ne2 is a reasonable alternative when 13...cxd4 14 Nxd4 looks promising because White has so many attacking options) 13...cxd4 14 Nxf7?! a speculative sacrifice luring the black king out into the open 14...Kxf7 15 Bxf6 Bxf6 16 Ne4 Kg8? Black is understandably keen to move his king away from danger, but it would be wiser to try 16...e5!. 17 Nxf6+ gxf6 18 Rxf6 (a sight that would delight any BDG player, because he has played spectacular moves, has thrown a piece away as part of the attack and can observe all of Black's pieces forlornly marooned on the back rank) 18...Qe7 19 Raf1 Qg7 20 Rxf8+! Rxf8 21 Bxh7 + Kh8 (or 21...Qxh7 22 Rxf8+ Kg7 23 Rf7+ Kxf7 24 Qxh7+ wins) 22 Bg6+ Kg8 23 Rxf8+ Kxf8 24 Qd8 checkmate 1-0. **7 Ne5 e6 8 0-0 Bxc2**



[FEN "rn1qkb1r/pp3ppp/2p1pn2/4N3/2BP4/2N5/PPb3PP/R1BQ1RK1 w kq - 0 9"]

This is supposed to be the refutation of the line, because Black picks up another pawn and if the bishop is captured the black queen swoops down on d4 to check and regain the piece. Instead 8...Bg6 is the quiet response, but it does allow to carry on attacking 9 Bf4 (9 Nxc6 hxc6 10 Bg5 is also possible) 9...Nbd7 10 Nxc6 hxc6 11 Qd3 b5 12 Bb3 a5 13 a4 b4 14 Ne4 Nxe4 15 Qxe4 c5? 16 Bxe6! fxe6 17 Qxe6+ Qe7 18 Qxc6+ 1-0, K.Gierth-K.Wilson, correspondence 2005. **9 Nxf7 Kxf7** The important alternative 9...Bxd1 is examined in the next game. **10 Qg4?!** White pinpoints the e6-pawn as the weak link in Black's defence. The modern chess software indicates that the alternatives need closer attention: 10 Qe2 is another approach when White has a strong initiative, but no obvious breakthrough. My hunch would be that in correspondence chess, with ample time to study, then a decent defence should be worked out in Black's favour. Then again, in practice White has tremendous play and with fast time-limits it can quickly spell disaster for the average player defending Black's honour. For example, 10...Qd7 11 Bg5 Be7 12 Rae1 Kf8 (not 12...Bf5? in view of 13 Rxf5! taking advantage of the pin on the e-pawn thanks to the bishop on c4) 13 Qxc2 Qxd4+ 14 Be3 Qxc4 15 Rf4 Qa6; I think the big new idea in this line is 10 Qxc2! when 10...Qxd4+ is met by the stunning move 11 Be3!



[FEN "rn3b1r/pp3kpp/2p1pn2/8/2Bq4/2N1B3/PPQ3PP/R4RK1 b - - 0 11"]

Please do not adjust your chess set. This is the computer's choice and breathes new life into an old line. I believe it has been examined in the past by the excellent German magazine Kaissiber. One could spend a week analysing such a fun line, but here are some samples: 11...Qxe3+ (11...Qxc4 runs into 12 Rf4! Qa6 (12...Qxf4 13 Bxf4 Nbd7 14 Rf1 when White is better) 13 Ra4 when Black will be in a state of shock having had his queen cornered.) 12 Kh1 Bd6 13 Rae1 Qh6 14 g4!? Qxh2+ (or 14...Re8 15 g5 Qh4 16 gxf6 gxf6 17 Ne4 Be5 18 Nc5! with a strong initiative) 15 Qxh2 Bxh2 16 g5 looks promising, but needs to be examined in closer detail. **10...Qd7 11 Bg5 Na6 12 Bxf6 gxf6 13 d5**



[FEN "r4b1r/pp1q1k1p/n1p1pp2/3P4/2B3Q1/2N5/PPb3PP/R4RK1 b - - 0 13"]

13...Nc7? It is understandable to try and defend, but it is not convincing. Instead 13...cxd5! leads to crazy complications, but is the right idea: 14 Nxd5 Bc5+! (or 14...Be7 15 Nxe7 Qxe7 16 Rxf6+ Qxf6 17 Rf1 is avoided by checking first to shift the king out of the way) 15 Kh1 Be7 when Black looks busted after a casual glance, but I can't see how White wins. **14 dxe6+ Nxe6 15 Rae1**



[FEN "r4b1r/pp1q1k1p/2p1np2/8/2B3Q1/2N5/PPb3PP/4RRK1 b - - 0 15"]

White maintains pressure on the pinned knight. **15...Re8 16 Ne4 Bxe4 17 Rxe4 Bc5+ 18 Kh1 Re7?** After 18...h5, White has 19 Qf4 with the better chances. **19 Qh5+ 1-0**

An impressive game, so quite an honour for club player Nick Larter to actually play the winner of such a game and test him with his own line. What would Welling do? Well, I would like to report that the dramatic draw was the result of a sacrificial kingside attack by White, where he sacrificed all his pieces and ended with a perpetual check in the middle of the board. That would be quite a story, but in fact the reality is almost as good because White was rather close to a giant killing result and eventually drew a mammoth game:

Nick Larter (1799) -Gerard Welling (2372)

Ohrid 2009

Blackmar-Diemer Gambit [D00]

1 e4 d5 2 d4 dxe4 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 f3 exf3 5 Nxf3 c6 6 Bc4 Bf5 7 Ne5 e6 8 0-0 Bxc2 9 Nxf7 Bxd1



After twenty-eight years the BDG specialists finally find out Welling's idea of a refutation of the line that he helped to establish. I can't read his mind, but would guess that he rejected 9...Kxf7 because of the line 10 Qxc2 Qxd4+ and now the amazing 11 Be3, which does herald a strong attack and if you have not looked at it recently the defensive task could be tough. Therefore, against a much lower rated player at the European Team Championships, there is a certain amount of logical to dictate that he should play it safe by entering the ending. 10 Nxd8 If you look on the standard computer databases, then you will struggle to find any games that carry on like this. Indeed, I can't find any. Still, dipping into my old book there is a game where White wins the ending and, yes you guessed it, the victory is by Welling! **10...Kxd8 11 Rxd1 Nd5 12 Re1 Kd7!?** The first new move as far as White was concerned, because he was following the game Welling-Wrobel, Luxembourg 1982, that continued 12...Bb4 13 Rxe6 Nxc3 14 bxc3 Bxc3 15 Bg5+ Kd7 16 Re7+ Kd6 17 Rd1 White has more than enough compensation for the pawn because the black king is perilously placed 17...h6 18 Re6+ Kd7 19 Bf4 Re8 (or 19...Na6 20 Rd6+ Kc7 21 Bxa6 bxa6 22 Rxh6+ Kd7 23 Rd6+ is just good for White) 20 Rd6+ Ke7 21 Rd3! Bb4 22 Re3+ Kf8 23 Rf6+! and Black resigned before he could be neatly checkmated. **13 Bg5** It makes sense to get another piece into the action. Then again, without the king on e8 maybe 13 Rf1! is worth a look intending to invade the heart of Black's position via the f7-square. 13...Be7 (13...Ke8 14 Bd2 Nd7 15 Rae1 Ke7? Black is worse, but here is how it can go seriously wrong 16 Nxd5+ cxd5 17 Bxd5) 14 Rf7 g6 15 Bh6 favours White. **13...h6 14 Bd2 Be7 15 Ne4**



[FEN "rn5r/pp1kb1p1/2p1p2p/3n4/2BPN3/
8/PP1B2PP/R3R1K1 b - - 0 15"]

Black is a pawn up and you think would be better, but Fritz 12 thinks Black is only slightly better, presumably because of White's active piece play. **15...b5 16 Be2 Nf6 17 Nc5+** 17 Bf3 looks like a decent alternative when the opportunities are equal. **17...Bxc5 18 dxc5 a5!?** Maybe 18...Nd5 to stop White from activating his bishop via the f4-square. **19 Bf4** I quite like 19 Rad1! to keep the options open of where to put the dark-squared bishop, because 19...Nd5 is well met by 20 Bc3 when an attempt to hang on to the g7-pawn with 20...Rg8 runs into 21 Bg4 and White is clearly on top. **19...Na6 20 Rad1+ Nd5 21 Bd6** In his brief notes to the game, Mr. Larter commented that he played the bishop move "with the idea 22 Rf1," which sounds sensible. **21...Rhe8?!** Or 21...Rh8 22 Bxf8 Rxf8 and now 23 a4 is suggested by Larter. **22 Rf1! Re7 23 Bxe7** One can hardly blame White for being delighted to win an exchange against an IM, but there is no rush. Instead 23 Bh5! preparing to take on e7 and then deliver a rook to the f7-square is very strong. After 23...Nf6 24 Bg6, I certainly prefer White's chances. **23...Kxe7 24 Rfe1 Nxc5 25 Bxb5 Kd6** Of course, 25...cxb5 allows 26 Rxd5 to regain the piece. **26 Bc4 Rb8 27 b3**



[FEN "1r6/6p1/2pkp2p/p1nn4/2B5/
1P6/P5PP/3RR1K1 b - - 0 27"]

White is better, but you can't underestimate the pressure that White is under. He is playing Welling's variation in the BDG and is beating the man himself. **27...Nd7 28 Re3 N7f6 29 Rg3 Rb7 30 Rf3?!** Around this point I get the feeling that White is beginning to drift because no clear plan is emerging. This is a critical point that needs time devoted to working out the future, so **30 Be2 e5 31 Rc3** is certainly fine for White aiming to eventually double rooks on the c-file, but Black has fighting chances which count for a lot when you are almost 600 rating points above your opponent. **30...e5 31 h3 e4 32 Rf5 Re7 33 g4 Kc5 34 g5** Maybe **34 a3** to stop the king invading the b4-square, when **34...g6 35 Rf2! e3 36 Rc2 Kb6 37 Kh2** is about equal because the need to stop the passed e-pawn prevents the white rooks from causing trouble. **34...h3 35 Rxc5 Kb4 36 Be2 Ka3 37 Rd4 Kxa2 38 Ra4+ Kxb3 39 Rxa5 Nc3 40 Kf1 Nfd5 41 Rc5 Ne3+ 42 Kf2 Nc2 43 Bc4+ Kb4 44 Rxc6 e3+ 45 Kg2** After **45 Kf1 Nd4 46 Rc8** (46 Rcc5 Ne4 wins) **46...Nf3 47 Rgc5 Nd2+ 48 Kg1** (48 Ke1 is strongly met by **48...e2!**) **48...e2**, Black has all the winning chances. **45...Nd4! 46 Rc8 e2**



[FEN "2R5/4r1p1/8/6R1/1kBn4/
2n4P/4p1K1/8 w - - 0 47"]

47 Bxe2 Ncxe2? It might seem to make no difference how the piece is captured, but now Black faces tremendous technical difficulties to force a win. Instead **47...Rxe2+** is very strong, because it produces a variety of checkmate tricks: a) **48 Kg1 Nf3+ 49 Kf1 Nxc5** wins. b) **48 Kh1 Nf3 49 Rg2 Re1+ 50 Rg1 Rxc1** checkmate. c) **48 Kg3** allows **48...Ne4+** picking up a rook. d) **48 Kf1 Ne4!** (I can't see how White survives now) **49 Rxc7** (or **49 Rb8+ Kc3 50 Rc8+ Kd3 51 Rd5 Nd2+ 52 Kg1 Ke4** and White can put the pieces back into the box) **49...Nd2+ 50 Kg1 N4f3+ 51 Kh1 Rh2** checkmate. **48 Rg4 Rf7 49 Rg8 Nf4+ 50 Kh2 Nfe6** Black has the edge, but White's defence has to be admired when you consider that he is up against an experienced master. **51 Rc8 Kb5 52 Rg2 Nc7 53 Rg8 Nde6 54 Rc2 Nc5 55 Rg2 N7e6 56 Rc8 Kc4 57 Rd2 Rf3 58 Rh8 Kc3 59 Ra2 Kd4 60 Rh4+ Ke3 61 Rg4 Nd3 62 Rg3 Rxc3 63 Kxc3 Ke4 64 Ra8 Ne5 65 Rg8 Kf5 66 h4 Nf7 67 h5 Nh6 68 Rxc7!**



[FEN "8/6R1/4n2n/5k1P/8/6K1/8/8 b - - 0 68"]

It is at this point that one should really get out the specialised endgame software to find out what is going on. Then again, I have in the past won with two knights against a pawn (it took eleven hours of play) and the only thing I remember is to make sure the opposing pawn is not on the fifth rank. This is basically because Black's plan is to blockade the pawn, force the white king into a corner, and then use the other knight to deliver checkmate while allowing the pawn to queen. If the pawn is too close to the queening square there is no time. Oh, and remember that if the pawn is taken then two knights versus a lone king is a draw because you cannot force a king into the corner without allowing stalemate. **68...Nxb7 69 Kf3 Ne6 70 Ke3 Ke5 71 Kd3 Kf4 72 Kc3 Ke3 73 Kb2 Nd4 74 Ka2 Kd3 75 Kb2 Kc4 76 Ka3 Kb5 77 Kb2 Kb4 78 Ka2 Kc4 79 Kb1 Kd3 80 Ka2 Kc3 81 Kb1 Ne2 82 Ka2 Kb4 83 Kb2 Nd4 84 Kc1 Kc3 85 Kb1 Ne2 86 Ka2 Nc1+ 87 Kb1 Nb3 88 Ka2 Nd2 89 Ka3 Nb3 90 Ka2 Nd4 91 Kb1 Ne2 92 Ka2 Nf4 93 Kb1 Nxb5 1/2-1/2**

A fantastic achievement by White.

Are there any other players who have scored shock results? If so send the games to me.

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...

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