



COLUMNISTS

Middlegame Motifs

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White's Pawn Storm in the QGD Exchange

When the kings are castled on opposite sides of the board, one of the most effective attacking methods is to advance your pawns towards the opposing monarch in order to pry open files. This represents a far less costly way of opening the enemy king up than sacrificing pieces to do so. The opposite side castling makes it much more feasible, because you won't be exposing your own king when the pawns move forward.

Opposite side castling can occur in many different openings, the most common one being the Sicilian Defense. But the pawn storm theme is more purely illustrated in games in which the center is relatively stable, which is most decidedly not the case in the Sicilian. A good vehicle for showing this strategy is in fact the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined and the plan of castling queenside for White. A sample move order is 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 Nbd7 8.Qc2 c6 9.Nf3 Nf8 10.0-0-0 after which White will advance on the kingside with h2-h3 and g2-g4, whilst one of the main plans for Black is to storm his a- and b-pawns down the board.

A very important point I would like to make is that it can be a major mistake for Black to touch his kingside pawns with either ...h7-h6 or ...g7-g6. This is because it becomes far easier for White to then open files and get his rooks into play; for example, after ...h7-h6 he might go g2-g4-g5, whilst after ...g7-g6 there's the possibility of h2-h4-h5, again prying open a line. But if the Black pawns stay on f7, g7, and h7, it will be much harder for White to achieve his open file; he probably has to get his pawns all the way to h5 and g6 before achieving his objective and even then he might not manage it.

Accordingly, White will often try to provoke a weakening of Black's kingside with piece play; for example, by lining his pieces up against the h7-pawn he might get Black to play ...h7-h6. After that the pawn storm will be much more effective.

In the following game the German grandmaster Rainer Knaak cleverly got Black to play ...g7-g6 after which h2-h4-h5 had the desired effect of opening up lines. Of course, it's not that simple as White had to combine his strategic thinking with some nice combinational pyrotechnics:

Knaak, R – Petkevich, J

Zabrze, 1977

Queen's Gambit Declined [D35]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Be7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bf4 Nf6

Black can also delay this move with 5...c6 6.e3 Bf5.

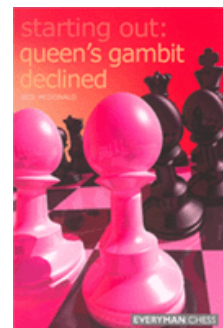
6.e3 c6 7.Bd3 0-0 8.Qc2 a5?! 9.Nf3 Na6 10.a3 Nc7? 11.Ng5!

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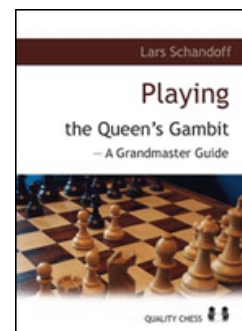
Play the Queen's Gambit

by Chris Ward



*Starting Out: Queen's
Gambit Declined*

by Neil McDonald



Playing the Queen's Gambit

by Lars Schandorff



[FEN "r1bq1rk1/1pn1bPPP/2p2n2/p2p2N1/3P1B2/P1NBP3/1PQ2PPP/R3K2R b KQ - 0 11"]

This powerful and non-stereotyped move forces a serious weakening of Black's pawn cover on the kingside.

11...g6

It would have been with a heavy heart that Black played this way. From a strategic point of view 11...h6 would have been the lesser evil, but here it loses a pawn to 12.Nh7 Nxh7 (Or 12...Re8 13.Nxf6+ Bxf6 14.Bxc7 Qxc7 15.Nxd5 etc.) 13.Bxh7+ Kh8 14.Bxc7 Qxc7 15.Nxd5 etc.

12.h4 Ne6 13.Be5! Ng7 14.0-0 h5 15.f3 Bf5 16.g4 Bxd3 17.Qxd3



[FEN "r2q1rk1/1p2bpn1/2p2np1/p2pB1Np/3P2PP/P1NQPP2/1P6/2KR3R b - - 0 17"]

17...b5

After 17...h5g4!?, White has 18.h5 Ngxh5 (If 18...Nfxh5, there follows 19.Nxf7! when Black's kingside collapses; for example, 19...Kxf7 20.fxg4 Nf6 21.Rh6 Rg8 22.Qxg6+ Kf8 23.g5 and White's other rook is coming to f1) 19.Rdg1 g3 (19...gxf3 20.Ne6 also wins material because Black dare not take the knight) 20.Ne6 is winning, as if 20...fxe6?, there follows 21.Qxg6+ Ng7 22.Rh7 Rf7 23.Rgh1 Kf8 24.Rh8+ Ng8 25.Rxg8+ Kxg8 26.Qh7+ Kf8 27.Qh8#.

18.Rdg1 b4 19.Na4!

From this square the knight helps hold up Black's counterattack.

19...bxa3 20.bxa3 h5g4 21.h5 Nfxh5 22.fxg4! Bxg5 23.gxh5 f6



[FEN "r2q1rk1/6n1/2p2pp1/p2pB1bP/N2P4/P2QP3/8/2K3RR w - - 0 24"]

24.Rxg5! fxe5

Or if 24...fxg5 there is 25.h6 Rf7 26.Qxg6 etc.

25.Rxg6

25.Qxg6 is also good, but it's worrying that Black can attack the a3-pawn with 25...Qe7.

25...e4 26.Qe2 Kh7 27.Qg4 Qe7 28.Rh6+ Kg8

Black cannot take the rook because of mate on g6.

29.Nc5 Rf3 30.Rg6 Kh8 31.Rg1 Qf8 32.Rh6+ Kg8 33.Qe6+! Qf7 34.Qxf7+ Rxf7 35.Ne6

The endgame is winning for White because he can exchange off into a pawn endgame.

35...Raa7 36.Rg2 Rab7 37.Kc2 Rbe7 38.Kb3 Rd7



[FEN "6k1/3r1m1/2p1N2R/p2p3P/3Pp3/PK2P3/6R1/8 w - - 0 39"]

39.Ka4! Ra7 40.Rhg6 Kh8 41.Nxg7 Rxg7 42.Rxg7 Rxg7 43.Rxg7 Kxg7 44.Kxa5 c5 45.dxc5 d4 46.Kb4 1-0

In this next game, we see another aspect of the pawn storm theme in that Black hits back in the center with his 13...c5, but finds himself with a weak d-pawn and an outpost for White's pieces on d4. This is a good example of how a player should not pursue his "plan" too dogmatically. If the position changes, we have to adjust to the new situation and regroup accordingly:

Ryzhkov, J – Faibisovich, V
USSR, 1972
Queen's Gambit Declined [D36]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Nbd7 5.cxd5 exd5 6.e3 c6 7.Bd3 Be7 8.Qc2 0-0 9.0-0-0

A sharp way of playing the position. A completely different plan is to aim for

a "minority attack" with 9.Nf3 Re8 10.0-0 Nf8 11.Bxf6 Bxf6 12.b4 as discussed in one of my earlier columns.

9...Re8 10.Nf3 Nf8 11.h3

Preparing to play g2-g4 in order to storm Black's kingside with pawns.

11...Be6 12.Kb1 Qa5 13.g4



[FEN "r3rnk1/pp2bppp/2p1bn2/q2p2B1/3P2P1/2NBPn1P/PPQ2P2/1K1R3R b - g3 0 13"]

13...c5!?

A logical attempt to get counterplay by striking back in the centre. But White is not restricted to playing for the attack, he can also try to exploit the isolated d-pawn that this move creates. [Perhaps Black should have played 13...Ne4!? when 14.Bxe4 dxe4 15.Bxe7 Rxe7 16.Nd2 Rae8 is far from clear.

14.dxc5 Qxc5 15.Nb5! Qxc2+ 16.Bxc2 Rec8 17.Bf4 a6

If Black defended the c7-square with 17...Ne8, then 18.Bb3 would spell the end for Black's d-pawn.

18.Nc7 Ra7 19.g5 Nh5 20.Nxd5 Bxd5 21.Rxd5 Nxf4 22.exf4 b5 23.f5 Rc5 24.Bb3 Rac7 25.Re1 Nd7



[FEN "6k1/2rnbppp/p7/1prR1PP1/8/1B3N1P/PP3P2/1K2R3 w - - 0 26"]

26.g6!

Devastating because of the support from the bishop on b3. Note that White should avoid 26.Rxe7?? because of 26...Rc1#.

26...hgx6 27.fxg6 Kf8 28.Rxc5 Nxc5 29.Bxf7

Not only is this a vital pawn, the proximity of White's massed forces also gives Black's king serious problems.

29...Nd3



[FEN "5k2/2r1bBp1/p5P1/1p6/8/
3n1N1P/PP3P2/1K2R3 w - - 0 30"]

29...Rc8 would have been more tenacious, but it's still quite lost for Black after 30.Ne5.

30.Ng5! 1-0

Exercises (solutions next month)



[FEN "4r2k/pbr1q2p/1p2np2/2pp3N/3P3P/
3BP1R1/PPQ2P2/1K4R1 w - - 0 27"]

White's pawn storm has already produced dividends in that he has broken up Black's king position. But how can he now convert this into victory?



[FEN "r2qmk1/pp3p2/2p3p1/3pP2p/
5Pb1/2NBP3/PPQ5/1K4RR w - - 0 19"]

How did White to play engineer a decisive attack?

Solutions to last month's exercises

Colle, Edgar - Berger, Victor

Hastings (1), 27.01.1928



[FEN "r2r2k1/ppqbbppp/4pn2/4N1B1/8/3B4/PPP1QPPP/3R1RK1 w - - 0 16"]

Here's another position from Colle's practice. What did White to play do in this position?

16.Bxh7+! This is stronger than 16.Bxf6 Bxf6 17.Bxh7+ as then Black can fight on with 17...Kf8!. **16...Kxh7** 16...Kf8 17.Bd3 would now leave Black a pawn down for nothing. **17.Bxf6 Bxf6?!** 17...Be8 would have been more tenacious, though White is a good pawn up after 18.Bxe7 Qxe7 19.c4. **18.Qh5 + Kg8 19.Qxf7+ Kh7 20.Rd3 1-0** There is no good defence to the threat of 21.Rh3+.

Matulovic, Milan (2525) - Carvajal, Juan
Tel Aviv ol (Men) qual-B (4), 1964



[FEN "r4rk1/3bnppp/1p2p3/p2pP3/Pn1P4/B1qB1N2/2P2PPP/RQR3K1 w - - 0 16"]

White to play appears to have his pieces on the wrong side of the board for any kingside action but nonetheless manages to pull it off. How exactly did he do this?

16.Bb2 Qc7 17.Bxh7+! A very surprising version of the Greek Bishop sacrifice. Should Black take it then White plays 18.c3+ followed by 19.cxb4, winning a pawn and living Black's kingside stripped of pawn cover. **17...Kh8** Probably best, but it leaves Black a pawn down for nothing. **18.c3 Nbc6 19. Bd3 f6 20.Ba3 fxe5 21.Nxe5 Nxe5 22.dxe5** and White was a good pawn up and went on to win.

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