



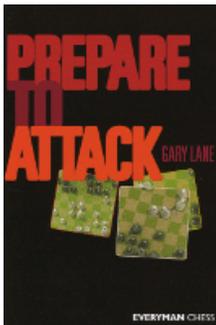
COLUMNISTS

Opening Lanes

Gary Lane



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Trash or Treasure?

A rare move in the Ruy Lopez on only move five stuns the chess world, but is it trash or treasure?

A topical question this month from FIDE Master **Francesco Bentivegna** from **Italy** who has been keeping up to date with the latest opening innovations. Even he was surprised by a strange move in the opening. He writes, "I have played the Jaenisch Gambit (with good results against GMs or IMs too). My "pet line," like Radjabov, is **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 f5 4 Nc3 fxe4 5 Nxe4 Nf6!?**. But a very strange game in the recent Aeroflot tournament (Balogh-Ponkratov) saw 5...Nge7!?. Is it really possible to play like that? I found only five games in the mega-database and this is a very new and strange idea of young GM Ponkratov, who played the first time against GM Shaposhniskov in 2008! A new strange line in the Jaenisch or pure bluff by black: what do you think?"

I have to admit that when the reader alerted me to the game I was a bit sceptical. After all, the Jaenisch Gambit, also commonly known as the Schliemann, has been around for years and a new idea in the super-strong Moscow tournament would be significant. I then looked up the game and, as usual, the readers know their stuff, because 5...Nge7 is simply not mentioned in the books. It is time to have a closer look at this new sensation.

Csaba Balogh – Pavel Ponkratov

11th Aeroflot Open Moscow 2012

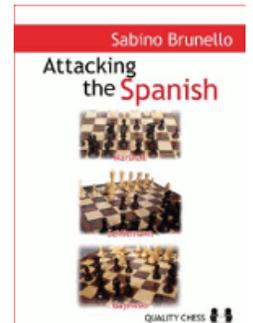
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 f5 The starting point of the Shliemann Defence. Jaenisch (1813-1872) originally promoted it because he wrote a book on openings. It is known in the English language as Chess Preceptor (1847) with loads of original material. The opening ended up being named after the German Adolf Schliemann (1817-72). Nowadays, it is growing in popularity because chess software is discovering new moves to revive discredited lines and amongst the elite "the boy from Baku" Teimour Radjabov is the keenest exponent of the line. **4 Nc3 fxe4 5 Nxe4 Nge7!?**



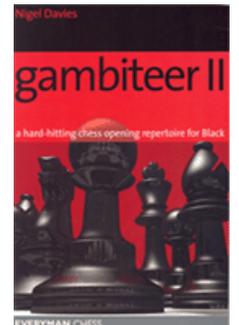
[FEN "r1bqkb1r/ppppn1pp/2n5/1B2p3/4N3/5N2/PPPP1PPP/R1BQK2R w KQkq - 0 6"]

This is a great move because it ignores conventional wisdom and seeks a new way to handle the position. The standard move 5...Nf6 is well covered in the books, but the text is simply not mentioned. A scan though a database reveals that Ponkratov has tried it before, so I am quite sure White had enough time to think up a decent reply in his preparation. I reckon if someone tried it in a normal tournament or online, they could expect to get good results if only for the shock value. However, if you are playing someone who is rated 2665, then this game is an indication such players do not get surprised easily. **6 d4** Balogh immediately increases the tension by challenging the e-pawn. In the

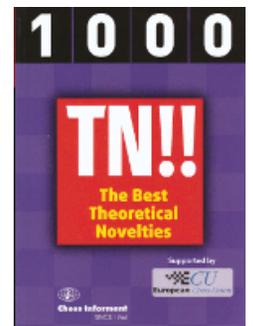
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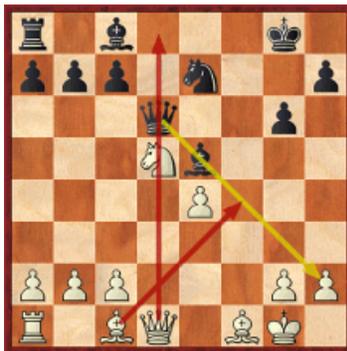


game F.Fargere-R.Fontaine, Le Port Marly 2009, White bided his time with 6 0-0 that game went 6...d5 7 Ng3 Qd6 (or 7...a6 8 Bxc6+ Nxc6 9 Nxe5 Nxe5 10 Re1 Be7 11 Rxe5 0-0 is roughly equal) 8 d4 exd4 9 Nxd4 Bd7 10 Bxc6 Bxc6 11 Re1 0-0-0 12 Ne6 Rd7 13 Qd4 with the better chances. **6...d5 7 Nc3!?** 7 Ng3 has been tested, but Black was fine after 7...e4; for instance, 8 Ne5 h5 (maybe 8...Qd6 is also possible) 9 Nxh5 Qd6 10 c3 a6 11 Bxc6+ Nxc6 12 Bf4 Qe6 13 Nxc6 bxc6 14 Be5 (not 14 Bxc7? in view of 14...Qf7 winning a piece) 14...Qf7 15 Qa4 Bd7 16 Ng3 Bd6 17 Bxd6 cxd6 18 Qc2 Rb8 19 Rd1 Bg4 20 Rd2 Qf4 21 Nf1 when Black had a decent initiative for the pawn, F.Fargere-R.Fontaine, Le Port Marly 2009. **7...e4 8 Ne5 g6 9 f3**



[FEN "r1bqk1r/ppp1n2p/2n3p1/1B1pN3/3Pp3/2N2P2/PPP3PP/R1BQK2R b KQkq - 0 9"]

This is probably the new move that Balogh had prepared for this encounter as a way of maximising the tension in the opening by planning to recapture on f3 with the queen (if given the chance) and then threaten checkmate on f7. After all, it makes sense considering that Ponkratov had defended the position against D.Rodin at Belgorod 2008, but then White chose to play 9 Bg5!? when the game continued 9...Qd6 10 Bf4 Qe6 11 f3 exf3 12 Qxf3 (I like 12 0-0! which is the sharp reply hoping for 12...fxg2?! and now 13 Re1 with plenty of active play thanks to the pressure along the e-file) 12...Bg7 13 Bg3 Rf8 14 Qe2 Bh6 15 Bh4 Rf5 16 Na4 Kf8 17 Nc5 Qd6 18 Nf3 Rf7 19 Bxc6 Nxc6 20 0-0 Kg8 with equal opportunities. **9...Bg7** Black is happy to get with it and prepares to castle kingside. Or 9...exf3?! 10 Qxf3 Bf5 (10...Be6 allows 11 Qf6 winning) 11 Bg5 (the threat now is, of course, Nxc6 to take advantage of the pinned e7-knight) 11...Qd6 12 0-0-0 and White is on top. **10 0-0** I reckon 10 Bg5!? should be considered when 10...Qd6 to break the pin on the e7 knight can be met by 11 Bxe7, when 11...Kxe7 12 Bxc6 bxc6 13 fxe4 Bxe5 14 dxe5 Qxe5 15 0-0 favours White. **10...0-0 11 fxe4 Rxf1+!** Black starts to go astray. A better idea is 11...Nxe5! 12 dxe5 and now 12...c6, when White retreats the bishop Black can take on e5 with confidence reaching equality. **12 Bxf1! Nxe5 13 dxe5 Bxe5?!** This seems logical enough, but it turns out poorly. Therefore, the steady reply would be to try 13...Be6, when White has the edge upon 14 exd5 Nxd5 15 Nxd5 Qxd5 16 Qxd5 Bxd5 17 Bf4 Re8 18 Re1 with a comfortable ending thanks to the extra pawn. **14 Nxd5 Qd6**



[FEN "r1b3k1/ppp1n2p/3q2p1/3Nb3/4P3/8/PPP3PP/R1BQ1BK1 w - - 0 15"]

At first glance, the position seems roughly level because the obvious continuation, as played in the game, is an absolutely brilliant move. **15 Bf4!!** The bishop is offered free in return for allowing White to infiltrate with his queen. Such a stunt requires precise calculation, but the rest of us mere

mortals can understand the motives that go into selecting such a move when you breakdown what is going on in the position. In this case, Black has poor development on the queenside, which does tend to give the attacking side more options and will allow the white queen to take up residence on d8. The other factor is that Bc4+, followed by Rf1, to attack the black queen and aid the onslaught is surprising simple and strong. Instead 15 Nxe7+ Qxe7 gives Black a solid, reasonable position despite the pawn deficit thanks to the influential bishop on e5. **15...Bxf4 16 Nxf4 Qxf4** Black accepts the challenge by taking the piece; otherwise, he would be merely a pawn down with zero compensation. **17 Qd8+ Qf8** Or 17...Kf7? 18 Bc4+ Be6 19 Bxe6+ Kxe6 20 Qxa8 winning. **18 Bc4+ Kg7 19 Qxc7!**



[FEN "r1b2q2/ppQ1n1kp/6p1/8/2B1P3/8/PPP3PP/R5K1 b - - 0 19"]

White has time to avoid a forcing line because the threat of Rf1, followed by Rf7+, is immense. Obviously the ending where White is a piece down is a tough task, especially upon 19 Qxf8+? Kxf8 20 Rf1+ in view of 20...Ke8 21 Bf7+ (21 Rf7 looks good, but 21...b5! makes a big difference 22 Bb3 c5 and the threat of c5-c4 will soon lead to White's resignation) 21...Kd7 22 Rd1+ Kc6 23 Rd8 b5, intending ...Bb7, is much in favour of Black. **19...Kh6** After 19...Qf6 20 Rf1 Bf5, Black hands back the extra piece and is still in trouble in view of 21 exf5 Rc8 22 Qf4 Nxf5 23 c3, which gives White a useful extra pawn and consequently the brighter prospects. **20 Rf1 Qg7 21 c3!?** A quiet move to stop ...Qd4+, though 21 Qd6 is also good to stop the same move. **21...Nf5 22 Qc5!** Remember 22 exf5?? only happens in dreams and time-trouble because of 22...Qxc7 and Black wins. **22...b6** Black is lost one way or another. Or 22...Qe7 23 Rxf5 Qxc5+ 24 Rxc5 Bg4 25 Bd5 and White has a winning ending. **23 Qd5 Ne7 24 Qxa8** It is time for Black to count the material and give up. **24...Qe5 25 Bd5 Qg5 26 Qb8 1-0**

If anyone has the opportunity to play the amazing 5...Nge7, then send me the game; whether it is a win, draw, or loss.

In last month's column **N. Earl Roberts** from **New Zealand** claimed a virtual bust of the Chigorin, but I gave some games that indicated Black's resources were sufficient. I am glad to say I am given extra encouragement by **David MacDonald** from the **United Kingdom** who e-mailed to comment, "With regard to your request concerning readers' experience with the line **1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nc6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 dxc4 5 d5 Na5**, last year I had a series of blitz (Fischer clock 2'+4") games in this line on the Internet against a player rated 2350 or so (my playing strength is around 2100-2150), and my results playing the black side were so good my opponent abandoned the line altogether. As you mention, the line 1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nc6 3 Nc3 dxc4 4 d5 Na5 is better for White, if Black wants to take on move three, he should put his knight somewhere else (e5) on move four."

If you are trying to visualise all that in your mind, I will give you a helping hand:

1 d4 d5 2 c4 Nc6 The starting point of the Chigorin. **3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 dxc4 5 d5 Na5 6 Qa4+ c6**



[FEN "r1bqkb1r/pp2pppp/2p2n2/n2P4/Q1p5/2N2N2/PP2PPPP/R1B1KB1R w KQkq - 0 7"]

The point is that Black is prepared to give up a piece in return for active play and some pawns. **7 b4 b5 8 Qxa5 Qxa5 9 bxa5 b4** and the game continues.

I appreciate Mr. MacDonald's support, but I would still like readers to send in their games, even if they are played on the Internet, so Chigorin players can watch and learn from their experience.

Andreas Kondziela from **Germany** sent a question about an unusual opening that has found prominence in this column since I wrote about it in February 2011. He writes, " In addition to the contributions concerning the Portsmouth Gambit in your excellent column, I would like to inform you that the British Correspondence Chess Association (BCCA) has organized a Thematic Tournament on this subject currently played on the ICCF webservice. In two games of this event I had the opportunity to try a new idea of Fred Clough, which he showed to me some months before tournament start. After **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 b4 cxb4 4 d4 d5 5 exd5 Qxd5 6 c4 bxc3 7 Nc3 Qa5**, Fred proposed – instead of the interesting but maybe unsound **8 d5?! or the solid 8 Bd2 – the fantastic move 8 Rb1** (the Swansea Variation), which leads to a very dangerous attack in my opinion. Could you give your assessment on this idea?"

The Swansea Variation has merit as long as you can steer your opponent to the desired position. After all, it is the perfect Internet opening, because it looks ridiculous but is playable. Indeed, even with over-the-board play, I would think White has the edge in as much that the complications are very difficult to fathom in a short space of time and there are plenty of opportunities for Black to go wrong. It seems that even in correspondence games things can be difficult if you don't double-check moves with your chess software.

Andreas Kondziela – N.W Jefferson
Correspondence 2011

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 b4!? Yes, it looks strange, but gambit players will try anything. The basic idea is to give up a pawn in return for more control of the centre. **3...cxb4** Or **3...Nxb4 4 c3**, intending **d2-d4**, with some compensation. **4 d4 d5 5 exd5 Qxd5 6 c4 bxc3 7 Nxc3 Qa5 8 Rb1!?**



[FEN "r1b1kbnr/pp2pppp/2n5/q7/3P4/2N2N2/P4PPP/1RBQKB1R b Kkq - 0 8"]

Portsmouth Gambit connoisseur Fred Clough thought up this extraordinary

looking move, which appears to give up a piece for nothing. Yes, it might be named after the city in Wales called Swansea, but is it any good? Well, if you were lucky enough to have this on the board, then I would wager your opponent is likely to get into serious time trouble working out what is going on. In this case it is a correspondence game, so the element of bluff is removed because computers can be used to assist decision-making. However, even the top software thinks the position is about equal and in a competition not many opponents playing Black can defend like a computer. The reader Mr. Kondziela comments, "This looks like a terrible blunder because the knight can be taken with check, while White – in contrast to 8 d5, which at least threatens the knight on c6 – seems to have no real attack. But in my opinion 8 Rb1 is a real killer move. The temptation to grab the piece is great especially over the board." **8...Qxc3+** Who can resist taking a free piece? Also possible is a) 8...Nf6 is met by 9 Bd2 when the position looks more like a Scandinavian opening (1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Qxd5) than a Sicilian, because the queen is out in the open on the a5-square. b) 8...e6 is a safe choice when the game F.Clough-J.Richardson, Correspondence 2011, continued 9 Bd2 Qd8 10 Bb5 Bd7 11 0-0 Nf6 12 Bf4 with equal chances, but a possible improvement is 12 d5! when play might continue 12...Nxd5 (or 12...exd5 13 Bg5! Be7 14 Bxf6 Bxf6 15 Nxd5 0-0 16 Nxf6+ gxf6 17 Bd3 with good play) 13 Nxd5 exd5 14 Bc3 leading to a strong initiative because Black's pieces lack harmony. **9 Bd2 Qa3 10 d5**



[FEN "r1b1kbnr/pp2pppp/2n5/3P4/8/q4N2/P2B1PPP/1R1QKB1R b Kkq - 0 10"]

10...Qxa2?! A surprising move in a correspondence game. I can't help thinking this is a bit greedy, but there are bound to be plenty of imitators keen to add another pawn to their haul. Maybe, the pawn steal was made acceptable because software initially suggests that Black can get away with it. Still, Black needs to catch up on development. Other moves are a) 10...Na5? 11 Bb5+ Bd7 12 Qc2 this is good, but (12 Bxd7+ is an improved version compared to the game in view of 12...Kxd7 13 Qc2 Qd6 and now 14 Qa4+! winning in view of 14...Kc8 15 Bxa5 threatening Qe8+ and also Rc1+) 12...e6 13 dxe6 fxe6 14 Bxd7+ Kxd7 15 Ne5+ Ke8 16 Qc7 Qd6 17 Qxa5 (White's position is so good he can be forgiven for not playing the most accurate continuation. Instead 17 Qf7+ Kd8 18 Bxa5+ b6 19 Rd1 will soon ensure that Black resigns) 17...Nf6 18 Rxb7 Rd8 19 Nf7 Qd5 20 Qxd8+ Qxd8 21 Nxd8 Kxd8 22 Rxa7 1-0, M.Bach-U.Zelmer, Rödermark Kreisklasse A 2011. b) 10...Bd7 11 Rxb7 and now b1) I would have thought 11...Nb8 would be a sterner test, but the reader Mr. Kondziela recommends 12 Bc4 and comments, "A piece down White simply completes his development. Black is helpless against White's plan of 13 0-0 followed by Qe2, Rfb1 etc." b2) 11...Qd6 12 Rxd7! Qxd7 13 dxc6 Qc7 14 Qa4 looks good. b3) 11...e6 12 dxc6 Bxc6 13 Ne5 Bxb7 14 Bb5+ Ke7 15 Bg5+ f6 16 Qd7 checkmate, A-Kondziela-D. Richardson, Correspondence 2011. c) 10...Nf6 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 Qc2 (gives White excellent compensation for the pawns, because the black queen is misplaced and in danger) 12...Qd6 13 Bd3 e6 14 0-0, intending Bc3 or Bb4 with the initiative. **11 dxc6 Qe6+** The queen makes good her escape from e2, but there still exists the practical problems of catching up with development. **12 Be3 bxc6** Of course, 12...Qxc6? runs into 13 Bb5. **13 Qa4!** The queen exerts pressure on the c6-pawn and more importantly sets up the possibility of Bf1-c4 to further harass the black queen. **13...Nf6 14 Bc4 Nd5 15 Bxd5 Qxd5 16 0-0** Kondziela has developed all his pieces allowing him to create various threats purely because so far Black has only managed to activate the queen. **16...Bf5 17 Rfd1** White manages to shift his pieces into improved positions by constantly attacking the black queen. **17...Qe4**



[FEN "r3kb1r/p3pppp/2p5/b2/Q3q3/4BN2/5PPP/1R1R2K1 w kq - 0 18"]

18 Qxa7! Bravo! **18...Rc8** Or 18...Rxa7 19 Rb8+ Bc8 20 Rxc8 checkmate. **19 Rb7 f6** Jefferson belatedly tries to create an escape square for his king, but it is too late. **20 Bc5 Kf7** Or 20...e6 simply allows 21 Re7+ Bxe7 22 Qxe7 checkmate. **21 Re1 Qc4 22 Rxe7+ Kg6** The alternative just gifts White a pretty finish upon 22...Bxe7 23 Rxe7+ Kg6 24 Rxg7+ Kh5 25 g4+! Bxg4 26 Rxh7+ Rxh7 27 Qxh7 checkmate. **23 Rxg7+ Kh5 24 h3 1-0**

Paul Lowry from the **USA** started something last month by asking about the notorious opening called the Jerome Gambit. Now reader **Anton Demidov** from **Russia** has come to his aid: "I'm a Jerome gambit fan and I think that White in your analysis makes a mistake on the seventh move. Instead of 7 f4, much better is 7 Qf5+, taking the knight on the next move or pushing f4 if Black responds Ke5. In this case, White preserves the possibility to create a broad pawn centre."

I welcome the Russian School of Chess commenting on the Jerome Gambit. But before I could think of a suitable reply I received another e-mail and this time it was from **Rick Kennedy** from the **USA**. He is a fan of this opening and is certainly interested in the history of the line. Chess legend Bobby Fischer once said you could learn a lot from the old masters, but I have a sneaky suspicion he didn't include Alomzo Wheeler Jerome (1834-1902) of Paxton, Illinois in his list of opening experts. Mr. Kennedy says, "It's a bit of a challenge finding the 'best' or 'most important' modern Jerome Gambits, so let me pass along a couple more classics from earlier, before giving you a couple of "moderns," while I continue to sift and sort. I have converted the notation to algebraic. Probably the best-known Jerome Gambit is the following (notes from the *Brooklyn Chess Chronicle*; I have corrected the year of the game to 1885 from Blackburne's 'about 1880' in his games collection, based on the *BCC*.)"

Yes, nobody can accuse me of ignoring classic old games when the next one is more than 100 years old, and remember the notes in quotes are from the *Brooklyn Chess Chronicle*:

Amateur – Joeseph Blackburne
London 1885

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 Bxf7+? Do not adjust your set because this is the move that signals the Jerome Gambit. **4...Kxf7 5 Nxe5+ Nxe5 6 Qh5+**



[FEN "r1bq2nr/pppp1kpp/8/2b1n2Q/4P3/
8/PPPP1PPP/RNB1K2R b KQ - 0 6"]

6...g6 "In the American edition of *Cook's Synopsis* ...Ke6 is given as the best defence, but Mr. Blackburne's ingenious counter sacrifice in the present skirmish would seem to show that the text is at least as good." **7 Qxe5 d6?** 7... Qe7 is best. **8 Qxh8** This game is famous, but Black should not repeat every move because now White should be winning. **8...Qh4 9 0-0** "He should have attempted to free his pieces by d4 before castling." I agree that 9 d4 is the best defence. **9...Nf6 10 c3?** "The only hope he had was 10 Qd8, thus preventing the deadly move of ...Ng4." **10...Ng4** Now Black is winning thanks to the pressure exerted on the f2- and h2-pawns. **11 h3 Bxf2+ 12 Kh1 Bf5 13 Qxa8 Qxh3+**



[FEN "Q7/ppp2k1p/3p2p1/5b2/4P1n1/
2P4q/PP1P1bP1/RNB2R1K w - - 0 14"]

"A charming termination, and quite in the Blackburnian style" **14 gxh3 Bxe4** checkmate **0-1**

To be fair, the experts of the day might have been impressed by King's Gambit-style play, but the Jerome Gambit was a very rare guest at tournament level. I am thankful to Mr. Kennedy who notes that the British newspaper *The Newcastle Courant*, Saturday, December 3, 1898, reprinted the Blackburne game with the following caution: "The following little brilliancy illustrates the unsoundness of the Jerome Gambit. Students would do well to commit it to memory, as strong players have a peculiarity of springing the opening upon the unwary."

Mr. Kennedy adds the comment, "My most recently discovered Jerome Gambit game was found in *The Newcastle Courant*, Saturday, September 9, 1899 (neither player is named): 'Played recently at a Garden Party given to the Edinburgh Chess players.'"

I have looked at the game and reckon they were drinking something other than a nice cup of tea.

Unknown – Unknown

Garden Party, Edinburgh, 1899

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 Bxf7+ Kxf7 5 Nxe5+ Nxe5 6 Qh5+ Ke6 7 Qf5+ Kd6 8 b4 Entertaining moves, but it is still winning for Black. **8...Bxb4 9 c3 Ba5 10 Ba3+ c5 11 Bxc5+** At least this is in the spirit of the opening, which wants to sacrifice pieces in order to encourage a king hunt. **11...Kxc5 12 Qxe5+**



[FEN "r1bq2nr/pp1p2pp/8/b1k1Q3/4P3/2P5/P2P1PPP/RN2K2R b KQ -0 12"]

12...Kb6?? Yes, Black allows a checkmate in three rather than play 12...d5, which would win with ease. Maybe a diplomatic loss against the host? **13 Qd6 + Kb5 14 a4+ Kc4 15 Qd5** checkmate **1-0**

Finally, Mr. Kennedy pointed out a fairly recent game played by Scottish player Geoff Chandler. I have never met him, but I do know that Mr. Chandler has an excellent sense of humour and his old chess blog at Chandler Cornered was zany, thought provoking, and usually very funny. Therefore, the following game looks like a fabrication, but I am happy to be corrected in the future. Here is another Jerome Gambit game that is spectacular as always.

Geoff Chandler – Todor Dimitrov
Blitz, Edinburgh 2004

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 Bxf7+ Kxf7 5 Nxe5+ Nxe5 6 Qh5+ This opening is ideally suited to blitz where you don't care whether you win or lose, but want to play something memorable. **6...g6 7 Qxe5 d6 8 Qxh8 Qh4 9 0-0 Nf6 10 Qd8!**



[FEN "r1bQ4/ppp2k1p/3p1np1/2b5/4P2q/8/PPPP1PPP/RNB2RK1 b -- 0 10"]

Geoff is a decent club player and could have found this himself if the game was really played. I still think it was more likely he was following the advice given in the previous Blackburne game, which has been copied up to this point. However, I did look up his old blog and found this comment: "I recall about a year ago Todor and me had a dozen or so games playing 4 Bxf7+ at 5 minute chess in Bells." If you think he played a game inside an actual bell, then think again. He is referring to his chess club hosted at a local bar. **10... Bh3 11 Qxc7+ Kg8 12 gxh3** Instead 12 Qxb7 is winning, because 12...Qg4 can be met by 13 Qb3+! (13 Qxa8+ Kf7 14 Qb7+ Kf8 15 e5? White should keep on checking, but this winning attempt backfires spectacularly upon 15...d5 and it turns out that Black wins.) 13...Kg7 14 Qxh3 and it is time for Black to put the pieces back into the box. **12...Qxh3 13 Qxb7 Qg4+** A draw by repetition beckons, but Mr. Kennedy assures me that Geoff went on to win.

If you want to play the Jerome Gambit, I wish you luck!

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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