THE NEW
WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

Volume 1, 2013

(Issues 1-12)

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'Too Much French Defence Theory?'

John Watson introduces his December column at ChessPublishing.com with the conundrum above. An odd question to ask on a theory website! Perhaps he means that there's so much material that it can't all be covered by one lone column? For it's true that ChessPublishing is now the only one, ever since John Knudsen's *The Winawer Report* last appeared, over ten years ago. So stated, the problem is easy to solve. *The New Winawer Report* will be a (free) monthly newsletter on the theory, practice, and history of the French Winawer. As with John Knudsen's original, reader contributions of articles, analysis, and games are welcome: please email me, and I promise to respond promptly.

To start, here's a look at an old but ever-interesting variation, which Simon Williams has recently attempted to rehabilitate. All in all, though, I don't think he's quite right.

*   *   *

Euwe variation, former main line: 15 ♗e2? is bad after all

Simon Williams' recent book *Attacking Chess: the French* has an extended discussion of Euwe's 10 ♔d1 line in the Winawer Poisoned Pawn. This is very rare these days, but undeservedly so: while best play seems to give Black roughly equal chances, you could say the same about the main line.

In Euwe's variation (*1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♔d1!?*), the former main line ran 10 … ♘bc6 11 ♘f3 dxc3 12 ♘g5 ♘xe5 13 f4 ♖xg5 14 fxg5 ♘5g6 **(1)**. The original games featured 15 ♗d3?, with poor results (after … e5-e4), and

15 ♗e2?, with disaster (see Matulović-Tatai below). Theory now prefers 15 h4!, planning an immediate h-pawn march, when Black is in serious trouble: see for example **Gärtig-Zhikharev, 'Baltic Sea: Sea of Friendship' corr 1980-83**.

It's always good to take such verdicts with a grain of salt, and Williams *p. 190*

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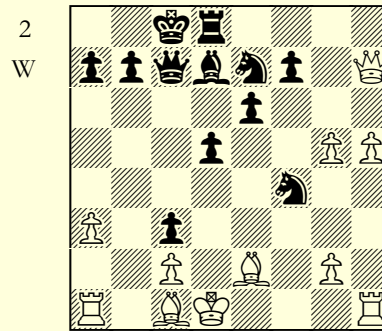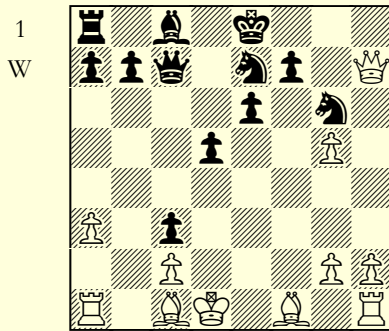
noticed that after 15 h4 ♕g3, the formerly standard 16 h5 is flawed, allowing Black to escape to an immediate draw with 16 … e5!. So he suggests 15 ♗e2 as a refinement, planning to meet the usual 15 … e5 with 16 h4! (instead of *16 ♖f1?!*), transposing to 15 h4 e5 16 ♗e2 but avoiding the awkward 15 … ♕g3.

All quite plausible, and Watson *PtF-4 p. 254* cites this with approval, giving 15 ♗e2 e5 16 h4 as a little better for White.

Well, it's true that 15 ♗e2 isn't the losing proposition it has sometimes been depicted. But it doesn't seem to offer the slightest advantage either, whereas 15 h4! does: White can improve later.

A1: 15 ♗e2 ♗d7!?

After 15 ♗e2, Black has usually played 15 … e5, with great success. But even better results have been achieved with **15 … ♗d7!?**, with the idea of castling as quickly as possible. After 16 h4 0-0-0 17 h5 ♘f4!**(2)**, there are two examples:
Taruffi-Tiller, European Junior Ch, Groningen 1974-75: 18 ♗f3 ♘f5 19 g4 ♘d4 (*19 … ♕e5!*, e.g. *20 gxf5 ♘d3! 21 ♖f1 ♘b2+* and mate in three) 20 ♕xf7

e5 21 ♗xf4 ♘xf3 22 g6 exf4 23 h6 ♕c4 24 g7 ♕d4+ (*24 … ♘g1!* mates even more quickly) 25 ♔e2 ♕d2+ 26 ♔xf3 ♕e3+ 27 ♔g2 ♕g3+ 0-1.
Bezler-Weinzettl, Liechtenstein Open, Schellenberg 1989: 18 ♕xf7 ♘f5 19 g4? (but *19 ♕f6 ♘xe2 20 ♔xe2 e5‡‡* is also lost) 19 … ♕e5 20 ♖h2 ♕d4+ 21 ♔e1 ♕g1+ 22 ♗f1 ♕xh2 0-1.

If instead (*15 ♗e2 ♗d7 16 h4 0-0-0*) 17 ♕xf7 ♖f8 18 ♕g7, Black has 18 … ♕c5 19 h5 ♘f5!! 20 ♕xg6 ♘g3‡‡ (*21 ♖e1 ♘e4!*).

So is 15 … ♗d7 a forced win? No, White's problems arose because the plan of a quick h4-h5, almost always the correct one in this line, is wrong here: after 15 … ♗d7, it's already too late. Instead 16 ♖b1 0-0-0 17 ♕xf7 ♕c5 is ∞/=, e.g. 18 ♖f1 (not *18 ♖b4? e5‡‡*) 18 … ♖xf1+ 19 ♗xf1 ♘f5!? or 19 … e5.

A21: 15 ♗e2 e5 16 h4!

There are only three examples, each transposing from 15 h4 e5 16 ♗e2. **Boisvert-MacDonald, CCCA corr, Canada 1970** continued **16 … ♘f8?!** 17 ♕g7?! ♘f5 18 ♕f6 ♘g3= (though 0-1, 37); here 17 ♕h8 gives White some advantage. After

the more natural **16 … ♗e6** 17 h5 ♘f8, **von Semmern-Skorna** (which Williams cites) and **Romanowski-Blachmann**, both **E. German corr 1982**, continued 18 ♕d3?! 0-0-0, and White was summarily crushed in each case. Better 17 ♗b5+ ♘c6 18 ♕d3, roughly equal after 18 … a6 19 ♗xc6+ ♕xc6 (*20 g6 fxg6 21 hxg6 ♕a4!*).

A22: 15 ♗e2 e5 16 ♖f1?!

Even the aimed-for lines above appear no better for White, but at least they improve on 16 ♖f1?! ♗e6 17 ♗b5+ ♔d8!**(3)**:
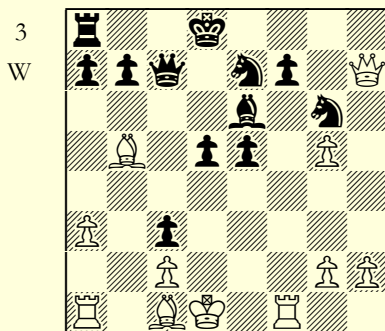
'Still roughly equal, but White has to proceed with extreme caution', Williams. Old opinions varied widely, but all evidence pointed to a Black win:
18 ♗e3? d4 19 ♗g1 ♕c5 20 ♗e2 ♕d5 21 ♖f3 ♔c7 was the stem game **Matulović-Tatai, Venice 1969** *Informator 7/211 (Ivkov)*, where White was massacred (0-1, 41).
**18 ♖xf7?** ♕c5! Barcza or 18 … ♕b6! Euwe, and **18 h4?** (Ivkov) ♕c5! Gligorić/Uhlmann, are no good.
18 ♖b1 is Williams' suggestion, continuing 18 … ♕c5 19 ♗d3 ♔c7 and 'Black is fine'. The book is generally excellent

but this is a slip: simply 18 … ♕b6 wins (*19 h3 a6; 19 ♖b4 a5*).
18 ♕g7! prepares ♕f6-f2 and restrains … e4. Then 18 … ♕c5 19 a4 ♕d4+ 20 ♗d3 ♕g4+ (… e4 being impossible) 21 ♔e1 ♕xg2 22 ♖b1 ♔c7 lets White off the hook via 23 ♗xg6! ♘xg6 24 ♖xf7+=. Best seems 19 … ♔c7∓.

Instead of 17 ♗b5+, Williams prefers **17 h4** (also Ivkov's suggestion in Informator), but finds Black has great attacking chances after 17 … 0-0-0 18 h5 ♘f4! 19 ♗xf4 exf4**(4)**. This was spectacularly borne out by a game that, strangely, appears in no database:
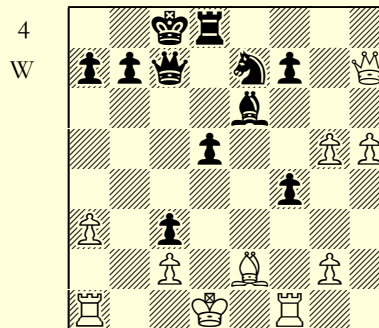
Met. Life-IBM Research, corr 1971 (telephone consultation) *Chess Life & Review 27/4, Apr. 1972, pp. 243-44 (IBM Research)*: 20 ♕d3 (on *20 g6*, IBM Research's intended *20 … fxg6 21 hxg6 ♕c5* is not best as White survives with *22 ♔e1!* (only thus), e.g. *22 … ♘f5 23 ♖b1 ♗d7 24 g7 ♕e3 25 g8=♕* and Black must take the perpetual; but *20 … ♘f5!* wins, e.g. *21 g7 ♘e3+ 22 ♔c1 ♘xf1 23 g8=♕ ♕e5! 24 ♕gg7 ♕e3+ 25 ♔b1 ♕b6+*, or *21 ♖f3 ♘e3+ 22 ♖xe3 fxe3 23 ♕g7 fxg6!‡‡*) 20 … ♘f5 21 ♖f3 (*21 ♔c1 ♘g3 22 ♖d1 d4‡‡*)

21 … d4 22 Qe4 Ne3+ 23 Rxe3 fxe3 24 Rb1 d3! 25 Bxd3 Rxd3+! 0-1.

B: 15 h4 Qg3

Since Williams' move order refinement fails to give any advantage, what of **15 h4 Qg3(5)**, which it seeks to avoid?

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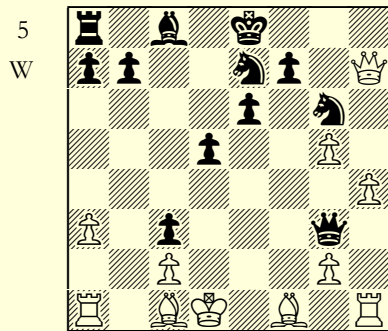
The queen move was recommended (with '!' but no further analysis) in the earliest mention of 15 h4, by Pietzsch *Schach 22/5, May 1968, p. 122*. But it has been under a cloud since its first trial in **Hansen-Wirth, Denmark-Belgium corr 1972-73**, a game that was widely publicised and annotated *Fernschach 34/1, Jan. 1973, pp. 6-7 and The Chess Player 3/463 (Hansen); Informator 15/227 (Marić); RHM game 18*. White won in style after **16 h5 Nf4** 17 Qh8+ Kd7 18 Bb5+ Nc6 19 Bxf4 Qxf4 20 Qxc3±± and 1-0, 30. Of 16 … Nf4 Marić says nothing, Hansen that it is best and forces White to play very precisely, and Gligorić/Uhlmann only that 'this was the point of Black's previous move'. It was left to Williams to point out that **16 … e5!** draws.

Iván Faragó gave **16 Rh3! Qg4+ 17 Rf3 Nf5 18 h5 '±'** in Informator 39. Williams gives 18 … Nf8 '!' as leading to excellent play for Black. But 19 Qh8 appears to favour White, e.g. 19 … Nd4 20 Be2 Nxf3 (*20 … Nxe2 21 Qf6*) 21 Bxf3 Qc4±, though it's still complicated.

Also in this line Williams doesn't mention **17 Ke1!**, which wins: 17 … Qe4+ 18 Kf2 Qxc2+ 19 Kg1±±.

Watson *PtF-4 p. 254* gives both key moves in one line: 17 Ke1 Nf5 18 h5 Nf8 19 Qh8! winning. (Williams is cited for 17 Ke1; a puzzle.)

Conclusion: 15 h4! is still best. ▶

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 bxc3 Ne7 7 Qg4 Qc7 8 Qxg7 Rg8
9 Qxh7 cxd4 10 Kd1 dxc3 11 Nf3 Nbc6 12 Ng5 Nxe5 13 f4 Rxg5 14 fxg5 N5g6(1)**

15 Be2?	Bd7!?	16 h4?	0-0-0	17 h5	Nf4!(2)		∓∓
…	…	16 Rb1	0-0-0	17 Qxf7	Rf8	18 Qg7	∞/=
…	e5	16 h4!	Be6	17 h5	Nf8	18 Bb5+	=
…	…	16 Rf1?!	0-0-0	17 Bb5+	Kd8!(3)	18 Qg7!	∓
15 h4!	Qg3(5)	16 h5?	e5!				=
…	…	16 Rh3!	Qg4+	17 Rf3	Nf5	18 h5	±
…	…	…	…	17 Ke1!			±±

RHM   GLIGORIĆ, Svetozar, & UHLMANN, Wolfgang, *The French Defence*. New York: RHM Press 1975. ISBN-10: 0-89058-010-3.

PtF-4   WATSON, John L., *Play the French* (4th edition). London: Gloucester (Everyman) 2012. ISBN-13: 978-1-85744-680-7.

AC:tF   WILLIAMS, Simon, *Attacking Chess: The French*. London: Gloucester (Everyman) 2011. ISBN-13: 978-1-85744-646-3.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

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Sacrificing a Different Exchange

Euwe's line, considered in the last issue, has some of the sharpest play in the entire Winawer Poisoned Pawn, and the entire variation is drastically underexplored compared to 10 ♘e2; it really deserves to be played more often. Before moving on to more mainstream topics, here is a taste of the possibilities in this unknown realm: a radically different and completely new approach to the modern main line. Current grandmaster practice after 10 ♔d1 has converged on transition to a roughly balanced ending (or queenless middlegame). Instead Black can force a turn into uncharted—and much sharper—territory …

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Euwe variation: an exchange sacrifice for the 13 ♗f4 line

The theory of the 10 ♔d1 variation features two much-studied exchange sacrifices. Another one, in the current main line, has escaped attention.

In Euwe's variation (*1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4*) **10 ♔d1,** the modern main line runs 10 … ♘bc6 11 ♘f3 dxc3 12 ♘g5 ♘xe5 and:

13 ♗f4!(1)

The former 13 f4 has fallen out of favour. Not because of the original exchange sacrifice 13 … ♖xg5, when the tremendous complications appear to leave Black worse, even lost: instead 13 … f6! gives excellent play; cf. Watson *PtF-4 pp. 254-56.* (Another celebrated line features a White sacrifice after 10 … ♘d7!? 11 ♘f3 ♘xe5 12 ♗f4 ♕xc3 13 ♘xe5 ♕xa1+.) The text was introduced in **Matulović-**
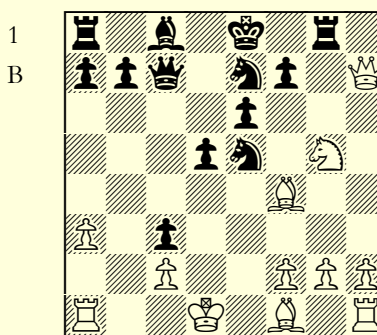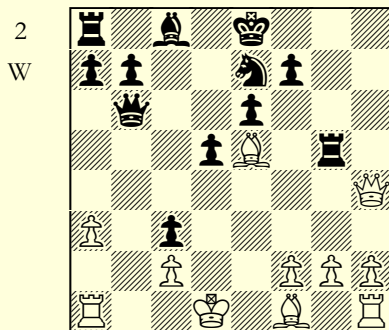

Uhlmann, Halle zonal playoff 1967. The result was a success, but the opening was not, and the line was considered

dubious for years.

13 … ♛b6!
14 ♗xe5   ♜xg5

The stem game continued **15 h4?** ♜g8; even better 15 … ♛xf2!. Since **15 ♗xc3?!** is also unsatisfactory after 15 … ♜g8/♗d7∓, White's next is critical.

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15 ♛h4!(2)

First mentioned by Balogh *Fernschach 33/3, Mar. 1972, pp. 51-52*: 'on 15 ♛h4, not 15 … ♜xe5? because of 16 ♛h8+, but rather 15 … ♜f5'.

15 ♛h4 aims to take control of d4, usually with exchange of queens, and was pioneered by Shkurovich-Khazin in correspondence games in the mid-1980's, with considerable success. 'White takes advantage of a tactical nuance to gain time to bring his queen back to the centre', McDonald *FW p. 36* ('definitely not 15 … ♜xe5? 16 ♛h8+', McDonald *ChessPublishing.com, February 2008*; 'of course, Black cannot continue 15 … ♜xe5?, owing to 16 ♛h8+', Pedersen *tMLF p. 157*; cf. also Balogh above).

In response, opinion is divided between 15 … ♜f5 and 15 … ♜g8:

A: 15 … ♜f5

Now after 16 ♛h8+! (not *16 ♗d4? ♞g6!*

∓ **Dekker-Quillan, Gibraltar 2007**) 16 … ♚d7 17 ♗d4 the debate over 17 … ♛d6 18 ♗d3 ♛f4 would take us too far afield; Popescu *Correspondence Chess Yearbook 3 p. 168* is probably right that 19 ♗xc3! ♛g4+ 20 ♚c1 ♜xf2 21 ♚b2 is ±. Instead 17 … ♛d8 18 ♛xd8+ ♚xd8, as in **Shkurovich-Khazin - Sabel, Baltic Sea tt5 corr 1986-91**, seems quite playable.

B: 15 … ♜g8

15 … ♜g8 16 ♛d4 ♛xd4 17 ♗xd4 **(3)** has become the main line: cf. Djurić, Komarov & Pantaleoni *COE-1 p. 209*, Pedersen *tMLF p. 157*.

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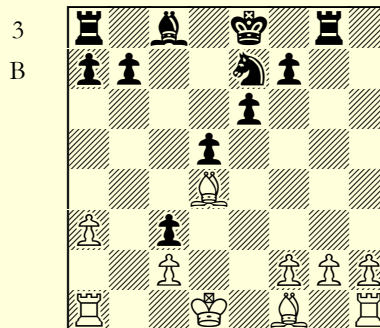
It's usual to evaluate White's two bishops and passed h-pawn as giving a slight edge. **Nilsson-Berg, Elitserien 2011-12, Västerås 2012** continued 17 … ♗d7 18 h4 ♞f5 19 ♗f6 ♜g6 20 ♗e5 f6 21 h5 ♜h6 22 ♗xc3 e5 23 g4 (with 'a slightly better ending', Grandelius *grandelius.blogspot.com, 11 Mar. 2012*) ½-½. Watson *PtF-4 p. 254* thinks otherwise, even giving Black a very slight edge from Fig. 2. Indeed Black has better piece coordination and can work up a slight initiative: let us split the difference and say about equal, with much intricate manœuvring in prospect.

C: 15 … ♖xe5!!?

But Black can force the game in a completely different direction by capturing on e5 after all:

15 …   ♖xe5!!?(4)

Not an oversight, but an exchange sacrifice to create a Q-side bind.

The only two practical examples diverged before the main idea: **Kagan-Warfield, Australian Ch Major, Sydney 1995**, 16 ♕h8+ ♞g8 17 ♕xe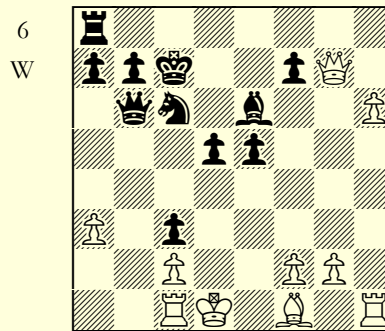5 ♗d7 (*17 … ♕xf2!? 18 ♕xc3 ♞f6=/±*) 18 ♕g5?= (*18 ♕g7 ♞e7 19 ♕xc3±*), and **'Flanker'-'Rezonator', HCL2072 playchess.de (18) corr 2003**, 16 … ♚d7 17 ♕xe5 ♕xf2!? 18 ♕xc3 ♞f5±.

16 ♕h8+   ♚d7!
17 ♕xe5   ♕b2!
18 ♖c1   ♞c6!(5)

At a cursory glance Black seems to be in a dire predicament:, with his entire Q-side out of play and no immediate threats, while the white h-pawn threatens to race to promotion. Yet it seems White stands no better. The immediate h-pawn march fails (though barely) and White has no other pressing threats while Black can develop with … ♚c7, … e5, … ♗d7/ e6/g4+ and … ♕xa3-b4 or … ♕b6, when it is White who is often in peril:

a) **19 ♕g7** ♚c7! 20 h4 (*20 ♕xf7+ ♗d7 21 ♗d3 ♕xa3=*) 20 … e5 21 h5 ♗e6 22 h6 ♕b6(6) (*22 … ♕xa3?!* leaves White with some advantage)

23 ♚e1 (*23 ♕g3? ♕d4+∓∓*) 23 … ♕b2 24 ♖d1 (*24 ♚d1 repeats*) 24 … ♕xc2 25 ♗d3 (*25 h7? ♕e4+∓∓*) 25 … ♕b2 26 h7 c2 27 ♗xc2 ♕xc2 28 h8=♕ ♖xh8 29 ♕/♖xh8 d4=.

b) **19 ♕f4** f5! 20 ♗d3 e5 21 ♕xf5+ ♚c7 22 ♕f7+ ♗d7 23 ♕xd5?! Rd8 (7). Black has excellent prospects, e.g. 24 ♕e4 ♚b8! 25 f3 ♚a8! (underscoring how tightly White is bound) 26 h4? (*26 ♚e2? ♗f5∓∓*, a critical point; *26 ♖e1 ♗e6 27 ♖e2 ♕xa3∓/∓*) 26 … ♞d4 27 h5 ♞b3 28 ♕e3 ♗a4∓∓.

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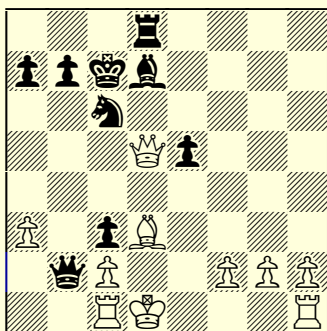
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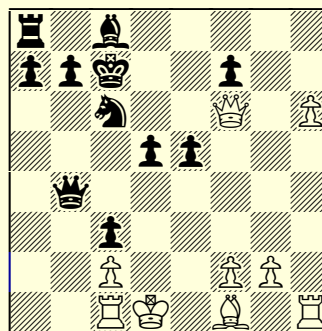
c) **19 ♕g3** (covering f2) 19 … e5 20 h4 ♔d6! (*20 … ♔c7?! 21 h5 ♗f5 22 h6 ♖h8 23 ♕f3±*). The h-pawn march still does not work: 21 h5 ♗e6 22 h6? ♘a5! 23 h7? (*23 ♕h4 d4∓*) 23 … ♘b3 24 ♕g5 f6 25 ♕h6 ♘xc1∓∓. Better 22 ♗d3 ♘d4, ∞/=, e.g. 23 ♕e3 ♖g8 24 h6 ♗g4+ 25 f3 (*25 ♔e1?! ♘f3+!∓*) 25 … ♗xf3+ 26 gxf3 ♖g2=.
d) **19 ♕f6** covers f2 and stops … ♔d6 after … e5. But g4 is left uncovered and leaves Black a way to survive: 19 … ♔c7 20 h4 e5 21 h5 ♕xa3! 22 h6 ♕b4 **(8)** and now:
d1) **23 h7?** ♗g4+ 24 f3 ♕d4+ 25 ♗d3 ♕f2∓∓, e.g. 26 ♗e2 ♖h8! 27 ♕xf7+ ♗d7 28 ♕g7 b6! and White falls into a remarkable zugzwang.
d2) **23 ♗d3** ♕g4+ (reaching here in time by omitting … ♗e6) 24 ♔e1 (*24 ♕f3? ♕g5 25 ♔e3 ♕xg2∓∓*) 24 …

♕xg2 with all to play for: ∞/=. A sample of the possibilities: 25 ♖h4 ♗h3 26 ♕xf7+ ♗d7!? 27 ♕f6 ♖f8 28 ♕xf8 ♕g5 29 ♖f4 exf4 30 ♖d1 ♕e5+ 31 ♗e2 ♕e4 32 f3 ♕e5 33 ♖d3 d4 34 ♔f2 ♕g5 35 ♕g7 ♕g3+!= and Black's Q-side pawns save the day.

The analysis barely scratches the surface and is untested in practice: use at your own risk! In each of several critical variations it *appears* Black has enough time to stop the h-pawn and develop, but with not a moment to spare, for equal chances.

Assuming *arguendo* that the sacrifice is any good, why has it been missed? Is it because it looks a blunder rather than a sacrifice? Or because it is indirect? Where an enterprising … ♖xg5!? would be played with relish, perhaps the mind blocks out a sacrifice-via-fork for fear of embarrassment?   ►

COE-1 DJURIĆ, Stefan, KOMAROV, Dimitri, & PANTALEONI, Claudio, *Chess Opening Essentials, vol. 1. 3rd English ed.* Alkmaar, The Netherlands: New In Chess 2010. ISBN-13: 978-90-5691-203-1.
FW MCDONALD, Neil, *French Winawer.* London: Everyman 2000. ISBN-13: 978-1-85744-276-8.
tMLF PEDERSEN, Steffen, *The Main Line French: 3 Nc3.* London: Gambit 2001; reprinted 2006. ISBN-13: 978-1-901983-45-6.
PtF-4 WATSON, John L., *Play the French,* 4th edition (Everyman 2012)—*see issue 1.*

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Out of Order?

The celebrated *tabiya* of the main line Poisoned Pawn variation has been the launching point for many thousands of games. From (1), White has a plethora of different approaches, starting with an unusually wide immediate choice: of the 19 moves that do not lose material immediately, a remarkable 11 are 'theory'. The complexity is further increased by the myriad possible transpositions, many of which require treading a narrow path of acceptable move orders.

Moskalenko features one such move order issue in his recent book *The Wonderful Winawer*. The immensely complicated variations after 13 ♕xc3 generally have little in common with the older 13 ♘g3, which is usually given as the 'solid' choice. But what if they are combined?

❀   ❀   ❀

Poisoned Pawn: 13 ♘g3 as a prelude to 14 ♕xc3 and *vice versa*

In the Poisoned Pawn main line (*1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dxc3*), the most critical continuation at present is 13 ♕xc3. This is often, even usually, met by 13 … 0-0-0, typically continuing 14 ♖b1 ♘f5 15 ♖g1 d4 16 ♕d3, e.g. **Shirov-Ganguly, Canadian Open, Edmonton 2009**.

Moskalenko *tWW p. 213* finds Black's move order is inaccurate since it allows 14 ♘g3!: he recommends that 13 ♕xc3 should be met by 13 … ♘f5!. Similarly after the older 13 ♘g3, he argues *p. 223* that 13 … 0-0-0?! is a mistake that allows
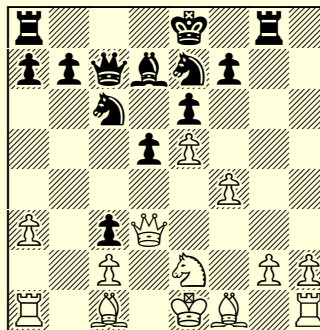
14 ♕xc3!, and that 13 … d4! is correct.

Is he right? This issue examines this idea and the 13 ♘g3 variation.

A: White defers capturing the c3 pawn

Once upon a time theory's main line from **(1)** ran 13 ♘g3 0-0-0 14 ♗e2 ♘f5 15 ♘xf5 exf5 16 0-0 d4**(2)**, and then followed Pachman: '**17 ♗f3** secures White a sm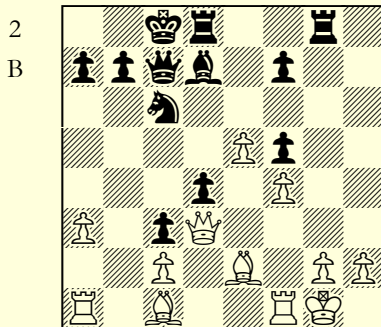all advantage, as Black must beware of moving 17 … f6 (*17 … f6? 18 ♗d5; 17 … ♖g6 18 ♖e1*)' *P65 p. 58*; similarly *P68 p. 50.*

2
B

In retrospect it's odd to see the broad acceptance of this verdict, e.g. Keres *SbF-1 p. 298* 'after 17 ♖b1 f6 18 exf6 ♖gf8 Black has sufficient counterplay'; after 17 ♗f3 'White's position is slightly preferable' (similarly *SbF-2 p. 296*), and Euwe '13 ♘g3!' … '17 ♗f3!' … 'White stands somewhat better' *Archives XXI/11 -12/64, 12f/36, Jun. 1972* (similarly *XXIV/10/74-2, 12f/39, Oct. 1975*).

A11: 17 ♗f3 ♗e6

The most famous example is **Sveshnikov-S. Webb, Hastings 1977-78** *Informator 25/268 (Cvetković)*, where **18 ♖b1** was met by **18 … ♗a2!?**. The justification is 19 ♕xf5+? ♔b8 20 ♖a1 ♘e7 '!, with plenty of activity for Black,' Short *The Sunday Telegraph, 27 Mar. 2005* (obituary tribute to Simon Webb).

Though this gives Black some advantage, as does 20 … d3, the right way is 20 … ♗c4! 21 ♖d1 d3!∓∓ (*21 … ♕b6? 22 ♕f2 d3+ 23 ♗e3 ♕b2*, as in **Wyker-Veenhuijsen, Netherlands M-class corr 1985**, may be no better than equal—though White resigned). Sveshnikov spurned the repetition with 19 ♖a1 ♗e6 20 ♖e1? and after 20 … ♕b6 lost resoundingly.

A12: 17 ♗f3 f6!?

And is **17 … f6!?** even prevented?. In three correspondence games **18 ♗d5** was met with **18 … fxe5! 19 ♗xg8 ♖xg8(3)**.

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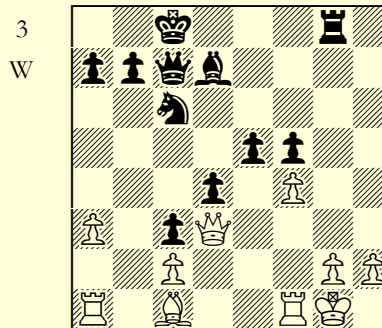
After **20 fxe5 ♘xe5!?** the stem game **Himstedt-Crane, World Cup III corr 1974-75** *Gambit (California Chess Review) no. 11, Nov. 1975, p. 26 (Crane)* (in no database) went astray via 21 ♗f4?? ♘xd3?? (½-½, 34). Instead 21 ♕xd4 ♗c6 22 g3 ♖d8! gives Black full compensation. Also good is **20 … ♕xe5!?** 21 ♗f4 ♕e4 22 ♖f3 as in **Elwert-Weise, corr 1983**, roughly equal. If instead **20 ♕c4,** best is **20 … ♘e7!** (*20 … ♖g6? 21 fxe5 ♕xe5 22 ♗f4±*), e.g. 21 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 22 fxe5 ♗c6 23 ♖f2 ♗e4=.

A13: 17 ♗f3 ♛b6!

In fact Black has several viable approaches, amply illustrated by nearly a hundred correspondence games. The best of all has been rare: **17 … ♛b6!** cuts out ♖b1, leaves White struggling to find any plan (*18 ♗d5? ♞e7∓∓; 18 ♖e1 ♗e6*—Sveshnikov-S. Webb), and gives Black an appreciable advantage. The practical results have been spectacular: 5½/6.

A2: 17 ♖b1

So Pachman's 17 ♗f3 is a mirage and from **(2)** White should choose 17 ♖b1 after all. Then 17 … f6 is usually given as equal; simpler 17 … ♗e6 18 ♗f3 ♞a5=.

B: White captures on c3 immediately

After 13 ♞g3 0-0-0, Moskalenko's suggestion echoes Short (see above): 'the direct materialistic 14 ♛xc3 leaves Black a pawn down for insufficient compensation … believe me—Black does not have enough'.

Earlier Moles *MLW p. 21* had noticed that 14 ♛xc3 had never been played or suggested, though he took this to indicate it wasn't good: a dangerous assumption.

B1: (*13 ♞g3 0-0-0 14 ♛xc3*) **14 … ♞f5**

Moles' recommended 14 … ♞f5 '!' 15 ♞xf5 exf5**(4)** 'and White has problems' was natural, given variation A. It had further support from the closest parallel, **Ree-Darga, Amsterdam 1969** *Informator 8/185 (Ivkov)*, which continued, in effect, (via *14 ♗e2 ♞f5 15 ♞xf5 exf5 16 ♗f3 ♛b6 17 ♛xc3*) 16 ♗e2 ♛b6 17 ♗f3 ♔b8 18 ♛b3 ♛xb3 19 axb3 ♞d4 followed by … ♞xb3 and … d4-d3, and
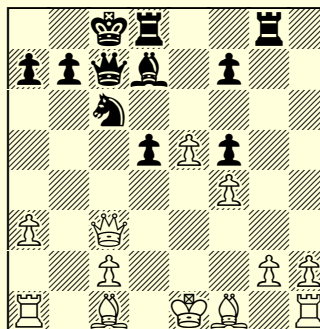
Black won in style. But White's plan—♗e2-f3, ♔f2 and h4-h5—could hardly have been more accommodating and with more care the extra pawn must be worth a plus.

From **(4)**, after **16 g3**:

1) **16 … d4** 17 ♛d3 ♗e6 18 ♗g2 ♞a5 (Watson *PtF-2 p. 171*) 19 0-0± ♗c4? 20 ♛xf5+ ♔b8 21 ♖f2∓∓ ♛c5 22 a4 ♗d5 23 ♗a3 1-0 **Mößle-Zöller, corr 1998**;

2) **16 … ♛b6** 17 ♛b3 ♛c5 18 ♖b1 b6 (Watson) 19 ♗e3 d4 20 ♗d2±;

3) **16 … f6** 17 exf6 ♖ge8+ 18 ♗e2 ♖e6 peters out after 19 ♗d2 ♖de8 20 f7±.

B2: 14 … d4, 14 … ♖h8

The relatively better 14 … d4 also falls short, e.g. **Ciucurel-Novák, ICCF corr (WS/MN/030) 2008**: 15 ♛c5 b6 16 ♛c4 ♔b8 (*16 … f6?! 17 exf6 ♞d5 18 ♞e4±* **Carlier-Carton, GLC Masters, London 1986**) 17 ♗d2 ♗c8 18 ♗d3 ♞d5 (*18 …♗b7± Moskalenko*) 19 0-0 ♗b7 20 ♞e4± and 1-0, 42. Neven *ChessBase Magazine 129* prefers 14 … ♖h8, intending … ♖dg8, but here too Moskalenko seems right: 15 ♖b1 and White stands better.

C: (*13 Ng3*) 13 … d4 14 Ne4

But is 13 … d4 any better? The key line 14 Ne4 0-0-0 15 Nd6+ Kb8**(5)** seemed unpromising enough that theory avoided even mentioning it until Korchnoi *C18-19 p. 64* gave a bare '16 Rb1 b6±'.

This was so thoroughly evaluated by Goh *ChessPublishing.com, May 2009*, who in particular anticipated the key sacrifice 17 Nxf7?! Rdf8 18 Nd6 Nf5 19 Nxf5 Rxf5 20 g3 Nxe5! (*21 fxe5 Bc6!*) from **A. Kovačević-Bukal Jr., 17th Zadar Open A 2010**, that there's little to add to his verdict that Black stands no worse. Spare a thought, though, for the unfortunate innovator in an earlier game, **Cooke-Abramson, New York 1991**, from **(5)** (and omitting *Rb1 b6*): 16 Nxf7 Rdf8 17 Nd6 Nf5 18 Nxf5 Rxf5 19 g3

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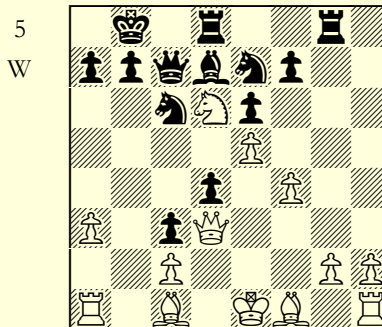
Nxe5! 20 fxe5 Rxe5+! (best here; ⇄) 21 Kf2 Rf5+?? 22 Qxf5! 1-0. Ouch!

Conclusion: After 13 Ng3 or 13 Qxc3, 13 … 0-0-0?! is indeed an inaccuracy. Black should prefer 13 … d4! and 13 … Nf5! respectively. ▶

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1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 bxc3 Ne7 7 Qg4 Qc7 8 Qxg7 Rg8 9 Qxh7 cxd4 10 Ne2 Nbc6 11 f4 Bd7 12 Qd3 dxc3(1) 13 Ng3

13 …	14		15		16		17		
0-0-0?!	Be2?!	Nf5	Nxf5	exf5	0-0	0-0-0(2)	Bf3?	Qb6!	∓/∓
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	Rb1	Be6	=
…	Qxc3!	Nf5	Nxf5	exf5(4)	g3	d4	Qd3	Be6	±
…	…	…	…	…	…	Qb6	Qb3	Qc5	±
…	…	d4	Qc5	b6	Qc4	Kb8	Bd2	Bc8	±
d4!	Ne4	0-0-0	Nd6+	Kb8(5)	Rb1	b6	Nxf7?!	Rdf8	=/∓

SbF-1   KERES, Paul, *Spanisch bis Französisch* (1st edition). Berlin: Sportverlag 1969.

SbF-2   —, *Spanisch bis Französisch* (2nd edition). Berlin: Sportverlag 1972. No ISBN.

C18-19   KORCHNOI, Victor, *C18-19 French Defence*. Nicosia: S. I. Chess Informant 1993. No ISBN.

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer*. London: Batsford 1975. ISBN-10: 0-7134-2921-6.

tWW   MOSKALENKO, Viktor, *The Wonderful Winawer*. Alkmaar, The Netherlands: New in Chess 2010. ISBN-13: 978-90-5691-327-4.

P65   PACHMAN, Luděk, *Semi-Open Games*. Spring Books 1965.

P68   —, *Semi-Open Games*. Tr. of 1966 German ed., revised 1968. Sutton Coldfield: CHESS Ltd. 1970. No ISBN. French defence portion published separately as *The French Defence*, CHESS Ltd., Sutton Coldfield.

PtF-2   WATSON, John L., *Play the French* (New [2nd] edition). London: Cadogan Books 1996. ISBN-10: 1-85744-101-X.

PtF-4   —, *Play the French* (4th edition)—*see issue 1*.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Compare and Contrast

In the early development of the main line Poisoned Pawn variation White's try 13 ♗e3 was a favoured line, even the recommended approach. But it has long since fallen from favour and these days serves mainly as a cautionary tale of what can befall White with unfocussed play, with Black's resources vividly illustrated by a showcase of spectacular victories. And these successes even require no more than natural developing moves: … ♞f5, … 0-0-0, and … d4 in virtually any order, followed by breaking open the centre with … f6, and Black can hardly go wrong.

But is anything ever quite as simple as that? A game from this year's Gibraltar Masters showed that there is poison in the most innocuous-looking moves in this variation. White's continuation, though strangely ignored by theory, was natural and straightforward, but it rendered Black's standard plan the wrong one. Why, and how should Black have responded?

✳ ✳ ✳

Janev-Quillan
11th Gibraltar Masters 2013

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♞c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♞e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♞e2 ♞bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dxc3 13 ♗e3

	13 …	0-0-0
	14 ♞d4	♞xd4
	15 ♗xd4	♞c6 **(1)**
	16 ♗xc3!?	f6?

Each side has several alternatives over these past few moves, some considered below, though Black's moves are all quite

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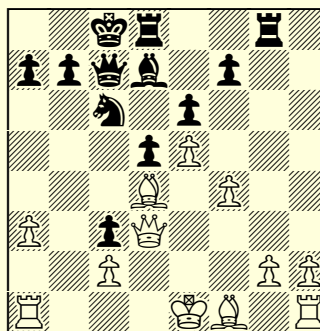
standard. White's last seems obvious

but has been entirely neglected by theory. In response Black sticks to the first-choice plan, which also appears to be virtually the only constructive approach. But it turns out to be bad here …

17 exf6   ♛xf4

On 17 … e5?!, computers choose the fearless 18 ♛xd5!±, leading to complications that seem to resolve in White's favour, e.g.:

a) 18 … ♞d4!? 19 ♗a5! ♛xc2 20 f7! ♖gf8 21 ♛c4+ ♗c6 22 ♗xd8 ♛e4+ 23 ♗e2 ♚xd8 24 fxe5! ♗d5 25 ♛d3±±;

b) 18 … ♗h3 19 ♛c4 ♗xg2 20 f7 ♖g6 21 ♗xg2 ♖xg2 22 ♖d1±±;

c) 18 … ♗g4 19 ♛c5! exf4 20 ♖b1±.

18 g3   ♛h6?

The losing move. It was essential to play 18 … ♛g5!, with the less-than-obvious difference that after 19 ♗g2 d4 20 ♗xd4? ♞xd4 21 ♛xd4, instead of 21 … ♗c6? 22 ♛c3!±± Black can turn the tables with 21 … ♛a5+! 22 ♛b4 ♛e5+ with a winning attack. White must settle for a more modest advantage after either 19 ♗g2 d4 20 ♗d2 ♛e5+ 21 ♗e4 ♛xf6± or 19 ♗e2 d4 20 f7 ♖gf8 21 ♗d2 ♛g7 22 0-0±.

Stolle-Kummer, E. German S corr 1969, went instead 18 … ♛d6?! 19 ♗g2 ♗e8 (*19 … d4? 20 0-0±±*) 20 0-0 ♗g6 21 ♛d2 ♛c5+ 22 ♚h1±, though White later went astray and even lost (0-1, 52).

19 ♗g2   d4?!

20 f7?! (*20 ♗xd4! ♗e8 21 ♛e3±±; 20 … e5 21 f7 ♖gf8 22 ♗e3±±*) 20 … ♖gf8 21 ♗d2 ♛h5 22 0-0 ♖xf7 23 ♖xf7 ♛xf7 24 ♖f1± and White won (1-0, 56).

For a sense of how atypical was Black's fate in this game, here is one of Black's most spectacular successes, involving a closely parallel continuation:

Tanin-Sanakoev
6th USSR Corr Ch ½-final 1960-61
TA pp. 19-21 (game 4)

From **(1)**, in effect (via *13 ♖b1 0-0-0 14 ♗e3 ♞f5 15 ♞d4 ♞xd4 16 ♗xd4*):

16 ♖b1

'The game follows a theoretical line on which the verdict, at that time, was unequivocal: White's control of the dark squares, his central preponderance and his passed h-pawn guarantee him the advantage. Black's plan with 16 … f6 changes this verdict.'—Sanakoev *TA p. 17*.

16 …   f6!

17 exf6

Of the other tries, the only one that is not hopeless is 17 ♛xc3 ♞xd4 18 ♛xd4 ♛xc2 19 ♗d3! (*19 ♖b2? ♛c1+‡‡* **Baturin-Sanakoev, 1st category corr, USSR 1959-60** *TA pp. 17-18 (game 3) (0-1, 24)*) 19 … ♛xg2∞/∓: White is clearly worse but possibly no more so than after 17 exf6.

17 …   e5!?

Here 17 … ♛xf4 is good, indeed more accurate, since Black can start rolling the centre pawns: 18 ♗xc3 d4 19 ♗d2 (*19 ♛b5? ♛e4+! and 20 … ♞e5∓*) 19 … ♛xf6. 'With a massacre in prospect' according to Moles *MLW pp. 7-8*, citing **Sandin-Stoltze, corr 1961**: quite an exaggeration but still a solid ∓.

18 ♗c5

If 18 fxe5 ♖g4! Black has at least some advantage, e.g. 19 ♗xc3 ♞xe5 20 ♗xe5 ♛xe5+ 21 ♗e2∓.

But 18 ♗xc3 is less clear: 18 … d4 19 f7 ♖gf8 20 ♗d2 ♖xf7 21 ♛c4∞/=; hence Black should prefer 17 … ♛xf4.

18 …	exf4
19 f7	♘e5
20 ♕a6(2)	

The queen is immune: 20 … bxa6? 21 ♗xa6+, a familiar theme in the Poisoned Pawn main line after ♖b1. Black has a rook *en prise* and White threatens ♕d6, ♗d6, and ♕xa7. Black's next deservedly features in Emms' book *The Most Amazing Chess Moves Ever Played (pp. 161, 173)*.
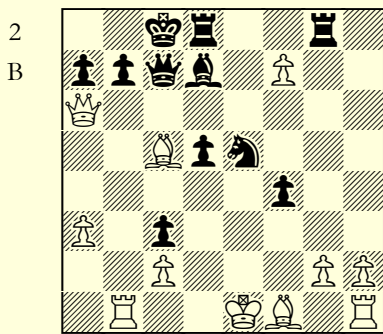
20 …	♖de8!!

Not only entering a fork, but allowing a capture with check. After 21 fxe8=♕+ ♖xe8, Black threatens 22 … ♘d3+ 23 ♔d1 ♖e1 mate as well as a capture on a6, and 22 ♕e2 ♘d3+ or even better 22 … ♕xc5! are devastating.

21 fxg8=♕	♘d3+
22 ♔d1	bxa6

And now White must give up the second queen also.

23 ♕xe8+	♗xe8

Material is roughly level but White's difficulties coordinating his pieces give Black a decisive advantage. The finish was 24 ♗xd3 ♕xc5 25 ♖b3 ♕e3! 26 ♖xc3+ ♔d8 27 ♖f1 ♗h5+ 28 ♖f3 ♗xf3+ 29 gxf3 ♕xf3+ 30 ♔e1 ♕e3+ 31 ♔f1 f3 32 ♖c6 ♕d2 33 ♖f6 ♕g2+ 34 ♔e1 ♕g1+ 0-1.

A. The heyday of 13 ♗e3

Only in the latter half of the 1950's did 13 ♗e3 enjoy the approval of theory. Its début in **Panov-Ragozin, Moscow Ch 1944-45** saw Black gain an excellent game with 13 … ♕a5 (½-½, 43), which deterred further trials for over ten years. Keres recommended it *FZ p. 133* and it appeared in four high-profile games between 1956 and 1959. The results were so unpromising that by 1960 the verdict once again shifted to disapproval, where it has stayed ever since.

Examples (Janev-Quillan to 13 ♗e3):

a) **Fuchs-Uhlmann, E. Germany 1956** 13 … ♘f5 14 ♗f2 0-0-0 15 ♖b1 d4 16 ♘g3 f6! 17 ♘xf5 exf5 18 exf6 ♕xf4 19 ♗g3? (*19 f7 ♖g7∓*) 19 … ♕h6∓∓ Euwe *TdSE-2 p. 80* (0-1, 23? (only in unsourced on-line databases)).

b) **Barden-Sterner, Hastings 1957-58**, 13 … ♘f5 14 ♘d4 ♘fxd4 15 ♗xd4 0-0-0(1) 16 g3 (usually given '?' because of the next game, but see below; *16 0-0-0 ♘xd4 17 ♕xd4 ♕a5=*) 16 … ♔b8?! (same comment) 17 ♗e2 ♘xd4 18 ♕xd4 ♖c8 19 ♔f2± ♖g6 20 ♗d3 ♖h6 21 ♖ab1 ♖f8?! 22 ♖b3±(1-0, 30).

c) **Padevsky-Bertholdt, Bulgaria-E. Germany, Kienbaum 1958**: 13 … ♘f5 14 ♘d4 ♘fxd4 15 ♗xd4 0-0-0(1) 16 g3 ('?') f6 ('!') 17 exf6 e5! 18 fxe5 ♖g4! ∓∓ (0-1, 33). All this has never been disputed but the overlooked capture on c3 again changes matters: 18 ♗xc3! exf4 19 0-0-0∞/=.

d) **Fichtl-Golz, Dresden 1959** (*10 … dxc3 11 f4 ♘bc6 12 ♗e3 ♗d7 13 ♕d3*): 13 … ♘f5 14 ♗d4 0-0-0 15 ♗xc3?! d4 16 ♗d2 f6 (almost always given '!') 17 exf6 e5 '!' (∓ Korchnoi *C18-19 p. 65*) 18 0-0-0 Rge8 (∓∓ Euwe) 19 g4 e4 (∓

Watson *PtF-2 p. 161*) 20 ♕h3 ♘d6 (*20 … d3!* immediately) 21 ♗e1 d3!∓∓ and 0-1, 35 (time). This classic win has been annotated many times but White's losing error has never been remarked on, except by Watson ('?!' *MtCO p. 308*). Instead of 20 ♕h3??, White stands no worse after 20 ♕b3!, ∞/±. White's plan is so slow that Black has no need to force complications: simply 16 … ♘ce7∓ is preferable.

B: 16 ♗xc3!?—problem and solution

In a multitude of ways the bishop is awkwardly placed on d4, giving Black a tempo after … ♕xf4 or … ♖g4 or … e5, and for good measure in the last of these getting in the way of ♕xd5. With 16 (or 17 or 18) ♗xc3!? White neatly sidesteps all these issues and robs … f6 of much of its force.

So how should Black respond? One way is 13 … 0-0-0 14 ♘d4 ♘xd4 **15 ♗xd4 ♘f5!** (or *13 … ♘f5 14 ♘d4 ♘cxd4! 15 ♗xd4 0-0-0*). After 16 ♗xc3? Black gained an advantage with 16 … d4?∓ in **Anuţa-Miroiu, Romanian Ch, Sărata Monteoru 2011** (0-1, 41), but there is an immediate refutation via 16 … ♗b5!∓∓, e.g. 17 ♕d2 ♗xf1 18 ♔xf1 d4 19 ♗a5 ♕c6 20 ♗xd8 ♖xg2!. And with the move order 13 … ♘f5 14 ♘d4, Black has the additional option 14 … ♘xe3 ('!' Moles *MLW p. 30*).

If Black nevertheless ends up in Janev-Quillan after 16 ♗xc3!?, what then? It's best to admit error via 16 … ♘e7!?, heading to f5 with … ♗a4 and play down the c-file to follow, when Black has adequate compensation for the pawn deficit. ▶

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1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8
9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dxc3 13 ♗e3 ♘f5 14 ♘d4

14 …	15		16		17		18		
♘fxd4	♗xd4	0-0-0**(1)**	♖b1?!	f6	exf6	♕xf4	♗xc3	d4	∓
…	…	…	g3	f6	exf6	e5	fxe5?	♖g4!	∓∓
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	♗xc3!	d4	∞/=
…	…	…	0-0-0	♘xd4	♕xd4	♕a5	♕b4		=
…	…	…	♗xc3!?	f6?	exf6	♕xf4	g3	♕g5!	±
…	…	…	…	♘e7					∞
♘cxd4!	♗xd4	♘f5	♗xc3?	♗b5!					∓∓

MA   EMMS, John, *The Most Amazing Chess Moves of All Time.* London: Gambit 2000. ISBN-10: 1-901983-29-3.

TdSE-2   EUWE, Max, *Theorie der Schach-Eröffnungen, Teil VIII: Französisch/Caro-Kann,* 2nd edition, 1960. Berlin-Frohnau: Siegfried Engelhardt Verlag 1972 (reprint).

FZ   KERES, Paul, *Frantsuzkaya Zaschita (ФРАНЦУЗКАЯ ЗАЩИТА).* Moscow: Fizkul'tura i Sport 1958.

C18-19   KORCHNOI, Victor, *C18-19 French Defence* (Chess Informant 1993)—*see issue 3.*

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3.*

TA   SANAKOEV, Grigory, *World Champion at the Third Attempt.* (Tr.: John Sugden.) London: Gambit 1999. ISBN-10: 1-901983-11-0.

PtF-2   WATSON, John L., *Play the French,* 2nd edition (Cadogan 1996)—*see issue 3.*

MtCO   —, *Mastering the Chess Openings.* London: Gambit 2006. ISBN-13: 978-1-904600-60-2.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

The Ghost of Theory Past

The 13 ♗e3 variation in the main line poisoned pawn, considered in the last issue, well illustrates a rarely-discussed feature of opening theory development. That there is a constant, intensive hunt for new ideas is a given, of course, but where can these be found? It is often the case that they're in the archives: old lines and discarded continuations frequently contain critical resources and important ideas, perhaps awaiting only small adjustments. Even when the verdict of theory on these side-lines is correct (which is far from always the case) it can and does happen that the same idea is good—even essential—in another context.

The classic plan to meet 13 ♗e3 involves … ♘f5, … 0-0-0, and … d4 in some order, followed by … f6. But when first introduced it was thought that Black's best response was 13 … ♕a5. This seems strange to modern eyes and it is indeed not best (though not for the reasons usually given). With some modest preparation, though, the same idea is indispensable.

❊   ❊   ❊

Poisoned Pawn: Ragozin's … ♕a5 versus 13 ♗e3

In the main line poisoned pawn (*1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dxc3*), 13 ♗e3**(1)** is not only considerably better than its reputation and results, but it also allows White to bypass some recently-popular Black options. After 10 … dxc3 11 f4 ♘bc6 12 ♕d3 both 12 … d4!? and 12 … ♘f5 have scored well, but 12 ♗e3!? essentially forces play back into familiar channels. Black is still fine, though care is required.

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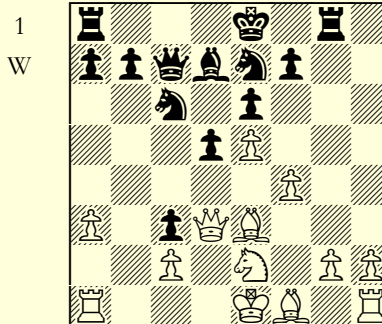
A. 13 … ♛a5?!

The 13 ♗e3 line has a curious pre-history (see issue 4): its début game **Panov-Ragozin, Moscow Ch 1944-45** continued with the 'clever but dubious' (Moles *MLW p. 29*) 13 … ♛a5, threatening … ♞b4. After 14 ♗f2?! ♞b4 15 ♛d1 ♞a6 16 ♞g3 ♞c5 (∓ Schwarz *dFV p. 12*, Moles) Black had a comfortable equality.

And there the matter rested for over ten years. Until the next 13 ♗e3 games, in the late 1950's, sources dismissed it with 13 … ♛a5∓ (Kloss *Fernschach 15/11, Nov. 1954, pp. 201-208*) or simply 13 … ♛a5 with no further comment (Schwarz *dFV-51 p. 130*).

Opinion finally shifted, though with the skimpiest of analysis. Keres *FZ p. 133* wrote 'but 13 ♗e3 is still a good continuation … instead of the unnecessary loss of time with 14 ♗f2, White could improve with 14 ♞d4 or the immediate 14 g3'. After White's disastrous results with 13 ♗e3 ♞f5, the variation was already long out of favour by the time Schwarz *dFV p. 12* fleshed out the analysis in 1967.

a) *(13 … ♛a5)* **14 ♞d4** ('!') ♞xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♜c8 16 ♛f3 ♗b5 17 g3 ♗xf1 18 ♚xf1 ♜c4 19 ♗f2 ♛a4 20 ♛d3 ♞c6 21 ♜b1 b6 22 ♜b3 ♞a5 23 ♜xc3± Schwarz (and Moles). This does not hold up as 16 … ♛a4∓∓ wins, 22 … ♚d7 is still ∓, and even the end position is no worse for Black. Better 16 g3 or 16 ♜b1, each well met by 16 … ♞f5∓.

b) 14 g3 was never analysed further ('is worth considering', Schwarz; 'is also good', Moles) and has never been played. After 14 … ♞b4 15 ♛d1 ♞c6 White may have nothing much better

than taking the repetition.

So is 13 … ♛a5 good after all? No, for there is one elementary drawback, though it appears in no games or commentary:

c) 14 ♛xc3! ♛xc3 15 ♞xc3 d4 (did analysts stop here?) 16 ♞e4 dxe3 17 ♞f6+ and White emerges with a solid edge, e.g. 17 … ♚d8 18 0-0-0 ♞b8 19 ♞xg8 ♞xg8 20 ♗c4.
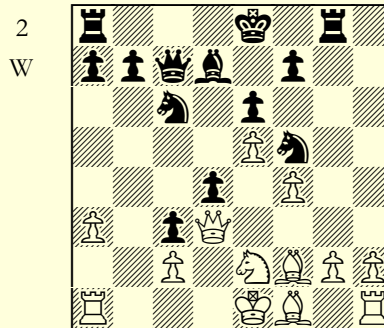
So 13 … ♛a5?! is indeed dubious. But matters might be different if Black first plays … d4, not only to prevent ♛xc3 as above, but to add extra punch to … ♞b4 via a subsequent … d3. In this modified form the idea works well, as will be seen below.

B. 13 … ♞f5

And now:

    14 ♗f2   **d4(2)**

This sequence is not forced: in particular some prefer 13/14 … 0-0-0. But 14 ♗f2, 'the best chance', Moles *MLW p. 29*, '!' Watson *PtF-2 p. 161*, is now usual. (For 14 ♞ or ♗d4, see issue 4.)

But what now? White's main continuations have been 15 ♞g3, 15 h3, and 15 ♜g1.

B1. (*13 … ♘f5 14 ♗f2 d4*) **15 ♘g3**

This featured in yet another classic Black victory in the 13 ♗e3 line:

Cobo-Ivkov
5th Capablanca Mem., Havana 1963

　　　15　…　　　　　　0-0-0
　　　16 ♘xf5

Roundly criticised at the time, this is best. Pachman *Schach-Echo 21/18, 23 Sep. 1963, p. 285* gave 16 ♘e4, planning g3 and ♗h3, as giving White some advantage, and this recommendation could be seen even decades later, e.g. Korchnoi *C18-19 p. 65*. But it was refuted by Zeuthen & Jarlnæs *FPP p. 81*: 16 … ♘xe5! and White is lost. The only known example, **Elich-Spieringshoek, Netherlands H197 corr 1983**, finished 17 fxe5 ♕xe5 18 ♗e2 ♗c6 19 ♘g3 ♘e3! 0-1 (*20 ♖g1 ♘xc2+!*).

　　　16　…　　　　　　exf5
　　　17 ♗h4?

This should lose: 17 g3 was essential. Then Zeuthen & Jarlnæs' startling 17 … ♘xe5!? is playable, e.g. 18 fxe5 ♕xe5+ 19 ♗e2 ♗c6, with … ♗e4 to follow: ∞/=. Schwarz *dFV p. 24* gives instead the natural 17 … f6 '!', also approximately equal after 18 exf6 ♖ge8+ 19 ♗e2 ♖xe2+!? 20 ♔xe2 ♗e6!.

　　　17　…　　　　　　♖de8
　　　18 ♔f2　　　　　　♖g4?

An error—never pointed out—that could have let White off the hook. Better the immediate 18 … ♖xe5!!∓∓.

　　　19 g3?

White lets the reprieve slip. After 19 ♗g3! he survives: it's not even clear Black has any advantage. Euwe *Archives 15/12 (1440), 28 Oct. 1963* gave 19 … ♘xe5! 20 fxe5 f4 or 20 ♕xd4 ♘c6 'with a strong attack in each case', both

∓ per Moles *MLW p. 30*, but in the latter line it's not clear how Black follows up after 21 ♕c5±; better 20 … ♘g6=.

　　　19　…　　　　　　♖xe5!!

The spectacular finish was 20 fxe5 ♘xe5 21 ♕d1 ♖xh4! 22 gxh4 ♘g4+ 23 ♔e1 ♕c4 24 ♕e2 ♗b5! 25 ♕g2 ♕e3+ 0-1.

B2. (*13 … ♘f5 14 ♗f2 d4*) **15 h3**

Even if 15 ♘g3 is enough for equality, it is hardly a try for an advantage. A much more enterprising approach is 15 h3, planning to push the knight back via 16 g4: then ♗e3-f2 will have had the effect of inducing the committal … ♘f5 and … d4. This was strongly recommended ('!') by Leisebein *Archives 36/10-11/48-1, Oct.-Nov. 1987* with many examples, and an attribution to Flügge.

Indeed this works well if Black does not react energetically:
a) **15 … 0-0-0?** 16 g4 ♘fe7　17 ♗g2 ♗e8± **Bakre-Neelotpal, Indian Ch, Nagpur 1999** (though 0-1, 67).

Several examples show that 16 … ♘e3? 17 ♗xe3 dxe3 18 ♕xe3±/±± is no improvement, and that the sacrifice 16 … f6? is inadequate (*17 exf6!±±*).
b) **15 … ♖h8?** 16 g4 ♘h4 17 ♗xh4 ♖xh4 18 ♘xd4±/±±.

So is there any answer? Yes, for now everything is in place for Ragozin's idea:
c) **15 … ♕a5!** (not considered by Leisebein). Now the best-known example is **Esser-Arounopoulos, German team Ch prel corr 1991-92** *Correspondence Chess Yearbook 6/187 (Arounopoulos)*: 16 ♖b1 (forced: *16 g4? ♘b4 17 ♕d1 d3∓∓; 16 ♘xd4? ♘xcd4 17 ♗xd4 ♖g3∓∓*) 16 … ♕xa3 17 ♕c4? b5!∓∓ (or *17 … a5!∓∓*) 18 ♕b3 ♕xb3 19 ♖xb3 b4 20 g4 a5!!

(0-1, 35). Cf. Watson *PtF-2 p. 161.*

This is impressive but misleading: again a single error turned an equal game into a rout. White should continue the plan of dislodging the knight: 17 g4 ♘fe7 (or *17 … ♘b4!?*: cf. B3 below) 18 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 19 ♗xd4 ♗c6=, e.g. **Lorentzen-Oren, EM/CL/Q13-1 ICCF email 2002** (1-0, 54).

d) **15 … ♕b6!?** should transpose, i.e. 16 g4 ♕b2 17 ♖d1 ♕xa3! and now 18 ♖b1 is forced (*18 gxf5?? ♘b4++*).

B3. (*13 … ♘f5 14 ♗f2 d4*) **15 ♖g1!?**

With the same idea as in B2, and again Black must react vigorously:

a) **15 … 0-0-0?!** 16 g4 ♘e3? (*16 …♘fe7 17 ♕c4 and 18 ♘xd4±*) 17 ♗xe3 dxe3 18 ♕xe3±± (*18 ♕xc3? ♘e7 19 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 20 ♖g3± **Rensch-Shavardorj, Berkeley Masters 2008** (½-½, 46)*).

b) **15 … ♕b6?!** is now less effective: 16 g4 ♕b2(!) (*17 … ♘e3? 18 ♗xe3 dxe3 19 ♕xe3±*) 17 ♖d1 ♕xa3 18 gxf5 ♖xg1 19 ♗xg1 opens a bolthole for the king (∞/±).

So here Ragozin's idea is essential:

c) **15 … ♕a5!** 16 g4? ('I can't find a satisfactory continuation for White', Minev *NFI-2 p. 304*) 16 … ♘b4++ 17 ♕d1? d3 0-1 **Pyhälä-Raaste, Järvenpää 1985**.

Minev's remark is mysterious as again White may chose to jettison the a-pawn: 16 ♖b1! ♕xa3 17 g4. Now 17 … ♘fe7 18 ♗xd4! gives White an edge, e.g. 18 … ♘b4 19 ♕xc3 ♕xc3 20 ♗xc3 ♘xc2+ 21 ♔f2±. **Kindbeiter-Höbel, EM/MN/074, ICCF email 2004,** continued 18 … ♘d5 19 ♗xc3 a5 20 ♖g3± and Black struggled to a draw.

It seems Black can only hold the balance via 17 … ♘b4!?, e.g. 18 ♖xb4 ♕xb4 19 gxf5 ♖xg1 20 ♗xg1 ♗b5! 21 ♕xd4 ♕b1+ 22 ♕d1 ♕xd1+ 23 ♔xd1 a5, still murky but about equal. ▶

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8
9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dxc3 13 ♗e3(1) ♘f5 14 ♗f2 d4(2)**

15	16	17	18	19	
♘g3 0-0-0	♘e4? ♘xe5!				++
… …	♘xf5 exf5	g3 f6	exf6 ♖ge8+	♗e2	=
h3 0-0-0?	g4 ♘fe7	♗g2			±
… ♕b6!?	g4 ♕b2	♖d1 ♕xa3!	♖b1		=
… ♕a5!	♖b1 ♕xa3	g4 ♘fe7	♘xd4 ♘xd4	♗xd4	=
♖g1!? ♕a5!	♖b1 ♕xa3	g4 ♘fe7	♗xd4!		∞/±
… …	… …	… ♘b4!?	♖xb4 ♕xb4	gxf5	∞/=

FZ   KERES, Paul, *Frantsuzkaya Zaschita* (Moscow 1958)—*see issue 4.*

C18-19   KORCHNOI, Victor, *C18-19 French Defence* (Chess Informant 1993)—*see issue 3.*

NFI-2   MINEV, Nikolay, *French Defense 2: New and Forgotten Ideas.* Davenport, Ia.: Thinkers' Press 1998. ISBN-10: 0-938650-92-0.

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3.*

dFV-51   SCHWARZ, Rolf, *Die Französische Verteidigung.* Berlin: Sportverlag GmbH 1951.

dFV   —, *Die Französische Verteidigung.* Hamburg: Das Schach-Archiv Fr. L. Rattmann 1967.

PtF-2   WATSON, John L., *Play the French,* 2nd edition (Cadogan 1996)—*see issue 3.*

FPP   ZEUTHEN, Steffen, & JARLNÆS, Erik, *French Poisoned Pawn: A Study of the Sally Qd1-g4:g7.* Copenhagen: ZeuSS Transactions 1971. No ISBN.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

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From *My Six Memorable Games*

Of the abundance of approaches available to White in the main line poisoned pawn, one whose theoretical reputation has improved greatly in recent years is that of an early h3 and g4. This idea was introduced by the late Robert Byrne, but it faded quickly as a result of the classic game Byrne-Uhlmann, Monte Carlo 1968, in which Uhlmann ventured a daring knight sacrifice, plunging the game into immense complications and achieving excellent play. For years the sacrifice was the standard—even the only—approved recipe for Black. But further practice and analysis has shown conclusively that it is unsound: in fact all the essential elements were known a few months after the game.

This issue considers the theory on Uhlmann's sacrifice, via a game that appears in no database: as it happens, one of my own games.

✻ ✻ ✻

Poisoned Pawn: Robert Byrne's 12 h3

Watkins-Coffey
World Cadet (U17) Ch (1)
Le Havre 1980
Sunday Press, 24 August 1980 p. 24 (Harding)

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 ♗d7

    12 h3

Byrne's idea. Of course 12 ♕d3 dxc3 13 h3 comes to the same thing.

12	**…**	**dxc3**
13	**♖b1**	**0-0-0**
14	**♕d3**	**d4**

1
B
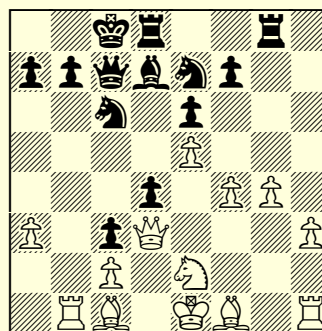
    15 g4(1)

White cuts out … ♘f5, … ♕b6, and

pressure down the g-file, and threatens to leave Black with no counterplay.

　　15　…　　　　　　♘xe5

It's easiest to give the theory as I knew it during this game first, and to re-evaluate it later.

　　16　fxe5　　　　　♗c6
　　17　♖g1　　　　　♘g6
　　18　♗f4

The critical alternative is 18 ♕g3. Uhlmann intended 18 … d3 but later gave analysis showing it leads to advantage for White. I had intended 18 … ♗e4, attributed by Moles to Larsen (from where?) *MLW pp. 33-34* and given there as 'very unclear'.

　　18　…　　　　　　♘xf4
　　19　♘xf4　　　　　♕xe5+
　　20　♘e2　　　　　♖d5
　　21　♗g2　　　　　♗b5
　　22　♕e4　　　　　d3**(2)**

2
W
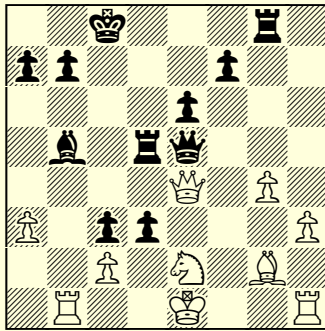
　　23　♖xb5!?

We have followed Byrne-Uhlmann to here but finally diverge. Byrne played 23 ♕xe5, and after 23 … ♖xe5 24 ♖xb5 theory considered that 24 … ♖xe2+ (instead of the game's *24 … ♖xb5*) secured an advantage.

I had remembered the theory in Moles to here, but was now on my own.

　　23　…　　　　　　♖xb5
　　24　♕xe5　　　　♖xe5
　　25　cxd3　　　　　♖d8!
　　26　♗e4?

Natural, but in light of what follows this is an error. Better 26 ♔f2 ♖xd3 27 ♖c1 ♖a5∞/=.

　　26　…　　　　　　f5?

The right idea, but the wrong move order, allowing White an extra resource: better 26 … c2 first.

　　27　gxf5　　　　　c2
　　28　fxe6?(3)

3
B
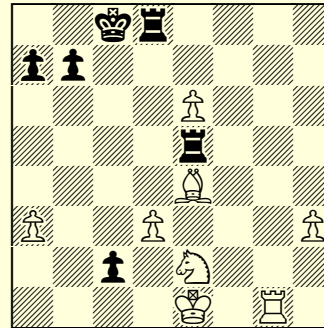
　　28　…　　　　　　♖xd3!

And White's position collapses. The finish was 29 ♖g8+ ♔c7　30 ♖g7+ ♔d8　31 e7+ ♔d7　32 ♖g4 ♖d1+　33 ♔f2 ♖d2 0-1.

White had to play 28 f6!. I had thought my planned 28 … ♖xd3 29 f7 ♖f3 was winning, but this is hallucinatory: White has 30 ♗xc2, ∞/±, though Black has no better. This is why the game's move order is inaccurate: better 26 … c2! 27 ♔f2 f5 28 ♗f3 ♖xd3∞/∓.

All quite pleasant, but there's a curious epilogue. Some thirty years after the game I read Gligorić & Uhlmann's annotation of Byrne-Uhlmann *RHM pp. 70-72 (game 19)*: 'after 23 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 24

♕xe5 ♖xe5 25 cxd3 comes 25 … ♖d8 26 ♗e4 c2! threatening both … ♖xd3 and … f5 with excellent play' … *nihil novi sub sole**.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

The passage of time has greatly changed theory's opinion on this line. From **(1)**, **15 … ♘xe5?** (sadly the sacrifice now seems unsound; for a discussion of the alternatives *15 … ♗e8*, *15 … ♔b8*, and *15 … a6* see Watson's survey *ChessPublishing.com, February 2010*, and *15 … ♘g6*, *15 … ♘d5*, and *15 … ♘a5* have been played) **16 fxe5 ♗c6 17 ♖g1 ♘g6** and now White has a critical choice.

A: 18 ♗f4?

After Byrne-Uhlmann, the game above appears to be the sole practical example of this move.

| 18 … | ♘xf4 |
| 19 ♘xf4 | ♕xe5+?! |

Watson points to the computer move 18 … ♖g5! as giving Black a strong attack and a large advantage. After 19 ♔f2 ♖xe5 (*19 … ♕xe5 20 ♕g3±*) 20 ♖g3, though, Black's edge appears minimal.

| 20 ♘e2 | ♖d5? |

Uhlmann *Schach 22/6, June 1968, p. 175* gave (as 'also good') 20 … ♗e4 21 ♕c4+ ♔b8 (with 'dynamic equality', Watson) 22 ♗g2 ♗xg2 23 ♖xg2 ♕e4 24 ♖f2 f5 ('about equal? *25 ♕d3!?*' Moles). Here 22 ♖d1± improves but this is still a better prospect than the text.

| 21 ♗g2? | |

Watson suggests 21 ♖b4 or 21 a4! ♗xa4 22 ♕c4+ ♗c6 23 ♗g2.

Each of these draws the sting from the threatened … ♗b5 (*21 ♖b4 ♗b5? 22 ♕g3!±±*, illustrating why the bishop is

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better left on f1) and leave Black with no counterplay; ± in each case.

| 21 … | ♗b5 |
| 22 ♕e4 | |

Both players gave 22 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 23 ♕xd4 ♖b1+ 24 ♔f2 ♕xd4+ 25 ♘xd4 ♖xg1 26 ♔xg1 ♖d8 (= Uhlmann; 'gives Black all the winning chances' Byrne *Chess Life 23/8, August 1968, pp. 291-3*). Uhlmann seems right.

| 22 … | d3**(2)** |
| 23 ♕xe5 | |

Byrne thought 23 ♖xb5 bad, giving 23 … d2+ 24 ♔f2 ♖xb5 25 ♕xe5 ♖xe5 26 ♘xc3 ♖c5 27 ♘e4 ♖xc2; but this is also about equal. Uhlmann's intended 23 … ♖xb5 24 ♕xd3 ♖d8?! 25 ♕xc3+ ♕xc3 26 ♘xc3 ♖c5 is ±; better 24 … ♖b2=.

| 23 … | ♖xe5 |
| 24 ♖xb5 | ♖xe2+ |

Uhlmann's suggested improvement, but is it really better? He analysed 25 ♔d1 ♖d2+ 26 ♔c1 ♖xc2+ 27 ♔b1 ♖d8 28 ♗xb7+ ♔c7 29 ♗e4? ♖e2 30 ♗xd3∓ (cf. also Moles), but here 29 ♖b3 and 29 ♖f1 are about equal, as is Byrne's 28 ♖b3. The game continued 24 … ♖xb5 25 ♘xc3 dxc2 26 ♔d2=; Uhlmann, short of time after spending ninety minutes on the sacrifice, made further errors and lost (1-0, 45).

So 18 ♗f4 gives equality at best.

B: 18 ♕g3!**(4)**

Uhlmann's recommendation in *Schach*: now a capture on e5 will either walk into a pin or allow an exchange of queens.

B1: *(18 ♕g3!)* **18 … d3**

Uhlmann now gave 19 cxd3 c2 20 ♖b4 ♘xe5 21 ♗f4 ♖xd3 22 ♗xe5 ♖xg3

4
B

23 Bxc7 Rxg1 24 Bf4! as 'probably' advantageous for White; this is tolerable for Black after 24 … Rh1 25 Rc4 Rh8 26 Kf2 Rxf1+ 27 Kxf1 Rxh3± **Leisebein-Berndt, E. German corr (K15 jr) 1987** (0-1, 34).

But White has better: the simple 20 Rb3±± covers d3 and eliminates Black's counterplay, e.g. **Maliangkay-Hyldkrog, Korning Mem corr 1998** (1-0, 38).

B2: *(18 Qg3!)* **18 … Be4**

With the plan of 19 Bg2 Bxc2 with complications. After 20 Rxb7, as in **Boll-Hyldkrog, 14th World corr Ch ½-final -5 1982**, White is winning though it's indeed complicated (1-0, 42).

Much clearer is 19 Rb4! ('a significant improvement' McDonald *ChessPublishing.com, April 2000*; cf. *FW p. 32*), undermining the Black centre, ±±.

As so often this was already known long ago: **Demarre-Vacca, French Ch, Lyon-Charbonnières 1968** *Europe Échecs 11/121 (5 Feb. 1969) p. 15 (Vacca)* continued 19 … d3 20 Rxe4 d2+ 21 Kd1 Rd5 22 Nxc3 dxc1=Q+ 23 Kxc1±±, though White later went astray: 23 … Rc5 24 Ne3 Kb8 25 Kb2 Rc8 26 Bg2?! Nxe5 27 Rxe5? (*27 Rb1!* or *27 Kb3!*, each ±±) 27 … Rxc3 28 Qe1 Qb6+ 29 Ka1 Rxa3 mate.

B3: *(18 Qg3!)* **18 … Rd7, 18 … Rd5, 18 … Nxe5, 18 … Qxe5**

Byrne's **18 … Rd5** ('!') and Vacca's **18 … Rd7** are each well met by 19 Bg2±. Watson recommends **18 … Nxe5**, giving 19 Bf4 f6 20 Rb4 Qa5 21 Bg2 Bxg2 22 Bxe5 fxe5 23 Qxg2 Rd5. This is already ±/±± after 23 Qf3 followed by Kf2-g2. Finally, 18 … Qxe5 has had some practical success but simply 19 Qxe5 is again ±.

Conclusion: 15 … Nxe5? is indeed virtually refuted by 18 Qg3! ▶

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1 e4 e6 **2** d4 d5 **3** Nc3 Bb4 **4** e5 c5 **5** a3 Bxc3+ **6** bxc3 Ne7 **7** Qg4 Qc7 **8** Qxg7 Rg8 **9** Qxh7 cxd4 **10** Ne2 Nbc6 **11** f4 Bd7 **12** h3 dxc3 **13** g4 0-0-0 **14** Qd3 d4 **15** Rb1(1)

15 …	16		17		18		19		
Nxe5?	fxe5	Bc6	Rg1	Ng6	Bf4?	Nxf4	Nxf4	Qxe5+	±
…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	Rg5	=
…	…	…	…	…	Qg3!(4)	d3	cxd3	c2	±±
…	…	…	…	…	…	Be4	Rb3!	…	±±
…	…	…	…	…	…	Nxe5	Bf4	f6	±/±±

RHM   GLIGORIĆ, Svetozar, & UHLMANN, Wolfgang, *The French Defence* (RHM 1975)—*see issue 1.*

FW   MCDONALD, Neil, *French Winawer* (Everyman 2000)—*see issue 2.*

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3.*

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

Lothar Schmid 1928-2013

Lother Schmid, Chess Referee, ran the headline of his obituary in the New York Times, and indeed he enjoys a place of honour in chess history for his rôle as arbiter of three of the most interesting and highly charged world championship matches ever: Fischer-Spassky, Karpov-Korchnoi 1978, and Karpov-Kasparov 1986. He also had the distinction of assembling one of the world's great collections of chess books and periodicals, extending to over 50,000 items. And all this is before considering his strength as a player: one of the élite few to achieve the title of grandmaster in both over-the-board and correspondence play.

He played the French Winawer with both colours, and his games were innovative and well ahead of their time. This issue considers his three Winawer games of greatest historical interest.

❋   ❋   ❋

Schmid-L. Pedersen
Max Blümich Memorial corr 1948-50
dFV pp. 23-24 (Schwarz, citing Schmid)

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 cxd4 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 ♕c7 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♕d3 dxc3

13 ♘xc3

The only try from early theory that continues to enjoy a good reputation. **Lilienthal-Levenfish, Moscow 1936** continued 13 … a6 14 ♖b1 ♖c8 15 ♗d2 ♘a5 and White won, though no other examples are known before the present game.

13	…	a6
14	♗d2	♘f5
15	g4!?	♖xg4
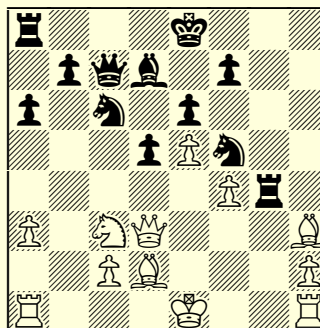
16 ♗h3(1)   ♘xe5!

This always-spectacular sacrifice has progressed to 'thematic' status based on its appearance in an abundance of exam-

ples. But in 1948 it was startlingly new: this seems to be the first example of … ♘xe5 in this form (the ♘c3 not being *en prise*) in a poisoned pawn Winawer.

| | 17 | fxe5 | ♛xe5+ |
| | 18 | ♔f2! | |

Schwarz *dFV pp. 21-22 (game 10)* now quotes extensively from Schmid (original source unknown). 18 ♔f1?♗b5 and 18 ♛e2? ♖e4 lose quickly. After 18 ♔d1? ♖d4 19 ♛f3 ♘e3+ 20 ♔c1, Schmid's 20 … ♘c4 leads to no more than equality, but computers unearth the devastating 20 … ♖xd2!!++: 21 ♔xd2 ♘c4+ 22 ♔d1 ♖c8 with a winning attack. **Frackowiak-Herrmann, Oberliga Nord N '01-'02 2002** continued 19 ♛e2 ♖e4 (*19 … ♘e3+ 20 ♔c1 ♖xd2!!++*) 20 ♛f2 ♖c8? (*20 … ♘e3+ is still winning*) 21 ♗xf5± and 1-0, 26.

	18	…	♖d4
	19	♛e2	♛f6
	20	♗xf5	♛xf5+
	21	♔e1	♖c8!

'With advantage to Black', Keres *FZ p. 133*. More accurate than 21 … ♛xc2? 22 ♖g1 (*22 ♛e3!?∞*) 22 … ♛h7 23 ♛f2 ♛h8± **Bánóczi-Bathory, E/359 National ½-final corr 1998** (1-0, 31).

| | 22 | ♖f1? | |

'!' Schmid, but this has a tactical flaw. White must instead try 22 ♛e3!, e.g. 22 … ♖cc4 23 ♖f1 ♛g6 24 ♛f3∞/∓.

| | 22 | … | ♛h7? |

Schmid thought 22 … ♛xc2 gave Black a bad ending, analysing 23 ♛f2 ♖xd2 24 ♛xf7+ ♔d8 25 ♛f6+ ♔c7 26 ♛f4+ ♔b6 27 ♖b1+ ♔a7 28 ♛xd2 ♛xc3 29 ♖f7 '!' or 28 … ♖xc3 29 ♛xc2 ♖xc2 30 ♖h1 'when the h-pawn's march can hardly be prevented'. But this underestimates Black's centre:

30 … d4∓, e.g. 31 h4?! d3 32 ♖d1? ♗a4++ or 31 ♖d1 e5∓; better 30 ♖f2=. On 28 … ♛xc3!, Schmid's 29 ♖f7 '!' favours Black after 29 … ♛e5+! ∞/∓; better 29 ♛xc3 ♖xc3∓. White should avoid this with 23 ♖c1, about =.

But Black has a clear path to advantage via the overlooked 22 … ♖xd2!, e.g. 23 ♔xd2 ♛g5+ 24 ♛e3 (*24 ♔d3?? d4++*) 24 … ♛xe3+ 25 ♔xe3 ♖xc3+ 26 ♔d2 ♖h3∓.

| | 23 | ♛e5 | ♖cc4 |

'?' Schmid: 'he pushes the attack too far and will soon regret he was not satisfied with 23 … ♛h4+! 24 ♛g3! ♛xg3+ with roughly equal chances.' This exaggerates: see below.

| | 24 | ♗e3 | ♛h4+ |
| | 25 | ♖f2 | ♖e4? |

The losing error. Schmid gives the right way: 25 … f6! 26 ♛xf6 ♛xf6 27 ♖xf6 ♖h4, though as 'the last resort', with 'much poorer chances' than after 23 … ♛h4+. Instead it's a modest ±, as is the 23 … ♛h4+ option.

After the text White wins by force. The finish was 26 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 27 ♛b8+ ♔e7 28 ♔d2 ♖xe3 29 ♖xf7+! 1-0.

<p style="text-align:center">✳   ✳   ✳</p>

Paoli-Schmid
Venice 1953 (3)
V53 pp. 29-30 (game 16) (Paoli)

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♛g4 cxd4 8 ♛xg7 ♖g8 9 ♛xh7 ♛c7

| | 10 | ♔d1 | |

Euwe's suggestion, then new: this is only the third game known. Euwe's articles *Archives, 1 July* and *15 July 1952* don't specify the source of the idea but it must surely have been inspired by **Alexander-**

Botvinnik, Great Britain-USSR radio match 1946, where White achieved a tremendous position with f4 and ♘f3-g5 (and indeed ♔d1).

10 …	♘d7!?

Schmid's startling innovation, which initially led Euwe to deem 10 ♔d1 'practically refuted' *Archives 7/8, 1954* (via Niessen *Chess Notes 6850*). The point is that 11 f4? may now be met by 11 … ♘c5!∓. White is forced into a speculative exchange sacrifice.

11 ♘f3	♘xe5!?
12 ♗f4	♕xc3
13 ♘xe5	♕xa1+
14 ♗c1(2)	

2
B
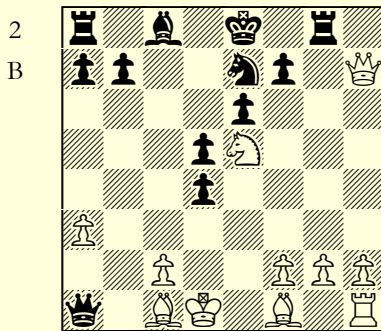
14 …	♖f8!

Much better than the later try 14 … d3?.

15 ♗b5+?!	

Keres *FZ p. 132* later gave 15 ♗d3!. But the text is much better than its reputation.

15 …	♘c6!
16 ♖e1	

'?' Moles *MLW p. 40*, but best. After 16 ♘xc6 the response 16 … ♗d7!, later repeatedly rediscovered, was already given by Paoli *V53 pp. 29-30*. Then Euwe *Archives XVII/3/17, 12f/30, 25 Feb. 1968* gave 17 ♘xa7 ♖xa7 18 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 19 ♕g7 but Black

stands much better, e.g. **Andexel-Bernal Caamaño, ICCF World Cup corr 1992** (0-1, 30) (cf. also Moles). Instead 17 ♘e5!? ♗xb5 18 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 19 ♕g8+ ♔e7 20 ♕xa8 is complicated (cf. Pederson *tMLF p. 155*) but probably in Black's favour after 20 … ♗c6!, ∓/∓.

16 …	♖b8

Schmid gave 16 … a6 17 ♗a4 d3!∓∓ (so cited by Paoli in the tournament book, probably from the *post-mortem*) and ever since this has been taken as refuting White's play. Fuchs' 17 … ♗d7 *Deutsche Schachzeitung 117/2, Feb. 1968, pp. 65-66* is also strong.

But White has much better in 17 ♗xc6+! bxc6 18 ♕h4!. After 18 … ♗d7 19 ♕f6 ♕c3? 20 ♗g5 ♕xa3 21 ♔e2±± Black is move-bound. After 19 … c5 White has a draw with 20 ♘c6/♘g6/♘xf7, but no more.

17 ♕g7	a6
18 ♘xc6	bxc6
19 ♗xc6+	♔e7

And the game quickly petered out into a draw: 20 ♕e5?! (*20 ♕g5+!? f6!∞/ =*) 20 … ♗d7 21 ♕c7 ♖bd8 22 ♗xd7 ½-½.

"« Eine hübsche Partie » ha detto il giovane maestro Tedesco dopo le solite analisi a fine partita. Anche di valore teorico."—''A lovely game' said the young German master during the usual analysis after the game. Also of theoretical value.'

✳ ✳ ✳

Schmid-Díez del Corral
10th Clare Benedict Cup, Lucerne 1963
Archives 15/8 (1407), 31 August 1963 (Euwe), citing Schmid notes from Schach-Echo

(Schmid-L. Pedersen to move 13)

14 ♖b1	♖c8

The former main line, which fell under a shadow as a result of this game. Now 14 … ♘a5 is more common, but the text is still playable (and played).

15	h4!	♘f5
16	♖h3	

Not quite new to Schmid: it was first played *against* him, in **Durão-Schmid, Málaga 1963** (½-½, 20).

| 16 | … | f6? |

The losing move. Better 16 … ♘ce7 or 16 … ♘cd4 (as played by Schmid): cf. **Sarkar-Shulman, Chicago Open 2007**.

17	exf6	♔f7
18	h5	

18 ♕d1 ♘g3 Euwe (from Schmid?), ∓ per Schwarz and Moles, is simply met by 19 ♔f2±±, but the text is just as good.

18	…	♖g4
19	h6	♘cd4
20	h7	♖h8
21	♕d1	

'21 ♖b4 was dangerous because of 21 … e5!', Euwe (Schmid?). But White is winning there also.

21	…	♖h4
22	♖xb7!	♕xb7
23	♖xh4	♘xd4(3)
24	♕xd4?	

This throws away White's advantage. Correct is 24 ♕h5+! ♘g6 25 ♗d3 ♘f5 27 ♗xf5! (but not *27 g4?* **Taetilae-Kuusela, Finnish corr 1975** and **E. Pedersen-H. Larsen, Danish corr Ch 1986**, allowing *27 … ♕b6!=*) 27 … exf5 28 ♕h6 ♔xf6 29 ♗e3±±.

3
W

[chess diagram]

| 24 | … | ♘f5? |

After the essential 24 … ♖xh7! Schmid thought 25 ♕c5 '!' was winning, analysing 25 … ♔xf6, 25 … ♘g6, and 25 … ♗c6. In fact the latter two possibilities seem quite satisfactory for Black, but there is no reason the check on e7 must be prevented: after 25 … ♕c8! 26 ♕e7+ ♔g8 Black stands no worse (*27 ♘xd5? ♖f7!∓∓*).

| 25 | ♕d3 | d4? |

The unremarked 25 … ♗b5! puts up much stiffer resistance. After 26 ♘xb5 ♕xb5 27 ♕h3 ♕c5 White needs to find accurate moves but is probably winning after 28 c4! ♕d4! 29 g4 ♘d6 30 cxd5!, e.g. 30 … ♕e4+ 31 ♕e3 exd5 32 ♗g2 or 31 … ♖xh7 32 dxe6+!.

After the text White wrapped up easily via 26 ♘e4 ♗c6 27 ♘g5+ ♔xf6 28 g4 ♗b5 29 ♕e4 ♕xe4 30 ♘xe4 ♔e7 31 gxf5 ♗xf1 32 ♔xf1 ♖xh7 33 f6+ ♔f8 34 ♔e2 ♖h1 35 ♗b2 1-0.

Thus three games of modern as well as historical interest.   ►

FZ   KERES, Paul, *Frantsuzkaya Zaschita* (Moscow 1958)—*see issue 4*.
MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3*.
V53   PAOLI, Enrico, *Vº Torneo Scacchistico Internazionale di Venezia, 8-23 ottobre 1953*. Reggio Emilia: Tipografia Sociale 1953.
tMLF   PEDERSEN, Steffen, *The Main Line French: 3 Nc3* (Gambit 2001)—*see issue 2*.
dFV   SCHWARZ, Rolf, *Die Französische Verteidigung* (Das Schach-Archiv Fr. L. Rattmann 1967)—*see issue 5*.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

A Bridge Too Far

Repertoire books have so completely taken over the openings field that other approaches have become virtually extinct. In many ways this is excellent for reader and author alike: authors may evade the difficulties of tilling well-trodden ground by choosing a different repertoire, while readers gain a diverse set of viewpoints and much greater depth for each covered line. Certainly we live in a golden era for the Winawer, with a succession of books by Moskalenko, Williams, Vitiugov and Watson in the past three years alone, and another from Berg about to go to the printers.

Great as the gains are, though, something is also lost: many interesting lines fall though the cracks and are rarely covered. One such is a side line that become popular in Argentina after the war, in which Black tries an unusual development plan. It seems a bridge too far—but even in such minor lines theory continues to evolve, and the reasons are not the ones usually given.

❊   ❊   ❊

Canoba-Eliskases
San Nicolás 1957 (8)
dFV pp. 17-18 (Schwarz, citing Eliskases (from Deutsche Schachzeitung 1963?))

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 cxd4 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 ♕c7 10 ♘e2

10	…	dxc3
11	f4	b6?!(1)

Black plans … ♗a6 and … ♘d7. 'Positionally well motivated but too slow' Moles *MLW pp. 35-36*: a good summary.

12	♘d4	♗a6
13	♗e3?!	♗xf1
14	♔xf1	♘d7
15	♘b5?!	

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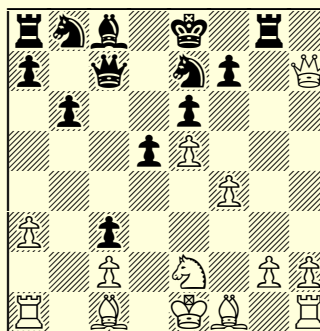
15 g3 (Minev *NFI-2 pp. 302-3*) =.

15	…	♕c4+
16	♕d3	♘f5

17 ♗f2?!

Usually given '?'. Eliskases thought both 17 ♗d4 and 17 ♔f2 led to equality, but 17 ♗d4?! ♛xd3+ 18 cxd3 a6 19 ♘d6+ ♘xd6 20 exd6 ♘c5 21 ♗xc3 ♘xd3 22 g3 ♖c8∓ also leaves White in difficulties. Best is 17 ♔f2 ♛xd3 18 cxd3 ♔e7∓.

17 …   ♛xf4!!?(2)

2
W
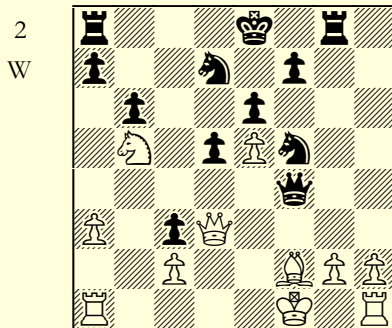
18 ♘c7+?!

Better 18 g3! first. Eliskases planned 18 … ♛xe5, with main line 19 ♖e1 ♛f6 20 ♘c7+ ♔d8 21 ♘xa8 ♘c5! 22 ♛d1! (*22 ♗xc5? ♘xg3+ mates quickly; 22 ♛f3? ♘xg3+∓∓; 22 ♛e2? ♘e4∓∓; 22 ♛b5? ♘d4∓∓*) 22 … ♔c8 followed by … ♔b7, … ♘e4 'with more than enough compensation for the sacrificed material'. After 23 g4!, though, it's about equal, e.g. 23 … ♘d6 24 ♔g2 ♘ce4 25 ♗g3 ♘xg3 26 hxg3 or 23 … ♘h4 24 ♛d4 ♛f3 25 ♖g1 ♛h3+ with a perpetual.

On 20 ♛xd5?! ♖d8 (Eliskases), 21 ♛xf5! allows White to escape to an ending that's only slightly worse.

Instead computers prefer 18 … ♛h6!, e.g. 19 ♘c7+ ♔e7 20 ♘xa8 ♛h3+ 21 ♔e2 ♖xa8 22 ♛xc3 ♔d8!∓ with … ♖c8 to follow, or 20 ♘xd5+ exd5 21

♛xf5 ♛e6   22 ♛xe6+ fxe6∓/∓ with prospects against White's weak pawns.

18 …   ♔e7

19 ♘xa8?

Again better 19 g3; then Black has the extra option 19 … ♘e3+!? 20 ♛xe3 (*20 ♔e2? ♛g4+!; 20 ♔e1? ♛f3; 20 ♔g1? d4*) 20 … ♛c4+ and 21 … ♛xc7∓.

19 …   ♘xe5

20 ♛xc3?

Here 20 g3 (the last chance) leaves Black with some work to do after 20 … ♛xf2+ 21 ♔xf2 ♘xd3+ 22 cxd3 ♖xa8∓/∓∓. The text loses quickly.

20 …   d4!

21 ♛c7+   ♔f6

22 ♖g1   ♖c8!

Usually given '!!'. Direct and spectacular but not strictly necessary: any reasonable move suffices. Indeed Black could pass and still have a winning position.

23 ♛xc8   ♘g4

And mate cannot be avoided. The finish was 24 ♛d8+ ♔g7 25 ♔e2 ♛xf2+ 26 ♔d3 ♘e5+ 0-1.

Canoba or Canobra?: Schwarz, Moles, Minev and van der Tak (see below) all give White as 'Canoba', but ChessBase.com's *Big Database 2012*, with all games from the tournament, gives '(Juvenal) Canobra', also given by McDonald (see below).

The tournament bulletin *SN57 p. 13* specifies 'Carlos Canoba'.

✳ ✳ ✳

Theory had long considered the variation practically refuted based on an early win by Ivkov and analysis by Eliskases, but a flurry of analysis in 2004-6, from McDonald, van der Tak, and Khalifman, gave conflicting recommendations. Which is correct? We turn to further practice for an answer.

The increased interest may have been prompted by a game featuring a line

considered critical since Eliskases' original analysis (1963?).

Shaw-Levitt
4NCL, West Bromwich 2004

(from **(1)**)

  12 ♘g3?!

'!' Moles, Khalifman, and long considered strongest: the knight heads for f6. But this solution is itself slow.

  12 …   **♘d7?**
  13 ♘h5   **♗b7!?**

The stem game **Ivkov-Rossetto, Belgrade 1962**, continued 13 … ♖f8 14 ♗b5! ♕c5 15 ♕d3 a6? 16 ♘f6+ ♔d8 17 ♗xd7! ♗xd7 18 ♗e3±± with a decisive grip (1-0, 34). Allowing White an uncontested stronghold on f6 was fatal: Black could have put up sterner resistance via 15 … ♖h8! and … ♘g8-h6, ±/±.

  14 ♘f6+   **♘xf6**
  15 exf6   **0-0-0**
  16 fxe7   **♕xe7(3)**
  17 a4?!

Schwarz' 17 ♕d3?! *dFV p. 9* is no better than equal after 17 … d4. The text is Moles' recommendation.

  17 …   **d4**
  18 a5   **b5!**

Several consecutive inaccuracies now make White's position critical: 19 a6? (*19 ♖g1±*) 19 … ♗xg2 20 ♗xg2?! (*20 ♖g1∓*) 20 … ♖xg2 21 h4? (*21 ♖b1 ♕c5∓*) 21 … d3! 22 cxd3 ♕c5 23 ♖f1. Now McDonald *ChessPublishing.com, May 2004* and *CHESS 69/5, August 2004, p. 47* suggests 23 … c2 24 ♗d2 ♖g3 (∓?); much better is the immediate 23 … ♖g3!∓∓. The game continued 23 … ♕f5? and ½-½, 28.

  The critical line is 17 ♗e3!, forestalling … d4. After 17 … ♕f6 18 ♖d1! the evaluation has been debated ('with double-

edged play after *18 … e5!?* or *18 … ♔b8!?*' McDonald; 'White refutes the enemy threats' Khalifman). Though there are indeed complications, the verdict must be that White is winning after either 18 … ♔b8 19 ♕d3 (less clear-cut is *19 g3?!*, Zapf *via UltraCorr3*, ±) or 18 … e5 19 ♕h3+! ♔b8 20 fxe5 ♕xe5 21 ♖d4 (again clearer than Zapf's *19 ♕h5?!* e.g. *19 … ♖de8 20 ♗b5 ♖e7±*).
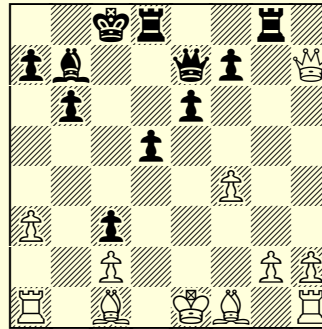
A. (*from* **(1)**) **12 ♘g3?! ♕c5!**

The only chance for survival: White is prevented from castling and faces an awkward problem placing the QB and more generally in developing. Opinions differ on how effective this is: '12 … ♕c5 just might be playable', van der Tak *New in Chess Yearbook 73, 2004, pp. 68-71*; 'Black's defence will be extremely difficult' Khalifman *OWA pp. 169-70*.

After **13 ♘h5 ♖f8 14 ♘f6+ ♔d8** examples include:

a) **Naiditsch-Luther, German Ch, Bad Königshofen 2007: 15 ♗d3 ♘d7 16 ♕h4 ♘xf6 17 ♕xf6 ♔c7 18 a4**, and now instead of the game's 18 … ♘c6? 19 ♗a3 ♘b4 20 ♗xb4 ♕xb4± and 1-0, 70, Black could have improved with 18 … ♗d7!, planning to meet 19 ♗a3 with

19 … ♛e3+ 20 ♔f1 ♞f5 21 ♗xf5 ♛xf4+ with a perpetual, or 19 ♔e2 with 19 … d4 20 ♗a3 ♛c6 21 ♖g1 (*21 ♔f2? ♞d5 22 ♛h4 ♖h8∓∓*) 21 … ♞d5 22 ♗e4 ♛c4+ 23 ♗d3 ♛c6=.

b) **de Silva-Neven, WC.T.2008.00001 corr 2007,** followed the same course until Black varied with **18 … ♞f5!?** and ended quickly after 19 g4 ♞e3 20 ♗a3 ½-½ (*20 … ♞xc2+ 21 ♗xc2 ♛e3+=*). Instead 19 a5 b5 20 ♗xf5 exf5 21 ♗a3 seems to yield no advantage after 21 … b4 22 ♛d6+ ♛xd6 23 exd6+ ♔d7=.

c) **Morais-Prokopp, Foglar Veterans III GM-B corr 2007: 15 g4!?** ♞ec6 16 h4 ♞d7 17 ♞xd7 ♔xd7 and White's difficulty in arranging castling is no longer significant, while Black also has fewer prospects of counterplay down the g- and h-files. Play continued 18 ♛d3 ♗b7 19 ♖h3 d4 20 h5± and 1-0, 35.

d) **Wiwe-Meessen, 25th European Club Cup 2009** varied with (*15 g4 ♞ec6 16 h4*) **16 … ♞d4**, which seems no improvement after 17 ♖h3 ♗a6 18 h5±; the game went 18 ♗e3 ♗xf1 19 ♔xf1 ♛c4+ 20 ♔g2± and after further complications Black even won (0-1, 35).

B. (*from* **(1)**) **12 ♞d4!**

'Not as strong as it looks', Moles, and indeed Black does well after all White tries but one. After **12 … ♗a6 13 ♗xa6** (not considered by Moles) **13 … ♞xa6**,

Black is fine after the older 14 ♞b5? ♛c5 15 ♞d6+ ♔d7 (cf. Minev), but van der Tak cites the major improvement **14 0-0!** planning a quick f5 before Black has time to complete development. **Rychagov-R. Lehtivaara, Helsinki 1991** *Informator 51/(289)* continued 14 … ♞c5 15 a4 a6 16 ♗a3± and 1-0, 31, while **Hellers-Sørensen, Copenhagen Open 1991** went instead 15 ♗e3 a6 16 ♖ae1 0-0-0 17 ♛xf7 ♖df8 18 ♛h5 ♔b7 19 ♖b1± and 1-0, 34.

Subsequent practice has failed to provide Black with an adequate antidote. **Guliyev-P. Lehtivaara, 13th Corsican Open 2009** saw Black attempt to hold the f-pawn with (*15 ♗e3 a6 16 ♖ae1*) 16 … ♖f8?, but to no avail after 17 f5! 0-0-0 (*17 … exf5 18 ♗h6±±; 17 … ♛xe5 18 fxe6 0-0-0 19 ♞b5 ♞e4 20 ♞xa7+ ♔b7 21 ♖xf7±±*) 18 fxe6 fxe6 19 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 20 ♛h6±± (1-0, 36). And **Roos-Prokopp, Foglar Veterans III GM-B corr 2007** reaffirmed that Black has no real compensation if the pawn is given up, diverging from Hellers-Sørensen with **18 … ♞f5**, but without success after 19 ♛e2 b5 20 ♖f3 ♞xd4 21 ♗xd4 ♞e4 22 a4± (1-0, 34).

Conclusion: despite many interesting possibilities, 11 … b6? is unsound. White can claim some advantage even with the older 12 ♞g3?!, but best is 12 ♞d4! ♗a6 13 ♗xa6 ♞xa6 14 0-0!, essentially a refutation. ▶

SN57   —, *Gran Torneo del Acuerdo, 22 de mayo — 1 de junio de 1957*. San Nicolás: Asociación Regional de Ajedrez de San Nicolás 1957.

OWA   KHALIFMAN, Alexander, *Opening for White According to Anand 1. e4, Book VII*. (Tr.: Evgeny Ermenkov.) Sofia: Chess Stars 2006. ISBN-13: 954-8782-46-4.

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3*.

NFI-2   MINEV, Nikolay, *French Defense 2: New and Forgotten Ideas* (Thinkers' Press 1998)—*see issue 5*.

dFV   SCHWARZ, Rolf, *Die Französische Verteidigung* (Das Schach-Archiv Fr. L. Rattmann 1967) —*see issue 5*.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

Winawer Praxis

*T*he New Winawer Report's scope includes the practice of the French Winawer, in addition to the theory and history. There is much to discuss: indeed the opening has never been more popular.

This issue considers two games from the past few months that feature lines considered in earlier issues. The first is of theoretical importance as it breaks new ground in a sacrificial line that has emerged only in the last few years, while the second features a plan for White that, though successful, can hardly be recommended. Both are dramatic and complex struggles— and so are thoroughly representative of the Winawer in practice.

✳   ✳   ✳

Rimkus-Rekhtman
WS/M/428 ICCF corr 2013

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 cxd4 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 ♕c7 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 dxc3 12 ♘g3 ♗d7 13 ♕d3 d4 14 ♘e4 0-0-0 15 ♘d6+ ♔b8**(1)**

The variation considered briefly at the end of issue 3: almost entirely ignored by theory until Goh's analysis *ChessPublishing.com, February 2009*.

16 ♖b1

Clearly better than 16 ♘xf7?! ♖df8 17 ♘d6 ♘f5 18 ♘xf5 ♖xf5 19 ♖b1, when instead of transposing, Black has 19 … ♗e8!∓, with … ♗g6 to follow, as in **Štika-Schyndel, S-Open/5-pr59 ICCF corr 2012** (0-1, 50).

16 …   b6

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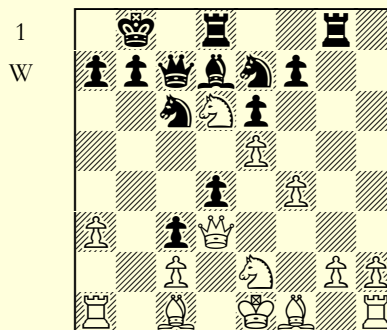
17	**♘xf7**	**♖df8**
18	**♘d6**	**♘f5**
19	**♘xf5**	**♖xf5**
20	**g3?!**	

The ensuing complications lead to difficulties for White. The next few moves follow Goh's analysis.

20	…	♘xe5!
21	fxe5	♗c6!
22	♖g1	♗e4!
23	♕xe4	♖xe5
24	♕e2!	

'With an interesting material imbalance,' Goh, who stops here.

24	…	♖xe2+
25	♗xe2	e5 (2)

2
W
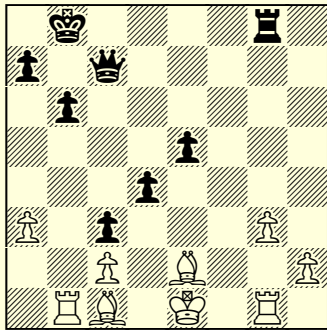
'=,' 'with chances for both sides,' Watson *PtF-4 p. 245.* Cf. also Watson's earlier analysis *ChessPublishing.com, January 2011* of **A. Kovačević-Bukal Jr., 17th Zadar Open A 2010,** which showed that White's 26 ♖g2? could have been refuted by 26 … ♖f8!∓∓, and gave instead 26 ♗d3 or 26 ♖b5!?, with no further analysis.

26 ♖b5!

26 ♗d3? is bad: 26 … ♖f8 (threat … e4) 27 ♖f1 ♖xf1+ 28 ♔xf1 ♕f7+ 29 ♔g2 (*29 ♔g1 ♕a2∓∓; 29 ♔e1 ♕f3∓∓; 29 ♔e2 ♕d5 30 ♔f2 transposes*) 29 … ♕d5+ 30 ♔f2 ♔b7! 31 h4 e4∓∓ or 31 ♖b5 ♕h1∓∓.

26	…	♖e8
27	♖f1!?	

Instead 27 h4 nips in the bud the problems that will emerge later. After 27

… ♕c6 28 ♖f1 ♕e4 29 ♔d1 d3 Black's initiative appears to peter out, e.g. 30 ♗xd3 ♕g4+ 31 ♗e2 ♖d8+ 32 ♔e1 ♕xg3+ 33 ♖f2 ♖d2!? 34 ♗xd2 exd2+ 35 ♔f1=. But the text should also be fine.

27	…	♕h7
28	♔d1	♕xh2
29	♖d5	♕g2

Keeping the rook out of d7 leads to no advantage after 29 … ♔c8 30 ♗a6+ ♔b8 31 ♖d7 or 29 … ♔c7 30 ♖f7+ ♔c6 (*30 … ♖e7!? 31 ♖xe7+ ♔c6 32 ♗f3 ♕f2=*) 31 ♖dd7.

30	♖d7	♖h8
31	g4?	

An initial choice of engines, this condemns White to a passive and probably doomed defence. With 31 ♗h6! followed by ♖ff7 White prevents the black rook from reaching h1, and neither side can avoid a quick draw.

31	…	♖h1
32	♖df7	b5
33	g5	

Instead 33 ♖xh1 ♕xh1+ 34 ♖f1 ♕g2 is similar to the game.

33	…	a6
34	♖f8+	♔c7

White now faces a gruelling defensive task: advancing the g-pawn requires cumbersome preparations, and in the meantime Black is able to advance in the centre and on the Q-side. Certainly engines prefer Black more and more with increasing evaluation time: ∓ at least, and probably there is no defence even with best play. In the game White was unable to find a solution (0-1, 53).

Objectively **(2)** appears indeed to be equal, but there is more pressure on White to play accurately.

Diepeveen-Meessen
Interclubs Nationaux (Belgian Team Ch) '12-'13, Eupen 2013

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♕c7 7 ♕g4 ♘e7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4 10 ♘e2 ♘bc6 11 f4 dxc3 12 ♕d3 d4 13 h3 ♗d7 14 g4 0-0-0 **(3)**

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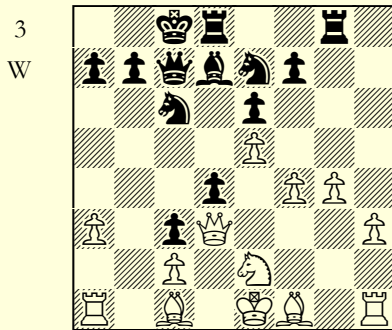
Byrne's idea: see issue 6.

15 ♗g2

Byrne thought 15 ♖b1 'necessary,' to prevent 15 … ♕b6 'when White's entire queenside is tied up' *Chess Life 23/8, August 1968, pp. 291-3*. Uhlmann's 15 … ♘xe5 was thought a strong response (wrongly, as it turns out), prompting other suggestions, e.g. '15 ♘g3 or 15 ♗g2 was preferable', Zeuthen & Jarlnæs *FPP p. 66*.

On 15 ♘g3? Moles *MLW p. 34* suggests 15 … ♘g6, with … ♘gxe5 to follow. But this version of the sacrifice is also unsound, since after 16 ♗e2/g2 ♘gxe5 17 fxe5 ♘xe5 White has the straightforward 18 ♕xd4±.

Moskalenko *tWW p. 222* finds a much better idea: 15 … ♘xe5 '!' 16 fxe5 ♕xe5+! 17 ♗e2 f5! 'with initiative,' indeed a very strong one, ∓ at least. White may be forced into 17 ♘e2,

though it's difficult and unpleasant after 17 … ♗b5 18 ♕f3 ♗c6 19 ♕g3 ♕e4 (*20 … ♕xg3? 21 ♘xg3 ♗xh1 22 ♘xh1 is about =*) 20 ♖h2 ♕xc2 21 ♘xd4 (∓ if defended accurately?). Also fine are 15 … ♕b6∓ or 15 … ♔b8∓.

All untested: the only known example **Fernandez-Sánchez Almeyra, Alicante Open-2 1989** went 15 … ♘a5?! 16 ♘e4?! (*16 ♕xd4 ♗c6 17 ♕xc3 ♗xh1 18 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 19 ♘xh1=*) 16 … ♗c6 17 ♖h2 (*17 ♘d6+∓*) 17 … ♗xe4 18 ♕xe4 ♘c4 19 ♕d3? (*19 ♖b1∓*) 19 … ♘b2∓ and 0-1, 27.

15 …   ♕b6

Uhlmann's suggestion *Schach 22/6, June 1968, p. 175*. Others, e.g. 15 … ♗e8 or 15 … ♔b8, usually transpose into 15 ♖b1 lines, for which see Watson's survey *ChessPublishing.com, February 2010*.

16 ♗e4?!

New, but no improvement. By covering c2, this prepares a4, planning to meet … ♘b4 with ♕f3. Here White isn't ready for a4, so a move of more general use should be preferred.

Best play seems to lead to equality: 16 0-0 ♗e8 (Watson's suggestion *PtF-1 p. 163* of *16 … ♘xe5 17 fxe5 ♗b5 18 ♕f3 ♗xe2 19 ♕xe2 d3+ 20 ♕f2 d2 gives White a better ending after 21 ♕xb6 axb6 22 ♗xd2 cxd2 23 ♖ad1±*) 17 ♘g3 ♔b8 18 ♘e4, about = since it is hard for either side to make progress. Instead **Jensen-Jorgensen, Danish Team Ch '06-'07 2007** went 17 ♔h2 ♖h8 18 ♗e4?! ♔b8 19 a4? ♘b4 20 a5 ♕c7 20 ♕f3 ♗c6∓ (though 1-0, 53).

16 …   ♗e8

17 g5?

A strange decision. Was White planning to roll the h-pawn? This is (or should be) too slow. Better 17 ♔f2∓

when White is still not too badly placed.

17	**…**	**♞a5**
18	**a4**	**♝c6**
19	**♞g3?**	

This should be a losing error. Better and more consistent 19 h4∓.

19	**…**	**♝xe4?!**

19 … ♞d5!, which could previously have been met by ♛xd4, allows the knight to transfer to b4 with … d3 to follow, ∓/∓∓.

20	**♞xe4**	**♛c6**

With a clear advantage to Black. The continuation was **21 ♚f2 ♞f5 22 h4 ♞c4 23 ♜b1 ♚b8?** (too slow; *23 … ♞fe3 24 ♜b4 ♜h8∓ 25 h5? ♞d2∓∓*) **24 h5 ♞fe3 25 ♜g1?** (*25 ♜b4!,* neatly preventing Black's next, about =) **25 … ♞xc2!∓∓ 26 ♞f6(4).**

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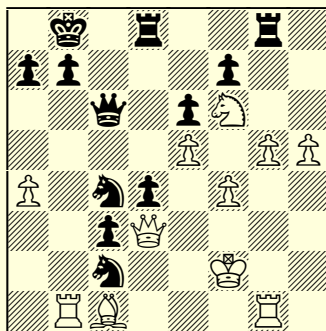
26	**…**	**♛xa4?**

A pity. Instead 26 … ♜h8! wins, as then 27 g6 would allow a fatal opening of the h-file, while the knight is still immune: 27 ♛xc2 d3 28 ♛xc3 ♛c5+∓∓.

27	**♞xg8**	**♜xg8?**

The win is gone and only the *zwischenzug* 27 … ♛a2! holds the balance: 28 ♚g3 ♜xg8 29 ♛h7 ♜c8 30 g6 ♞e3 (or *30 … ♛xb1*) with tremendous complications but apparently equal.

28	**g6**	

More accurate 28 ♛h7±±, e.g. 28 … ♜c8 29 g6 ♛a2 30 gxf7.

28	**…**	**fxg6**
29	**♜xg6**	**♜c8**
30	**♜g7**	**♞b6**
31	**h6**	**♛a2**
32	**♛e4!**	

The only move to win: except for 32 ♛f3, all others lose.

32	**…**	**♜c7**
33	**♜xc7?**	

Greatly complicating White's task, if it doesn't throw away the win entirely. After 33 h7 it's all over.

33	**…**	**♚xc7**
34	**h7**	**♛xb1**
35	**h8=♛**	**♛xc1**

After **36 ♛hh7+ ♞d7 37 ♛xc2 ♛xf4+ 38 ♚e2 ♛e3+ 39 ♚f1** Black made the final error with **39 … b5? 40 ♛he4±±** and White won easily (1-0, 48).

The natural 39 … ♛f3+ leaves the result in doubt, e.g. 40 ♛f2 ♛d1+ 41 ♚g2 ♛g4+ 42 ♚h1 ♛d1+ 43 ♚h2 ♛g4 44 ♛g2 ♛f4+ 45 ♚g3 ♛d2+ 46 ♚h3 ♛d1 47 ♛gd3 ♛h1+ 48 ♚g3 ♛e1+ 49 ♚f3 ♛xe5, with two lone queens versus queen, knight and five pawns: a draw with best play? Or similarly 39 … ♛xe5, e.g. 40 ♛he4 ♚d6 41 ♛cd3 ♛xe4 42 ♛xe4 e5∞.

An eventful game: White's plan of 17 g5? and a h-pawn march won the day after all. ▶

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3.*
tWW   MOSKALENKO, Viktor, *The Wonderful Winawer* (New in Chess 2010)—*see issue 3.*
PtF-4   WATSON, John L., *Play the French* (4th edition) (Everyman 2012)—*see issue 1.*

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

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'A Famous Old Line'

October marks the sixtieth anniversary of Venice 1953 and the game Paoli-Schmid, featuring the then-critical Winawer innovation discussed in issue 7. Though the variation is renowned—or notorious—for immense complications and very dense theory, its development followed a peculiar trajectory: advances occurred almost entirely in analysis rather than games for its first twelve years, before a meteoric rise to the height of chess fashion in the mid-1960's. When interest moved on equally quickly, the prevailing impression was left that White had much the better of it. Much of theory's verdict is wrong or incomplete, though. This issue surveys the field and in several places corrects the record.

✳   ✳   ✳

Schmid's 10 … ♘d7: a survey

Schmid's variation runs (*1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♕g4 ♕c7 8 ♕xg7 ♖g8 9 ♕xh7 cxd4*) 10 ♔d1 ♘d7!? 11 ♘f3 ♘xe5 12 ♗f4 ♕xc3 13 ♘xe5 ♕xa1+ 14 ♗c1**(1)**. Black is precariously placed, but for once in the poisoned pawn it is White who is down material.

14 …   ♖f8!

Schmid's original choice. Later **Bronstein-Uhlmann, United Nations Peace Tournament, Zagreb 1965** *dFV game 21, RHM game 17* introduced **14 … d3?!** as an attempted improvement. After 15 ♕xf7+ ♔d8 16 ♕f6! (the untried *16 ♕f4*, '!?' Vitiugov *aCBR p. 191,* seems no more than equal) 16 … dxc2+, Bronstein's 17 ♔d2 is complicated, but further practice and analysis indicate that Black maintains equal chances. Instead
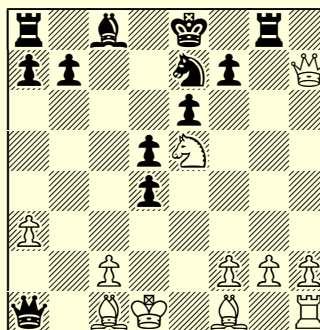
17 ♔xc2! is a better prospect: after 17 … ♛a2+ 18 ♗b2 ♗d7 19 ♘f7+ ♚e8 20 ♘d6+ ♚d8 21 ♗d3! (*21 ♘xb7+? ♚e8?! 22 ♗e2!* de Firmian *MCO-15 p. 218*, ∞/±; *21 … ♚c7!∞/∓*) 21 … ♗a4+ 22 ♚d2 ♚d7? 23 ♖e1 ♘c6!, **Grabarczyk-Spiess, Bundesliga 2 '94-'95, Germany 1995** continued 24 ♘xb7? (½-½, 29), and based on this example S. Pedersen *tMLF p. 155* labels 21 ♗d3 dubious. Instead 24 ♛xe6+ ♚c7! leads nowhere.

But 24 ♗b1! wins: after 24 … ♛b3 25 ♘xb7, now with more sting because of the threatened fork on c5, probably wins, but computers find a winning attack in the maelstrom after 25 ♛xe6+! (now that the white QB is unpinned).

Scope for improvements is limited. Black can survive to a pawn-down ending via 22 … ♖xg2! 23 ♘xb7+ ♚e8 24 ♛h8+ ♖g8 25 ♛h5+ ♚f8 26 ♛e5 d4 28 ♖b1 ♛d5 29 ♗e4 ♛g5+, perhaps saveable.

15 ♗d3!   **♗d7(2)**

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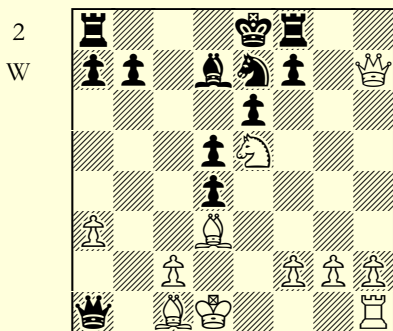
White's 15th is due to Keres *FZ p. 132*, but now his proposed 16 h4 is dubious because of 16 … ♘c6 17 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 18 ♗g6 0-0-0 19 ♛xf7 ♘e5∓/∓. White's main choices are 16 ♖e1 and 16 ♚e2.

A: (*from (2)*) **16 ♖e1(!)**
White prepares to 'castle by hand' with ♚e2-f1 and forestalls Black's … ♘e5 resource from the 16 h4?! line.

16 …   ♘c6!
17 ♘xf7   ♖xf7
18 ♗g6   0-0-0
19 ♛xf7!

The other capture 19 ♗xf7?! has been labelled '??' on the basis of **Matulović-Fuchs, Kislovodsk 1966** *Informator 2/203 (V. Sokolov)*: 19 … d3! 20 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 21 ♖xe6 ♘d4 22 ♖e7 dxc2+ 23 ♚d2 ♛b1 24 ♖e3∓∓ and 0-1, 39. But here White's ♖e6-e7-e3 forced the BQ to a much better square. Instead the direct 22 ♖e3! dxc2+ 23 ♚d2 is ∞/=.

19 …   e5!
'And Black has a strong initiative', Psakhis, *FD-ps p. 216*.

20 ♚e2(3)

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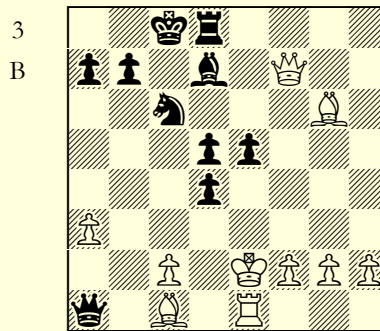
20 …   e4?
'∓' Marić *Informator 2/204*. Natural, and virtually universal in practice, but now Black appears to lose almost by force. For an improvement, see below.

21 ♚f1
±± V. Sokolov *Informator 2/203*—odd to have such inconsistent evaluations in adjacent games.

21 … ♕c3
22 ♗g5!

After the standard 22 ♗f5?, simplest is 22 … d3! (Marić) 23 ♕xd5 (*23 cxd3 ♕xd3+ 24 ♔g1 ♕c3 25 ♖f1 ♕e5=*) 23 … ♘e7! 24 ♗xd7+ ♖xd7, e.g. 25 ♕b3 ♕xb3 26 cxb3 d2 27 ♗xd2 ♖xd2 with a better ending. This possibility has been ignored, perhaps because Marić's follow-up 23 (♕xd5) ♘d4?? loses immediately to 24 ♗xe4.

22 … ♘e7

The improvement, attributed to Fuchs, on 22 … ♘e5? 23 ♕xd5!± and 1-0, 26, **Fuchs-Uhlmann, Zinnowitz 1966** *Informator 2/204 (Marić)*; 'with sufficient counterplay', Suetin *FD-su p. 140.*

23 ♗h5!

Old theory concentrated almost exclusively on 23 ♖b1 (Pachman *P68 p. 49*, Suetin), and Korchnoi suggested 23 a4 *C18-19 p. 61*; both are about =. But the text—**Handke-Berndt, E. German corr 1989** (but 0-1, 34), Burgess *COS p. 60*—avoids exchange of knight for bishop and covers e2, refuting Fuchs' idea: ±±.

Where can Black improve? Konikowski (via UltraCorr3) gives **20 … ♕c3!?** 21 ♗g5 ♖h8, evaluating as ∓. This is too optimistic after 22 h4, when White must be better, but appears at least playable: ∞/±.

B: (*from* **(2)**) **16 ♔e2(?!)**

Usually given as best; '(!)' Moles *MLW p. 42*, '±' Nunn *NCO p. 282*, but probably less accurate than 16 ♖e1.

16 … 0-0-0
Alternatives:

a) **16 … ♘c6?!** is weaker now that the white QB is not pinned. The stem game **Matulović-Camilleri, Halle zonal 1967** featured the forcing 17 ♘xf7 ♖xf7 18 ♕g8+ ♖f8 19 ♗g6+ ♔e7 20 ♕g7+ ♔d6 21 ♗f4+ ♖xf4 22 ♖xa1, and now instead of 22 … ♖af8 as played (and 1-0, 28), Uhlmann gave 22 … ♖g4 23 ♕h6 ♘e5 24 ♗d3 ♖xg2=. Moles correctly gave as more critical 23 h3 ♖xg2 24 ♔f1 ♖h2 25 ♗e8 'with initiative'. Indeed Black appears lost, e.g. 25 … ♖h1+ 26 ♔g2 ♖xa1 27 ♕xd7+ ♔c5 28 h4! ♖d8 (*28 … e5 29 h5 ♖d8 30 ♕f7 e4 31 h6 d3 32 cxd3 exd3 33 ♗xc6!* ±± **Leimeister-Ziegert, BdF H-class corr 1998** (1-0, 44)) 29 h5! when the h-pawn can't be stopped.

So Camilleri's much-maligned 22 … ♖af8 is best after all. It provokes 23 f3 ('±' Vitiugov *aCBR p. 192*, *aCBR-2 p. 239*), so that after 23 … ♘e7! Black may eventually capture the g-pawn with check: ±. Instead 23 ♖f1 e5 24 ♔d1, clearing e2 for the bishop and pre-empting checks, appears better, probably ±.

b) **16 … ♘f5!?** is much better than its reputation. Suggested by Marić *Teoreticheski Bulletin No. 1, 1968?*, it aims to transfer the knight to the useful outpost d6, covering f7. It fell under a cloud quickly because after 17 ♖e1 (given as best by Marić) 17 … ♕c3, Yudovich Jr. *Shakhmatny Bulletin 11/1968 pp. 325-26* gave 18 ♗g5! ('N ±±' Pytel *Informator 7*), winning in all lines, and convincingly illustrated by **Pytel-Haufe, EU/M/190 ICCF corr 1968-69** *Fernschach 31/10, October 1970, p. 234, Informator 7/213 (both Pytel)*: 18 … ♘d6 19 ♔f1 ♕c7 20 ♗g6 ♕c3 21 ♗d3 ♕xa3 22 ♕g7! ♘e4 23 ♗h4 ♕d6 24 f3 f6 25 ♘g6 1-0.

Thus current theory, which however has entirely overlooked the improvement 17 … 0-0-0!. Now it is not so easy to exploit the BQ's position (*18 ♗h6? ♖h8! ∓∓; 18 ♗g5 ♕xa3 19 ♗xd8 ♖xd8=*), and after 18 ♘xf7 ♖de8! 19 g4?! Black

has 19 … ♛c3!∓. The critical line is 19
♔f1 ♜e7 20 ♞d6+ ♚c7 21 ♛h5
♞xd6 22 ♝g5 ♜xf2+ 23 ♚xf2 ♜f7+
24 ♛xf7 ♛xe1+ 25 ♚xe1 ♞xf7 26
♝f6 ♚d6, when White is better but
Black should be able to hold.

    17 ♞xf7   **♜xf7**
    18 ♛xf7   **♜e8(!)**

  More accurate than 18 … ♞c6 19
♜d1 ♛c3 20 ♝g5 ♜e8 21 h4 and a
h-pawn advance; ±.

  **Matulović-Jahr, Reggio Emilia
1967-68** *Informator 5/209 (Marić)* continu-
ed **19 ♜e1 e5! 20 ♚f1 e4 21 ♝e2 ♛c3
22 ♝g5(4)** ('±' Korchnoi *C18-19 p. 61*)
22 … ♛xa3, when White went astray
with 23 ♝g4?! ♛a6+∓ (½-½, 38).

    23 ♜d1

'±' Marić. With minor variations this has
been accepted as the last word ever since:
'the improvement at move 23 makes the
whole variation favourable to White', Moles

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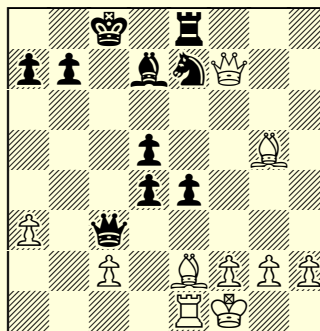
p. 43, '±' Kasparov & Keene *BCO-2 p.
207*; 'Black has not solved his opening
problems', A. Martin & Stein, via Burgess
COS p. 60; all without further analysis.

  In fact Black can force an immediate
draw: 23 … ♛c5! (threat *24 … ♞f5+*)
24 ♝g4 ♛b5+ 25 ♝e2 and repeats.

  Conclusion: 10 … ♞d7 appears to give
White an edge but no more.   ▶

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             978-1-901983-02-9.

MCO-15 DE FIRMIAN, Nick, *Modern Chess Openings* (15th edition). New York: Random House
             Puzzles & Games 2008. ISBN-13: 978-0-8129-3682-7.

RHM   GLIGORIĆ, Svetozar, & UHLMANN, Wolfgang, *The French Defence* (1975)—*see issue 1.*

BCO-2   KASPAROV, Garry & KEENE, Raymond, *Batsford Chess Openings 2* (2nd edition).
             New York: Henry Holt 1994. ISBN-13: 978-0-8050-3409-7.

FZ   KERES, Paul, *Frantsuzkaya Zaschita (*Fizkul'tura i Sport 1958)—*see issue 4.*

C18-19 KORCHNOI, Victor, *C18-19 French Defence* (S. I. Chess Informant 1993)—*see issue 3.*

MLW   MOLES, John L., *The French Defence Main Line Winawer* (Batsford 1975)—*see issue 3.*

NCO   NUNN, John, GALLAGHER, Joe, EMMS, John & BURGESS, Graham, *Nunn's Chess
             Openings.* London: Cadogan 1999. ISBN-10: 978-1-85744-221-2.

P68   PACHMAN, Luděk, *Semi-Open Games* (CHESS Sutton Coldfield 1970)—*see issue 3.*

tMLF   PEDERSEN, Steffen, *The Main Line French: 3 Nc3* (Gambit 2001, 2006)—*see issue 2.*

FD-ps   PSAKHIS, Lev, *French Defence 3 Nc3 Bb4*. London: Batsford 2004. ISBN-13:
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dFV   SCHWARZ, Rolf, *Die Französische Verteidigung* (1967)—*see issue 5.*

tFD-su SUETIN, Alexei, *French Defence*. London: Batsford 1988. First published (in German)
             1982; English translation 1988, revised and updated. ISBN-10: 0-7134-5938-7.

aCBR   VITIUGOV, Nikita, *The French Defence: A Complete Black Repertoire.* (Tr.: Evgeny
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aCBR-2 ——, *The French Defence Reloaded.* (Tr.: Evgeny Ermenkov.) Sofia: Chess Stars 2012.
             ISBN-13: 978-954-8782-86-9.

PtF-4   WATSON, John L., *Play the French* (4th edition) (Everyman 2012)—*see issue 1.*

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

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Gambit Games—I

Of the various side lines available to White to bypass the critical main lines of the Winawer, one with an enduring respectability is the 4 ♘e2 variation. White avoids the doubled c-pawns that are a feature of virtually very other Winawer line and—at least for its most common continuation throughout most of its history—steers the game in a quieter, positional direction.

Yet the variation was initially conceived as a gambit, and to this day it's a genuine one that may be accepted. 'There is not a single true chess-player whose heart does not beat faster at the mere sound of such long beloved and familiar word as 'gambit games'', says Bronstein; and so this issue and the next cover the lines where Black accepts the offer.

❋ ❋ ❋

The Alekhine (or Maróczy) Gambit Accepted

Ponce, Rousseau, DuBois & Stark-Lasker, Wimsatt Sr., Eaton & Mutchler
Consultation game, Washington 1938
Washington Post, 23 January 1938 p. TS-14 (Turover)

1 d4 e6 2 e4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4

4	♘e2	dxe4
5	a3	♗xc3+
6	♘xc3	♘c6!(1)

The immediate 6 … f5?!, as in **Maróczy-Seitz, Győr 1924** (1-0, 37) and **Alekhine-Nimzovitch, Bled 1931** (1-0, 19), is considered too risky. The text received an early endorsement from Alekhine: 'the correct reply which secures

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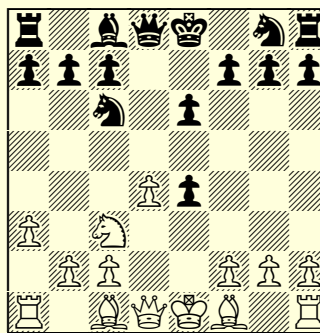
Black at least an even game is 6 … ♘c6! and if 7 ♗b5 then 7 … ♘e7 followed by … 0-0, etc.' *MBG-2 p. 94*.

But for many decades theory did not agree, considering this as giving White an edge, and preferring 5 … ♗e7, retaining the two bishops, e.g. Euwe *TdSE-2 p. 66*, Schwarz *dFV p. 173*, Pachman *P68 p. 59*, Keres *SbF-2 p. 288*, Gligorić & Uhlmann *RHM pp. 16-17* and Moles & Wicker *MAL p. 221*.

7	♗b5	♘e7
8	♗e3	

Later considered less accurate than the finesse 8 ♗g5 f6 9 ♗e3, provoking a weakness. But the difference is marginal.

The first (and only previous?) game with 6 … ♘c6!, **Lasker-Kan, Moscow 1936**, went 8 0-0? (too slow) 8 … 0-0 9 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 10 d5?! (*10 ♗f4∓*) 10 … exd5 11 ♕xd5 ♘d4! 12 ♗g5 ♕xd5 13 ♘xd5 ♘e6?!∓ (*13 … ♗g4∓*) and ½-½, 25.

8	…	0-0
9	♕d2	f5(2)

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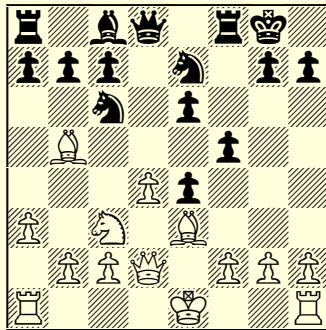
10	f3	exf3
11	gxf3	e5
12	d5?!	

Better 12 ♗c4+ ♔h8 13 d5, as suggested by Moles & Wicker *MAL p. 220* ('White has plenty of play'), probably with balanced chances. Compared to the game, after 13 … f4 14 ♗c5 ♘d4 (Watson *PtF-4 p. 188* analyses *14 … b6!?*) 15 0-0-0 ♘ef5?! 16 ♗xf8 ♕xf8

White has the extra possibility 17 ♘b5!±.

12	…	f4!
13	♗c5	

Turover thought 13 dxc6 would have given 'drawing chances' (implying that the move played did not?). Then 13 … fxe3 14 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 15 cxb7 ♗xb7 16 0-0 ♖d2∓ is quite uncomfortable.

13	…	♘d4
14	0-0-0	♘ef5
15	♗xf8?	

On 15 ♕f2?, as in **Rogulj-Lindgren, Pula Open 2011** (in effect: transposition from 8 ♗g5 f6 9 ♗e3), instead of 15 … ♘xb5?!∓ (and 1-0, 42), Watson gives 15 … ♖f7! 16 ♗c4 ♘e3∓.

Better 15 ♕e1!, e.g. 15 … ♘e3 (*15 … ♘xf3 16 ♕e2 ♘5d4 17 ♖xd4=*) 16 ♗xd4 exd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗f5∓.

15	…	♕xf8
16	♕f2	♘e3

'∓' Watson, though ∓ seems equally plausible.

17	♖d2?	

Natural, but the losing move. White must instead give up the exchange: 17 ♗d3 ♗f5 18 ♘e4 ♘xd1 19 ♖xd1∓.

17	…	♗f5
18	♗a4	

Now 18 ♗d3 is too late. **Branford-Wiley, British Championship, Edinburgh 1985**, continued 18 … ♗xd3 19 ♖xd3 ♘exc2‡‡ 20 ♘e2 ♕c5?! (*20 … ♖d8*) 21 ♔b1 ♕xd5 22 ♖c1? (*22 ♘xf4!∓*) 22 … ♕b5 and 0-1, 31.

18	…	♕c5!
19	♖xd4	exd4
20	♘e4	♕e7
21	♗b3	♔h8
22	♘d2	a5
23	a4	b5

0-1

All quite convincing; why would the line ever have been considered questionable? Later games saw Black try some weaker plans, and the theory manuals ignored Lasker's consultation game.

∗   ∗   ∗

From **(2)**, and for consistency adopting the most common move order 8 ♗g5 f6 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 ♕d2 f5, White has two main possibilities:
A: 11 f3
B: 11 0-0-0 (next issue)

A1: (*from* **(2)**) **11 f3, Black plays … ♞d5**

Black's main defences involve either … e5 or … ♞d5.

a) **11 … ♞d5:** An early and influential example was **Pachman-Bondarevsky, Chigorin Memorial, Moscow 1947**, which went 12 ♗xc6 ♞xc3?! 13 ♕xc3 bxc6 14 ♗f4 ♕d5 15 0-0-0 (± *Pachman P68 p. 59*) 15 … ♗d7 (*15 … ♖f7±*) 16 ♗xc7 ♗e8 17 ♗e5± (½-½, 41). Black is hardly at a severe disadvantage but has no positive prospects.

Better 12 … bxc6, when 13 fxe4 may be met most simply by Watson's 13 … fxe4! 14 0-0-0 ♞xc3 15 ♕xc3 ♕d5=, though this has never been played.

Instead Black has usually tried 13 … ♞xc3 14 ♕xc3 ♕h4+ 15 g3**(3)** ♕xe4, though 16 0-0-0± leaves White with some advantage, e.g. **Povah-Bernat, Hoogovens B, Wijk aan Zee 1981** (1-0, 41), **Oppici-Diotallevi, Italian corr Ch 1989** (1-0, 57) and **Weill-Prié, Cannes Open 1992** (1-0, 52). Here the attempted improvement (from **(3)**) 15 … ♕g4!?, as in **Gómez Baillo-Bernat, Argentine U26 Ch, Pehuajó 1983** (½-½, 23), prevents White from castling long, planning 16 0-0 ♕xe4 and … ♗b7 with play on the
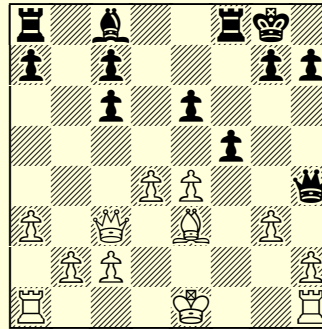
long diagonal; about equal. After 16 exf5!? White appears to have an edge, e.g. 16 … ♖xf5 17 ♔d2 ♗d7 18 ♖ae1 and 19 ♔c1±.

b) **11 … exf3 12 gxf3 ♞d5:** Another early game, **Pilnik-Donner, Hoogovens Beverwijk 1951**, continued 13 ♗xc6 ♞xe3?! 14 ♕xe3 ♕h4+ 15 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 16 ♔xf2 bxc6, and now instead of 17 ♞a4 e5 (and 1-0, 53), theory considered that 17 ♖he1 gave White some advantage (± Dempsey *AG p. 19*). The advantage is small (±/=) but Black is passively placed. Better 13 … bxc6=.

A2: (*from* **(2)**) **11 f3, Black plays … e5**

This theme has appeared in several forms other than 11 … exf3 12 gxf3 e5:

a) **11 … e5:** (Rare.) White secures an edge after 12 d5 ♞d4 13 ♗xd4 exd4 14 ♕xd4 c6 15 ♗c4 cxd5 16 0-0-0 or 12 … f4 13 dxc6! (*13 ♗c5?! e3∓*).

b) **11 … f4 12 ♗xf4 ♕xd4 13 fxe4 e5:** Vitiugov's suggestion *aCBR p. 172*, and a straightforward way to (a sterile) equality. It dates back to **Pilnik-Martín, Mar del Plata 1950**, which went 14 ♗g3 ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 ♗e6= (½-½, 69).

c) **11 … a6 12 ♗xc6 ♞xc6 13 fxe4 e5:** 14 d5 ♞a5 15 b3 ♕d6=, **Westerinen-**

Welin, Rilton Cup, Stockholm 1987 (½-½, 43), and 14 dxe5 ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 fxe4=, **Seret-Dimitrov, Cappelle Open 1989** (½-½, 17) each give equality.

A3: (*from* **(2)**) **11 f3, Black plays … exf3 and … fxg2**

After 11 f3 exf3, White may try the double gambit **12 0-0-0!?**. Dempsey *AG p. 19* thought it was too dangerous to accept: 12 … fxg2 13 ♖hg1 'gives White a dangerous initiative'. But Watson *PtF-4 p. 188* analyses further: 13 … ♘d5 14 ♕xg2 g6 15 ♗g5 ♕d6, which is ⩲̄: White has clear compensation, but not enough for two pawns.

This double gambit never seems to have been tried, but there are several examples once Black has played … f4. After 11 … f4 12 ♗xf4 exf3 13 0-0-0 gxf2 14 ♖hg1 **(4)**, with only a single pawn sacrificed and the square e4 now available, it is White who stands better. Now 14 … e5? should lose after 15 ♕xg2 ♘f5 16 dxe5±±, e.g. 16 … ♕e8 17 ♘d5 ♕f7 18 ♗c4 ♗e6, **Rapoports-Lettl, DDR/FS/84/96 corr 1984** (½-½, 20) and **Holzhäuer-Duppel, Oberliga Wuert '97-'98 1998** (0-1, 30), and now 19 ♘f6+ ♔h8 20 ♖d7! is crushing, though
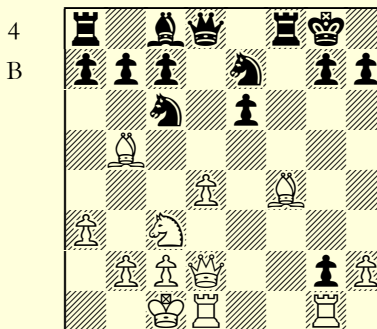
strangely this was missed in both examples. Better 14 … ♘g6, e.g. 15 ♗g5 ♕d6 16 ♖xg2?! (*16 h4!±; 16 ♕xg2?! ♘xd4 17 h4 ♕c5? 18 h5±± and 1-0, 33,* **de Greef-Harmsen, Oisterwijk (Women) 1990**; *17 … ♘f4!∞/⩲*) 16 … e5 17 ♘b5 ♕d7 18 d5 ♘ce7? (*19 … a6!∞/⩲*) 19 d6± (*19 h4!±±*) **Zimmer-Abel, St. Ingbert Open 1987** (1-0, 39).

So Black should not accept the gambit in this form; better 13 … e5=.

Conclusion: Both the … ♘d5 and … e5 approaches give full equality, and no more, with accurate play. Of Black's many satisfactory choices, though, none improves on Lasker's consultation game.

Next issue: 'the modern' 11 0-0-0.   ▶

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PtF-4   WATSON, John L., *Play the French* (4th edition) (Everyman 2012)—*see issue 1*.

THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

Editor: Seán Coffey

Gambit Games—II

True gambits need startling victories if they are to inspire: games in which the defender appears to make no obvious mistake but falls victim to a storm from a clear blue sky.

It is fair to say that the lines of the Alekhine gambit accepted that were considered in the last issue fall short in this regard. They are sound, certainly, and leave White no worse; but after all Black can equalise in a number of ways and is hardly in real danger.

The situation is rather different in the modern version: with an innocuous-seeming alteration in the setup, the stage is set for devastating attacks. Almost imperceptibly, White slips the lead into the boxing glove …

✳ ✳ ✳

The Alekhine (or Maróczy) Gambit Accepted—Modern Version

Braakhuis-Neven
WC.2000.S.00001 IECG corr 1999
(Braakhuis (via UltraCorr3))

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 ♘e2 dxe4 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 ♘xc3 ♘c6! 7 ♗b5 ♘e7 8 ♗g5 f6 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 ♕d2 f5

11 0-0-0(1)

'The modern preference', Dempsey *AG p. 20*, in contrast with 'the hasty' 11 f3, Vitiugov *aCBR p. 172*. White forestalls the immediately equalising … f4 and completes development. Black is short of useful ways to use the tempo.

11 …	a6	
12 ♗xc6	♘xc6	
13 f3	exf3	
14 gxf3	e5	
15 d5	♘a5	
16 ♕e2	b5	
17 f4	e4	
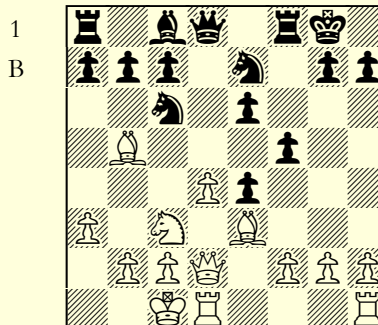
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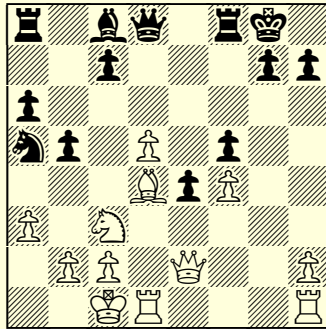
18 ♗d4(2)   ♞c4?

'As it turns out, this is the losing move!', Braakhuis; 'incredible!'

19 ♕h5!   ♞d6?

Black could have defended more resiliently with 19 … g6, planning 20 ♖hg1 ♖f6 followed by … ♖b8-b6. Even that may be winning for White; still clearer is 20 ♕h6 ♖f6 21 h4++.

20 ♖hg1   ♖f7

Losing immediately, but 20 … ♞e8 21 ♖g3 and 22 ♖dg1 is also hopeless.

21 ♞xe4!!

A deflection sacrifice of the f-pawn, so that 21 … fxe4 may be met by 22 ♗xg7! (*22 … ♖xg7 23 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 24 ♖g1+* and the king has no haven on h8).

0-1

Braakhuis gave 18 … ♕d6? as the only defence, continuing 19 ♗e5 ♕h6 20 ♗xc7 ♞c4 '∞'. But here 19 ♖hg1! is again winning: 19 … ♕xf4+ 20 ♔b1 is hopeless after 20 … g6 21 ♕h5 ♕d6 22 ♕h6 ♖f7 23 ♖df1 or 20 … ♖f7 21 ♕h5 ♗d7 22 ♖df1 ♕d2 (*22 … ♕d6 23 ♞xe4*) 23 ♞e2! followed by ♖d1 trapping the queen, while 19 … g6 (or ♖f7) 20 ♕h5 is not so different to the game.

Instead the right way is 18 … ♕h4!=, e.g. 19 ♖df1 g6 followed by … ♖f7 and … ♗b7.

If White plays 18 ♕h5 to forestall this possibility, Black has time for (18 … ♕e8 19 ♕h3) ♖f6=.

*   *   *

From **(1)**, each side has several plausible ways of diverging from the main game:

11 …   a6

Instead 11 … ♞d5, while playable, is usually not recommended as after 12 ♞xd5! (best; *12 ♗xc6* ± Schwarz *dFV p. 174* leaves White with inadequate compensation) 12 … exd5 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 ♗f4 'although Black may not have much chance of losing, he has absolutely no chance of winning', Psakhis *tCF p. 196* ('±' Miles). The position is objectively equal but has significantly favoured White in practice; cf. for example **Barrios Troncoso-Strautiņš, Jacques Joudran Memorial A corr 2002** (1-0, 31).

12 ♗xc6   ♞xc6

Now White has two major approaches:
B1: 13 ♗g5
B2: 13 f3

Others pose no threat. The natural-looking 13 ♗f4 was introduced in **King-Menzel, World U16 Team Ch, Viborg 1979** *BCM 1980 p. 265 (King)*, (in no database), with success after 13 … ♞e7 14 f3 exf3 15 gxf3 ♞g6? (*15 … b5=*) 16 ♗g5 ♕d6?! (conceding a tempo after White's later ♗f4; better *16 … ♕d7±*) 17 h4 ♖f7 18 h5 ♞f8 19 ♗f4± ♕d8 20 ♖dg1 ♞d7 21 ♖g3 ♞f6 22 ♗e5 ♞d7 23 ♗f4? (*23 h6! ♞xe5 24 hxg7!±*) 23 … ♞f6 24 ♗g5? ♗d7? (Black has almost weathered the storm: *24 … c5!∞/=*) 25 ♖hg1 ♔h8? (*25 … ♕e7±*) 26 ♞e2!++ c5 27 ♞f4

h6 28 ♘g6+ ♔h7 29 ♘e5 ♖e7 30 ♗xf6 gxf6 31 ♕g2! 1-0.

King thought 13 … b5 14 d5 ♘e7 15 dxe6 ♗xe6 16 ♕xd8 ♖fxd8 17 ♗xc7 'gives White the better ending', but this seems fully equal. An even simpler solution is to give back the pawn to close off e5, which stops White dead in his tracks: 13 … e5! 14 dxe5 ♕xd2+ 15 ♖xd2 ♗e6=, **Ambrož-Ivarsson, Prague Bohemians 1980** (½-½, 28) and others.

B1: 13 ♗g5

Another move with a spectacular début: White recorded a crushing victory in **Miles-Reefschläger, Porz 1981-82** *Informator 33/418 (Miles)* after 13 … ♕e8? 14 f3 exf3 15 gxf3 ♘d8? (Miles gives *15 … e5 16 dxe5 ♗e6* followed by … *♖f7±*) 16 ♖hg1 c6 (*16 … e5*, again suggested by Miles, is now met by *17 ♘d5±±*) 17 ♖g3 ♖f7? (better *17 … b5*, Miles; e.g. *18 ♖dg1 ♖a7 19 ♗f4 ♖f6±*) 18 ♖dg1 b5 19 ♗f6! 1-0. (The game's move order was 8 ♗e3 instead of 8 ♗g5 f6 9 ♗e3, saving one move.)

  13 …   ♕d7!

Much more to the point, covering g7, c7, and d5.

  14 d5(3)

After 14 f3 exf3 15 gxf3 e5 16 d5? the bishop is misplaced, allowing 16 … ♘d4 17 ♕f2 f4∓. Watson *PtF-4 p. 188* gives 16 dxe5! ♕xd2+ 17 ♗xd2 ♗e6=. But then the whole line is wrong for White.

  14 …   ♘e5!

After 14 … exd5?! 15 ♘xd5 ♕f7 16 ♗f4 White recovers the pawn with a small edge. **Hector-Faragó, Hamburg Ch 2004** continued 16 … ♗e6 17 ♘xc7 ♖ad8 (*17 … ♖fd8?! 18 ♘xa8!?±*) 18 ♕c3 ♖c8 19 ♘xe6 ♕xd6 20 ♖d6 ♕a2 21 ♖hd1± (1-0, 40).
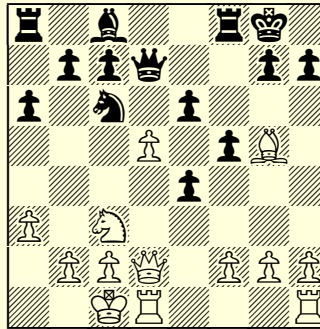
Instead 14 … ♘e7 is playable though unambitious, e.g. 15 dxe6 ♕xe6 16 f3 h6 17 ♗f4 (*17 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 18 fxe4 fxe4=* **Westerinen-Thompson, Gausdal Classics GM-B 2006** (0-1, 40)) 17 … ♕c6 18 ♖he1 ♘g6 19 fxe4 ♘xf4=.

After the text, sources differ: Vitiugov gives 15 f3 ♘c4 16 ♕e2 b5 17 fxe4 ♗b7 18 exf5 exd5 'with double-edged play'; Watson says that Black 'has somewhat the better of it' in the final position (∓).

Examples:

a) 15 ♕d4 ♘f7?! 16 dxe6 ♕xe6 17 ♗f4 c6= and ½-½, 34, **Moreno Ramos-Negele, WT/MN/035 ICCF corr 1996** (via transposition). Better 15 … ♕d6∓.

b) 15 ♕e3 ♕f7= 16 f3?! h6?! 17 ♗f4 ♘g6?!= **Morais-Musitani, EM/OL14/G3/B4 ICCF corr 2000** (½-½, 35); better 16 … exd5! 17 ♘xd5 ♘d3+∓, an important resource.

c) 15 f3 b5 (*15 … exf3?! 16 ♖he1±*; *15 … ♘f7?! 16 fxe4±*; *15 … ♘c4 16 ♕d4 b5 17 fxe4 e5∞/=*) 16 fxe4 fxe4= 17 ♕e2? ♘f7? (*17 … exd5! 18 ♘xd5? ♘d3+∓∓*; *18 ♖xd5 ♕f5 19 ♗e3 ♗b7∓*) 18 ♗e3 ♗b7= **Hector-S. B. Petersen, 27th Politiken Cup 2005** (1-0, 48).

Overall Black has nothing to fear.

B2: 13 f3

13 …   exf3

Alternatively, and perhaps preferably, 13 … e5 ('!' Uhlmann *WwtF p. 150*, Psakhis) declines the gambit, but is better if Black plans … ♞a5: (13 … e5) 14 d5 ♞a5 15 ♗c5 may be met by 15 … ♞c4 16 ♕e2 ♞d6= **Hartmann-Hertneck, Bundesliga '88-'89 1989** (0-1, 48).

On the usual 15 ♕e2 ('!' Uhlmann, McDonald *FW p. 120*), 15 … exf3 16 gxf3 b5 reaches the main game, while 15 … b5 16 fxe4 f4 17 ♗c5 ♖f7 18 d6 c6= is solid though with few positive prospects, e.g. **Wiemer-Bischoff, West German Ch, Bad Neuenahr 1984** (½-½, 51). Instead 15 … b6 16 fxe4 f4 17 ♗d2= gives more chances to play for a win, e.g. **Stripunsky-Shulman, US Ch, St. Louis 2010** (0-1, 45).

14 gxf3   e5

'With at least equality', Moles & Wicker *MAL p. 220*.

15 d5(4)   ♞a5?!

This concedes an advantage. Better 15 … ♞e7!, with balanced chances, as attested by practical tests, e.g. 16 f4 exf4 17 ♗xf4 ♞g6 18 ♗g5 ♕d6 19 h4 h6 20 h5= **Ginzburg-Gorovykh, Russian Ch Higher League 2010** (½-½, 33) or 16 … ♞g6 17 fxe5 ♞xe5 18 ♖hg1 ♖f7∞/= **Paljušaj-B. Kovačević, Zadar Open A 2010** (0-1, 38).
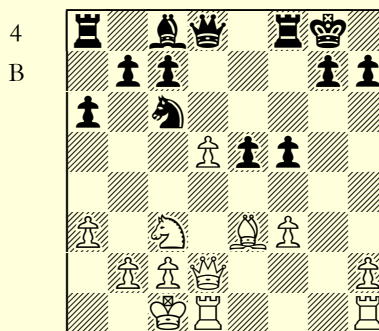
16 ♕e2?!

Instead 16 b3!? ♕d6 17 f4!? (*17 ♔b2 f4=*), as in **Morozov-Nienhuis, Kirjeshakki-25 GM corr 1987-91**, introduces complications, but 17 … ♕xa3+ 18 ♔b1 exf4 19 ♗xf4 ♖f7 20 ♖hg1 ♞xb3!?, with four pawns for the knight, should be acceptable for Black.

Best is 16 ♗c5! ♖f7 17 ♖he1 b6 18 ♗b4 ♞c4 19 ♕e2± (cf. *18 ♗f2?! ♞c4=* **Walek-Totsky, České Budějovice Open 1993** (0-1, 33)).
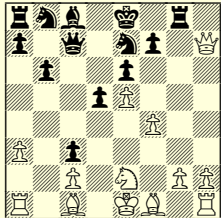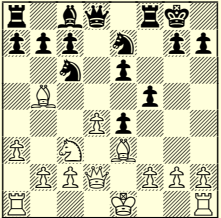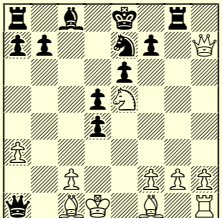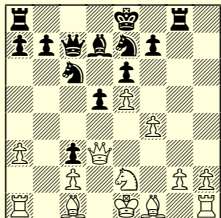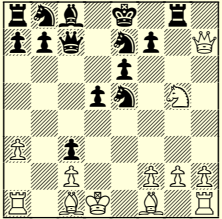
16 …   b5
17 f4   exf4!?

Even simpler than the main game, e.g. 18 ♗d4 (*18 ♗xf4 ♞c4=*) 18 … ♞c4 19 ♖hg1 ♖f7 20 ♕h5 ♞e3=.

Conclusion: 11 0-0-0 is more dangerous, but is still equal with best play. ▶

AG   DEMPSEY, Tony, *French Winawer Alekhine Gambit* (The Chess Player 1986)—*see issue 11.*

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PtF-4   WATSON, John L., *Play the French* (4th edition) (Everyman 2012)—*see issue 1.*

INDEX OF VARIATIONS

Italics denote variations not yet covered.

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ERRATA

1. Issue 2 (February 19, 2013): on p. 2, left column, Figure 2 should indicate Black to move.
2. Issue 3 (March 19, 2013): on p. 2, left column, Figure 2 should indicate White to move.
3. Issue 4 (April 19, 2013): the title of John Emms' book is given incorrectly on p. 3, left column: it should read *The Most Amazing Chess Moves of All Time* (given correctly in the references).
4. Issue 5 (May 19, 2013): on p. 1, right column, Figure 1 should indicate Black to move.
5. Issue 5 (May 19, 2013): on p. 3, left column, Cobo-Ivkov was played in the 2nd Capablanca Memorial, not the 5th as given.
6. Issue 5 (May 19, 2013): on p. 4, left column, "Shavardorj" should be "Sharavdorj": GM Dashzeveg Sharavdorj (MGL).
7. Issue 6 (June 19, 2013): "Demarre" should be "Démarre": Jacques Démarre (FRA).
8. Issue 9 (September 19, 2013): on p. 1, left column, Goh's analysis was in the May 2009 ChessPublishing.com update, not in February. (Given correctly in issue 3.)
9. Issue 9 (September 19, 2013): on p. 4, the references should include Zeuthen & Jarlnæs.
10. Issue 10 (October 19, 2013): on p. 3, left column, the abbreviation used for Suetin's book (*FD-su*) does not match the abbreviation given in the references (*tFD-su*).

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