

Junior Tay

The Old Indian

move by move

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About the Author

Junior Tay is a FIDE Candidate Master and an ICCF Senior International Master. He is a former National Rapid Chess Champion and represented Singapore in the 1995 Asian Team Championship. A frequent opening surveys contributor to *New in Chess Yearbook*, he lives in Balestier, Singapore with his wife, WFM Yip Fong Ling, and their dog, Scottie. He used the Old Indian Defence exclusively against 1 d4 in the 2014 *SportsAccord* World Mind Games Online event, which he finished in third place out of more than 3000 participants.

Also by the Author:

The Benko Gambit: Move by Move

Ivanchuk: Move by Move

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Foreword

Move by Move is a series of opening books which uses a question-and-answer format. One of our main aims of the series is to replicate – as much as possible – lessons between chess teachers and students.

All the way through, readers will be challenged to answer searching questions and to complete exercises, to test their skills in chess openings and indeed in other key aspects of the game. It's our firm belief that practising your skills like this is an excellent way to study chess openings, and to study chess in general. Many thanks go to all those who have been kind enough to offer inspiration, advice and assistance in the creation of *Move by Move*. We're really excited by this series and hope that readers will share our enthusiasm.

John Emms
Everyman Chess

Introduction

What is the Old Indian Defence?

The Old Indian refers to the opening which begins 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6, when Black places the king's bishop on e7 instead of g7 (as in the King's Indian Defence). Black allows White to build a big centre with pawns on c4, d4 and e4, intending to strike back with ...e7-e5 to gain his own central strongpoint. This is normally prepared by 3...♗bd7, although there are adherents of 3 ♘c3 e5, challenging White to a queenless middlegame after 4 dxe5 dxe5 5 ♗xd8. The Old Indian Defence has similarities with its more popular sibling, the King's Indian Defence, especially when it comes to Black's undermining options (...c7-c6xd5 or ...c7-c6, ...a7-a6 and ...b7-b5) or flanking ideas (...f7-f5). This is due to the similarity in the general pawn structure in some lines (e.g. white pawns on c4, d5 and e4 versus Black's on c6, d6 and e5).

Why play the Old Indian Defence?

1. The Old Indian has not, generally, been high up on the Indian Defences 'totem pole'. In fact, it has a reputation of being the "poor man's King's Indian" (*Nunn's Chess Openings*). Nevertheless, it is a very solid and compact opening where Black seldom gets hit or overrun by sharp gambits or bamboozled by the tricky move orders commonly seen in other Indian Defences.

2. Black's general themes are relatively simple to remember and understand. There is no need to memorize long and compulsory intricate continuations in order to get out of the opening alive.

3. Personally, I feel that there have been some interesting developments in the opening to warrant its reconsideration as a weapon in one's repertoire. Black is no longer confined to playing for the standard ...c7-c6, ...a6-a6 and ...b7-b5 expansion after asserting himself in the centre with ...e7-e5; recent developments have given Black other means of setting problems for White, especially with ...♗e8/...♘d8 ideas.

4. There's always room for a secondary defence, especially for a King's Indian player. If you have been playing that line, you'll already be familiar with Old Indian themes, whereas White doesn't get either the Four Pawns Attack or the typical Sämisch Variation pawn storms where the black king is frequently under heavy bombardment.

5. Adherents of the Old Indian include some of the world's most respected grandmasters. Famous players of the past wielding this defence include Chigorin, Capablanca, Bron-

stein, Petrosian, Kotov, Bolevslavsky and Larsen. In more recent times, GMs Akopian, Movsesian, Granda and Kozul have taken up its cause with good results. The mercurial three-time Georgian Champion, devotee of offbeat openings, Baadur Jobava has given the Old Indian a new lease of life by using it against Elo 2700+ opposition.

6. One very pertinent reason for taking up the Old Indian: the theory is definitely not as well known or analysed as the King's Indian. One may scoff at the placement of the bishop on e7 where it (allegedly) seems more like an extra e-pawn (being blocked by the d6-pawn and apparently having no prospects), but if White plays stereotypical 'standard' moves or tries to transpose into a King's Indian type of position, the bishop may turn out to be excellently placed on e7! Let me explain...

In the Classical King's Indian, after 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 ♘g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗f3 0-0 6 ♙e2 e5 7 0-0 ♗c6 8 d5 ♗e7 9 ♗e1 ♗d7 10 ♗d3 f5 11 ♙d2 ♗f6 12 f3 f4, Black tends to drop his g7-bishop back to f8. In some cases it goes to e7 to clear the f8-square for the heavy pieces to make their way to the kingside; sometimes it re-routes further via d8 to b6 to join in the attack from the other side.

In the Old Indian, on the other hand, the bishop is already on e7, so there's no need to reshuffle it. If Black gets ...f5-f4 in, the bishop can support the ...g7-g5 advance. In other cases ...g7-g5 is not required to start an attack; Black can also consider the rook lift ...♖f6-g6/h6 to take aim at the white kingside, as games in the book will show you.

Here's a perfect illustration of how 'standard' play can go horribly wrong against the Old Indian:

Example 1

J.Brenninkmeijer-Je.Piket

Wijk aan Zee 1987

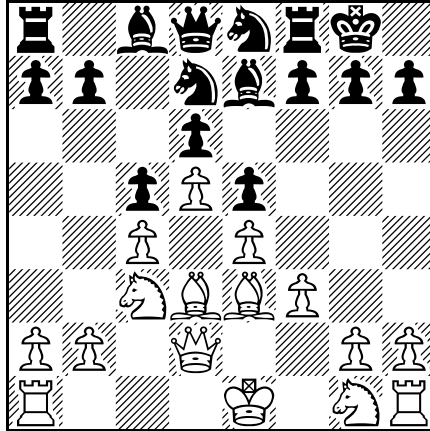
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♗c3 ♗bd7 4 e4 e5 5 d5 ♙e7 6 ♙e3 0-0 7 f3

White sets up the Sämisch structure.

7...c5

For the record, I will not be covering ...c7-c5 lines in this book. I prefer to leave the c5-square free for the d7-knight (see Chapter Three).

8 ♙d2 ♗e8 9 ♙d3



9...♔h8

Black mustn't play stereotypical moves either. For instance, after the immediate 9...g6, White can latch onto the weakness created to play on the h-file with 10 ♖g2 ♜g7 11 ♔h6 ♞f6 12 h4 ♔h8 13 h5! and White is having a great time in E.Vegh-Ka.Wolter, Münster 1992.

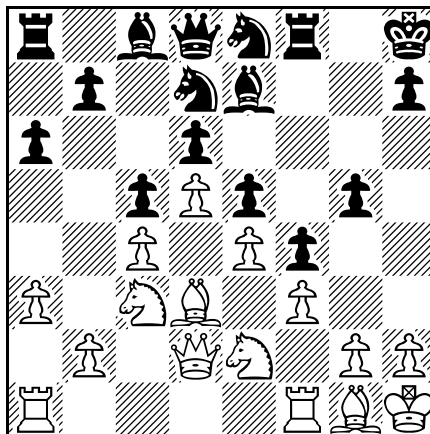
10 ♖g2 a6 11 0-0

Only when White has castled does Black prepare ...f7-f5 with his next move.

11...g6 12 a3 f5 13 ♔h1

Another way to make sure Black doesn't get the lion's share of activity is to play 13 exf5 gxf5 14 f4 e4 15 ♔c2 with equal chances. White will be aiming for g2-g4 to wreck the opposing pawn chain, while Black will try to prevent that from happening by pressing on the g-file and gunning for the white king.

13...f4 14 ♔g1 g5



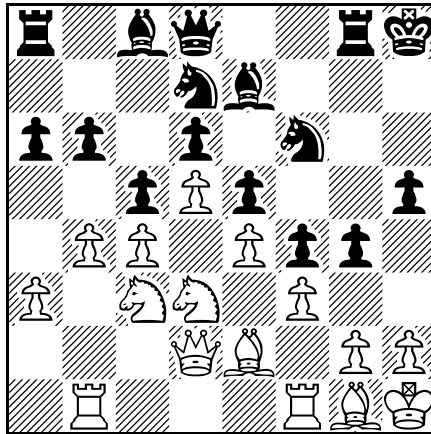
All of a sudden, Black has a souped-up Classical King's Indian-style attack, without hav-

ing to waste time getting the king's bishop out of the way!

15 ♖c1

If White tries 15 g4 (a standard defensive idea in the KID), we see a further plus point to having the bishop on e7 in that the black king can easily make way for the rook: 15...h5 16 h3 ♖g7 17 ♖g2 ♜h8 and Black has the initiative.

15...h5 16 ♗e2 ♜g8 17 ♘d3 ♘ef6 18 b4 b6 19 ♝ab1 g4

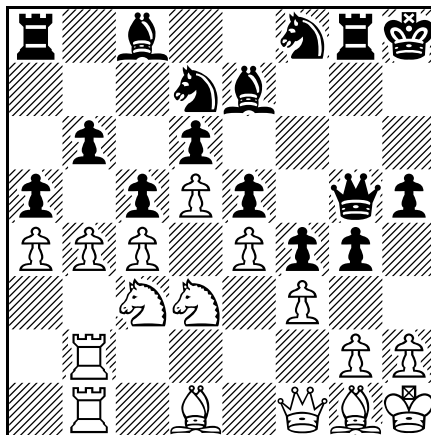


The dark-squared bishop isn't exactly badly placed on the e7-square, as the g-file is clear for barnstorming activities. In fact Black's attack is already reaching dangerous proportions while White is barely starting his queenside intentions.

20 ♜b2 ♚f8 21 ♜fb1 ♚g7 22 ♚e1 ♘h7 23 ♚f1 ♚g5 24 ♗d1 ♘hf8 25 a4?!

If 25 ♗a4, Black can continue on the kingside with 25...h4!.

25...a5!



After this master stroke, suddenly White has nothing to aim at on the queenside and

must watch helplessly as Black takes his sweet time to build the ideal kingside breakthrough.

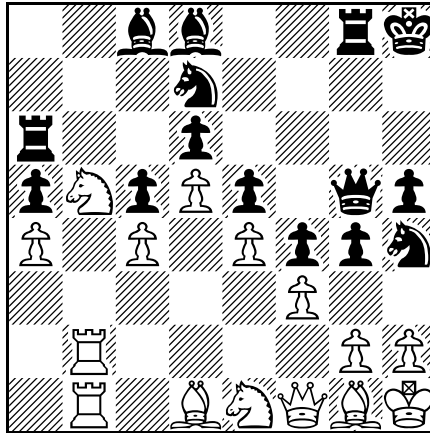
26 bxc5 bxc5 27 ♖e1 ♙d8!

Now Piket plays a couple of defensive moves to cover the queenside squares.

28 ♘b5 ♜a6 29 ♘d3 ♘g6

Not falling for 29...♗f6? 30 ♗xd6! ♜xd6 31 ♙xc5, when White breaks into the queenside with strong play; e.g. 31...♗d7 32 ♜b8 ♙a6 33 ♙xf8 ♙xf8 34 ♗c5 ♗d6 35 ♜a8, winning material.

30 ♖e1 ♗h4



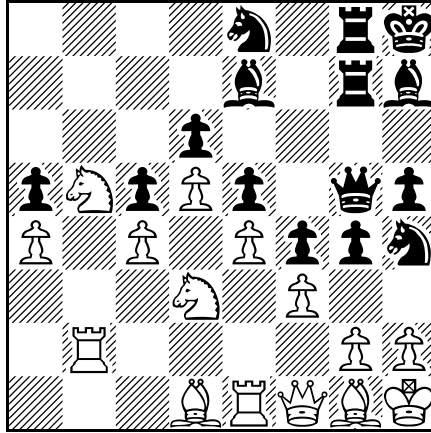
The rest is just Black building and building until the attack reaches insurmountable proportions.

31 ♙b3 ♗f6 32 ♘d3

With the bishop impeding the rooks on the b-file, the piece for two pawns sacrifice doesn't work as well after 32 ♗xd6 ♜xd6 33 ♙xc5 ♗d7.

32...♙d7 33 ♜e1 ♙e8 34 ♙d1 ♜b6 35 ♜a2 ♙g6 36 ♜b2 ♙h7 37 ♜a2 ♗e8 38 ♜b2 ♜b7 39 ♜a2 ♜bg7 40 ♜b2 ♙e7

Only one pawn has been exchanged since the start of the game, but it is obvious that Black is poised for a breakthrough. First, Piket reorganizes his minor pieces, cheekily returning the dark-squared bishop to its home square.



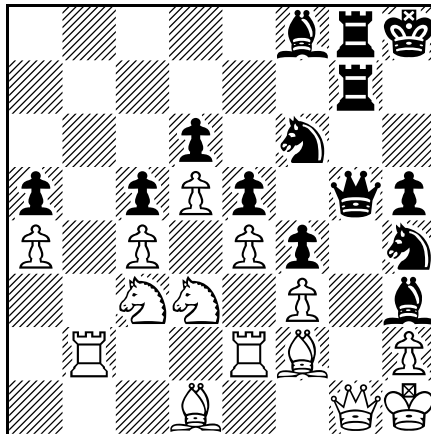
41 ♖a2

Rather than just sitting there, White might at least have tried to do something on the queenside, even if it would be ultimately futile; e.g. 41 ♖a7 ♜f6 42 ♜c6 ♙f8 43 ♜d8 (or 43 ♜xa5 gxf3 44 ♙xf3 ♜xf3 45 ♛xf3 ♛h4 46 ♙f2 ♜g3!) 43...gxf3 44 gxf3 ♜xe4! 45 ♜e6 ♛f5 46 ♜xg7 ♜xg7 47 fxe4? ♛xe4+ and wins.

41...♙f8 42 ♜b2 ♜f6 43 ♜c3 ♙g6 44 ♜b1 ♙e8 45 ♙f2 ♙d7 46 ♜b2

Black has finally achieved his optimum set-up and pulls the trigger.

46...gxf3 47 gxf3 ♜g2! 48 ♜ee2 ♙h3 49 ♛g1 ♜h4



The queen trade removes White's only reliable defensive piece, after which there's no way to stop Black from utilizing the g-file for the kill.

50 ♛xg5 ♜xg5 51 ♜e1 ♙g2+

This windmill bishop will collect a truckload of material.

52 ♙g1 ♙xf3+ 53 ♙f1 ♙g2+ 54 ♙g1

Or 54 ♔e2 ♘f3.

54...♙xe4+ 0-1

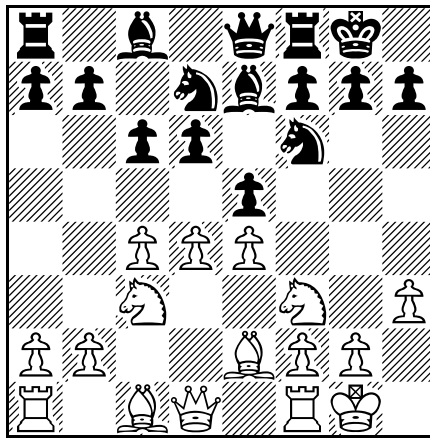
In recent years, Old Indian mavens have surmised that the king's bishop might be better placed on the queenside (!) and so, in conjunction with ...♖e8, the bishop is rerouted via the d8-square to a5 (putting pressure on the e4-pawn by attacking the c3-knight), or b6 (to increase central tension on a pawn or knight on d4), or to c7 (to protect the d6- and e5-pawns). Sometimes, the bishop can assist in a powerful kingside attack from b6 as it radiates power down the g1-a7 diagonal. Although the following game was played at blitz speed, it is a good cautionary tale about the danger of the ever-lurking Old Indian bishop.

Example 2

Zhu Chen-I.Krush

Women's World Blitz Championship, Khanty-Mansiysk 2014

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘f3 ♘bd7 4 ♘c3 e5 5 e4 ♙e7 6 ♙e2 0-0 7 0-0 c6 8 h3 ♖e8!?



The queen and bishop dance (...♖e8-e7, ...♙d8-b6/c7/a5) was recommended in a 1984 32-page opening monograph by Leonard Pickett, *The Old Indian Renewed*. The point is to use the queen (rather than the king's rook) to maintain the strongpoint on e5, while the bishop finds greener pastures on the queenside outside the pawn chain. Typically in the Old Indian, the bishop goes to f8 and sometimes g7, giving it a King's Indian character. In 2002, in *New In Chess Yearbook 63*, Argentine IMs Diego Adla and Pablo Glavina drew attention to the queen and bishop regrouping, calling ...♖e8 "the drastic solution" to address the passive position of the dark-squared bishop. Let's see how Krush's Old Indian bishop performs in this game.

9 ♖e1

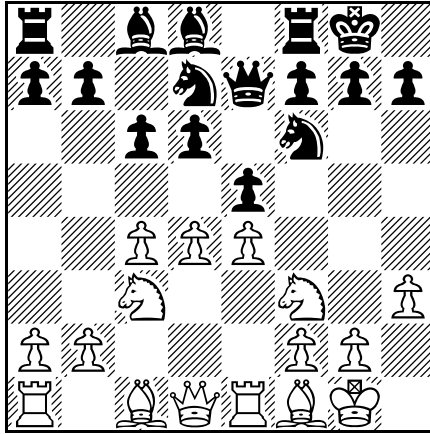
The Old Indian: Move by Move

We look at 9 ♖e3 ♗d8 in Game 13 (in the second part of Chapter One).

9...♗d8

The re-routing of the bishop is also seen in the Snake Benoni: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♘c3 exd5 5 cxd5 ♗d6, where the bishop tends to move to c7 and a5. How is it that Black can afford to waste so many moves switching the queen and bishop around? The main reason is that the position is relatively closed and there are no sudden breaks to catch Black out (unless the thematic c4-c5 works).

10 ♗f1 ♚e7



11 b3

Instead:

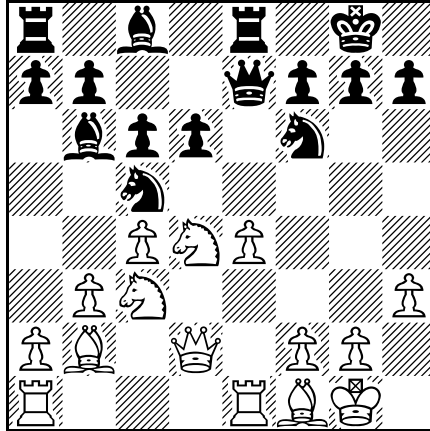
a) 11 ♗e3 ♗a5! is covered (by transposition) in Game 11.

b) 11 b4 ♗b6 12 c5?! ♗c7 sees White having released the centre tension too soon, and Black's 'Indian' bishop is well placed to take advantage with 13 cxd6 ♚xd6 14 ♖b1 exd4 15 ♚xd4 (not 15 ♘xd4?? ♚h2 mate) 15...♚xd4 16 ♘xd4, when the position is roughly equal.

11...♖e8 12 ♗b2

After 12 ♗a3, the active moves ...♗a5 or ...♗b6 might be shelved in favour of defending the d6-pawn (and vicariously the e5-pawn) with 12...♗c7. For example, 13 ♚c2 ♘h5 14 ♖ad1 ♚f6 15 ♖e3 ♘f8 16 ♘e2 ♘f4 17 dxe5 dxe5 18 ♗b2 ♘xe2+ 19 ♚xe2 ♘e6 with even chances.

12...♗b6 13 ♚d2 exd4 14 ♘xd4 ♘c5



Black should be happy with the outcome of the opening. Her bishop is well placed and the seeming weakness at d6 is pretty hard to get at.

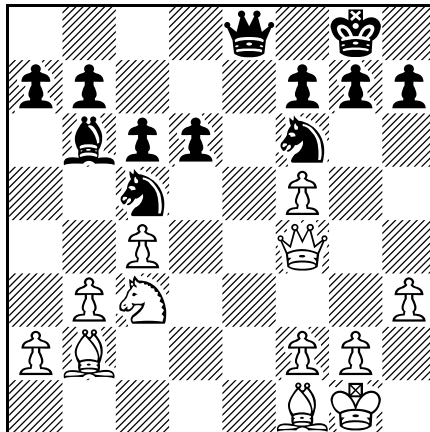
15 ♘f5?!

Premature; now Black really has no problems. It was better to play a game of restraint with 15 ♖ad1 ♙d7 16 ♚c2 a5 17 ♜e2 ♖ad8, when White perhaps has a slight edge.

15...♙xf5 16 exf5 ♚d7 17 ♜f4 ♜xe1 18 ♜xe1 ♜e8!

Setting a cute trap based on the loose d6-pawn.

19 ♜xe8+ ♚xe8



20 ♚xd6??

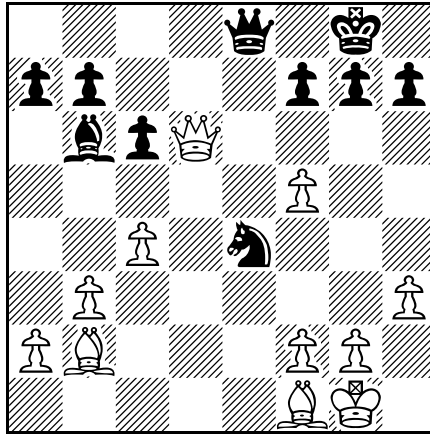
White should have preferred 20 ♘d1 ♚e7 21 g4, although it's not easy to improve her position even with the bishop pair.

20...♘ce4!

All of a sudden, the f2-pawn falls and the weakened dark squares are irredeemably ex-

posed.

21 ♖xe4 ♗xe4



Life sucks. The white queen simply has no good squares to go to, despite having the run of the entire board.

22 ♛e5

After 22 ♛a3 ♙xf2+ 23 ♚h1 (or 23 ♚h2 ♛b8+) 23...♗g3+ 24 ♚h2 ♗xf1+ 25 ♚h1 ♛e1, White gets mated.

22...♙xf2+ 23 ♚h2

Or 23 ♚h1 ♗g3+ 24 ♚h2 ♗xf1+ 25 ♚h1 ♛xe5 with a decisive advantage position for Black.

23...♙g3+

It is fitting that the zigzag bishop delivers the *coup de grâce*.

24 ♛xg3 ♗xg3 25 ♚xg3 ♛e3+ 26 ♚h2 ♛f2 0-1

Don't underestimate that zigzag Old Indian bishop!

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my editors GM John Emms and IM Byron Jacobs for allowing me to make chess writing a viable and enjoyable career. I also greatly appreciate the efforts of CC-SIM Jonathan Tait for his extremely careful and thorough editing of the book draft. Also, a note of thanks to IM Andrew Martin, whose flamboyant Old Indian games have demonstrated that the defence is not a stodgy, safe, secondary opening to get out of the opening alive. Finally, I am especially grateful to my wife, WFM Yip Fong Ling, for her incredible patience and for continuing to believe in me.

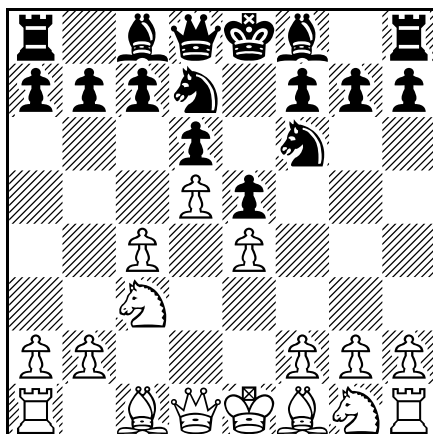
Chapter Two

Sämisch-style Set-ups and Early d4-d5 Systems

In this chapter, we will examine lines where White seizes space with an early d4-d5 and/or supports the centre with f2-f3 in the style of the Sämisch King's Indian (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♞c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 6 f3).

The First Few Moves

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♞c3 ♞bd7 4 e4 e5 5 d5



White closes the centre immediately and establishes a space advantage. On occasion, White will claim more territory on the kingside: with g2-g4 and h2-h4 (in the f2-f3 set-up), or h2-h3 and g2-g4 (in ♙c2 lines).

We will examine the Sämisch-like 5 ♞ge2 c6 6 f3 in Games 16 to 18, though there are

many transpositional possibilities back and forth, since d4-d5 is often played later on. As in the Sämisch itself, White has the flexibility of castling on both sides of the board.

5...♞c5

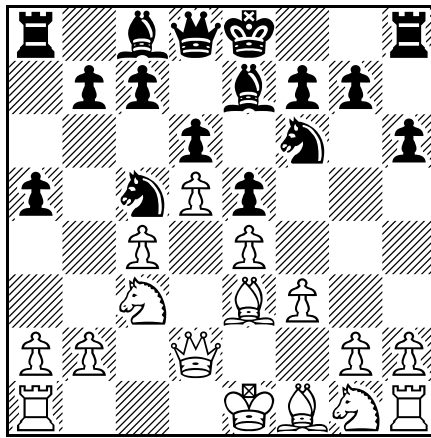
Black attacks the e4-pawn and prepares to anchor the knight on its current outpost with ...a7-a5.

Playing 5...♞e7 6 ♞e3 0-0 first is also possible, when 7 f3 c6 8 ♚d2 may transpose to 5 ♞ge2 lines above, unless White opts to do without this move. However, 5...♞e7 is less accurate due to 6 ♞d3, when White can meet 6...♞c5 with 7 ♞c2 (see the first note to Game 25).

6 f3

A critical option is to defend the pawn with 6 ♚c2, This is examined in Section C.

6...a5 7 ♞e3 ♞e7 8 ♚d2 h6



The basic set-up for this variation. Black may go on to attack on the queenside with ...c7-c6, ...a5-a4 and ...♚a5, or play more sedately ...b7-b6 to support the knight. Another useful plan is to prepare the trade of dark-squared bishops with ...h7-h6 and ...♞fd7/♞h7, intending ...♞g5.

A) Sämisch-style f2-f3 with an early ♞ge2

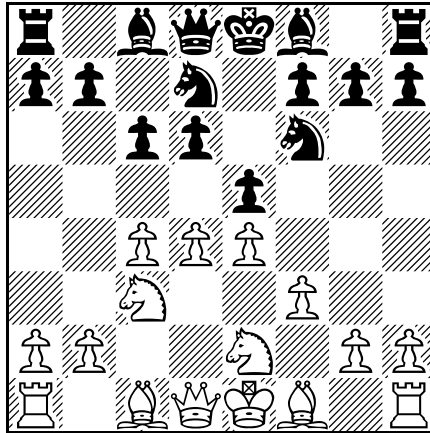
In Game 16, we see a superb demonstration by GM Dorfman of why it is not a good idea for White to maintain the tension for too long (8 ♚d2?!) since Black can strike back in the centre with 8...d5!. Hence 8 d5 is stronger, examined first in Game 17 which introduces Black's attempt to trade dark-squared bishops with ...h7-h6 and ...♞g5. In Game 18, White's play is refined yet again, meeting Black's bishop-trading policy by g2-g3 and f3-f4, with the idea of creating a big pawn centre and opening lines against the black kingside.

Game 16
I.A. Novikov-J. Dorfman
 USSR Championship, Lvov 1984

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 ♘bd7 4 e4 e5 5 ♘ge2 c6

Black can also play 5...♗e7 first, when 6 f3 0-0 7 ♗e3 c6 transposes, while 6 d5 ♘c5 7 f3 a5 8 ♗e3 (without ...c7-c6) is examined in Games 20 and 21.

6 f3

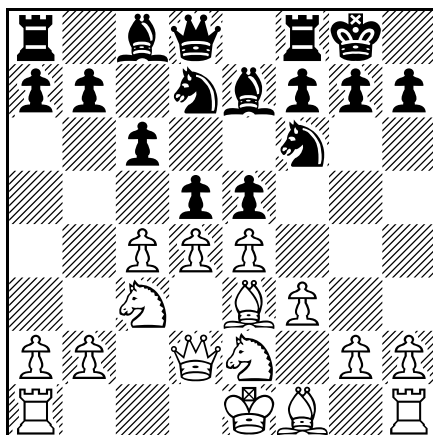


In the King's Indian Defence, the Sämisch is a fearsome variation, where the solid pawn centre formation gives White the possibility of launching a kingside attack or using the space advantage accorded to throttle his opponent.

6...♗e7 7 ♗e3 0-0 8 ♖d2?!

This is a natural move in the King's Indian; indeed, the equivalent 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 ♘ge2 c6 8 ♖d2 was a favourite of Karpov in the nineties. In the Old Indian position, however, White needs to play 8 d5!, as examined in the next two games. Leaving the pawn on d4 is not advisable because of Black's next move.

8...d5!



Black blasts open the centre while White is still comparatively undeveloped.

Question: Why does this work here and not in the King's Indian?

Answer: The difference is that Black has only spent one move developing his dark-squared bishop (...♗e7 as opposed to ...g7-g6 and ...♗g7) and has used the other one on ...♗bd7. In the King's Indian line from the previous note, he hasn't played that yet, so 8...d5? would just lose the e-pawn, while 8...♗bd7 is then met by either 9 d5 (Karpov's usual choice) or 9 0-0-0 (when 9...d5? is still unplayable); in V.Ostakhnovich-S.Stavroyany, Kiev 2011, White decided upon the slow 9 g3?! and was duly hit by 9...d5!.

9 cxd5

The most logical way to capture, towards the centre. Instead:

a) 9 exd5 cxd5 10 0-0-0 (10 cxd5 would transpose to the game) 10...dxc4 11 ♖g3 exd4 12 ♗xd4 ♗b6 was agreed drawn in E.Gasanov-G.Matjushin, Odessa 2005. But Black doesn't have to automatically recapture here; instead, he can play 9...♗b6! 10 ♖g3 exd4 11 ♗xd4 cxd5 12 cxd5 ♗fxd5 13 ♖d1 ♗g5 with the initiative.

b) 9 ♖g3 allows Black to exchange favourably with 9...dxe4 10 dxe5 (after 10 ♗cxe4 ♗xe4 11 ♗xe4, H.Mecking-G.Vescovi, Brazilian Championship, Campinas 2011, Black can seize the initiative with 11...f5! 12 ♗c3 ♗h4+ 13 g3 f4 14 ♗f2 ♗g5! 15 0-0-0 fxg3 16 ♗e3 exd4 17 ♗xg5 dxc3 18 bxc3 ♗a5, when the exposed white king gives him a lasting attack) 10...♗xe5 11 ♖gxe4 ♗e6 12 c5 ♗xe4 13 ♗xe4 ♗h4+ 14 ♗f2 ♗d5! 15 ♗xh4 ♗xh4+ 16 ♗f2 ♗f4 (16...♗e7! is even stronger) 17 ♗e2 ♗xe4 18 fxe4 ♗xe4 and Black is on top, A.Moiseenko-H.Jurkovic, Ceske Budejovice 1995.

9...cxd5 10 exd5

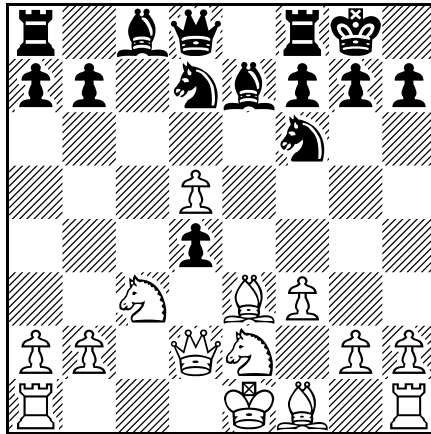
Perhaps not the most accurate response. White is already behind in development and so, ideally, should focus on mobilizing his troops and getting his king out of the centre pronto, instead of making central pawn trades. 10 dxe5 ♗xe5 11 ♖xd5 is even more un-

wise due to 11...♗xd5 12 ♖xd5 ♗d3+! 13 ♕d2 ♗b4 with a strong initiative.

The most prudent course seems to be 10 ♗g3!? dxe4 11 0-0-0 (development is the name of the game; White shouldn't sweat losing pawns) 11...exd4 12 ♗xd4 exf3 13 gxf3 with compensation.

10...exd4

Opening lines in the centre before White can consolidate.



Exercise: Based on general principles, with which piece should White recapture?

11 ♗xd4

This recapture doesn't seem the most accurate, since White now requires another knight move to develop the f1-bishop. And 11 ♖xd4?! is clearly inferior, due to 11...♗c5 12 ♖d2 ♗xe3 13 ♖xe3 ♗b6, when Black regains the pawn with the better game.

Answer: The best option looks to be 11 ♗xd4 ♗b6 12 d6 (seeing no good way to keep the pawn, White displaces a black piece in the hope of enacting exchanges) 12...♖xd6 (12...♗xd6 13 ♗db5 ♗e5 14 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 is fairly equal) 13 ♗db5 ♖c6 (here 13...♖xd2+ 14 ♗xd2 ♗f5 might still offer Black a little something) 14 ♗d4 ♖d6 15 ♗db5 ♖c6 16 ♗d4 and a truce was agreed in Ol.Jakobsen-Kl.Berg, Danish Championship, Vejle 1982.

11...♗b6

Now Black regains the pawn with a developmental edge.

12 ♗f4

The queenside wasn't that safe a haven after 12 0-0-0 ♗bxd5 13 ♖b1 ♗f5+ 14 ♖a1 ♗b4 15 a3?? (White has to give up a pawn with 15 g4 ♗c2+ 16 ♖b1 ♗xd4+ 17 gxf5 ♗xf5) 15...♗c2+ 16 ♖a2 ♖a5! 17 ♗e4 ♖d5+ 18 b3 ♗xe4 and White resigned (albeit a little prematurely), H.Herraiz Hidalgo-L.Bernal Moro, Spanish Team Championship 1995.

12...♗bxd5

The other recapture, 12...♗fxd5, might be more precise, as White then has fewer op-

tions: 13 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 transposes to the game; while 13 ♗xb6 (13 0-0-0?? loses to 13...♗xf4 and the knight is untouchable due to ...♗g5) 13...♗xb6 14 0-0-0 looks somewhat precarious for White. For example, 14...♖c7 (or just 14...♗xd2+ 15 ♖xd2 ♗c5 16 ♗fd5 ♖xd5 17 ♖xd5 ♗e6 with the two bishops) 15 ♖b1 (or 15 ♗d3 ♗f6) 15...♗b4 16 ♗fd5 ♖xd5 17 ♖xd5 ♗xd2 18 ♗xc7 ♗f5+ 19 ♗d3 ♗xd3+ 20 ♖a1 ♖ac8 21 ♖xd2 ♖fd8 22 ♖c1 g5!, followed by ...♗g6 with a good endgame for Black.

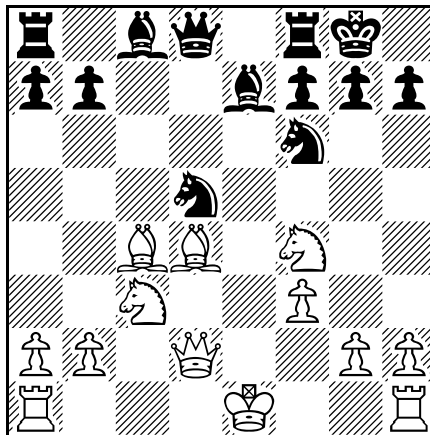
13 ♗fxd5?!

White plays to win a pawn (with a discovered attack on d5) but neglects his development still further. Other moves:

a) 13 0-0-0 is met by 13...♖c7 14 ♗fxd5 ♖xd5, when 15 ♗xg7? (even worse than in the game; but 15 ♖b1 ♗b4 16 a3 ♗f5+ 17 ♗e4 ♗c6 18 ♗c3 ♖fd8 is also difficult for White) 15...♖d8! 16 ♗d4 (or 16 ♖h6 ♖d6) 16...♗f5 17 ♖h6 f6 18 ♗d3 ♗xd3 19 ♖xd3 ♗f4 20 ♖d2 ♖xd4! 21 ♖xd4 ♗e2+ wins for Black.

b) 13 ♗c4?! ♗b4 14 0-0-0 ♖c7 15 ♗b3 a5 16 ♖b1?? (the king is actually more vulnerable here; White had to play 16 g4!, preventing ...♗f5, with an unclear position) 16...♗f5+ 17 ♖a1 a4 18 ♗xa4 ♖xa4! 19 ♗xa4 ♖c4 20 b3 ♗c2+ was winning for Black already in V.Mihajlovic-G.Vojinovic, Obrenovac 2004.

Going back to 13 ♗c4?! again:



Exercise: Mihajlovic-Vojinovic looked fairly conclusive, but Black had a stronger continuation than 13...♗b4. What was it?

Answer: He had the instructive 13...♗xf4! 14 ♖xf4 ♗h5 (gaining tempi on the enemy queen to improve piece placement) 15 ♖d2 (if 15 ♖e4 then 15...♗f5! 16 ♖xf5 ♖xd4 17 ♖xh5 ♖ad8! 18 ♖d1 ♖xc4 19 ♖f2 f5! 20 ♖he1 ♖xd1 21 ♖xd1 ♖b4 wins on the queenside while the white queen is out of the game) 15...♗g5 16 ♖f2 ♗f4 17 0-0 ♗e6! 18 ♗b5 (or 18 ♗xe6 ♗d3!) 18...a6 19 ♗b6 ♖f6 20 ♗a4 ♗h4 21 ♖e3 ♖g5 22 g4 ♗xg4 23 ♗e4 ♖g6 24 fxg4

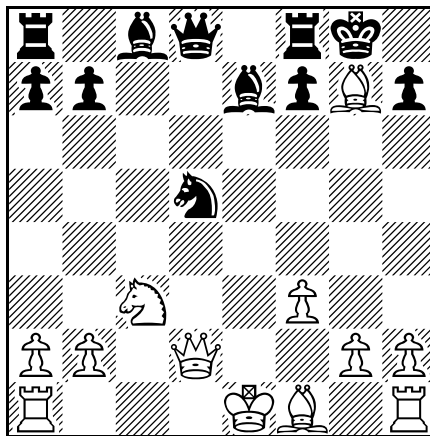
♖xg4+ 25 ♘g3 ♙xg3 26 hxg3 ♘d5, when Black regains the piece and remains two pawns up.

c) 13 ♙e2 allows Black to activate his pieces in a similar, if not so devastating way: 13...♘xf4 14 ♗xf4 ♘h5 15 ♗d2 (or 15 ♗e4 ♖e8 16 ♚d1 ♙b4 17 ♙e5 ♗e7 is also unpalatable for White) 15...♙g5 16 ♙e3 ♙xe3 17 ♗xe3 ♗h4+ 18 ♗f2 ♗b4 and Black has a persistent initiative.

d) 13 ♚d1! looks like the best way for White to solve his problems. After 13...♘b4 (this time 13...♘xf4 14 ♗xf4 ♘h5 15 ♗d2 ♙g5 16 ♙e3 is fine for White) 14 ♙c4 (or 14 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 15 a3 ♘c6 16 ♗xd8 ♚xd8 17 ♚xd8+ ♙xd8) 14...♗xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♘c2+ 16 ♙f1 ♘xd4 17 ♚xd4, White can complete development with g2-g4 and ♙g2, and Black's only advantage is his two bishops.

13...♘xd5 14 ♙xg7?

Again, White should look to his development with 14 ♙e2 ♙g5 15 ♗d1 ♙f5 16 0-0 ♘e3 17 ♙xe3 ♙xe3+ 18 ♙h1, when Black has the two bishops and the initiative but no concrete route to a clear advantage.



Exercise: White wins a pawn due to the discovered attack on d5, but Dorfman wasn't at all concerned by this. Why not?

Answer: The desperado bishop sacrifice only helps Black to mobilize his rook; now White will have to suffer the consequences.

14...♖e8!

With a serious threat of discovered check. 14...♙xg7? 15 ♘xd5 would be fine for White.

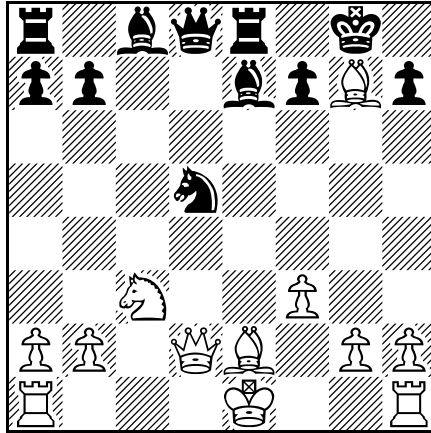
15 ♙e2

Somewhat belatedly, White shows prudence and develops a piece, trying to ward off the dangers down the e-file. Other options are hopeless:

a) 15 0-0-0? ♙g5 16 f4 ♙xf4 17 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 18 ♚xd8 ♚xd8 left Black the exchange up for

nothing in V.Zilberstein-V.Utemov, Smolensk 1992.

b) 15 ♖xd5?? is even worse: 15...♗f6+! 16 ♔f2 (16 ♔d1 ♗xc3 17 ♖xd8 ♜xd8+ and 18...♗xg7 wins a piece) 16...♖b6+ 17 ♖g3 ♗xg7 18 ♘e2 (or 18 ♘d1 ♜e5! 19 ♖d2 ♗h6! 20 f4 ♜e4 and White is toast) 18...♗e5+ 19 f4 ♗xb2 and White has no time to evacuate the queen's rook because of the threat of ...♜e3+.



15...♘e3?!

Although this prevents White from castling, there was a stronger alternative.

Exercise: How can Black make better use of the tempo White must spend on retreating his g7-bishop?

Answer: A tricky steed is required to make it work: 15...♘b4! 16 ♗h6 (swapping queens would lose the rook on a1) 16...♗h4+! 17 g3 ♘d3+ 18 ♔d1 (not 18 ♔f1? ♗h3+ 19 ♖g1 ♖d4+ and mates) 18...♘f2+ and Black wins the other rook. After 19 ♔c1 ♘h1 20 gxh4 ♖xh4, White doesn't have the resources to exploit Black's exposed king.

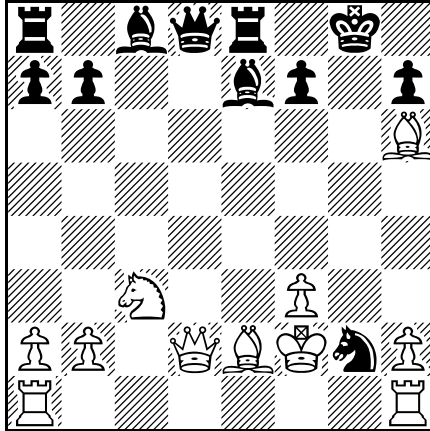
16 ♗h6

Once again, the queen trade loses the exchange after 16 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 17 ♗h6 ♘c2+.

16...♘xg2+ 17 ♔f2??

This hit on the knight appears to hand White a lifeline, but instead Black's initiative is fired up again, this time with powerful afterburners. 17 ♔f1?? was equally bad, due to 17...♗h3! 18 ♜g1 ♗h8 19 ♗xg2 ♜g8 and wins.

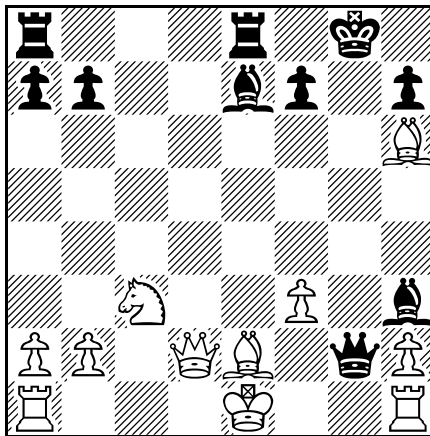
The king had to go the other way: 17 ♔d1!, though Black's development may still count for something; for example, 17...♗h3 18 ♗d3 ♗c5 19 ♖g5+ ♖xg5 20 ♗xg5 h6! 21 ♗xh6 (or 21 ♗d2 ♘h4) 21...♜ad8 22 ♔c2 ♜d6 23 ♗g5 ♗e3!.



Exercise: How does Black execute a sustained attack on the white king?

Answer: Black can ditch the knight to propel his pieces towards the white king, which is driven back into the centre.

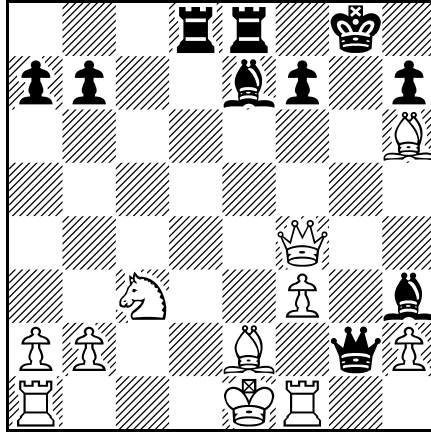
17... ♖b6+! 18 ♔xg2 ♜g6+ 19 ♕f1 ♗h3+ 20 ♔e1 ♜g2!



This is the key move which renders the white pieces totally helpless as the final attacking piece (the d8-rook) comes into the fray.

21 ♜f4

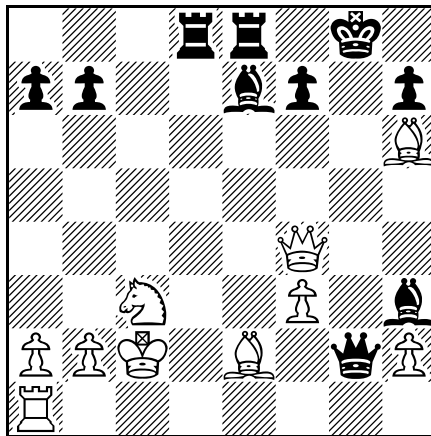
Novikov decides to chuck a rook in an attempt to escape, but there's no denying Black. Trying to save material with 21 ♜f1 ♗ad8 22 ♜f4 allows an immediate and pretty finish.



Exercise: Black to play and mate in two.

Answer: The solution is 22...♖xf1+! 23 ♜xf1 ♜h4 mate. Playing 22...♜h4+ first would take a move longer, due to 23 ♖g3+(!).

21...♖xh1+ 22 ♜d2 ♜ad8+ 23 ♜c2 ♖g2



There's no way for White to exploit the seemingly precariously placed black king. The rest is a cinch for Black, who maintains a devastating initiative and now has a material advantage too.

24 ♜b3 ♜e6+ 25 ♜c4 ♜xc4+ 26 ♖xc4 ♜f6 27 ♖f4 ♜e6 28 ♜d1 ♜xd1 29 ♞xd1 ♜b6+ 30 ♜c4 ♖e2 0-1

White resigned, not waiting to be shown the noose after 31 ♜d5 (or 31 ♜c5 ♖b5 mate) 31...♖e6+ 32 ♜c5 ♖c6 mate.