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Chess

VOLOKITIN VICTORIOUS

UKRAINIAN CHAMPION EDGES
OUT MICKEY ADAMS IN LONDON



A Stunning Start – The early action from the world championship match in Astana



Improve Your Mindset! – Noel Studer ponders successful chess improvement



Don't Forget the Rook! – Brian Escalante takes a look at a striking manoeuvre

Chess

Founding Editor: B.H. Wood, OBE. M.Sc †
Executive Editor: Malcolm Pein
Editors: Richard Palliser, Matt Read
Associate Editor: John Saunders
Advertising: Tao Bhokanandh

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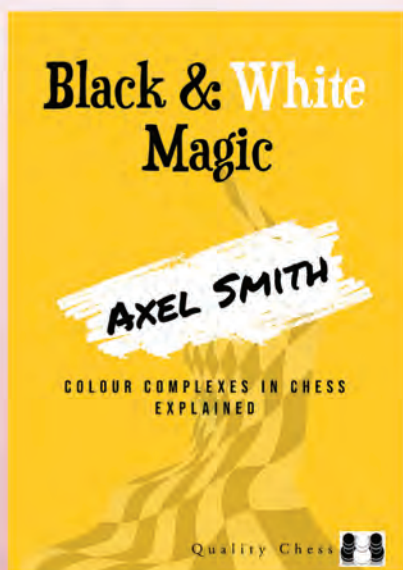
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New from Quality Chess!

Black & White Magic



GM **Axel Smith** came to the realization that understanding colour-complex strategies is one of the key differences between strong and weak players. After many years of delivering lectures and training material to his students, Smith produced a Chessable course on the topic, which has been extensively edited and reorganized by Quality Chess to produce this book.

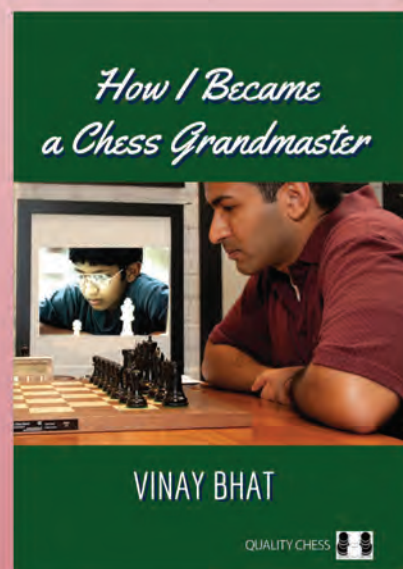
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GM **Axel Smith** is the award-winning author of *The Woodpecker Method*, *Pump Up Your Rating*, *e3 Poison* and *Street Smart Chess*. Using the Woodpecker as part of his training, as an adult he improved from a rating of 2100 to becoming a Grandmaster.

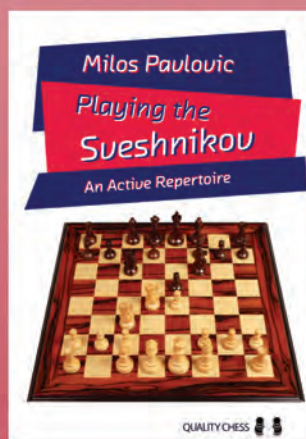
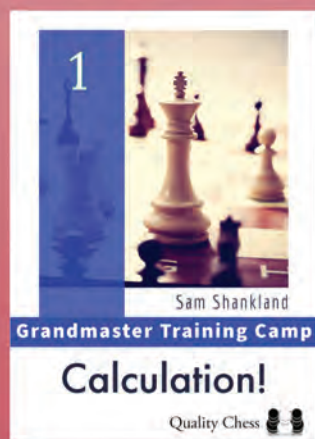
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GM **Vinay Bhat** tells his personal story, charting his path to improvement and the struggles he had to go through. With numerous photographs and anecdotes, **How I Became a Chess Grandmaster** is a book that entertains as it instructs. Follow the inspirational rise of a young player from novice to Grandmaster to carve out your own path to improvement and achieve your chess goals.

GM **Vinay Bhat** became a National Master at the age of 10 and an International Master at 15 – at the time the youngest American IM since Bobby Fischer. He later went on to gain the ultimate title of Grandmaster in his mid-twenties.



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Solidarity



To mark the UK's support of Ukraine, a special match was staged in London between Michael Adams and Andrei Volokitin, which went to the latter after a hard fight

The eight-game match pitched the UK's top grandmaster, Michael Adams, against the three-time and current Ukrainian Champion, Andrei Volokitin, who due to the ongoing war is currently based in Poland. The format was similar to last year's match between the UK and Sweden, which saw David Howell beat Nils Grandelius 5½-4½ in a match played at the Swedish Ambassador's London residence, with the prize-fund of \$45,000 split to incentivise decisive results.

This year's competition, a statement of solidarity between the two countries during Russia's now year-long invasion of Ukraine, was supported by the Ukrainian Embassy and the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, who both hosted half of the match. As was reported in last month's Editorial, publicity for the match was further boosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, who offered the prestigious Speaker's House at the Palace of Westminster as a venue for the opening ceremony, which actually took place the day after the opening game.

The match was organised by Chess in Schools and Communities, thanks to the donation of a private sponsor, and was officiated by International Arbiter Shohreh Bayat, who is herself a tutor for the charity. Shohreh was reprimanded by FIDE for wearing a skirt in the colours of the Ukrainian flag while officiating at the Chess960 World Championship last year.

On paper the match was an intriguing one, both players being hardened professionals with decades of top-level experience, separated by only 22 rating points (Adams 2687, Volokitin 2665), yet never having faced each other over the board.

Game 1 kicked off on Tuesday 21st March at the Ukrainian Embassy with Andrei accompanied by his wife and daughter, as well as by the Ukrainian National Coach, Oleksandr Sulypa, and Michael accompanied by his wife Tara, having flown in the previous day from participating in the German Bundesliga. When play got underway, the players certainly didn't disappoint.



A. Volokitin-M. Adams

Game 1

Giuoco Piano

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♙c5 4 0-0 d6

A subtle move order, designed to avoid 4...♘f6 5 d4!?, although here Volokitin would likely have preferred 5 d3 d6 6 c3 with a transposition.

5 c3 ♘f6 6 d3 a5 7 ♗e1 ♙a7 8 ♘a3! 0-0 9 h3 h6 10 ♘b5

This isn't such a bad square for the knight, unless Black can quickly regroup with ...♘e7 and ...c6, and it forces the black bishop to move for a third time ahead of exchanging it off.

10...♙b6 11 ♙e3 ♙xe3 12 ♗xe3 ♗e8

Sensible and best, especially since 12...♗e7 13 d4 gives White an edge.

13 ♗b3



A new move, if a pretty logical one at that.

13...♙e6 14 ♙xe6 ♗xe6 15 c4!?

A big decision, weakening d4 to clamp down on d5, and Adams now decides to seize some useful enough space of his own.

15...a4 16 ♗d1 ♗d7 17 ♗c1 ♗a6! 18 ♗e2?!

Played with the idea of 18...♘a7 19 d4, but White was perhaps guilty of not talking to his rook on e3 at this point and 18 ♘h4! ♘e7 19 ♗c3 would have cut across Black's plans and likely left him slightly for choice.

18...♘h5!

Adams is quick to seize the initiative on the kingside and even Volokitin's next fails to prevent the knight from advancing into the heart of the white kingside.

19 g3 ♘f4!



20 ♗f1

Necessary as, of course, 20 gxf4? exf4 would both expose the white king and lose the exchange on e3.

20...♗g6 21 ♘h4!

Good active defence, taking the fight to Black and not allowing him a free hand on the kingside.

21...♗g5!

Best. The h-pawn wasn't entirely taboo, but after 21...♘xh3+! 22 ♘h2 ♗f6 23 ♗xh3 ♗xf2+ 24 ♘g2 ♗xh3+ 25 ♘xh3 White is at least OK and Black may not have enough for the piece.

22 ♘h2 ♗h5

Another strong move, as well as one Adams had to see in advance when he sent his knight into f4.

23 ♘f5 ♗e6

The safe choice. Instead, 23...♘h3! 24 g4 ♗xf5 25 gxf5 ♘f4 would have left Black with full positional compensation and decent play for the exchange.

24 f4!?

Volokitin remains determined to defend actively, but by now was already running low on time.

24...♗b6 25 ♗f3?!





Andrei Volokitin (left) was content to try and press with the fashionable *Giucco Piano* against Michael Adams, winning one and drawing the other three, albeit while twice coming under pressure.

There was no need to provoke Black so and 25 ♖g2 would have been somewhat safer.

25...♗xf5!?

This is an even better exchange sacrifice than the one we've just seen, although 25...g6! was arguably even stronger, and if 26 ♖g4 (Black regains his material with interest after 26 g4?! exf4! 27 gxh5 ♖e5) 26...♗h7 27 ♖h4 exf4 28 gxf4 ♖e7 29 ♖f5 ♖f6 when White's position would have begun to creak.

26 exf5 ♖ed4 27 ♖xd4

He didn't have to finally move the knight and 27 ♖g2!? ♖xb5 28 cxb5 ♗xb5 29 f6 was worth a thought, aiming to disrupt matters.

27...♖xd4 28 ♖f2 exf4 29 gxf4 ♖xf5

White is being outplayed and finds himself somewhat on the back foot, since while Black may only have a pawn for the exchange, his knight is a monster and his king much the safer.

30 ♗e4 ♖h7 31 ♗c2 c5!



Securing control of the d4-square ahead of advancing further in the centre...

32 ♗ce2 d5?!

...A policy which probably wasn't the best one, especially with White playing largely just on the 30-second increment and so looking mainly at forcing lines. Instead, 32...♖d8! 33 ♗e8 ♖f6 would have improved the queen

while maintaining full control.

33 cxd5 ♗d6!?

Still playing for the win and so avoiding 33...♖d4 34 ♗xd4! cxd4 35 ♖xd4 ♗d6 36 ♗e5 with a likely draw.

34 ♗e5

Volokitin possibly rejected 34 ♖xc5 ♗xd5 35 ♖f8! ♗xd3 36 ♖e8 due to 36...♖d5, but after 37 ♖e5 White has everything covered and the game might well have ended in a repetition with 37...♖d7 38 ♖e8.

34...f6 35 ♗e8?!

And here 35 ♗e6! ♗xd5 36 ♖g2 ♗xd3 37 ♖e4 would have been a more active and superior defence, if another perhaps not easy to spot with little time.

35...♗xd5 36 ♖g2 ♗xd3 37 ♖e4 ♗d4 38 ♖e6! ♖xe6 39 ♗xe6 b5 40 ♗c6 c4



While Volokitin must have been relieved to reach the time control, the defensive task in front of him doesn't look an especially easy one, not least considering the grinding and positional capabilities of his opponent.

41 ♗f2 b4

A tempting choice, but it may be that 41...♗d5!? was a better try: for example, 42 ♗c7 h5 (angling to get ...h4 and ...♖g3 in) 43 b3! (a big move, and seemingly a decent one) 43...cxb3 44 axb3 axb3 45 ♗c3 ♖d4 46 ♖g2 ♖g6 47 ♗d2! ♖f5 48 ♗xb3 ♖xf4 49 ♖f2 when Black has three pawns for the



A little bird just told me

A round-up of what the top players and chess personalities have been saying on Twitter

Andriy Volokitin - @AndriyVolokitin

Solidarity match UK v UKRAINE ended with the victory of UKRAINE. I am very happy to see the Ukrainian flag at the big chess event. Many thanks to @TelegraphChess, @schools-chess, @EBRD, @UkrEmbLondon and all the people involved in organizing this unique event.

Chess24.com - @chess24com

"I guess the reason is maybe we are not that professional as Magnus!" quipped Ding Liren when asked why there were so many decisive games in the current World Championship match. It's a rest day, so plenty of time to catch up with all the action/recaps!

Jonathan Tisdall - @GMjtis

Watching Ian's gracious moment of resignation today just reminded me of how sympathetic I find both players in general. Easy to root for either of them, as they climb their respective mountains. #NepoDing

Levon Aronian - @LevAronian

I hope the intensity and beauty of this #chess World Championship will remind people that classical chess is quite often far more watchable and exciting than blitz or rapid chess. A chess boom combined with a lack of classical events does not make sense.

Women's Chess Coverage - @OnTheQueenside

Lei Tingjie not only won the Candidates(!), she broke her own rating record for her career! She also climbs to No. 5 in the world, one spot ahead of the World Champion who she'll face in July!

Adam Raof - @adamraof

Two Grandmaster norms at Southend thanks to Lance Leslie-Smith for organising! Ameet Kumar Ghasi and Mahel Boyer.

2700chess - @2700chess

Indian 16 y/o Pranav, V gains 51.5(!) rating points in his last three tournaments and moves to World Junior #17

Garry Kasparov - @Kasparov63

Thanks for the birthday wishes. 60! Who can believe it? I may not be this 'young firebrand' anymore, and my diet has had to change with age, but my family and a steady diet of new challenges have kept my fires burning! What passion keeps your spirit young?

exchange and might well fancy his chances over the board, even if the engines assess the position as objectively being close to level.

42 ♖c5! ♜e3 43 f5!?

Having driven the knight forwards, White might have attacked it: 43 ♖e2 ♘d3 44 ♔g1, with good chances to hold.

43...b3!?

Play quickly fizzles out after this. As such, 43...♘d3! was likely a better try, although after 44 ♖f3! (and not 44 ♖e2? c3) 44...b3 (44...♘d1 45 ♖f4! ♜xb2 46 ♖c7 followed by ♖g4 also gives White enough counterplay) 45 axb3 axb3 46 h4! White seems to be able to hold, as with 46...c3 47 bxc3 ♘d2+ 48 ♔g3 b2 49 ♖b5 ♜c4 50 ♖f2.

44 axb3 cxb3 45 ♖a5!

Slamming the brakes on any notion of a timely ...a3.

45...h5 46 ♖e2 ♘d3 47 ♖f2 ♘d4

There's no longer any real way for Black to make progress.

48 ♖e2 ♘d3 49 ♖f2 ♘d4 ½-½

Game 2 initially appeared to be going well for home fans, Adams building up a pleasant position, but he then uncharacteristically allowed Black some counterplay.

M.Adams-A.Volokitin Game 2



28 ♔h1!?

Adams has secured a typical Mickey edge in a Moscow Sicilian and here 28 ♜e3! ♜c5 29 h3 (Pein) would have retained that small advantage.

28...b5!

Volokitin seizes the chance to liberate his position.

29 axb5 axb5 30 ♜e3 ♖c5 31 b4! ♖b6 32 ♖e1

The queen was doing a decent enough job on h4 and there was no especially good reason not to improve the dormant bishop with 32 ♘d3.

32...♜d6! 33 ♖d2 ♜c4 34 ♘xc4 bxc4 35 c3 ♖b5 36 ♘d8?

Underestimating a second pawn advance. Black would also have been for choice after 36 ♘d5 ♘xd5 37 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 38 ♖xd5 e4!, so perhaps White should have sat tight with, say, 36 h3!?

36...e4!



37 f4?

Making matters worse, although even after 37 fxe4 ♖b7 38 ♜d5 ♘xd5 39 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 40 ♖xd5 White would have been suffering, albeit with the draw still in sight, as shown by 40...♘xc3 41 b5 ♖xe4 42 g3 ♖e5 43 ♖xe5 ♘xe5 44 b6 c3 45 b7 c2 46 ♘g5 f6 47 ♘e3 and White ought to manage to hold.

37...♖b8! 38 ♘g5 f6

Simply netting a clear pawn.

39 f5!? gxf5 40 ♘h4 f4

It's become a dream version of a Sveshnikov for Black and even Adams now failed to offer any real resistance.

41 ♜d5?

41 ♜c2 ♖e5 42 ♜d4 was grim, but likely also the last try.

41...♖e5 42 ♜xf4 ♘h6

Seizing a deadly initiative.

43 ♖f1 e3 44 ♖c2 ♘f5! 45 ♖e2 ♘xf4 46 ♖xc4+ ♘e6

46...♔g7 47 ♖xf4 e2 48 ♘e1 ♖a8 also does the business.

47 ♖xf4 e2! 48 ♖f3 ♘d8

The e-pawn is simply far too strong.

49 h3 ♘d1+ 50 ♔h2 e1 ♖ 51 ♘xe1 ♖xe1 52 b5 ♔f7 53 ♔g3 h4+! 54 ♔h2 ♔g6 0-1

After a fairly solid draw in Game 3, where Volokitin pressed for a bit, it was time for Adams to finally make his class tell and this time he made no mistake, reaping the rewards from some unusually aggressive play on the kingside.

M.Adams-A.Volokitin Game 4 Sicilian Chekhover

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4

Deviating from 3 ♘b5+ ♜d7 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♜xd4!? ♜gf6 6 ♘d3 ♜c5 7 ♜c3 g6 8 0-0 ♘g7 9 ♖e1 0-0 10 ♘f1 b6 11 f3 ♘b7 12 ♘e3 a6, which was probably OK for Black at this stage in Game 2.

3...cxd4 4 ♖xd4 ♜f6 5 ♘e2 ♜c6 6 ♖e3!?

A modern twist as White keeps the d-file clear for the king's rook.

6...g6 7 0-0 ♘g7 8 ♘d1 0-0 9 ♜c3

We've reached another Dragon-type position where you might feel Black should be OK, but just watch what happens. As such, perhaps here 9...♜b4 10 ♖d2 ♘e6 11 a3

♜c6 would be prudent and Black might even consider 9...♘g4!? 10 e5 ♜e8.

9...♜g4 10 ♖g5!?

Revealing some perhaps unexpected aggressive intent.

10...♘xc3!?

A risky choice, possibly overly so, and similarly 10...♘f6 11 ♖f4 ♖b6 12 ♖g3 ♘xc3!? 13 bxc3 ♖c5 (Druska-Martinovic, Slovakian League 2019) 14 h3 ♜f6 15 ♘d3 ♖xc3 16 ♖b1 feels quite pleasant for White.

11 bxc3 ♖a5 12 ♖h4!?



Gambiting for the attack, although 12 ♖xa5 ♜xa5 13 h3 ♜f6 14 e5 was by no means impossible, with chances for a lasting nibble.

12...♖xc3 13 ♘d2 ♖f6

Alternatively, after 13...♖c5 14 h3 ♜f6 15 ♘g5 ♘e6! Black should be maintaining the rough balance, but not here 15...♖xc2?! 16 ♘b5! ♘d7 17 ♖dc1 ♖b2 18 ♖ab1! with the initiative and decent compensation for White.

14 ♘g5 ♖e6?!

Black should have been happy enough to return the pawn to eliminate White's unopposed bishop. Moreover, after 14...♖c3! 15 ♘xe7 ♜xe7 16 ♖xe7 ♜e5! nothing too bad would have happened, and if 17 ♖xd6 ♜xf3+ 18 ♘xf3 ♘e6 with full compensation for a pawn.

15 ♜d4! ♜xd4 16 ♖xd4 h6?

Drifting further into trouble, although even after 16...♜e5 17 h3 f6 18 ♘h6 g5 19 ♖g3 followed by f2-f4 White would have enjoyed promising play for his pawn.

17 ♘xe7! g5 18 ♖xg4 ♖xe7 19 ♖h5 ♔g7 20 ♖ad1 ♘d8



21 f4!?

By no means the only good choice and a pretty decent case might also be made for

21 h4!, and if 21...gxh4? 22 f4 when Black would just be getting crushed.

21...♙e6?

Volokitin simply had to go in for 21...gxf4! when 22 h4!? (to prevent ...♙g5) 22...♙e6 23 e5 dxe5 24 ♖xe5+ f6! 25 ♖xf4 ♙f7 should be defensible for Black.

22 f5! ♙xa2

Now the bishop gets trapped, but Black is also lost after 22...♙c8 23 ♙c4 or here just 23 ♖f1, and if 23...♙f6 24 e5!.

23 ♖a4 d5 24 ♖xa2 dxe4 25 ♙f1 ♖f6 26 ♖g4



Black has only two pawns for the piece and remains under pressure on both flanks. Unsurprisingly Mickey made no mistake from here on.

26...♙e8 27 ♖a4 e3 28 ♙f3 ♙e7 29 ♖a3 ♙c8 30 c4 ♙c6 31 ♖xa7 ♖b6 32 ♖a3 ♙e5 33 ♖d3 ♙f6 34 h4! gxh4 35 ♖g4+ ♗h7 36 ♖xh4 ♙e8 37 ♖d5 ♙b2 38 ♙e1 ♖g8 39 ♖d4 ♙b4 40 ♖d1 1-0

Following the fourth game, and with the match tied at 2-2, the players had a well-deserved rest day. The match now transferred venue, with the remaining four games being hosted on the 16th floor of the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development. (EBRD) The offices were only completed in October 2022, and indeed King Charles III officially opened the EBRD's new headquarters only a few days before the Solidarity match got underway.

Perhaps feeling less pressure playing away from the Ukrainian Embassy, Volokitin produced his best effort of the match, this time making the Giuoco Piano look like a most potent weapon indeed.

A. Volokitin-M. Adams
Game 5
Giuoco Piano

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♙c4 ♙c5 4 0-0 ♗f6 5 d3 0-0 6 h3 d6 7 c3 ♙b6 8 ♙e1 h6 9 ♗bd2 ♗e7

Beginning a standard regrouping as Black sends the knight round to the kingside, while freeing the c-pawn for action.

10 a4 a5 11 d4!?

Opting for immediate central action. The more cagey 11 ♙b3 had been seen in Game



Michael Adams was outplayed in Game 5, but otherwise largely played some excellent chess against Volokitin, the British no. 1's other two defeats being caused by uncharacteristic blunders.

3, where after 11...c6 12 ♗f1 ♗g6 13 ♗g3 d5 14 exd5 ♗xd5 15 d4 exd4 16 ♗xd4 ♙e8 17 ♖xe8+ ♙xe8 18 ♙xd5 cxd5 19 ♙e3 ♙c7 20 ♙d3 ♙xg3 21 fxg3 ♙d7 22 b3 White was slightly better, but the presence of opposite-coloured bishops helped Black steer the game towards a draw.

11...♗c6 12 ♖a3!?

If this rook lift looks familiar, it may be that you remember it from last year's Grandelius-Howell match.

12...♙e8 13 ♙a2 ♙a7!?

A new try and 13...exd4 14 cxd4 ♗xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♙xd4 16 ♖d3 ♙a7 17 e5! had left White with dangerous compensation in Grandelius-Howell, 7th matchgame, London 2022, as we saw in the April 2022 CHESS with notes by the winner.

14 ♖b3 ♖b8

Instead, 14...exd4 15 cxd4 ♗xd4 16 ♗xd4 ♙xd4 17 ♖d3 would but transpose into our previous note.

15 ♙b1



15...♙d7?!

This feels a little slow and 15...exd4 16 cxd4 ♗xd4 17 ♗xd4 ♙xd4 18 ♗c4 (18 ♖d3 ♙a7 19 e5 can now be met by 19...♙e7!?) 18...♙c5 19 ♗xa5 ♗d7 was probably a better defence.

16 ♗c4!?

Tempting, but the engines feel that White is simply doing pretty well after the standard regrouping 16 ♗f1 and ♗g3.

16...exd4 17 cxd4 ♗b4?!

The attack on a4 is easily dealt with and, as such, Black should have preferred 17...d5! 18 exd5 when even 18...♗xd4! 19 ♖xe8+ ♙xe8 20 ♗xd4 ♙xd5 is possible, with objectively rough equality after 21 ♖d3 ♙xc4 22 ♗f5, scary though this does appear for Black.

18 ♖b3 b5!?

Now 18...d5 19 exd5 leaves Black with nothing better than 19...♗fxd5 20 ♖xe8+ ♙xe8 when 21 ♗ce5 begins to look like it might well lead to a strong kingside attack for White.

19 axb5 ♙xb5 20 ♗xa5!

Volokitin is not to be bluffed.

20...c5 21 ♖a3

The Zaitsev-like rook swings back to the a-file, but White might also have considered more aggressive ideas, not least the engine-endorsed 21 ♗h4!? ♙xa5? (21...cxd4!? 22 ♖g3 d3 23 ♙xh6 ♙xf2+! 24 ♙xf2 ♙b6+ is probably the critical line) 22 ♖g3 with a huge attack for the piece, and if 22...♗f8 23 ♗f5.

21...♙b6 22 ♗b3 c4 23 ♗bd2 ♗d3 24 ♙e3!



The complex position continues to closely resemble the complex Zaitsev variation of the



The dress code was smart casual with the recommendation both players also display the two countries' flags, as worn by Mickey, who was typically the consummate professional all match.

Ruy Lopez, as was famously debated in the 1990 world championship match.

24...♖c8 25 b3 d5 26 e5 ♘h5?

Adams has fought back well, but this cannot be right. Admittedly centralisation would have cost a second pawn, but after 26...♘e4! 27 ♘xe4 dxe4 28 ♖xe4 ♙c6 29 ♖g4 ♘xc1 30 bxc4! (30 ♖xc1 ♙xf3 31 gxf3 h5! defends) 30...♙xf3! 31 ♖xf3 ♙xd4 32 ♖xc1 ♙xe5 33 ♖c2 ♘f8 while he is undoubtedly clearly worse, Black is most certainly not without chances of saving the game.

27 bxc4 dxc4 28 ♘e4

Heading for d6 as White's pieces swiftly begin to take over the board.

28...♖e6 29 ♘c3 ♙d7 30 ♙xd3

Even 30 ♖xd3!? cxd3 31 ♖xd3 ♖g6 32 g4 would have been very powerful.

30...cxd3 31 ♖xd3 ♖g6 32 ♘h2



Sidestepping Black's desperate counterattack and it is, of course, by now two extra pawns.

32...♙f5 33 g4! ♙xd3 34 ♖xd3 ♘f6 35 exf6 ♖xf6 36 ♘g2

White retains sufficient control and Volokitin was able to safely reach the time control.

36...h5 37 g5 ♖e6 38 ♙f4 ♙c5 39 ♖b3 ♙d6 40 ♙xd6 ♖xd6 41 ♘e4 ♖d5 42 ♘g3 1-0

Having taken the lead for a second time, Volokitin now switched to the Petroff Defence, which perhaps caught Adams by surprise or at least his unusual line against it quickly led to a position where only Black could be better. Then disaster struck.

M.Adams-A.Volokitin Game 6



20...c4!? 21 ♖d5?

It can't have looked appealing to give Black a big passed pawn, but White simply had to go in for 21 ♖e1 cxd3 22 ♖xe8+ ♘h7 then something like 23 ♖e7 ♘e5 24 a5! ♖a6 25 ♙e3 when he might only have been slightly worse.

21...♖8e5!?

Angling for even more than an extra pawn and pressure after 21...♖c5! 22 ♖xc5 ♘xc5 23 ♙g5 ♖xd1 24 ♖xd1 ♘xa4.

22 ♖f3 ♖f5 23 ♖xf5??

A horrible blunder, although even after 23 ♙f4 ♘e5 24 ♖g3 ♖xd1 25 ♖xd1 ♘d3 26 ♙e3 ♖c6 White would have found himself under pressure.

23...♖xf1+!



24 ♘xf1 gxf5 25 a5 ♖c6 26 ♙e3 ♘e5 27 ♙xa7 ♘d3 28 ♖d2 ♙h6 29 ♖c2 ♘f4 30 f3 ♖d5 31 ♖f2 ♖d3+ 32 ♘e1 ♖d5 33 ♘f1 ♙g5 34 ♙d4 ♘e6 35 ♙b6 ♙h4 0-1

Needing to win, Adams did his best to

unbalance things on the black side of 1 e4 e5 2 d3 f3 3 c6 3 c4 c5 4 c3 f6 5 d4 exd4 6 e5 d5 7 b5 e4 8 cxd4 b6 in Game 7, but Caissa again wasn't on his side and Volokitin also played well, being prepared to advance his king to g3 at a key stage ahead of forcing simplification then a draw.

The match might have been over, but Adams was determined to salvage some pride come Game 8 and so continued to grind away in a rook and opposite-coloured bishop endgame, which eventually caused Volokitin to crack.

M.Adams-A.Volokitin Game 8



53...Rc5??

A probable sign of tiredness. White's far-apart passed pawns will now prove decisive, whereas after 53...Rhx5 54 Rc6+ e7 55 Rxb6 Rh3+ 56 Qg2 Rh4 57 f5 h5 (Pein) Black would most likely have been able to hold. **54 Rxc5 bxc5 55 d3 d2 56 e4 a5 57 a4 c7 58 f5 d8 59 d5 c4 60 xc4 g5 61 b5! xh5 62 a5 xa5**



White is in time to deal with this last-ditch counterplay, but 62...d6 63 a6 d4 64 f6! would, of course, have forced one of the pawns home.

63 xa5 g5 64 b5 h5 65 c5 h4 66 d4 h3 67 e5 1-0

After a six-hour playing session in the final game, and having played eight games in the previous ten days, the players would have been forgiven for grumbling about having to immediately begin a 60-board simultaneous display, but this certainly wasn't the case.



Like Mickey, Andrei Volokitin was a pleasure for the CSC match organisers to deal with, as well as a worthy winner of the UK-Ukraine Solidarity Match. We'll hear more from Andrei on page 25.



The players might have been tired, but still happily tackled a large simultaneous display organised by the EBRD for employees and their families, as well as a contingent of Ukrainian children currently living in London. It raised thousands of pounds for a Ukrainian children's art charity.



60 Seconds with... GM Andrei Volokitin



But less memorable than your worst move? When I was 12, I checkmated but lost, which is a funny story.

A. Volokitin-M. Ganin
Ukrainian Team Championship,
Alushta 1998



Born: 18th June 1986, Lviv.

Place of residence: Lviv.

Occupation: Chess player and sometimes a chess coach.

Enjoyable? Yes.

And home life? Always enjoyable.

But sometimes good to escape to: The sea.

Sports played or followed: Running, swimming.

A favourite novel? *Needful Things* by Stephen King.

Piece of music? 'In the Air Tonight' by Phil Collins.

Film or TV series? *Shawshank Redemption*, *Chernobyl*.

The best three chess books: *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual* by Mark Dvoretsky, Garry Kasparov's *My Great Predecessors* series and *My System* by Aron Nimzowitsch.

What's the best thing about playing chess?
Your brain is always fit.

And the worst? It's very stressful when you make stupid mistakes and lose the game.

Your best move? Hard to choose, but perhaps the move 30...♙f5 that impressed Ivanchuk.

A. Korobov-A. Volokitin
Kharkiv 2001
King's Indian Defence

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 b4 ♘h5 10 ♙e1 f5 11 ♘g5 ♟f6 12 f3 ♘h8 13 ♙e3 ♟e8 14 c5 f4 15 ♙f2 ♟xd5 16 ♟xd5 ♙xg5 17 cxd6 cxd6 18 ♙c1 ♙e6 19 ♙f1 ♟d8 20 ♙e2 b6 21 ♟d2 ♙xd5 22 ♙xd5 ♙e7 23 ♙c6 ♙f6 24 ♘h1 ♙h4 25 ♙g1 ♟f6 26 ♟dx6 ♟h5 27 ♙d5 ♙e1 28 a3 ♟g3+ 29 hxg3 fxg3 30 ♙e6



30...♙f5!!
When I showed this game to Ivanchuk later that year, he was impressed with ...♙f5 and said something like "Wow!". Black prevents the white queen going back to h3.
31 ♙h2 ♙h5 32 ♟d2 ♟hx2+ 33 ♘g1 ♙xd2 0-1

In this completely winning position I thought I had found the shortest path to victory...

29 ♙xf5 exf5 30 e6 ♟b7 31 ♟h8+??

At this moment I stopped the clock and said "Checkmate!". My slightly shocked opponent took the rook and pressed the clock.

31...♘xh8 32 ♙h3+ ♘g8 33 ♙xg7 ♙xg7 34 ♟xg7+ ♟xg7 35 ♙xf5 ♟b8 h4 ♟b1+ 37 ♘h2 ♟bg1 38 e7 ♟1g2+ 39 ♘h1 ♟g1+ 40 ♘h2 ♟1g2+ 41 ♘h1 ♟2g4 42 ♙f8+ ♘h7 43 ♙f5+ ♘h6 44 ♙f6+ ♘h5 45 ♙e5+ ♘xh4 46 ♙h2+ ♘g5 47 ♙e5+ ♘g6 48 ♙e6+ ♘h7 49 ♙f5+ ♟7g6 0-1

And a highly memorable opponent? Magnus Carlsen.

Favourite game of all time? Difficult to say. This requires deep research!

Is FIDE doing a good job? Only for Russia, otherwise it's the worst job we've ever seen.

Or your National Federation? Could be better.

Any advice for either? For the UCF to promote chess more in Ukraine. After the Ukrainian victory of course.

Can chess make one happy? Yes, but only temporarily.

A tip please for the club player: Play against stronger opponents!

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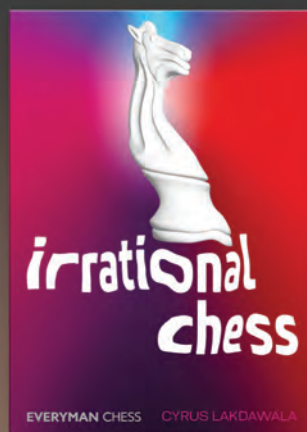
The English Defence (1 d4 e6 2 c4 b6) is a dynamic, counter-attacking line, initially investigated by English grandmasters. José González provides an excellent analysis of this complex opening and carves out a powerful repertoire for Black covering all lines after 1 d4.

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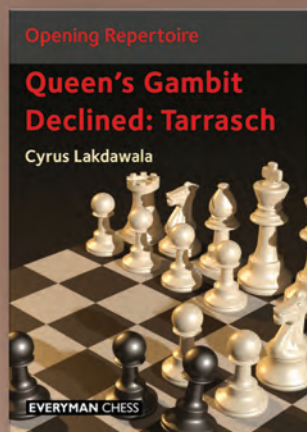
Understanding pressure play is crucial for capitalising on tiny advantages as well as being able to avoid going downhill in slightly inferior positions. In this book, the highly experienced author and coach Neil McDonald analyses the finest examples of pressure play. In doing so he teases out the fundamental concepts that enable players to torture their opponents mercilessly.

Paperback 352 pages



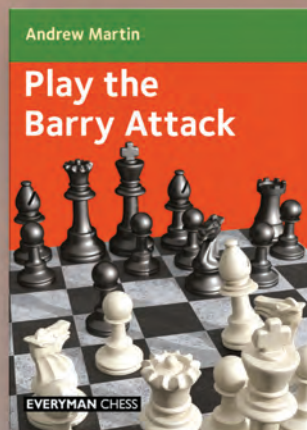
In this collection of brilliantly unconventional and irrational games, the positions appear almost random. Kings have gone walkabout, pieces are on bizarre squares, huge pawn rollers are sweeping all before them. How can you navigate a path in such a game? Prolific chess author and coach Cyrus Lakdawala shows you how.

Paperback 400 pages



The Tarrasch Variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined is a fierce counter-attacking line arising after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 c5. In this variation Black gains free and easy piece play but in return usually has to accept the structural weakness of an Isolated Queen's Pawn (IQP)

Paperback 304 pages



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This Month's New Releases



Pressure Play

Neil McDonald, 352 pages
Everyman Chess

RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

It is good to see Neil McDonald back with a new book, written in his usual no-nonsense, instructive and accessible style. The subject of this new work will feel familiar to most of us, especially when playing against opponents with a higher rating or greater experience.

"Have you ever been tortured at the chessboard? If so, then you have probably been a victim of pressure play."

Yes, very familiar – as is the rest of the blurb: "Elite players are brilliant exponents of pressure play. In situations where they have either a tiny advantage or no advantage at all they are highly adept at constantly setting problems for their unfortunate opponents. The position on the board may appear lifeless but they can probe and find plans and regroupings that will constantly ask their opponents difficult questions. These can be countered only by continual alert and accurate defence and we all know how difficult and wearing that can be."

Former world champion Magnus Carlsen is named as the "arch exponent of pressure play" and, sure enough, several of his games are included in the book. There are nine main chapters, covering elements of pressure play from 'Paralysing the Enemy Pieces' through to 'The King as the Final Straw'.

McDonald is a good writer, who chooses his material carefully and doesn't fall into the trap of dumbing it down in the desire to keep it accessible. Questions are asked throughout the well-annotated games and the level is pitched higher than Everyman's popular *Starting Out* series.

Here is one example from the chapter on 'Increasing and Exploiting a Space Advantage'.

"Question: What is the most efficient winning plan for White?"

"Answer: **46 ♖xg4!**"

As Larsen himself commented, "A rook is not worth more than a knight in this position." **46...hxg4 47 ♖e3**

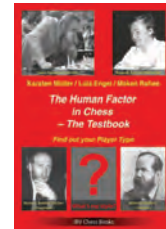
In my experience, club players are still reluctant to sacrifice material in the endgame, which is why McDonald's explanations should prove to be very instructive. Here he writes:

"White will pick up the g4-pawn, then put his king on g5 to prepare h5-h6. Once the pawn obstacle on g7 is removed the king can infiltrate via f6 to shepherd home the passed pawn or attack the d6-pawn. Usually a knight is hopelessly outranged by a rook in endgames with this material balance. But there is no open file available for the rook (see how the knight is stopping it penetrating down the f-file), meaning it has no way to attack anything. And even if it could become active by jettisoning the d6-pawn, White's pawns are so far advanced on the queenside that after ♖xd6, etc, Black's defences would collapse before he could do anything meaningful."

Torre, a former Candidate, couldn't hold off Larsen for much longer and resigned on move 56.

This is an instructive book and one which should help club and tournament players attain a greater understanding of how to develop their own methods of chess torture from positions in which there appears only to be a very slight edge. The hunted could become the hunter!

Sean Marsh



Time now to shine a light on a publisher, Joachim Beyer Verlag, who has yet to gain much attention within these pages, as we take a look at two books which are very strongly linked.

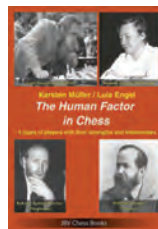
On the surface level, there may be confusion due to the similar colours of the covers and the identical photographs used. Yet if the books are seen together 'in the flesh' then the differences become apparent; the test book is physically larger, and the bright red stands out more than the burnt orange livery of its predecessor. However, this does come at a price. The larger of the two books suffers somewhat from an excess of white space on the pages of tests. It would have been better to keep the books the same size, vary the colours more and change the photographs of the players.

The point of the first book is to identify "4 types of players with their strengths and weaknesses". The four types are: Activist, Reflector, Pragmatic and Theorist.

Wilhelm Steinitz, Anatoli Karpov, Garri Kasparov and Robert 'Bobby' Fischer are the cover stars (and we will stick with JBV's spellings for the purposes of this review), which gives the slightly misleading impression that they are the only players covered in the book, but once inside, the categories are expanded. For example, in the case of the Activists there is content concerning many other players, including Alexander Alekhine, Boris Spasski, Bent Larsen and Judit Polgar. Possibly for reasons of vanity, co-author Karsten Müller is also included in the list. Then in the case of Mikhail Tal and Rashid Neshmetdinov there is an extension to the category; they are classed as Hyperactivists.

There is a short discussion on each player's strengths and weaknesses, their willingness to take risks, their training options, opponents and openings. Then there are annotated games showing each of the four categories of players at their best, plus a selection of puzzles. Additionally, there are games (and snippets) chosen to show the weaknesses of the players. For example, Kasparov was never particularly good at

B.Larsen-E.Torre Brussels 1987



The Human Factor in Chess

Karsten Müller and Luis Engel, 244 pages
JBV Chess Books

RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

The Human Factor in Chess: The Test Book

Müller, Engel & Makan Rafiee, 208 pages
JBV Chess Books

RRP £21.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £19.75**

passive defence in the endgame, which often accelerated his (rare) defeats, whereas more patient players (Karpov, for example) would have been able to dig in and put up much sterner resistance.

Don't go looking for an easy ride with the puzzles; they are usually presented without any clues and will require serious work from the student. Here is one example, taken from the section on how to defend against activists.

The book sets the scene: "Of course, you can allow yourself to get into a scuffle, but you should be tactically fit. Otherwise it's better to curb the activity early on."

R.Reti-A.Alekhine Baden-Baden 1925



"Alekhine's last move **26...♗e3!** was a real bombshell. How should White have reacted?"

Anyone who has studied the classics will already know that Reti lost the game after **27 ♖f3?** (0-1, 40), but what would you play instead? **27 fxe3?? ♗xg3+** **28 ♔g2 ♕xe3** is catastrophic, but "According to Alekhine, **27 ♕f3!** was correct. And according to the engines, the position after **27...♗ae8** would be equal." Perhaps, psychologically, Reti was reluctant to part with his king's bishop, which usually served him so well, but even after **27...♕xf3 28 exf3** Alekhine's classic attack would have been stifled. Lesson: don't go toe-to-toe with an activist!

The Testbook takes things a stage further, with the aim of helping readers to fathom their own style of play, which would enable them to work on their weaknesses too – or to play according to one's opponents' weaknesses.

As the blurb has it: "For example, certain characteristics stand out clearly in activists, and being able to adjust to them as an opponent is of course very valuable. A good example is Kramnik's win over activist Kasparov (at the London 2000 world championship match). Since Kramnik always managed to steer the game in the direction appropriate to his style, his big opponent never had the chance to demonstrate his own strengths in positions with attack and initiative."

The introduction suggests there is more than one way to use the material within. "As a

supplement to our book *The Human Factor* we are now presenting a work with exercises and test questions that enable the reader to better identify one's own style. As a third author, we brought in FM Makan Rafiee, who designed the tests to distinguish the player types in Chapter 6. Except for these, the book is self-explanatory even without knowledge of our first work. It is intended as a test book, but can also be used as a textbook by studying the solutions right away."

The aforementioned Chapter 6 has the title 'What player type are you?' and it will provide a stiff test of one's powers. Here is one position to ponder.



Black to play

The book offers three suggestions, namely:

- "1) I play **1...g4**
- "2) I play **1...♗e5**
- "3) I play **1...♗e3"**

The legendary trainer Bob Wade was a fan of such multi-choice questions, which aren't seen often enough, especially as they come close to mimicking the in-game thought processes.

I am not going to give the answer here. All three moves are perfectly reasonable, but one of them led to a win against a reigning world champion. What would you play, dear reader – and why?

Summing up, this is a very interesting pair of books which should help readers to think differently about their own style and that of their opponents.

Also, being able to review both books here will hopefully raise awareness about the other titles released by the publisher Joachim Beyer Verlag, which, more often than not, offer something different to the norm.

Sean Marsh



Black & White Magic

Axel Smith, 264 pages, paperback
RRP £22.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.25**

Axel Smith's previous works for Quality Chess have always been original, as well as thought-provoking, and this new work is no

different. Based on a course the Swedish GM wrote and presented for Chessable, Smith's emphasis is on colour complexes, something he believes isn't particularly well understood by the average club player. In contrast, a strong player is far more likely to sacrifice the exchange to dominate on either the light or dark squares. Smith's material includes such exchange sacrifices, as well as weak squares and how to avoid them, blockades and opposite-coloured bishops. Note too that a hardback version of this book is also available, retailing at £26.99 or £24.29 for Subscribers.



Brilliant Chess Studies

Anatoly Kuznetsov, 334 pages, hardback
RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

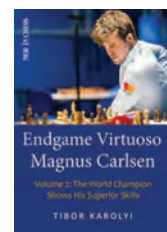
Russian Chess House's latest work is a new edition of a work written late in life by leading study composer Anatoly Kuznetsov (1932-2000), in which he presented the 150 most outstanding endgames, from an artistic perspective, played between 1837 and 1997. There are undoubtedly many gems within, positions readers may wish to try to solve, assisted by the large diagrams, or simply enjoy the detailed solutions.



Chess Informant 155 – Rejuvenated

Chess Informant, 344 pages, paperback
RRP £39.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.99**

The latest 'Informator' has appeared from Belgrade and features not just all the traditional features, including hundreds of annotated, theoretically important games, but also a great many articles. These include Elshan Moradiabadi reporting on Wijk aan Zee, Danny Gormally on the 4NCL and several detailed opening surveys, including one by Nigel Davies on the Catalan.

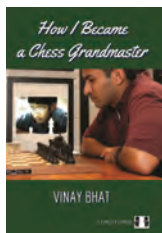


Endgame Virtuoso Magnus Carlsen: Volume 2

Tibor Karolyi, 224 pages, paperback
RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**
Released in 2018, *Endgame Virtuoso*

Magnus Carlsen saw Karolyi explore the 16th world champion's superb ability in the latter stages of the game. There he considered Carlsen the best endgame player of all time alongside Anatoly Karpov and since then Karolyi has realised that Carlsen has "managed to improve his skills further". That explains this second volume, which covers Carlsen's endgames played between 2018 and 2022, and again contains a wealth of highly instructive material. Just like in *Pressure Play*, as reviewed above, the reader will quickly appreciate how Carlsen rarely rushes and gradually builds up the pressure. Karolyi's annotations are detailed, but not overly so and the book concludes with a fascinating interview with Carlsen's long-term second, Peter Heine Nielsen. If you wanted to work on your general endgame ability this summer, why not do so in the company of Karolyi and arguably the strongest endgame player of all time?

If you're yet to purchase *Endgame Virtuoso Magnus Carlsen* and would like to acquire both volumes of Karolyi's work from Chess & Bridge, it's possible to do so for the special price of £44.00 or just £39.60 for Subscribers.



How I Became a Chess Grandmaster

Vinay Bhat, 342 pages, paperback
RRP £24.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.49**

Vinay Bhat was something of a sensation in American chess in the 1990s, becoming a National Master at 10 then an IM at 15 before later qualifying for the grandmaster title. In this new work for Quality Chess, he tells his story, aiming to instruct along the way. Having long worked in the field of data science, Bhat reflects on some of his old training methods and how he might have done things in a better way. While his life story is often an impressive and interesting one, the games included are instructive and often entertaining too, and both coaches and

those serious about their chess will welcome the emphasis on Bhat's chess training.



Middlegame Secrets Vol. 1 – The Power of the Queen

Jan Markos, PC-DVD; running time: 5 hours
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Jan Markos's books *Under the Surface* and, with David Navara, *The Secret Ingredient* are both excellent and packed full of thought-provoking advice. Now he appears in the ChessBase studio, presenting a new series which focusses on each of the pieces, with this first DVD devoted to the queen. Markos freely explains how he hasn't always made the best use of the queen, while also looking at how Magnus Carlsen has. Important topics which are discussed include manoeuvring the queen, assessing queen exchanges and how the queen best interacts with the other pieces.

The second DVD in Markos's series has also been released, *Middlegame Secrets Vol. 2 – The Potential of the Rook*, which covers a wide array of highly instructive content, be it on activating rooks, how best to use them in an endgame, attacking down the g- and h-files, transferring a rook to attack a weakness, etc. This DVD also provides five hours of video coverage, as well as an additional database with exercises, while retailing too at £26.95 or £24.25 for Subscribers.



Playing for a Win with ...b6

Semko Semkov, 236 pages, paperback
RRP £23.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.55**

We tend to associate Chess Stars repertoire books with quite theoretical lines,

but here while the format is very familiar, including the step by step approach, a practical, fighting weapon against 1 d4 and 1 c4 is discussed, namely the English Defence. It should be noted that after 1 d4 e6 Semkov doesn't supply any coverage of 2 e4, but he does examine in some detail not only the many strategically complex lines after 2 c4 b6, but also 2 ♖f3 c5, while mapping out a fairly detailed repertoire for Black.



The Modernized Barry Attack

Vladimir Okhotnik, 204 pages, paperback
RRP £28.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.05**

Thinkers Publishing's latest work in their 'Modernized' series sees a veteran French Grandmaster examine that club player anti-King's Indian favourite, 1 d4 ♖f6 2 ♖f3 g6 3 ♗c3 d5 4 ♗f4. Okhotnik has been playing the Barry Attack ever since he came under early pressure when Julian Hodgson used it against him at Cappelle-la-Grande in 1988. He freely admits that while the Barry may be a good practical weapon, it doesn't promise White any objective advantage against a well-prepared opponent. As such, the modern-day Barry player may wish to have more than one string to their bow and so will find useful Okhotnik's thorough treatment after 4...♗g7 of all of the modern 5 ♗b5, the direct 5 ♗d2 and the old main line, 5 e3 0-0 6 ♗e2 when after 6...c5 he examines both 7 dxc5 and 7 ♗e5.







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