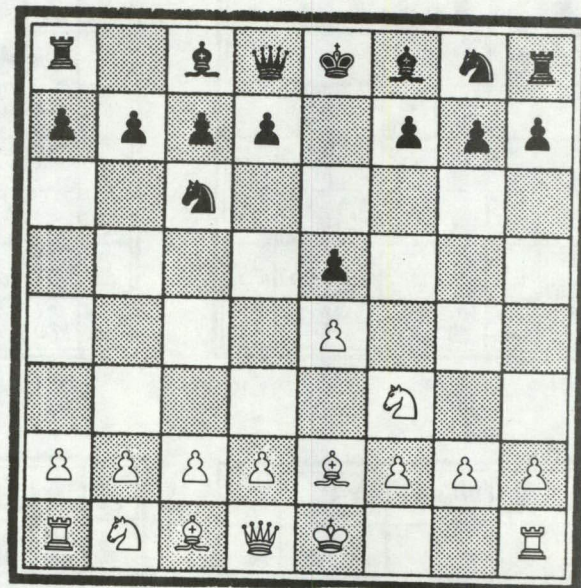
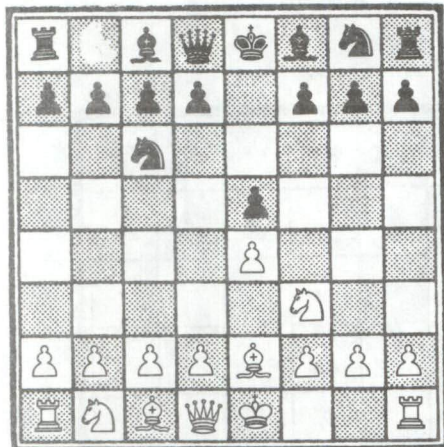


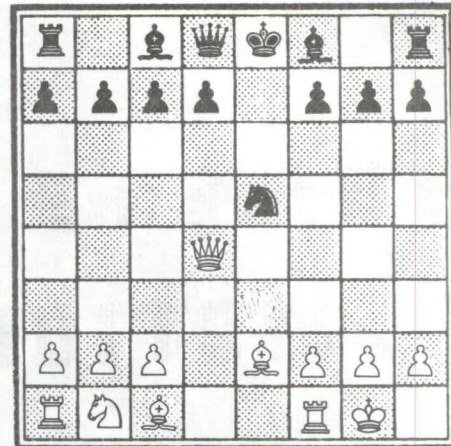
TAYLER'S
VARIATION
BASMAJIAN



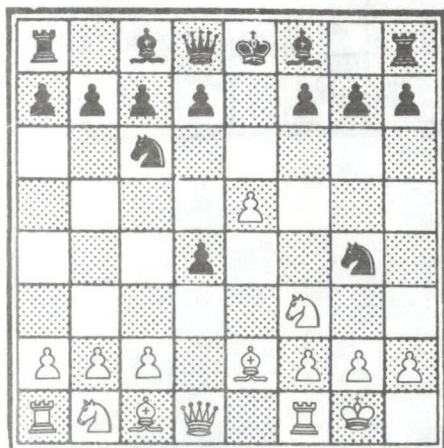
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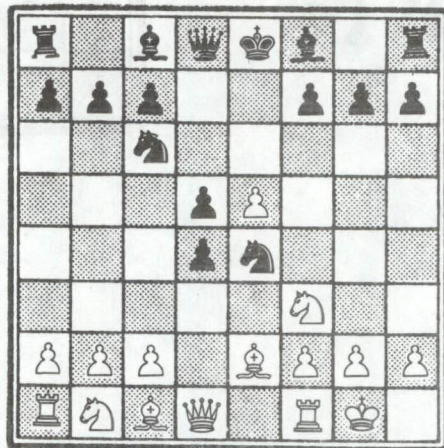
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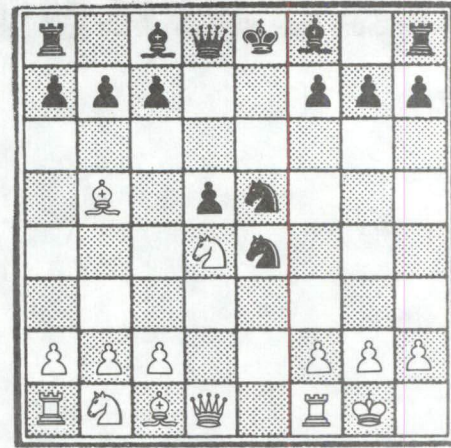
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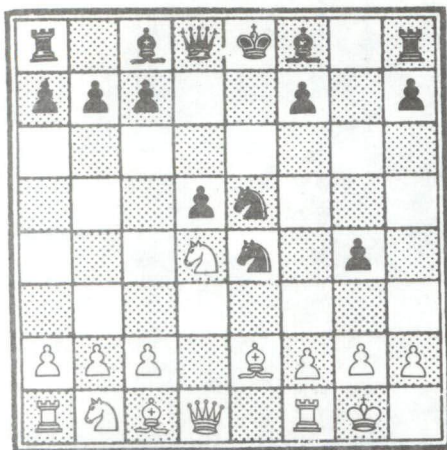
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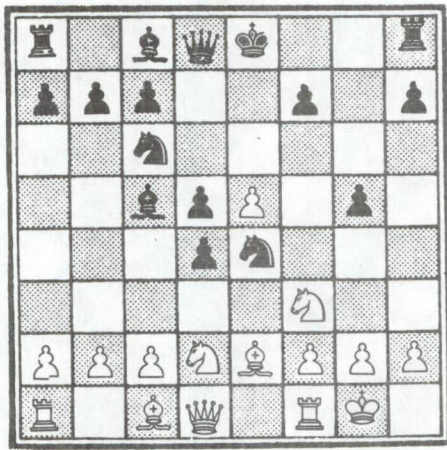
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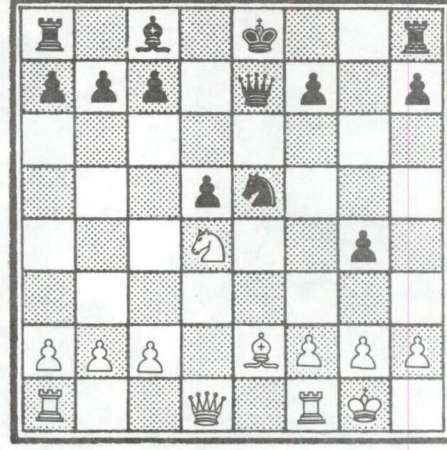
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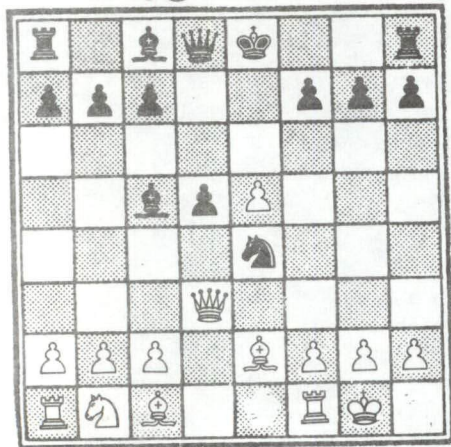
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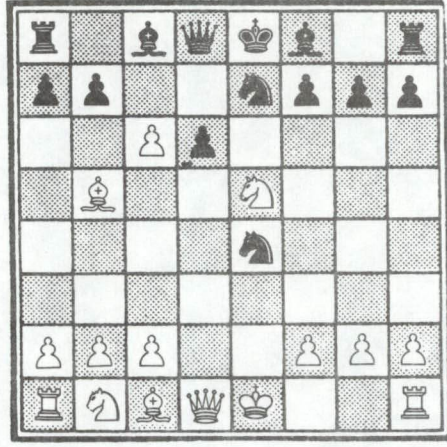
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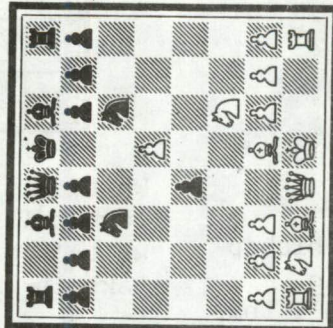


Waiting to be played by John M. Taylor

At the London tournament of 1922, Tartakover, a player of novel opening lines, had white against Bogolyubov: 1 P-K4 2 N-KB3 N-QB3 3 B-K2? N-B3 4 P-Q3 etc. This line may be found in *Modern Chess Openings* as the Inverted Hanham.

In December 1979, with my pocket set handy, I was following the game and wondered what would happen if White played 4 P-Q4 instead.

My preliminary analysis suggested that Black's only sound reply (apart possibly from 4 ... P-Q3) is 4 ... P-P, to which White replies 5 P-K5.



Now Black must play 5 ... N-Q4, 5 ... N-KN5 or 5 ... N-K5. In all cases, White seemed to get good play, and the surprise value over the board would be considerable. I was therefore gratified to have three opportunities to play it. Hebden tried, most interesting theoretically: 5 ... N-K5 6 NXP? P-Q4? 7 O-O N-N 8 Q-N 9 Q-N 10 N-B3 B-B4 11 NXP R-K1 12 B-B4 B-KN3 13 QR-Q1? NXP etc.

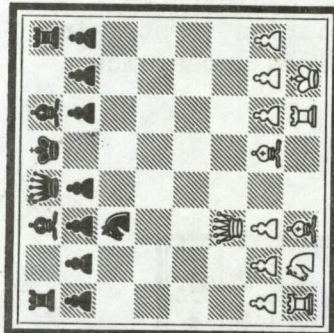
White should have played 13 Q-QN3 with winning prospects. Even so, I got counterplay for my loss of the exchange, and only lost through later blunders. My subsequent analysis showed that 6 ... B-B4 is very strong, and that White could avoid this trouble by 6 O-O, when the best line appeared to be 6 ... P-Q4 7 NXP transposing to the game. My subsequent more complete analysis confirmed confidence in the system 3 B-K2 and 4 P-Q4, so I wrote this out and showed it to Peter Sanderson who

has been good enough to act as "Devil's Advocate". He showed interest but was somewhat sceptical of the strength of the opening. Later, we came to some sort of consensus. I exclude lines of Philidor character where Black holds the centre with ... P-Q3. If this is best for Black, then White has a space advantage, and the line would have an important impact on opening theory.

First four inferior lines for Black:

- 1 P-K4 P-K4 2 N-KB3 N-QB3 3 B-K2 B-B4 4 NXP Q-R5? 5 N-Q3;
- 3 ... N-B3 4 P-Q4 P-Q4? 5 QPxP KNXP 6 O-O B-K2 7 P-B4 PxP 8 Q-B2 B-KB4 9 R-Q1;
- 4 ... NXP 5 P-Q5 QN moves 6 Q-K2 pointless;
- 4 ... PxP 5 P-K5 N-Q4 6 O-O followed by 7 P-B3. 6 NXP was played in Taylor v Lenton: 6 ... NXP 7 O-O P-Q3 8 R-K1 B-K2 9 B-QN5ch K-B1; is also quite good for White.

A 5 ... N-KN5 6 O-O and now:
i) 6 ... N(N5)XP 7 N-N N-N 8 QxP N-B3 9 Q-B3.



White appears to have more than enough for the pawn, e.g. 9 ... Q-B3 (9 ... P-Q4 10 B-QN5 followed by R-K1ch is worse) 10 QxQ PxQ 11 N-B3, when Black has inferior development, weak pawns and a rather exposed king.

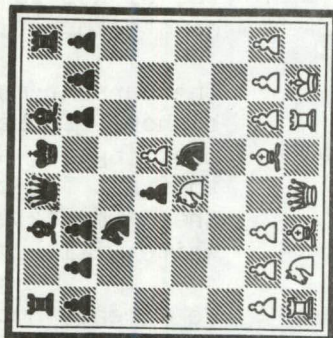
- 6 ... P-Q3 7 NXP N(N5)XP 8 P-KB4 N-N3 9 N-N PxN 10 Q-Q4 when Black has no satisfactory continuation.
- 6 ... B-K2 7 NXP N(N5)XP 8 P-KB4 is good for White.
- 6 ... B-B4 7 B-KN5 B-K2

(7 ... P-B3 8 PxP and now both 8 ... NXP(B3) 9 P-B3! and 8 ... PxP 9 B-R4 O-O 10 P-B3! are good for White) 8 BxB QxB 9 NXP N(N5)XP 10 N-N5 followed by N(N1)-B3 or P-KB4 is good for White.

B 5 ... N-K5 6 O-O (best). Now the two likely bishop moves look weak:

- 6 ... B-B4 7 B-Q3 P-B4 8 BxN PxN 9 N-N5 NXP 10 NXP Q-K2 11 B-N5 Q-B1 12 P-KB4 White wins.
- 6 ... B-K2 7 NXP NXP? 8 N-B5 B-B3 9 Q-Q5 N-Q3 10 N-Nch PxN 11 QxQP, good for White.

Thus 6 ... P-Q4 7 NXP looks best.



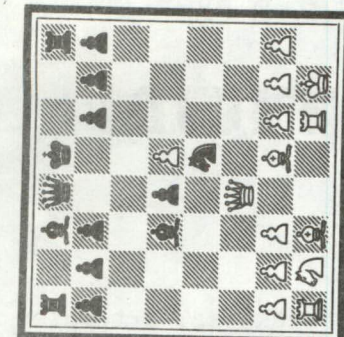
White plans 8 N-N, 9 B-K3, 10 P-KB3 etc. Now 7 ... B-QB4 allows 8 N-N PxN 9 N-Q2 N-N 10 QxN! with threats of 11 Q-B3, 11 P-QN4, or 11 Q-N5, so Black has:

- 7 ... NXP 8 P-KB3 N-KB3 (8 ... N-Q3 9 P-KB4 with very strong pressure, e.g. 9 ... N-N3 10 P-B5 or 9 ... N-B3 10 N-QB3) 9 B-QN5ch P-B3 10 R-K1 PxP (10 ... B-Q3 11 P-KB4) 11 RxNch B-K2 12 Q-K2.
- 7 ... N-N 8 QxN B-QB4 9 Q-Q3. White's queen looks oddly placed but she retains flexibility with control of the third rank. Black cannot effectively attack the KP.

DIAGRAM
i) 9 ... O-O 10 N-B3. As in Taylor v Hebden; Black's best now appears to be 10 ... N-N but 11 QxN leaves White the initiative. Only further practical tests can decide whether Black can slowly equalise or whether White can use his KP as a basis for a win by king's side pressure. However, White can also try 10 N-Q2 or 10 B-K3 meeting 10 ... P-Q5 by 11 QxN PxP 12 P-KB4! standing Black's KP.

White plans 8 N-N, 9 B-K3, 10 P-KB3 etc. Now 7 ... B-QB4 allows 8 N-N PxN 9 N-Q2 N-N 10 QxN! with threats of 11 Q-B3, 11 P-QN4, or 11 Q-N5, so Black has:

- 7 ... NXP 8 P-KB3 N-KB3 (8 ... N-Q3 9 P-KB4 with very strong pressure, e.g. 9 ... N-N3 10 P-B5 or 9 ... N-B3 10 N-QB3) 9 B-QN5ch P-B3 10 R-K1 PxP (10 ... B-Q3 11 P-KB4) 11 RxNch B-K2 12 Q-K2.
- 7 ... N-N 8 QxN B-QB4 9 Q-Q3. White's queen looks oddly placed but she retains flexibility with control of the third rank. Black cannot effectively attack the KP.



ii) 9 ... B-B4. Now 10 Q-N5ch looks too risky, e.g. 10 ... P-QB3 11 QxNP O-O 12 QxQB P-R5 13 B-K3 P-Q5 14 P-KN3 Q-R6 etc. Also 10 N-B3 P-QB3! seems to give Black at least equal chances. However, it seems there is 10 B-K3! and now:

- 10 ... N-N6 11 Q-N5ch P-QB3 12 QxB NxBch 13 K-R1, when Black's knight looks doomed.
- 10 ... BxB 11 QxB O-O 12 P-KN4 followed by P-KB3 and P-KB4 highlights the dangers inherent in 9 ... B-B4.

c) 10 ... B-QN3 11 Q-R3! BxB 12 QxB transposes to b), or 11 ... Q-K2 12 BxB QxQ 13 NxQ RxB 14 N-N5 with strong play for White.

d) 10 ... Q-Q2 11 BxB NxB 12 Q-QR3! causes problems.

- 10 ... P-Q5 11 B-B4 O-O 12 Q-KB3! (threat: 13 B-Q3) 12 ... P-KB3 (12 ... P-KN4? 13 B-Q3) 13 B-B4ch K-R1 14 P-K6 followed by R-K1, N-Q2, or BxP.

I would be interested in readers' constructive comments. The moves are all there, only waiting to be played!



The Greater London Council plan a repeat in 1982 of the prestigious Phillips and Drew international tournament last April, allocating £1000 from lottery funds.

Mrs. Nancy Elder, Dundee, Scottish Lady Champion has died on holiday in Australia.

She had won the title 14 times before — the last in 1974. She was awarded the OBE for her services to the game in Scotland.

(This article wrongly ascribes the variation to the American master, Jim Tayler, rather than the Leicester player.)

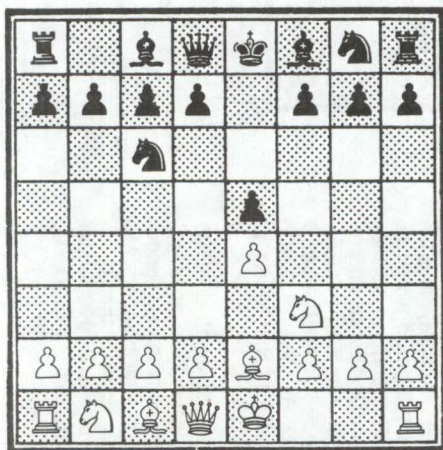
TAYLER VARIATION

A few years ago, an article appeared in the magazine "Chess", written by the American expert, Jim Tayler, then sojourning in the British Isles. It suggested novel king pawn opening, beginning with the moves 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Be2. I shelved the article for sometime, but recently came across it again and looked into it more deeply.

The need for a line like this is apparent. If white plays 1 e4, he must have an answer to 1 e5. Unfortunately, many of the lines he can choose from - Ruy Lopez, Giuoco Piano, Scotch - are either too well known or inadequate for the initiative. I had already pioneered a line against the Sicilian beginning 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 and 3 Be2; wouldn't it be great if the move 3 Be2 also proved effective against a straight 1 e5?

As with the 3 Be2 line against the Sicilian, Tayler's variation is striking by its harmless, toothless appearance

1 e4 e5
2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Be2



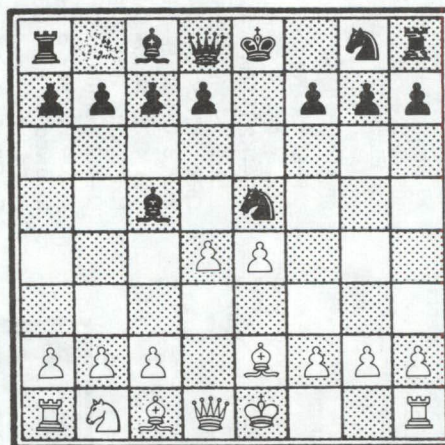
We've all been trained to bring our bishop out to c4, to aim at the weak point in black's game, the F7 square - but isn't this

a rather illusory weakness, a tempter to make us forget the rules of development and mobilization, aiming instead for a quick knockout with only a couple of fighting units. Besides, the bishop is often exposed to the counterthrust d7-d5 on c4.

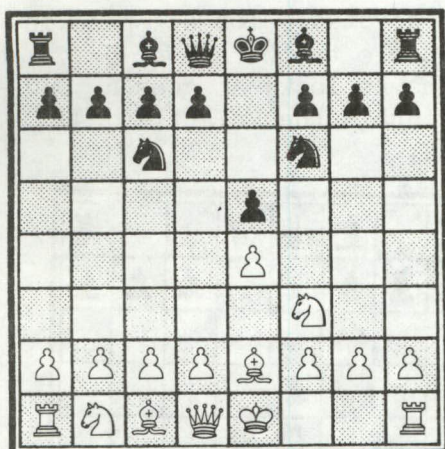
The current move, 3 Be2, lifts the bishop off the first row and prepares castling; it also signals the intention to fight for central terrain, rather than immediate attack, and to this end, white will be playing d2-d4 shortly.

We already notice that the automatic reply 3 Bc5 is not adequate here. White has two good possibilities; one is to play 4 c3, intending to obtain dominance in the central area of the board by d2-d4, and gain time for it by attacking the black bishop at the same time.

The other idea is to play the fork trick, which works in this position, but would not do so if white's bishop were at c4. So 4 Nxe5 Nxe5 5 d4



White has eliminated the black central pawn whilst maintaining his own. Had white's bishop been on c4, black could take it with his knight here.



By counter attacking against the white "e" pawn black hopes to considerably reduce the impetuosity of the attack. In fact, white is virtually forced to sacrifice a pawn if he wants to keep the initiative.

4 d4!

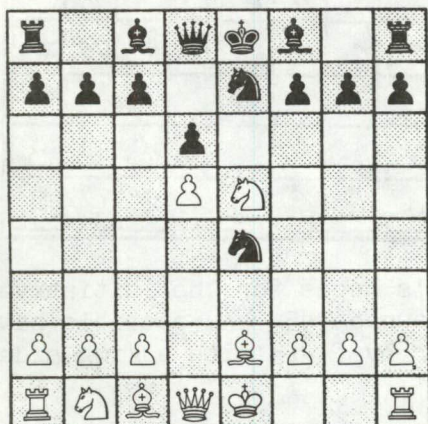
Other moves to guard the "e" pawn are possible, but 4 d3 is too quiet and 4 Nc3 allows black to develop his bishop aggressively with 4 Bb4!

Now we can pass quickly over the defensive move 4 d6, as besides 5 dxe5, white can also play 5 Nc3 with a strong position, as black has not the aggressive bishop development Bb4 with his pawn on d6.

Furthermore, 4 Nxe4 is dubious as white has two ways to regain his pawn and secure the edge.

One is 5 dxe5 white gains a strong pawn at e5 and has possible threats of Qd5 isolating the knight at e4.

Another move is 5 d5 Ne7 (or Nb8) 6 Nxe5 with a better central position for white due to his advanced pawn at d5. There is also a possible curious sequel if black tries 5 d6 here. (We are assuming black played Ne7 not Nb8)



6 Bb5+!

An awkward check. Black just does not have sufficient fire power on the blocking squares d7 and c6.

6 c6

7 dxc6

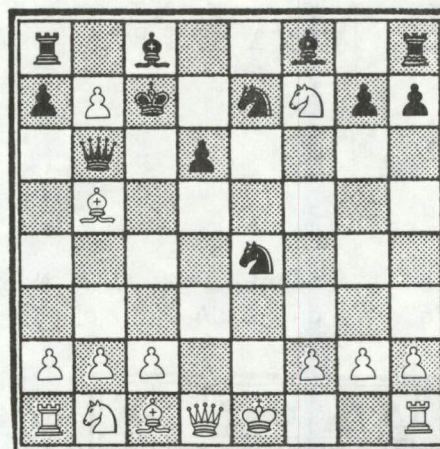
Now if black plays 7 bxc6, 8 Nxc6 is strong. Instead black tries to complicate

7 Qb6!?

Threatens mate on F2

8 cxb7 dis. ch. Kd8

9 Nxf7+ Kc7



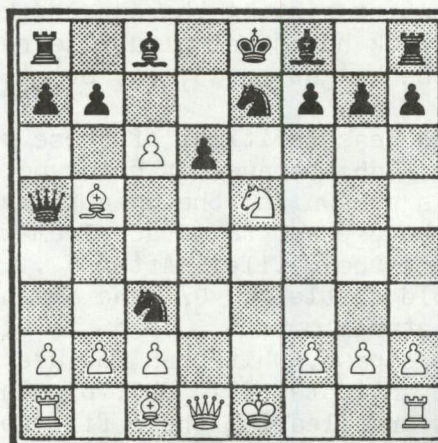
10 b7xa8=Nch!! and white wins.

On move 7 black can try an even more complicated line

7 Qa5+!

Forking king and bishop

8 Nc3! Nxc3



Things look grim for white. Three pieces enprise and a piece down to boot. Fortunately, his discovered check saves the day.

9 cxb7 discovered check!

answered by

9 Nxb5 discovered check!!

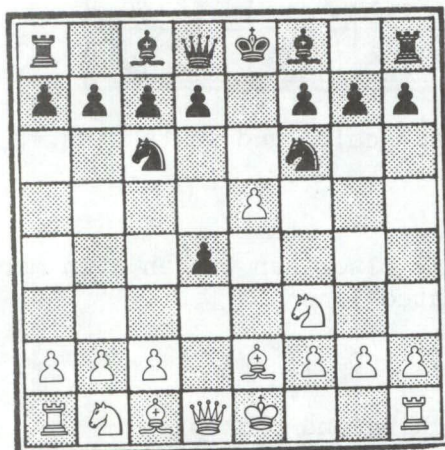
answered by

10 Bd2!!!

and white seems to come out a queen ahead.

THE MAIN LINE

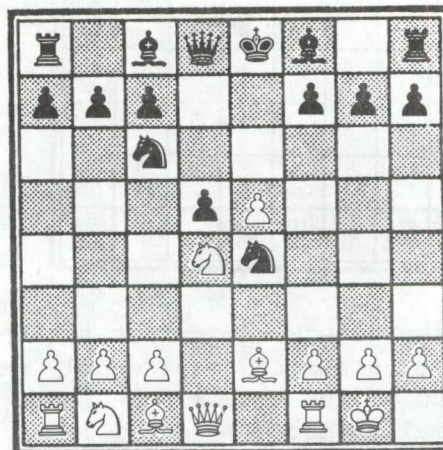
This begins 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Be2 NF6 4 d4 exd4 5 e5



The advance of this pawn disturbs black's development by hitting the exposed knight at F6. Black has three plausible replies - to move the knight to d5, e4, or g4.

I feel the least critical of these moves is 5 Nd5, because it holds no threat to white's e pawn and the knight may sometime be exposed to attack from white's queen along the d file. After 5 Nd5 white could castle /60-07 and against black's natural move 6 d6 to eliminate the white e pawn, white can now use the universal antidote of 7 Bb5, pinning the c6 knight and clearing the e file for his rook.

Taylor devoted a lot of space in his article to the answer 5 Ne4. One line he looks at goes 6 0-0 d5 (to maintain the knight at e4)
7 Nxd4.



Now black can take the bait at e5 by

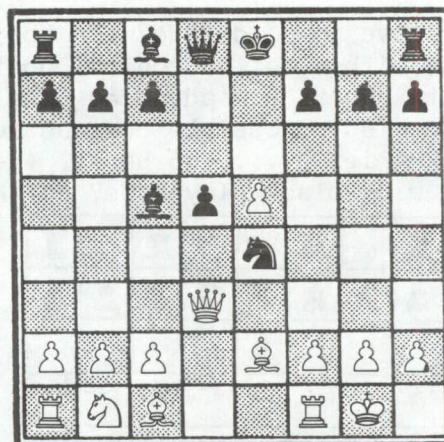
7 Nxe5

against which Tayler suggests the following critical continuation:-

8 F3 NF6 9 Bb5+! c6
10 Re1 cxb5 11 Rxe5+ Be7
12 Qe2 and white's pressure down the e file prevents black from castling.

In black's other line, he does not capture the pawn at e5, so the game turns into a purely positional struggle for the initiative.

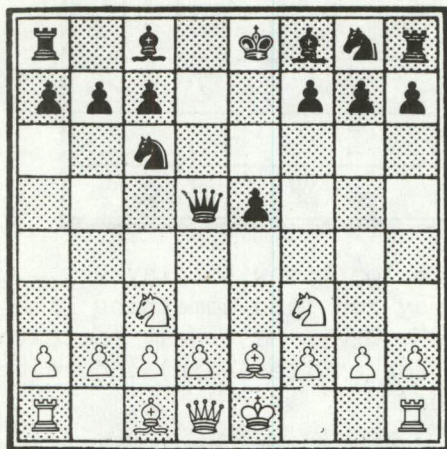
From the last diagram, instead of 7 Nxe5 black plays for quick development by 7 ... Nxd4 8 Qxd4 Bc5 9 Qd3



White's hopes for the initiative lie with his pawn at e5, and possible pawn roller by f4-f5 with a king side attack.

After 4 Nxe5 black could answer
 4 Bxf2+ 5 Kxf2 Nxe5 but then
 white has the opportunity to control the
 centre with pawns with a subsequent d4,
 and his loss of castling rights be
 corrected by a process called "artificial
 castling" - that is, playing Rh1-f1,
 followed by KF2-g1.

Now lets return to our first diagram,
 after the move 3 Be2. A favourite
 reply, much beloved of computers, is to
 play 3 d5. White should hope to
 do well out of this, because after
 4 exd5 Qxd5 5 Nc3, he gains time for
 development by attacking the black queen.

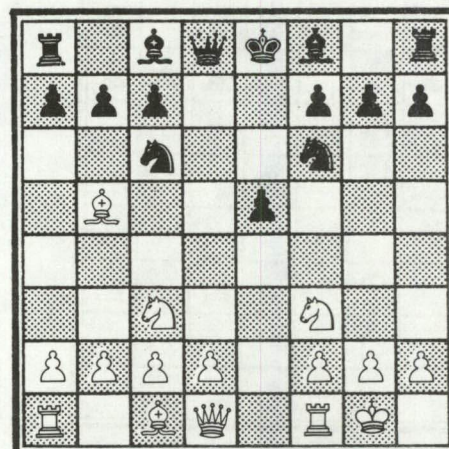


White's only worry is that black now has
 the dominant central pawn, which rather
 cramps white's game. However, white's
 king can quickly castle, and with his extra
 development he should be able to knock out
 black's central pawn, and perhaps also attack
 down the central files against the black
 king, which will take longer to escape from
 the middle. Here is a quick win against the
 Novag computer on level 1, which illustrates
 the basic themes.

4 exd5 Qxd5
 5 Nc3 Qd8

Much more stubborn is 5 Qc5. We'll
 look at this later.

6 O-O NF6
 7 Bb5!



This is an idea that frequently recurs
 in this variation, and many will say
 why move a piece twice in the opening
 and couldn't have you done this on
 move 3 and played the Ruy Lopez?

However, Bb5 in this position is much
 stronger than in the Ruy Lopez. It
 delivers an actual pin, and there is
 a direct threat of winning a pawn by
 8 Nxe5. Furthermore, by impaling the
 black beast at c6, blacks hold on the
 centre is dealt a mortal blow, so that
 white is all ready to smash open the
 central files by d2-d4. To prevent this,
 black tries a pin of his own.

7 Bg4
 8 H3 Bxf3

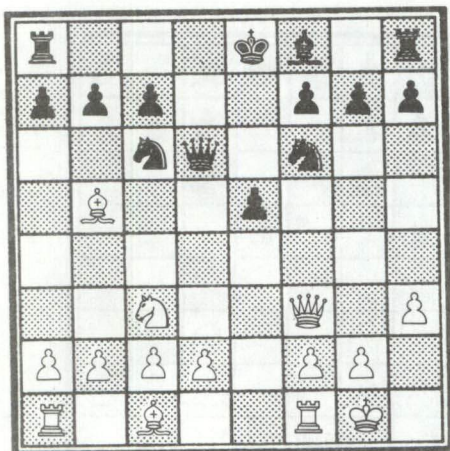
Black exchanges and removes the
 immediate threat to his pawn at e5.
 But this only throws up more problems.

9 Qxf3

Now there is a focussed attack on c6
 to be dealt with.

9 Qd6

True to form, the computer holds on to
 what he's got.



10 d4!

It had to come. This pawn sacrifice allows white to use the central file against the uncastled black king.

10 exd4

Of course, 10 Qxd4 would be even worse after 11 Bxc6+ bxc6 12 Qxc6+ ♔ QXR.

11 Re1+ Be7

12 Bf4

Develop with a gain of time they say.

12 Qc5?

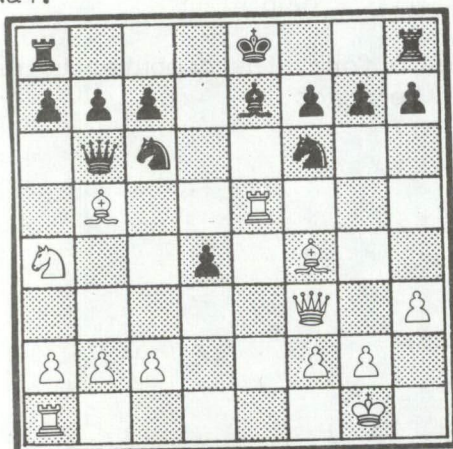
This loses rapidly. The position is still problematical after 12 ... Qd7, which indicates that white's last move, 12 Bf4, may have been too routine, and that 12 Ne4 Nxe4 13 Qxe4, preventing 0-0, might have been better.

13 Re5!

Taking advantage of the pin again.

13 Qb6

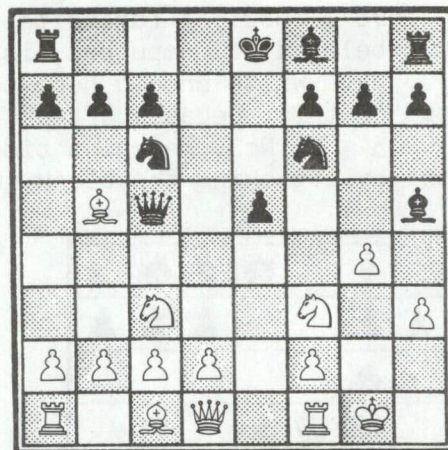
14 Na4!



And black's queen is lost.

Another game against the Novag level 1 featured the black queen moving to c5 instead of black to d8.

After 3 Be2 d5 4 exd5 Qxd5 5 Nc3 Qc5 6 0-0 Nf6 white played again 7 Bb5 Bg4 8 h3 Bh5 9 g4



Black is loath now to play 9 Bg6, which may run into something like 10 Nxe5 Qxe5 11 Re1 (note the use of the e file again) and instead continued

9 Nxe4 10 hxg4 Bxg4 However this receives short shrift from 11 d4! Bxf3 (... exd4 12 Re1+ Be7 13 Qxd4!) 12 Qxf3 exd4 13 Re1+ Kd8? 14 Qxf7 Kc8 15 Re8+ and mates in a couple.

approaching the

main variations

The most testing reply to 3 Be2 is

3 NF6

This intends to capture the pawn a move later, when black will castle quickly into safety. White's problem is to find something meaningful to do with his extra move.

7 Nxd4

This seems best, as it forces black to capture the pawn immediately, and then white hopes to make something out of the advance of his F pawn

7 Ng4xe5

8 F4 Nxd4

(8..... Ng6 is also possible).

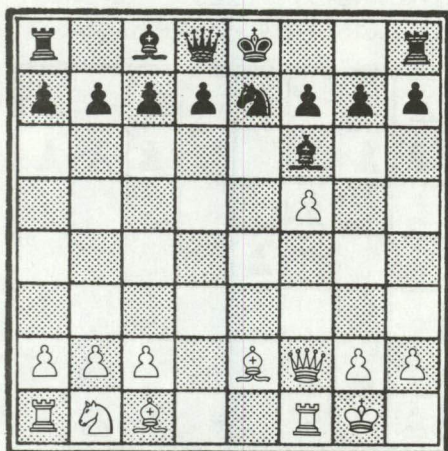
9 Qxd4 Ng6!

10 F5

(10 Qxg7 Bf6 11 Qh6 is another story)

10 Bf6

11 Qf2 Ne7



This is another typical position where white has given up a pawn but has advanced strongly on the king side, and should black castle there he may find himself attacked strongly.

A game Basman-Novag constellation level 7 continued from the diagram:

12 Nc3 d5

13 g4! 0-0

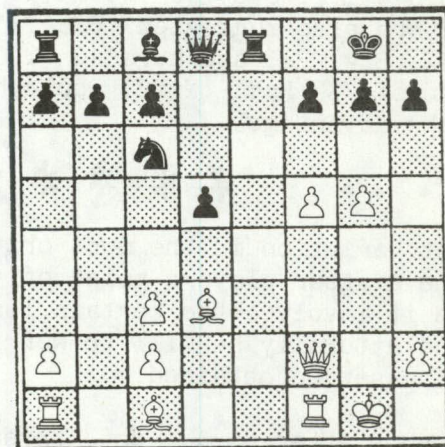
14 Bd3

(preparing g5, by protecting the F5 pawn)

14 ... Bxc3(?)

15 bxc3 Nc6

16 g5 Re8



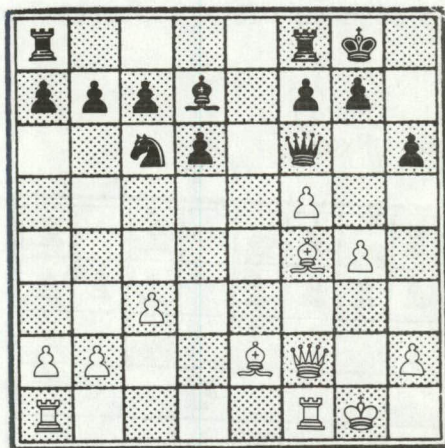
Here I had a choice of pawn thrusts, 17 g6 or 17 f6. In one game against Novag I chose 17 f6 and won quickly with mate threats at g7. 17 g6 18 Qh4 Qd6 19 a4! followed by Ba3 and Qh6. In another game I chose 17 g6 but did not fare so well after 17 hxg6 18 Fxg6 F5! 19 h4 Qf6 20 h5 Qxc3 (grab everything) 21 Be3 Nb4! with counter play for black. In a couple of practice games between Basman and Cavendish (London U12 Champion) the consequences were:

(PLEASE GO BACK TO THE LAST DIAGRAM BUT ONE)

12 Nc3 0-0 13 g4 h6

14 Ne4 Nc6 15 Nxf6+ Qxf6

16 c3 d6 17 Bf4 Bd7



White steadily masses for the g5 pawn break through.

18 Qg3 Ne5 19 Rf2 Bc6

20 h4 Nd7 21 Bd3 Nc5

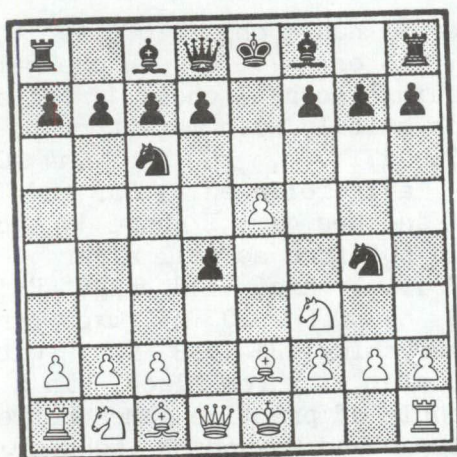
22 g5! hxg5 23 hxg5 Qe7

A game between Tayler and Hebden in 1981 continued 9 0-0 10 Nc3 (10 Nd2 and 10 Be3 are also suggested) Bf5 11 Nxd5 re8 12 Bf4 Bg6 and here 13 Qb3 (instead of 13 Rad1 Nxf2) would have given white the advantage.

✕ * * * * ✕

Our last variation is the most critical one from the amateur players point of view - because it involves the certain loss of a pawn and naturally he will be worried about the compensation obtained.

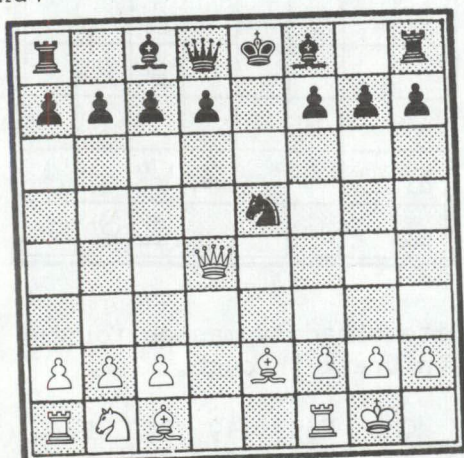
This occurs after 5 Ng4, threatening the white e pawn twice.



There is no real point in trying to save this pawn - if white plays 5 Bf4 black will simply attack the centre with d6 and white's hopes of an opening advantage are shelved.

So white must go for immediate castling, hoping to take advantage of the open 'e' file as soon as black captures the central pawn.

6 0-0! Ngxe5
7 Nxe5 Nxe5
8 Qxd4



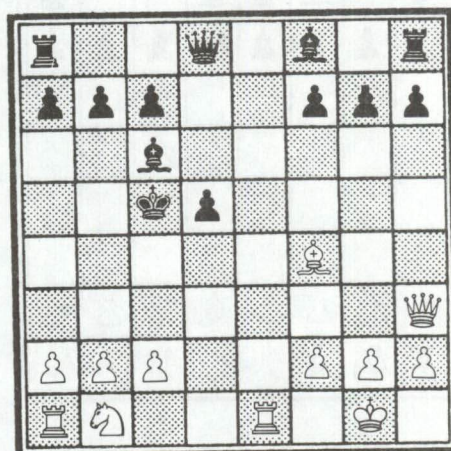
White's queen comes to the middle of the board with gain of tempo. We can see that black still needs two moves to castle his own king.

8 Nc6

9 Qc3!

A strong retreat, designed solely to prevent the development of black's bishop at f8, on pain of capture of the 'g' pawn and destruction of black's intended castled position. Of course, black can simply go straight for the ending with 9 Qf6, but after 10 Qxf6 gxf6 11 Nc3 (threat Nd5) his defence is not easy, despite having an extra pawn.

Playing this position against Sensory 9, the computer chose 9 ... d5 here, but got into trouble almost immediately after 10 Bb5! Bd7 11 Bxc6 (not 11 Re1+ Ne7!) Bxc6 12 Re1+ Kd7 13 Qh3 Kd6 14 Bf4+ Kc5.

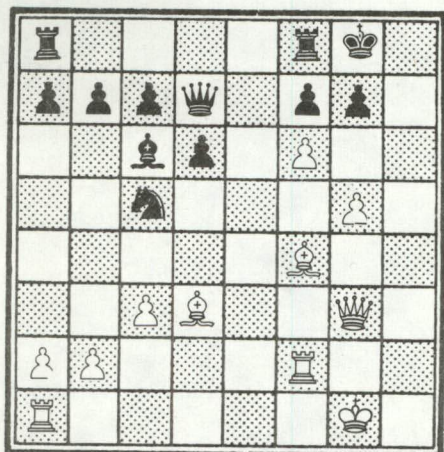


If white doesn't manage to mate quickly here, his win should be easy if he steamrollers his queen side pawns down against the black king opening the files and crushing the pieces in their path.

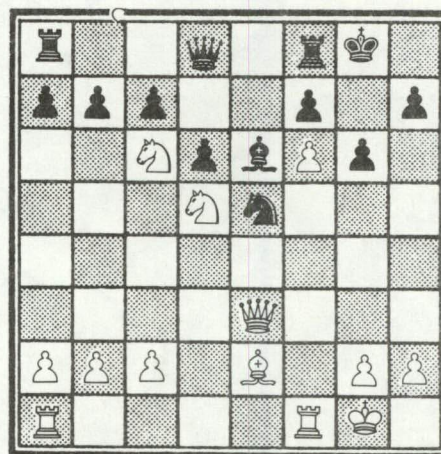
Sensory 9, actually, preferred usually to play a more conservative, but probably stronger line than the immediate capture at e5.

After 5 Ng4 6 0-0 it chose: 6 Be7!

24 f6! Qd7



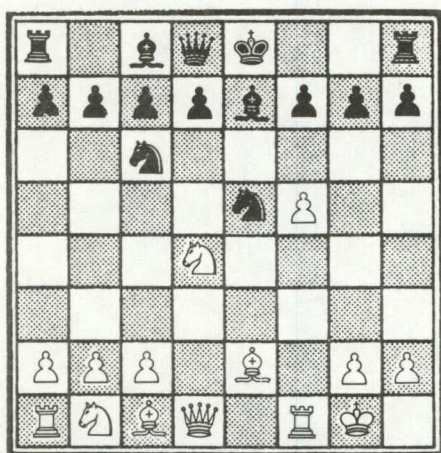
15 Nxc6 Bxe3+ 16 Qxe3



25 Bh7+ Kxh7 26 Rh2+ Kg8
27 Qh4 and mates

However, Cavendish gained revenge as white in the following encounter:

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Be2 Nf6 4 d4 exd4
5 e5 Ng4 6 0-0 Be7
7 Nxd4 Ngxe5 8 f4 Ng6
9 f5 Nge5



10 Nc3 0-0 11 Nd5 This knight coming to d5 severely constricts the black position.

11 Bc5 12 Be3 d6 13 f6
The thrust comes and mating threats are in the air.

13 g6 14 Qd2 Be6 all oblivious to the coming storm.

Black resigns, because 16 bxc6 is answered by Qh6 followed by mate. To recap on the ideas of Taylers's variation

1. White forgoes the immediate attempts to assault f7 but aims for quick development and castling. The bishop's post at e2 is modest, but avoids exposure and aids castling.

2. White aims to play d2-d4 and assault black's pawn at e5, either exchanging it or gaining a space advantage with two pawns in the centre.

3. Black may try to cut across white's plans by counter attacking in the centre with 3 Nf6. In that case, to retain his initiative white may need to sacrifice a pawn gaining in exchange attacking chances against the black king in the centre or in its castled position.

4. The move Be2-b5 at certain critical moments can disable black's control of the e5 and d4 squares, making the move d4 easier for white. The bishop move also clears the 'e' file. A lesser intention of playing Be2-b5 is to play Bxc6 doubling black's pawns, but it is usually less important than the other ideas already mentioned. I say this because a lot of people get fixed on the idea of doubled pawns and elevate the concept into idolatrous proportions.

I look forward to hearing of your successes with this new variation!

