

Mini-Lessons From Short Games Of 21st Century

By IM Nikolay Minev

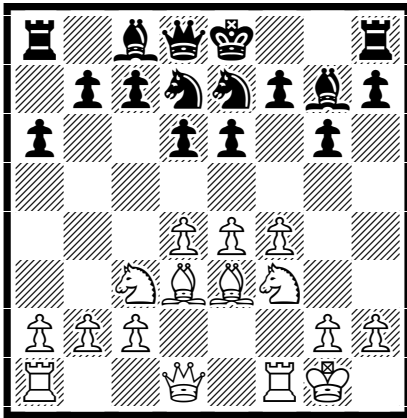
Fresh Mini-Stories from 2011

Rare Openings and Variations

B06 T. Weber – J. Rudd

Gibraltar 2011

1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.Be3 a6 5.Bd3 e6 6.f4 Ne7 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.O-O



The practice shows that Black's relatively rare defensive formation is very resilient. In most games, White uses a plan of attack combining long castling and the h2-h4 advance, but this has not led to real success. In this game, White promotes another plan, with Kingside castling and the f4-f5 instead. This idea looks very promising.

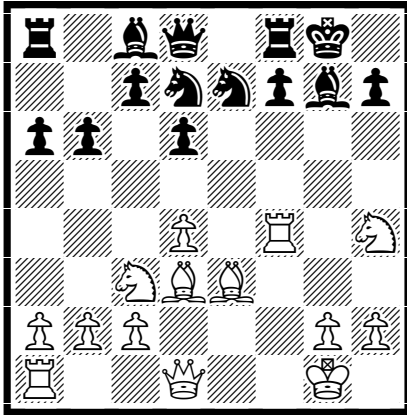
8...b6?!

Consistent is 8...b5, but 8...c5, 8...e5, or even 8...f5 also deserve attention.

9.f5!? exf5 10.exf5 gxf5

After this Black is in trouble. Perhaps 10...Bb7 or 10...O-O offer better resistance.

11.Nh4 f4? 12.Rxf4 O-O



13.Qh5 Ng6 14.Nxg6 hxg6 15.Bxg6! fxg6 16.Qd5+ 1-0

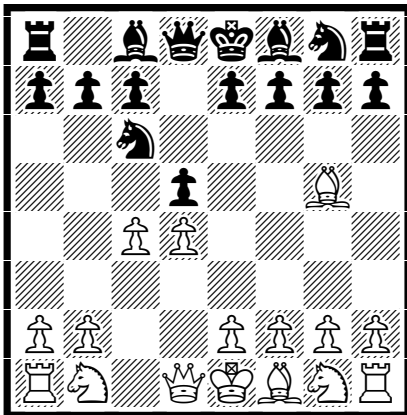
D07 M. Bouaraba – M. Wiander

Stockholm 2011

1.d4 d5 2.Bg5

This strange continuation has sometimes made an appearance in recent tournament practice.

2...Nc6!? 3.c4!?



Now we have transposition into an extremely rare variation of the Chigorin Defense: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 and now the unique 3.Bg5!? leads to the game position.

3...f6 4.Bh4 e5

With the idea to immediately seize the initiative. Instead, Black has many other continuations at his disposal that deserve attention, such as 4...e6, 4...Nh6, 4...Bf5 etc.

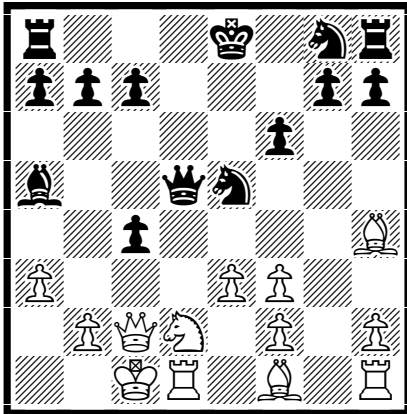
5.dxe5 Bb4+ 6.Nd2 dxc4 7.Ngf3 Bg4 8.a3 Ba5 9.e3 Bxf3

9...c3!?

10.gxf3 Qd5 11.Qc2 Nxe5?

11...O-O-O!?

12.O-O-O



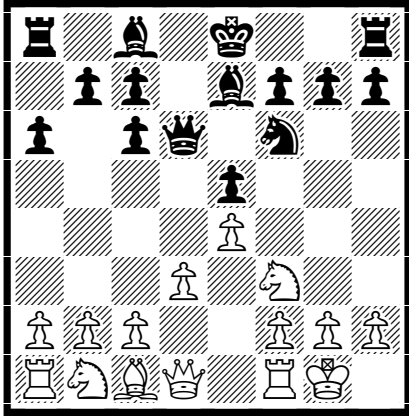
12...Bxd2+

Surprisingly Black is in trouble. If 12...O-O-O 13.Bh3+! Nd7 (13...Kb8 14.Nxc4) 14.Nxc4 and White wins.

13.Rxd2 Qxf3 14.Rg1 Ne7 15.Rxg7 Nf5 16.Be2 Qh3 17.Bxf6 Nxg7 18.Bxg7 Ng6 19.Bxh8 Nxh8 20.Qe4+ Kf8 21.Qf4+ 1-0

C85 J. Mullon – K. Georgiev
Gibraltar 2011

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O Be7 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.d3 Qd6!?



An extremely rare continuation, instead of the regularly played 7...Nd7.

8.b3

White gains nothing with 8.d4 Nd7 or 8.Nbd2 Be6 8.d4 Nd7.

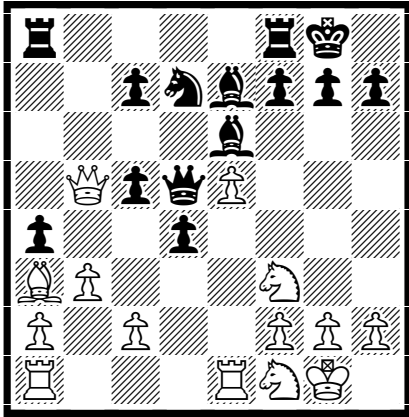
8...Be6 9.Ba3 c5 10.Nbd2 Nd7 11.Qe2

11.Nc4!? Bxc4 12.bxc4.

11...b5 12.Rfe1 O-O 13.Nf1 a5! 14.d4

After 14.Bb2 a4 Black stands better.

14...exd4 15.Qxb5 a4 16.e5 Qd5



17.c4

In a worse position, White initiates tactical complications that prove to be not in his favor.

17...dxc3 18.Ne3

If 18.Rad1 Rfb8!

18...Qe4 19.Nd1 c6 20.Qb7 Qd3 21.Re3 Qb5 0-1

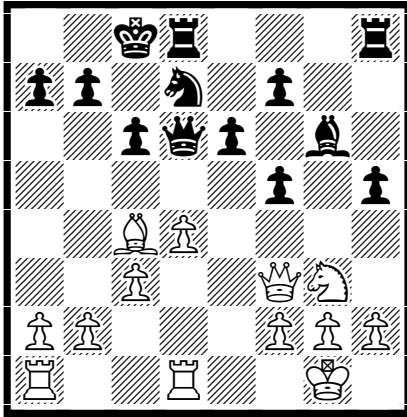
Mistakes and Typical Tactics

“Without mistakes, chess is not interesting. Routine games can be played by computers, but human mistakes create very unusual situations and it is always a challenge to find a way out of trouble.” – D. Bronstein.

“Sacrifices only prove that someone has blundered.” – S. Tartakover.

B16 N. Mikkelsen – K. Rasmussen
Denmark (ch team) 2011

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ gxf6 6.Bc4 Bf5 7.Ne2 e6 8.O-O Bd6 9.Bf4 Qc7 10.Bxd6 Qxd6 11.Ng3 Bg6 12.Qe2 Nd7 13.Rfd1 O-O-O 14.c3 h5 15.Qf3 f5



16.Ne2??

A blunder that would be typical for players with little tournament practice.

16...Ne5! 0-1

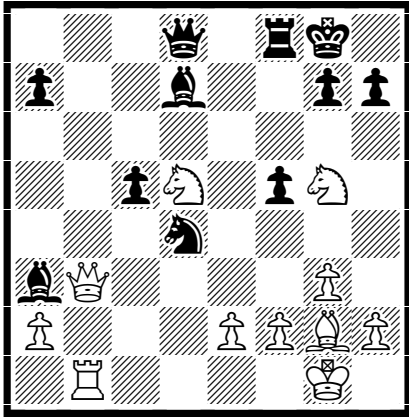
D34 M. Taras – P. Van Ginkel
Leinzell 2011

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.O-O O-O 9.Bg5 b6?

A novelty that, in my opinion, is not to be recommended.

10.Qa4 Bd7 11.dxc5 bxc5 12.Bxf6 Bxf6 13.Nxd5 Bxb2 14.Rab1 Rb8 15.Qc2 Ba3 16.Rxb8 Qxb8 17.Ng5 f5 18.Rb1 Qd8 19.Qb3 Nd4

The same mating pattern with two Knights also arises after 19...h6 20.Nf6++ 21.Kh8 22.Qg8+ Rxc8 23.Nf7#



20.Nf6++

The same result is also achieved by 20.Ne7++.

20...Kh8 21.Qg8+ 1-0

For if 21...Rxf8 22.Nf7#

D71 M. Carlsen – A. Giri

Wijk aan Zee 2011

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 d5 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.Nf3 Nb6

Recently, this has been considered Black's best continuation.

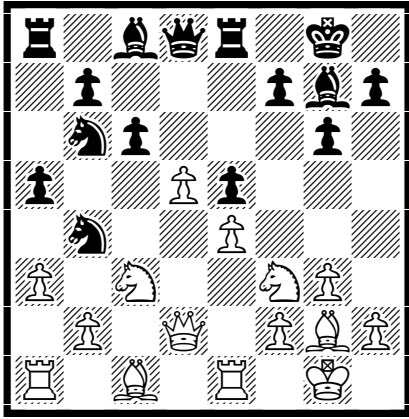
7.Nc3

7.e4!?

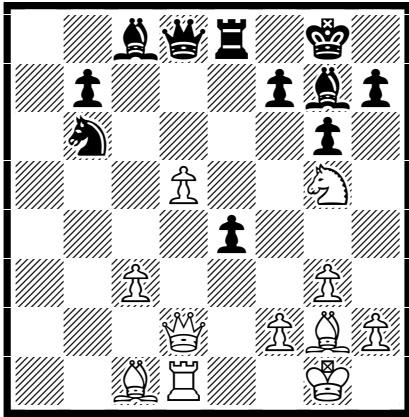
7...Nc6 8.e3 O-O 9.O-O Re8

9...e5!?

10.Re1 a5 11.Qd2 e5 12.d5 Nb4 13.e4 c6 14.a3



14...cxd5! 15.axb4 axb4 16.Rxa8 bxc3 17.bxc3 Nxa8 18.exd5 Nb6 19.Rd1 e4 20.Ng5?



The decisive mistake. As we shall see later, White wrongly assessed the position after the forced tactical complications that follow. Necessary was 20.Ne1, but it seems that after 20...Qc7 or 20...Bg4 White is still in trouble.

20...e3! 21.Qb2 Qxg5!

Now White discovers that the planned 22.Qxb6 is refuted by 22...e2 23.Re1 Qxc1!! 24.Rxc1 e1=Q+ 25.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 26.Bf1 Bh3 with inevitable mate.

22.Bxe3 Qg4 0-1

Because of 23.f3 Qa4 24.Ra1 Nc4.