

Chess Openings: New Theory

by James A. Riechel

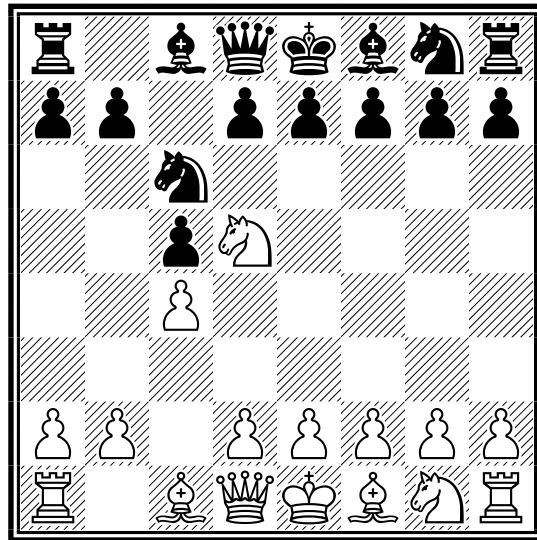
(penname: James Alan York)

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Chapter 1 – York Opening

The York Opening is reached by 1. c4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. Nd5. The move 3. Nd5 distinguishes the York Opening from the Symmetrical English. It appears unusual, but has directed meaning and purpose.



The York Opening

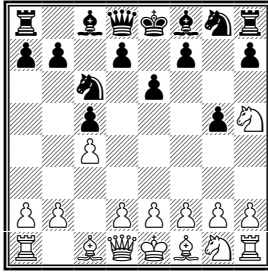
With 3. Nd5, White plans to redeploy the queen knight to the kingside, where the knight will aid in the defense of White's kingside, help control the center, and attack Black's kingside.

Black has four main choices for defense: The Hypermodern York, The Classical York, The Symmetrical York, and the Scandinavian York. Black can choose his defense based on playing style. The four defenses are significantly different from each other, and can be considered separate openings.

The Scandinavian York, however, is a challenge for White, in the spirit of the King's Gambit. Caution is advised.

Section 1 – Hypermodern York

1. c4 c5
2. Nc3 Nc6
3. Nd5 e6
4. Nf4 g5^A
5. Nh5



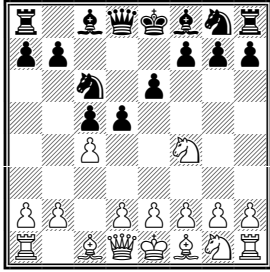
^A The Hypermodern York.

5. Nh5 is forced, but is a strong attacking move. In some variations, White must be willing to sacrifice this knight or the other to gain a strong attack against Black's king, in the style of Tal.

Obviously, with a strong White knight entrenched on h5, and because of the weakening effect of ...g5 on Black's kingside, Black plans to castle queenside. Black should concentrate on this goal while at the same time completing his development. The White knight on h5 cannot be easily won or trapped.

Section 2 – Classical York

1. c4 c5
2. Nc3 Nc6
3. Nd5 e6
4. Nf4 d5^A



^A The Classical York

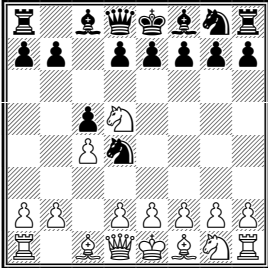
Black plays classically, and immediately creates a classical pawn formation in the center. White must respond accurately, or face disadvantages.

- 5 cxd5
- exd5
- 6 d4(a)

(a) Kasparov's move. Fritz recommends 6. g3, followed by a later d4.

Section 3 – Symmetrical York

1. c4 c5
2. Nc3 Nc6
3. Nd5 Nd4^A



^A The Symmetrical York.

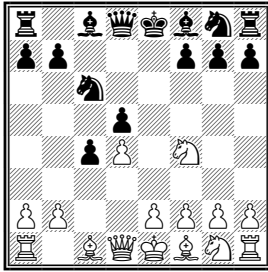
Black plays symmetrically, without disadvantage.

- 4 e3
- e6
- 5 exd4
- exd5
- 6 Nf3
- Nf6
- 7 d3
- d6
- 8 Be2
- Be7
- 9 o-o
- o-o(a)

(a) The position is completely symmetrical after nine entire moves!

Section 4 – Scandinavian York

1. c4 c5
2. Nc3 Nc6
3. Nd5 e6
4. Nf4 d5
5. cxd5 exd5
6. d4 c4^A



^A The Scandinavian York.

Black sets up the traditional Scandinavian c4-d5 pawn formation

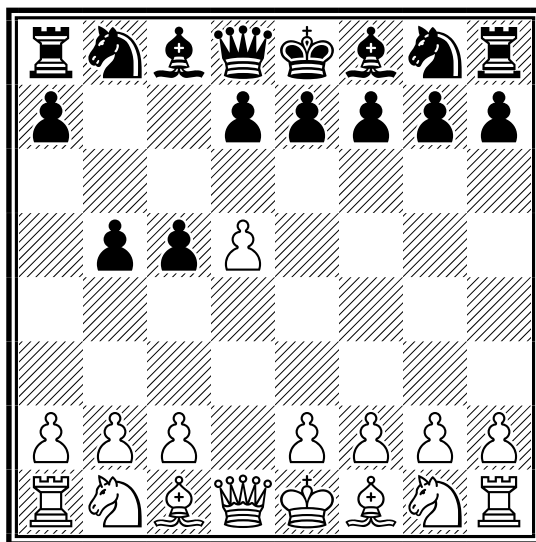
7 e4(a)

(a) Kasparov's move. The most spirited reply.

Chapter 2 – York Benko

A Benko Gambit occurs when Black follows 1. d4 c5 2. d5 with an early ...b5.

In the York Benko, Black plays ...b5 at the earliest possible opportunity, even though the sacrifice of a pawn is required, a pawn which may never be recovered. The move order is 1. d4 c5 2. d5 b5!

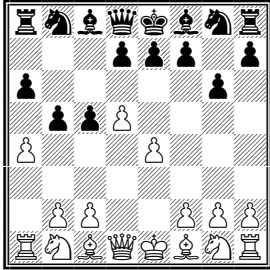


York Benko

A rook must be traded, so Black does not have the traditional compensation of double rook attack on White's a and b pawns on open files. The position is, however, likely a theoretical draw. Black achieves a flexible setup. The constant threats to recover the Black pawn with open lines accruing to Black practically nullify the value of White's extra pawn, which cannot develop except backwards and therefore cannot promote. White with the material advantage, is tied down but solid. Black is flexible with certain chances to draw in the endgame.

Section 1 – York Benko

1. d4 c5
2. d5 b5^A
3. e4 a6
4. a4 g6^B



^A The York Benko.

^B The new move, a theoretical novelty.

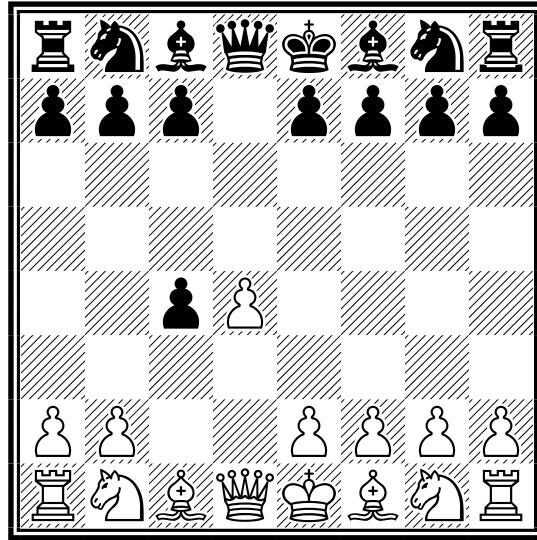
Black sacrifices the b5 pawn, and concentrates on developing his forces for the middle game and endgame.

- 5 axb5
- Bg7
- 6 Nf3
- d6
- 7 h3
- Nf6
- 8 Bd3
- o-o
- 9 o-o
- Qb6
- 10 Qe2
- Ra7(a)

(a) Now the capture on b5 is possible, and Black has nearly completed his development. Here's one possible continuation: 11. Nc3 axb5 12. Rxa7 Qxa7 13. Nxb5 Qb6. Black has an incredibly flexible position, and definite fighting chances.

Chapter 3 – Queen’s Gambit Accepted

The Queen’s Gambit Accepted is reached by 1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4.



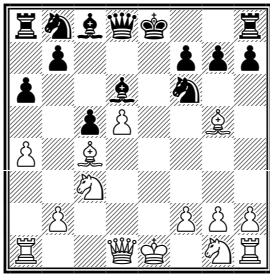
Queen’s Gambit Accepted

Black has abandoned the center, but in the time it takes White to recover the pawn, Black hopes to rally his forces for a successful defense.

The York-Sandnes Variation of the Queen’s Gambit Accepted occurs in the old line where White plays 3. Nc3 in conjunction with the theoretical novelty 9. Bg5. This is the subject of this section.

Section 1 – York-Sandnes Variation

1. d4 d5
2. c4 dxc4
3. Nc3 c5
4. d5 e6
5. e4 exd5
6. exd5 Nf6
7. Bxc4 a6
8. a4 Bd6
9. Bg5^A



^A The new move, a theoretical novelty.

So far, Black has been able to maintain the balance.

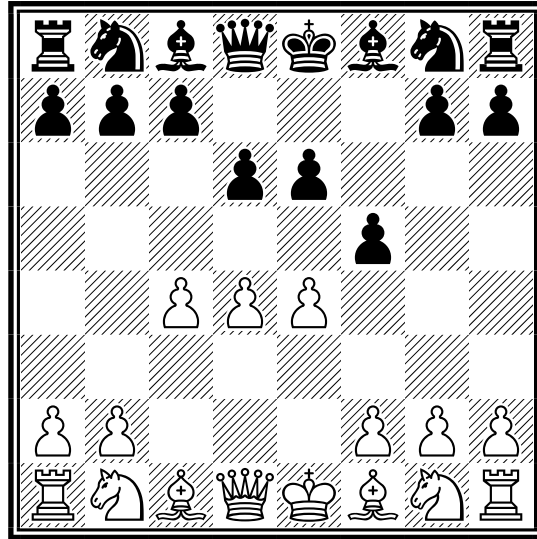
- 9 h6
- 10 Bh4
- g5
- 11 Bg3
- o-o
- 12 Ne2
- Bf5
- 13 o-o
- Ne4(a)
- 14 Nxe4
- Bxe4
- 15 Nc3
- Bg6(b)

(a) 13. ... Ne4 solves all of Black's problems except the development of the b8 knight.

(b) And now White has two choices: 16. Qb3 Bxg3 17. fxg3 Qc7 18. Rae1 Nd7 19. Re7 Rae8 20. d6 Qxd6 21. Bxf7+ Bxf7 22. Rxf7 Qd4+ 23. Kh1 c4 24. Rxf8+ 24. ... Rxf8 25. Rxf8+ Kxf8 26. Qxb7 Nc5. The position is unclear, but most likely a draw. Black is down a pawn, but has a strong attack with what little material is left on the board. The other White choice: 16. f4 gxf4 17. Bxf4 Bxf4 18. Rxf4 Qd6. The b8 knight will soon be developed, and Black has solved all of his problems.

Chapter 4 – York Dutch

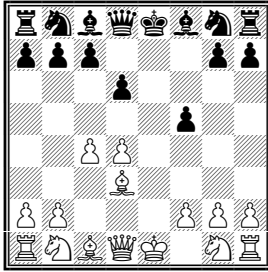
Everyone knows the Dutch Defense: 1. d4 f5. In the York Dutch, Black delays ...f5 until ...d6 and ...e6 are played. The move order is 1. d4 e6 2. c4 d6 3. e4 f5.



York Dutch

Section 1 – York Dutch

1. d4 e6
2. c4 d6
3. e4 f5^A
4. exf5 exf5
5. Bd3^B



^A The York Dutch.

^B White targets the f5 pawn. It is not easily defended, but Black has resources.

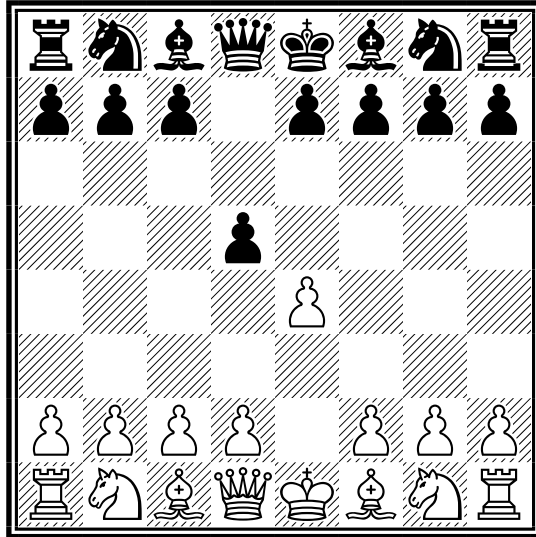
White has an ideal center, and a good target to attack. How should Black continue?

- 5
- Nf6
- 6 Qf3
- Nc6(a)
- 7 Ne2(b)
- Nb4(c)
- 8 Bxf5
- Bxf5
- 9 Qxf5
- Qd7!(d)
- 10 Qxd7+
- Kxd7(e)

- (a) Now 7. Bxf5?? loses to 7. ... Qe7+, and 7. d5 Ne5 forks bishop and queen.
- (b) 7. Be3 leads to complicated positions not unfavorable to Black. For example, consider the pawn sacrifice 7. ... f4!?
- (c) Now Black gets a nice attack for the pawn.
- (d) The White queen has no retreat and must trade to avoid 10. ... Nc2+.
- (e) With White to play, Black nevertheless has an attack with excellent chances to regain the pawn and continue the attack.

Chapter 5 – Center-Counter

The Center-Counter is perhaps the oldest of openings, reached by 1. e4 d5.



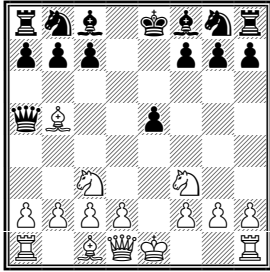
Center-Counter

White obviously responds 2. exd5, and after 2. ... Qxd5, White gains time developing and attacking the Black queen with 3. Nc3.

In this chapter, we explore an interesting bishop gambit available to White.

Section 1 – York Bishop Gambit

1. e4 d5^A
2. exd5 Qxd5
3. Nc3 Qa5
4. Nf3 e5
5. Bb5+!?^B



^A The Center-Counter.

^B White's point is an interesting bishop gambit.

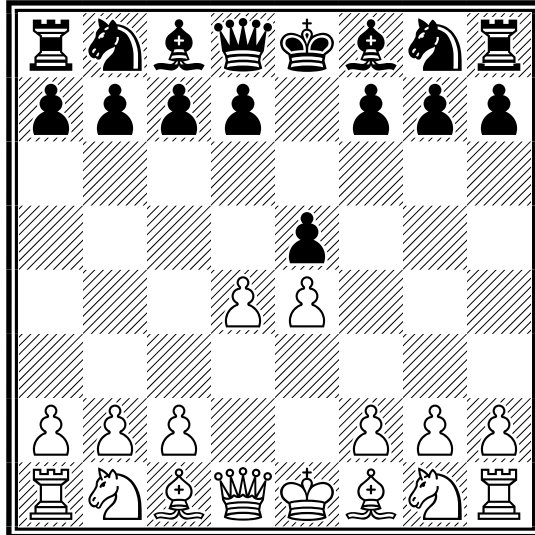
White gains additional time developing by checking the Black king. But the White bishop on b5 is vulnerable.

- 5 c6
- 6 o-o
- 7 Nxe5(a)

- (a) A difficult position. Black has a whole bishop for a pawn, but White is light years ahead of Black in development. White is castled, while Black's king stands on its original square on an open file. The only Black piece that has developed is the queen, all the other Black pieces stand on their original squares. White should, at the very least, be able to force a draw.

Chapter 6 – Danish Gambit

The Danish Gambit is reached by 1. e4 e5 2. d4.



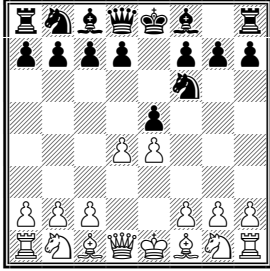
The Danish Gambit

The Danish Gambit is a very dangerous weapon in White's arsenal. Black must be on his toes to look for opportunities to return the pawn to thwart White's attack and complete his development.

Here we look at a new second-move response to the Danish Gambit, 2. ... Nf6, the so-called Alekhine Variation.

Section 1 – Alekhine Variation

1. e4 e5
2. d4^A Nf6^B



^A The Danish Gambit.

^B The Alekhine Variation.

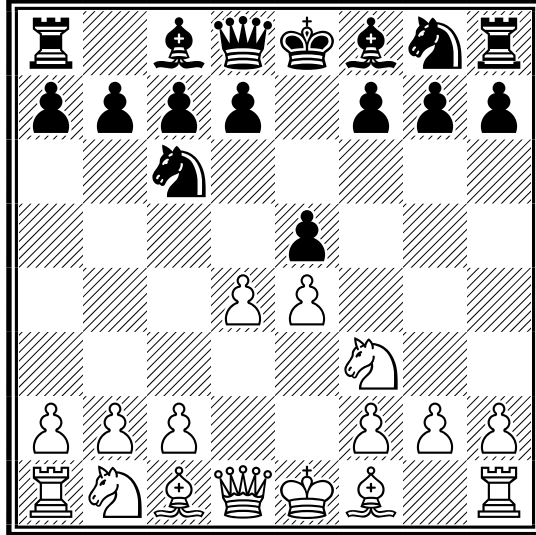
Instead of capturing on d4 or defending e5, Black attacks e4 in the style of Alekhine.

- 3 dxe5(a)
Nxe4(b)

- (a) The most difficult move for Black to meet.
(b) And now we have transposed from the Danish Gambit to something that looks like the Petrov Defense.

Chapter 7 – Scotch Opening

The Scotch Opening is reached by 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4.

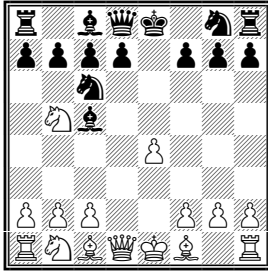


Scotch Opening

After 3. ... exd4 4. Nxd4, 4. ... Bc5 has been traditionally difficult to meet. But White has a new move, and Black has a new defensive system.

Section 1 – Belgium Defense

1. e4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. d4^A exd4
4. Nxd4 Bc5
5. Nb5!^B



^A The Scotch Opening.

^B The new move, a theoretical novelty. Notice that the sacrifice 5. ... Bxf2+? doesn't hold up, and 5. ... Qf6 and 5. ... Qh4 are both ineffective.

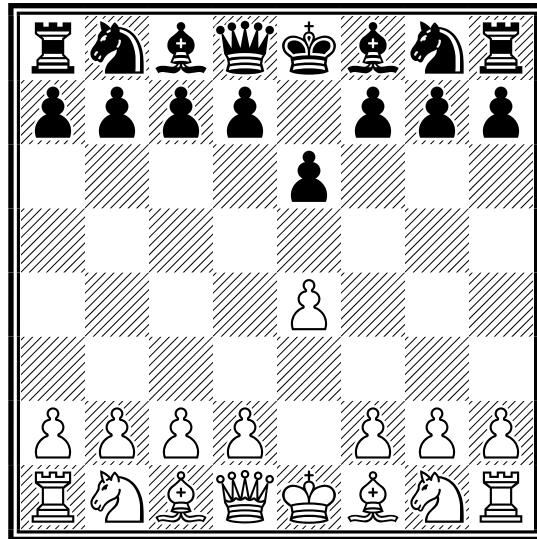
The annoying White knight on b5 keeps the Black queen stuck on d8, limiting Black's counterattack.

- 5 a6
- 6 Qd5
- 7 Qxc5
- b4(a)

(a) Completing the Belgium Defense setup.

Chapter 8 – The French Defense

The French Defense is reached by 1. e4 e6.

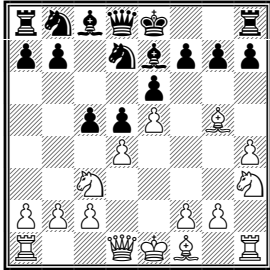


The French Defense

In this chapter we will examine new moves in the Albin-Chatard-Alekhine variation, a new variation in the MacCutcheon, and a sacrifice of a pawn by Black which I would like to call the “French Gambit.”

Section 1 – Albin-Chatard-Alekhine Variation

1. e4 e6
2. d4 d5
3. Nc3 Nf6^A
4. Bg5 Be7
5. e5 Nfd7
6. h4^B c5
7. Nh3^C



- ^A The Classical French.
- ^B The Albin-Chatard-Alekhine Variation.
- ^C A new move, a theoretical novelty.

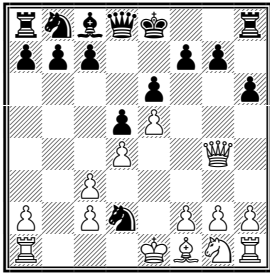
7. Nh3 is a new move worthy of consideration.

- 7 cxd4
- 8 Bxe7
- 9 b4
- Qa5!!(a)
- Qa3(b)

- (a) Amazingly or not, the recapture of the bishop can be delayed.
- (b) And now 10. Nb5 Qa4!! 11. Nc7+ (11. Bd6 Na6 also draws) 11. ... Kxe7 draws, while 10. Nxd5, 10. Qxd4, 10. Bg5, and 10. Bd6 offer Black the advantage.

Section 2 – York MacCutcheon

1. e4 e6
2. d4 d5
3. Nc3 Nf6
4. Bg5 Bb4^A
5. e5 h6
6. Bd2 Bxc3
7. bxc3 Ne4
8. Qg4 Nxd2^B



^A The MacCutcheon Variation.

^B A new move, a theoretical novelty.

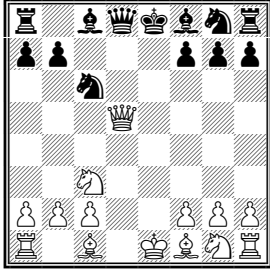
Black is sure to lose his g7 pawn. Will he lose the game as well?

- 9 Qxg7
Rf8 (forced)
- 10 Kxd2
Qg5+!
- 11 Qxg5
hxg5
- 12 h4
gxh4
- 13 Rxh4
c5(a)

(a) The starting point of the York Variation. Even though Black is down a pawn, the game is fully equal. For example, 14. dxc5 Na6! draws.

Section 3 – The French Gambit

1. e4 e6
2. d4 d5
3. Nc3 c5!^A
4. exd5^B cxd4
5. Qxd4 Nc6!
6. Qd1 exd5
7. Qxd5^C



^A An unrecognized move in an old, well-established line.

^B Better than 4. dxc5 d4!

^C Black is now down a pawn, but does have compensation.

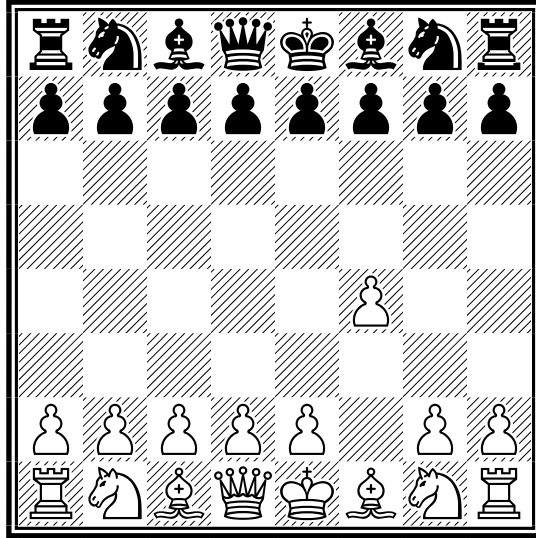
Black exchanges his pawn for a tremendous lead in development and an attack.

- 7 Be6!
- 8 Qxd8
Rxd8
- 9 Bb5
Ne7
- 10 Nf3
a6
- 11 Ba4
Bc4!
- 12 Bb3
Bxb3
- 13 cxb3
Nb4!(a)

(a) And now Black has an attack for the pawn, and White's extra pawn is doubled.

Chapter 9 – Bird Opening

The Bird Opening is reached by 1. f4.

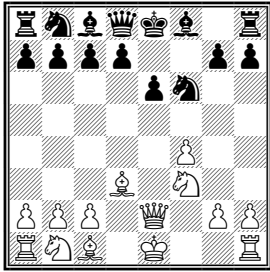


Bird Opening

The subject of this chapter is the Symmetrical Bird: 1. f4 f5. It was once thought a clear, easy win for White, but improvements have been found for Black.

Section 1 – Symmetrical Bird

1. f4 f5^A
2. e4^B fxe4
3. d3 exd3
4. Bxd3 Nf6
5. Nf3 e6
6. Qe2^C



- ^A The Symmetrical Bird.
- ^B A promising pawn sacrifice.
- ^C A new move, a theoretical novelty.

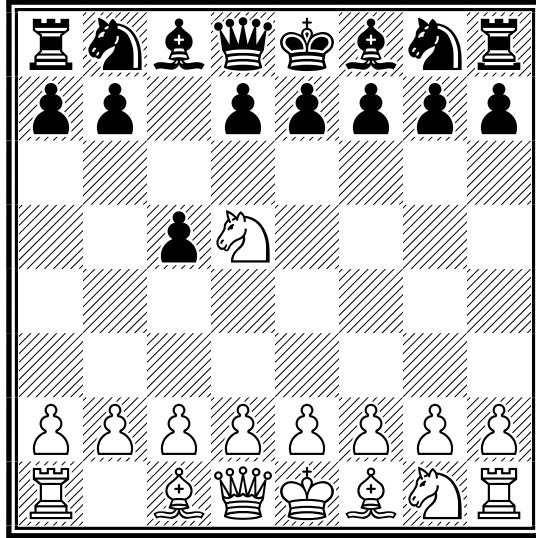
Is White's pressure worth the pawn?

- 6 Be7
- 7 Nc3
- o-o
- 8 Bd2
- a5!(a)

(a) With approximately equal chances.

Chapter 10 – The American Opening

The American Opening is reached by 1. Nc3 c5 2. Nd5.



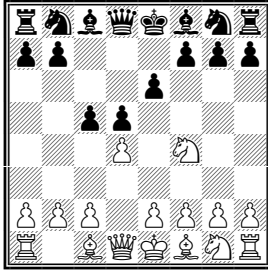
The American Opening

The American Opening is more aggressive and flexible than the York. White does not play 1 c4 before Nc3, so White does not invite the English. White immediately occupies the hole created on d5 by 1. ... c5, and as in the York, plans to redeploy the queen knight to f4 to pressure d5, defend the White kingside, and attack Black's kingside.

2. ... e6 must be considered the main line. Black attempts to embarrass the White knight, and occupy the center with a mass of pawns. Nevertheless, White maintains a slight but significant advantage after the opening phase of the game is complete.

Section 1 – Riechel Variation

1. Nc3 c5^A
2. Nd5 e6^B
3. Nf4 d5
4. d4



^A Black can play 1. ... e6 to avoid 2. Nd5, aiming for a type of French. White's best is then the Dunst-French: 2. d4 d5 3. Nf3! Then after 3. ... Nf6 4. Bg5 4. ... Be7 5. Bxf6 Bxf6 6. e4, we have transposed to the Rubenstein French with advantage to White.

^B 2. ... Nc6 3. c4 transposes to the York Opening.

With 4. d4, White strikes back at the Black center, which has become quite powerful. White will lose time recapturing the pawn with his queen, but the queen will find a favorable post on a4, pressuring Black's queenside. Black will develop with time attacking the White queen, but Black faces difficulties thanks to White's seventh move in the main variation, 7. c4.

- 4 cxd4
- 5 Qxd4
- 6 Nc6
- 7 Qa4
- 8 Bd7
- 9 c4(a)

(a) A difficult position to assess. But certainly White's initiative is worth at least as much as Black's developmental advantage.