

Efstratios Grivas

GRIVAS OPENING LABORATORY

VOLUME 5



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Evolution

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KEY TO SYMBOLS

| | |
|----|--------------------------------|
| = | Equality or equal chances |
| ± | White has a slight advantage |
| ∓ | Black has a slight advantage |
| ± | White is better |
| ∓ | Black is better |
| +- | White has a decisive advantage |
| -+ | Black has a decisive advantage |
| ∞ | unclear |
| ∞ | with compensation |
| ↔ | with counterplay |
| ↑ | with initiative |
| → | with an attack |
| Δ | with the idea |
| □ | only move |
| N | novelty |
| ! | a good move |
| !! | an excellent move |
| ? | a weak move |
| ?? | a blunder |
| !? | an interesting move |
| ?! | a dubious move |
| + | check |
| # | mate |

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

The series continuing with this book is aimed at offering a full repertoire for White based on **1.d4**.

The idea of small opening repertoire books is not new, but here the purpose and the presentation are different.

The choice of variations against each reply from Black will be mine and will be based on my long experience, having played the game for over 40 years, and also served as a professional coach for approximately 20 of those!

I hope that each book in the series will come out every two months and one to three openings will be offered in each of them.

Maybe not all of the choices will appeal to you, but you should understand that what is important is to learn them in depth, rather than looking for something astounding — this is simply an illusion.

What I mean by this is that nowadays no opening offers all that much; what you can expect is something between a tiny bit better and slightly better, if

you have done your homework! Otherwise there is no point in the Black player following it!

The recommendations are geared towards posing Black unconventional problems. Your opponents will not be able to churn out lengthy, memorised variations but will need to solve problems at the board, in positions that are somewhat different in character from those normally reached in the openings under discussion.

I have also selected the systems within the repertoire in such a way that they form a seamless whole and are also reachable by transpositions.

I have tried to describe the suggested systems in detail, giving my assessments as clearly and responsibly as possible, and have generally aimed to provide useful guidelines as well as many new ideas and moves.

Many things in chess theory, as in life, are relative and a matter of taste. Actually, there are no 'good' or 'bad' openings. There are openings that you know and understand, and openings that you do not know and do not understand.

Thus, I believe that my recommended systems will offer a lot of possibilities, new ideas and practical benefits, aspects that should not be underestimated in modern chess. Among other things, I have tried to make them 'understandable' to you.

This book series' main purpose is to train and educate the reader in territory that is 'unknown' to him. We must not forget that this is a theory book series, where concrete reaction to the opponent's moves is of primary importance.

General principles and plans do merit a place in this project but, in my opinion, move-by-move consideration is most significant.

Of course, it is not necessary to memorise all the variations and moves mentioned in the books — this would probably be impossible.

But then, you may ask, what is the reason for someone to deal with a theory book, one that he does not need to 'memorise' in full?

The theory of 'subconscious education' will help us to answer this question. By playing through the moves and variations in the books, our subconscious processes and stores similar motifs, repeated moves and plans, and also 'learns' to avoid traps and unwelcome positions.

Such proper 'subconscious memorisation' will, at the critical moment, enforce the correct choice upon us.

Many of the opening books I have read mainly focus on the general characteristics of the opening or the variation in question, and much less so on move-by-move theory.

This can lead to unresolved questions in the reader's mind, and the danger that he will mix things up at moments when it is necessary to find one specific concrete move or sequence.

The recommended repertoire is that of a Grandmaster, without omissions or hidden secrets. On the contrary, it contains a great number of new and deeply analysed suggestions, plans, novelties, new ideas, moves, etc!

Let us not forget that the basic characteristics of the openings do not frequently undergo radical changes. On the other hand, the development of move-by-move theory is explosive.

Every chess player stands on the shoulders of those who came before him. Every generation of good chess players learns from and builds upon the experience and creativity of the previous generations.

The chess player of the year 2020 has encountered more types of positions than the chess-player of 1980 and

knows the proper ways to deal with these positions.

Therefore, a chess player today would have a great advantage over a chess player (even one of equal or greater talent) of 40 years ago, simply because he could play the opening with deeper understanding; this understanding is offered to him by the multitude of deeply-analysed variations.

On no occasion do I underestimate the necessity and value of learning the general characteristics and plans of each opening or variation. However, I do strongly believe that move-by-move theory and its (at least) subconscious absorption are necessary in order to survive in the labyrinth of the chess openings.

One question often posed by my students is whether we must simultaneously prepare two or more different systems against an opening. My personal opinion is that only professional Grandmasters can afford this luxury.

All other chess players should focus on one specific system every time, so as to specialise in it and reap maximum benefit. Only if this choice eventually proves undesirable should one change his systems.

As Ernest Hemingway once wrote: 'I guess really good soldiers are really good at very little else'.

The massive development of theory in all openings has clarified that White cannot hope for anything more than a slight advantage, but in some cases even this is unattainable! My recommendations are purely based on a healthy approach.

I must clarify that I took the liberty of changing the original move-order of many games. In this way it was possible to provide clearer coverage and guidance.

Of course, the way you reach a certain position is important, but equally important is to examine how you want to proceed upon reaching it. True value comes from knowing what to keep and what to throw away.

Finally, I would like to thank my ex-students GMs Antoaneta Stefanova, Alex Ipatov, Emre Can and Ion Chirila among others), for adopting the variation, at least from time to time!

Efstratios Grivas
Sharjah, September 2020

DESCRIPTION

In the fifth book of the series we continue to deal with 'QGD' schemes.

We will start by dealing with how to face 'Various Lines' in the 'QGD'.

Well, these sidelines are considered to be 'second-hand' and rightly so! They can be good for rapid or blitz games but are rarely adopted by top, or even simply good players, with very few exceptions from time to time.

There is no real point in talking about statistics, as these lines are usually played from the black side by lower-rated players, so the results strongly favour White.

It must also be noted that there are plenty of possibilities to further improve the white side as well, as a lot of games are played at club level, where the white player is 'weak' as well!

Generally, I cannot suggest these lines to any player playing Black, as they are 'fishy' and rarely helpful in the development of a chess player.

But the truth is that the 'Baltic Defence' and the 'Symmetrical/Austrian

Defence' are quite playable and need 'special care' and preparation to face, something I cannot say for the 'Albin Counter-Gambit' and the 'Marshall Defence!'

The second line we will examine is the so-called 'Chigorin Defence', which can be quite dangerous for White, as Black seeks early piece counterplay.

My proposed line scores a solid 59%, but the games in question number approximately 210, so the sample is not so big.

Then we move on to the infamous 'Tarrasch Defence'.

This is an opening that enjoyed great popularity in the 80s', mainly owing to the success of the FIDE's 13th World Champion, Garry Kasparov. But today it seems that it has vanished from top-flight play, unlike the 'Semi-Tarrasch Defence', which has enjoyed a great comeback.

Well, Black is ready to accept an isolated pawn in return for active play, but with the help of chess engines everything seems to be kept at bay nowadays.

For this reason (mainly) White (with the suggested lines) scores a healthy 59.1%, which is way above the 52% that is the general (approximate) White ‘advantage’.

However, this doesn’t sound logical, as the general score across all variations sits at 51.8%, when the average expected number of white ‘superiority’ is 51.5% to 52%, but we will see why this is so.

Finally, we deal with how to face the ‘Semi-Tarrasch Defence’.

This is a solid system for Black, which lately has been adopted by many top-level players, unlike the ‘Tarrasch Defence’.

With our proposed system to face it, White scores a very healthy 58.8%, which looks quite enticing.

In this book you will find not only a concrete and well structured move-by-move presentation, but also chapters on the middlegames, endgames and tactics that are typical for this variation, which together will help you to understand it better.

The only two things you have to do are to buy the book (!) and study it!

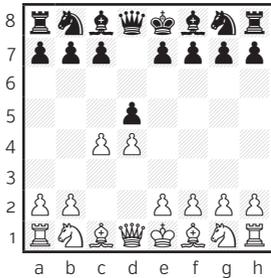
Note that the research on the games included is up to mid-September 2020.

Efstratios Grivas
Sharjah, September 2020

PART 1.

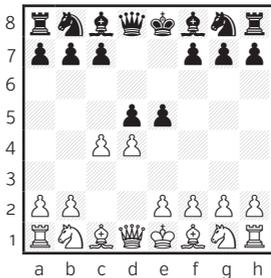
QGD – VARIOUS LINES (D06-D08)

In the 'Queen's Gambit Declined' (QGD) there are numerous sidelines, which we will examine in this chapter. After the moves **1.d4 d5 2.c4**

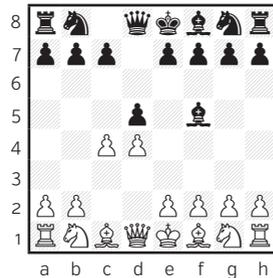


The various sidelines from this position are:

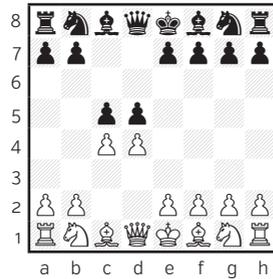
Chapter 1. The Albin Counter-Gambit: **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5**



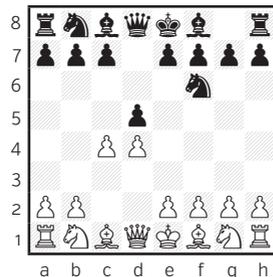
Chapter 2. The Baltic Defence: **1.d4 d5 2.c4 f5**



Chapter 3. The Symmetrical/Austrian Defence: **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c5**



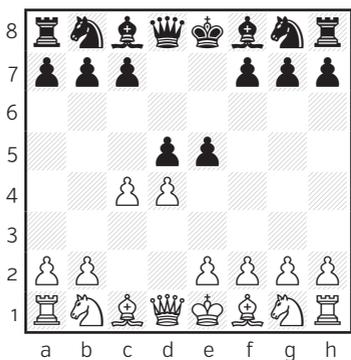
Chapter 4. The Marshall Defence: **1.d4 d5 2.c4 f6**



CHAPTER 1.

THE ALBIN COUNTER-GAMBIT

The 'Albin Counter-Gambit' is characterised (after **1.d4 d5 2.c4**) by the move **2...e5**



The 'Albin Counter-Gambit' is an uncommon defence, where in exchange for the gambit pawn, Black has a central wedge at d4 and gets some chances for an attack. Often White will try to return the pawn at an opportune moment to gain a positional advantage.

In the 'Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings' the opening is assigned under the codes Do8 and Dog.

Historical Approach

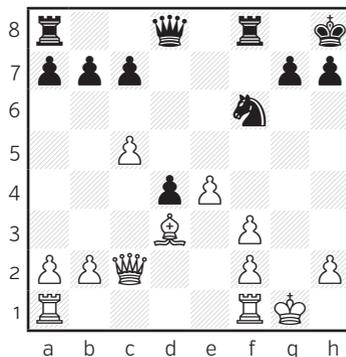
Although this opening was originally played by Mattia Cavallotti against

Carlo Salvioli at the Milan tournament of 1881, it takes its name from Adolf Albin, who played it against Emanuel Lasker in New York 1893.

Though it is not played frequently at master level, the Russian GM Alexander Morozevich has made some successful use of it.

- ▷ **Salvioli Carlo**
- ▷ **Cavallotti Mattia**
- Do8** Milan 08.09.1881

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4.e4 ♘c6
5.♗f3 ♕g4 6.♕f4 f6 7.exf6 ♘xf6
8.♕d3 ♕b4+ 9.♕d2 o-o 10.o-o
♕xd2 11.♗bxd2 ♘e5 12.c5 ♖h8
13.♗c2 ♕xf3 14.♗xf3 ♘xf3+ 15.gxf3



15...♖h5 16.♔h1 ♜xf3 17.♚e2 ♚f6
 18.e5 ♚f4 19.♚e4 ♚xe4 20.♙xe4
 ♜f4 21.♙xb7 ♜b8 22.♙c6 ♜xb2
 23.e6 ♖f6 24.e7 ♜b8 25.♜ab1 ♜c8
 26.♜b7 ♜f5 27.♜e1 d3 28.♜xc7 ♜b8
 29.e8♚+ ♖xe8 30.♜xe8+ ♜xe8
 31.♙xe8 d2 32.♙a4 g6 33.♙g2 ♜e5
 34.c6 ♜a5 35.♙b3 ♜xa2 36.♜c8+
 ♙g7 37.♜g8+ ♔f6 38.c7

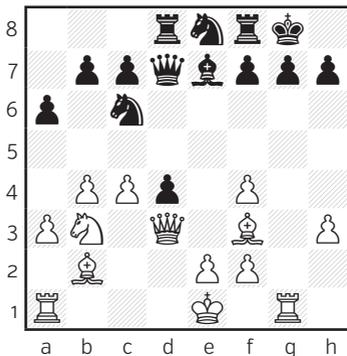
1-0

▷ Lasker Emanuel

▶ Albin Adolf

Do8 New York 16.10.1893

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4.♖f3 ♖c6
 5.a3 ♙g4 6.h3 ♙xf3 7.gxf3 ♖xe5 8.f4
 ♖c6 9.♙g2 ♚d7 10.b4 a6 11.♙b2
 ♜d8 12.♖d2 ♖ge7 13.♖b3 ♖f5
 14.♚d3 ♙e7 15.♙e4 ♖d6 16.♖c5
 ♚c8 17.♙f3 o-o 18.♜g1 ♖e8 19.♖b3
 ♚d7



20.o-o-o ♚d6 21.♔b1 ♚xf4 22.♜g4
 ♚h6 23.♙xc6 bxc6 24.♜xd4 ♜d6
 25.c5 ♜e6 26.♚xa6 ♚hx3 27.♜4d3
 ♚g2 28.♖d4 ♜f6 29.♜e3 ♙d8
 30.♖c2 ♜xf2 31.♜xd8 1-0

The Lasker Trap

The black pawn at d4 is stronger than it may appear. The careless move 4.e3? can lead to the 'Lasker Trap'. After 4... ♙b4+ 5.♙d2 dxe3 6.♙xb4?, Black plays 6...exf2+ 7.♙e2 fxg1♖+! and wins. 'The Lasker Trap' is notable because it is rare to see an underpromotion in practical play.

The Spassky Variation

In the 'Spassky Variation' White plays 4.e4, to take advantage of the fact that an en passant capture must be made immediately after the enemy pawn advances. So now after 4... ♙b4+ 5.♙d2, the capture 5...dxe3 is no longer available to Black.

Starting Out

The main line continues 3.dxe5 d4 4.♖f3 ♖c6, when White's suggested option is 5.♖bd2.

In the 'Albin Counter-Gambit' Black sacrifices a pawn in order to gain more space on the board and disturb the normal development of White's pieces.

His plan is either to create quick pressure in the centre and on the king-side with ...♙e6 (or ...♙g4), ...♚d7 and ...o-o-o, or to regain the pawn quickly with ...♖ge7-g6.

The good results with the ‘Albin Counter-Gambit’ achieved by Alexander Morozevich and Rustam Kasimdzhanov show that even strong GMs can face difficulties with the white pieces.

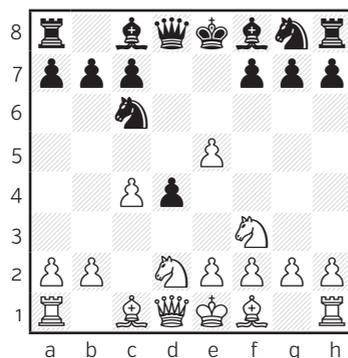
The suggested system with 5. ♖bd2 is a very flexible one, which doesn’t reveal White’s intentions yet. First of all he protects the pawn on c4 (in case of ... ♗e6) and the knight on f3 (in the case of ... ♗g4). However, White’s main idea in this system is to quickly attack the pawn on d4!

In fact, with 5. ♖bd2, it is White who tries to create quick pressure on Black’s position and this is exactly what this system is all about — White plays very concretely against the black pawn on d4.

Since White’s main plan is to play ♖b3, he usually needs to play a3 in order to prevent a check from b4. Besides, the move a3 prepares b4. The ideal scenario for White is to play a3, b4, ♖b3 and ♗b2, after which the d4-pawn inevitably falls.

Black tries to prevent this (usually by counter-attacking the pawns on c4 or e5).

So, after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4. ♖f3 ♗c6 5. ♖bd2

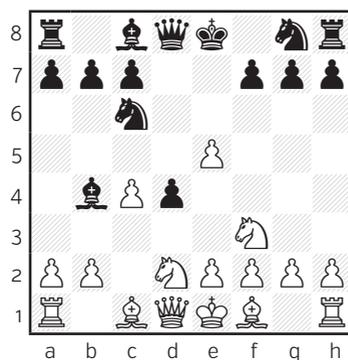


Black can opt for 5... ♗b4, 5...f6, 5... ♗g4, 5... ♗e6 and 5... ♖ge7.

Other ‘second-hand’ lines are even worse, but anyway, as was already mentioned, this is not a sound system, but probably interesting enough if it is played in rapid or blitz games!

1.1 – 5... ♗b4

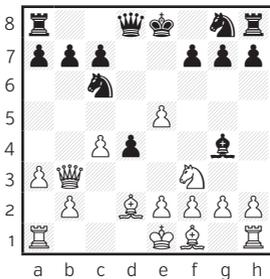
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4. ♖f3 ♗c6 5. ♖bd2 ♗b4?!



A dubious move which stops White's plan, but on the other hand it gives up the bishop pair...

6.a3! ♖xd2+ 7. ♗xd2

White can also opt for the other capture (planning o-o-o) with 7. ♖xd2 ♗g4 8. ♗b3



And now:

a) 8... ♗c8 9. o-o-o ♖ge7 10. ♖g5 ♖f5 11. h3 ♖xf3 12. exf3 h6 13. ♖d2± Marshall, F-Reggio, A Monte Carlo 1903.

b) 8... ♖b8 9. o-o-o (9. ♖g5 ♖ge7 10. o-o-o o-o 11. e3± Marshall, F-Showalter, J Lexington 1909) 9... ♖ge7 10. e3±

c) 8... ♗d7 9. h3 ♖xf3 10. gxf3 ♖ge7 11. f4 o-o 12. o-o-o± Livaic, D-Jakovljević, R Zagreb 2010.

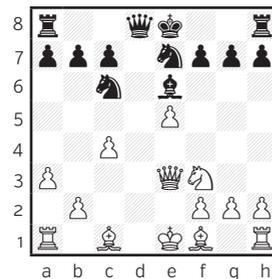
d) 8... ♖ge7 9. o-o-o (9. h3 ♖xf3 10. gxf3 ♖xe5 11. f4 [11. o-o-o ♗d6 12. f4 ♗c6 13. ♖g1 ♖xc4 14. ♖g2± Smith, V-Defibaugh, J Parsippany 2007] 11... ♖5c6 12. o-o-o ♗c8 13. ♖g2± Gomez Olivares, A-Moya

Pol, A Palma de Mallorca 2012) 9... o-o 10. e3 ♖g6 11. exd4 (11. ♖b4 ♖xf3 12. gxf3 ♖xb4 13. ♖xd4 ♗e7 14. axb4 ♖xe5 15. ♖e2±) 11... ♖xd4 12. ♗e3 c5 13. ♖c3 ♗e7 14. ♖xd4 cxd4 15. ♖xd4 ♖xf3 16. gxf3 ♗xe5 17. ♗xe5 ♖xe5 18. f4±

7... ♖g4

Alternatives also fail to impress:

a) 7... ♖e6 8. e3 (8. b3 ♖ge7 9. ♖b2 ♖g6 10. ♖xd4± Dumesnil, A-Kerbaol, J Fouesnant 2004) 8... dxe3 9. ♗xe3 ♖ge7



10. ♗c3 (10. ♖d3 ♖f5 11. ♖xf5 ♖xf5 12. o-o o-o 13. b3 ♖e8 14. ♖b2 ♗e7 15. ♖fe1± Buganca, L-De Souza, A Florianopolis 2020) 10... ♗d7 11. ♖e2 o-o-o 12. ♖g5 h6 13. ♖d1 ♗e8 14. ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 15. ♖e3± Urkedal, F-Kocevar, T Pula 2013.

b) 7... ♖ge7 8. b3 (8. b4 ♖g6 9. ♖b2 o-o 10. ♖xd4± Kamrukov, A-Romanov, V Novosibirsk 2008; 8. e3 dxe3 9. ♗xd8+ ♖xd8 10. ♖xe3 ♖g4 11. ♖e2± Litrento, O-De Souza, L Rio de Janeiro 2002) 8... ♖g4 9. ♖b2 ♖xf3 10. exf3 ♗d7 11. o-o-o ♖d8

12.f4± Omorjan,D-Klingher,D Porec 2015.

c) 7...f6 8.exf6 ♘xf6 9.e3 (9.♖d3 ♙g4 10.♙g5 0–0≙ Knaak,H-Aepfler,G Bad Sooden 2011) 9...dxe3 (9...♖e7 10.♘xd4±) 10.♖xd8+ ♘xd8 11.♙xe3±

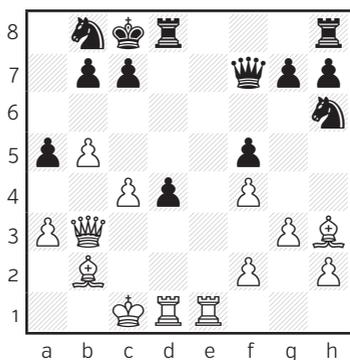
8.b4!

The expansion on the queenside is even better than the modest 8.b3 ♙xf3 9.gxf3 ♘xe5 10.f4 ♘c6 11.♙b2 ♖h4 12.e3 ♘f6 13.♙g2± Rioridan,C-Sagalchik,G Boston 2001.

8...♙xf3 9.exf3 ♘xe5 10.♙b2 ♖e7 11.0–0–0 0–0–0 12.f4 ♘c6 13.g3 f5

13...b6? weakens the queenside and the black king as well: 14.♙h3+ ♔b8 15.♙g2 ♖d6 16.♖d3 ♘ge7 17.♖f3 a6 18.♖xd4 1–0 Tsai,C-Sagalchik,O Seattle 2003.

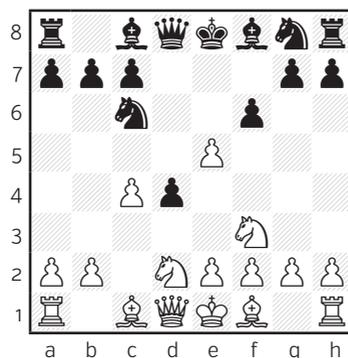
14.b5 ♘b8 15.♙h3 ♘h6 16.♖he1 ♖f7 17.♖b4 a5 18.♖b3±



Fine,R-Adams,W New York 1944. White has a clear advantage due to his bishop pair and pressure on the d4-pawn.

1.2 – 5...f6

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4.♘f3 ♘c6 5.♘bd2 f6



A pawn sacrifice for better development.

6.exf6 ♘xf6

6...♖xf6 is the other main capture: 7.g3 ♙g4 (7...♙f5 8.♙g2 0–0–0 9.0–0 g5 10.♖a4 [10.a3!? ♘ge7 11.♘e1±] 10...♙b8 11.♘b3± O’Hanlon,J-Euwe,M Broadstairs 1921) 8.♙g2 0–0–0 9.h3 ♙h5 (9...♙f5 10.0–0 g5 11.♖a4± Teichmann,R-Mieses,J Berlin 1910) 10.0–0 d3 11.♘b3 dxe2 12.♖xe2± Garcia Gil,J-Romero Perera,E Santa Eulalia de Roncana 2010.

7.g3