

# Try these for openers

THREE new books appeared at the end of last year on the English opening (1.c4), previously rather neglected territory publishing-wise despite its popularity in play over the past few years. Two of the books, *English 1...P-K4* (hardback, £8.95) and *English 1...N-KB3 Systems* (hardback, £4.95), published by B. T. Batsford Ltd, are written by American International Master John L. Watson as part of a systematic four-book series dealing with all lines of the English.

Watson, a staunch believer in and player of the English himself, is well qualified to write such a series. Written in descriptive notation, the books seem to contain all the relevant game scores, and also include some of Watson's original analysis. However, they are rather dry and little attempt is made to explain the various strategies involved. As a reference work though, the series must be recommended to the player who wishes to make a serious study of 1.c4 and its ramifications.

The third book is 475 pages long and has barely any words in it! The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings, Volume A* (hardback, £15.00) in figurine algebraic notation lives up to ECO's reputation as the openings Bible of chess players. As well as the English opening, Volume A covers the Benoni, the Dutch defence, the

Old Indian defence, Reti's opening, Bird's and irregular openings. Published by Sahovski Informator and Batsford, and boasting a world-class team of authors, the entire set of A, B, C, D and E are indispensable to competitive tournament players.

Amongst the irregular openings ECO Volume A covers is the rare and seemingly absurd first opening move for White of 1.g4 (!?!). However, at a congress just ended in Oxford, England, the world may have witnessed the first ever defeat of a Grandmaster by this very system!

### GROB'S ATTACK

M. BASMAN J. NUNN

1. g4?!?

*Believe it or not, Grandmaster Nunn would have been surprised if Basman had played anything else. For Basman, who incredibly has managed to sustain one of the highest ratings in England, is the most bizarre player in the universe! As Black he currently answers 1.e4 with 1...g5 and 1.d4 with 1...b5, and I can tell you that as White it's not so easy deciding which to choose!*

*In the ECO Volume A, Larsen gives 1.g4 a question mark, but I don't think it's quite that bad — White still has slight chances of preserving the first player's initiative.*

1. . . . d5

*Perhaps the reason why 1.g4 is so*

*heavily frowned upon is the "fool's mate" — 1...e5 2.f3?? Qh4 checkmate, the shortest game possible!*

- |        |     |
|--------|-----|
| 2. h3  | e5  |
| 3. d3  | Bd6 |
| 4. c4  | c6  |
| 5. Nc3 | Ne7 |
| 6. Nf3 | h5? |

*Too ambitious — Black could just castle. Perhaps Nunn had in mind a previous game with Basman, also from Grob's attack, in which Basman had been wiped off the board by aggressive tactics.*

- |           |       |
|-----------|-------|
| 7. g×h5   | R×h5  |
| 8. Bd2    | a6 ?! |
| 9. e4     | d×c4  |
| 10. d×c4  | Nd7   |
| 11. Ng5!  | Nf6   |
| 12. Qf3   | Ng6   |
| 13. 0-0-0 |       |

*Basman, playing less "Basmanically" than usual, has taken advantage of Nunn's faulty sixth and eighth moves and now has a telling lead in development.*

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|-----------|-----|
| 13. . . . | Qe7 |
| 14. Kb1   | Nf4 |
| 15. Rg1   | Kf8 |

*Running from the e-file. White threatened 16.c5, followed by B×f4, Bc4 and e5.*

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|----------|------|
| 16. Ne2  | Ne6  |
| 17. N×e6 | B×e6 |
| 18. Ng3  | Rh8  |
| 19. Bg5  | Rad8 |
| 20. Be2  |      |

*20.Nh5 R×h5 21.B×f6 Q×f6 22.Q×h5 wins a rook for a knight, but Basman delays this to gain a greater positional advantage.*

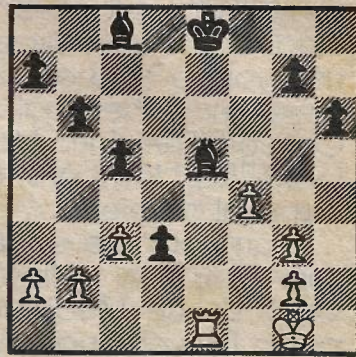
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|-----------|------|
| 20. . . . | R×h3 |
|-----------|------|

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|----------|---------|
| 21. Qg2  | Bc7     |
| 22. Nh5  | R×d1 ch |
| 23. R×d1 | R×h5    |
| 24. B×h5 | Qb4     |
| 25. Be2  | B×c4    |
| 26. B×c4 | Q×c4    |
| 27. B×f6 | g×f6    |
| 28. Qg4  |         |

*Now queens must come off and it's all over.*

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|-----------|---------|
| 28. . . . | Qe6     |
| 29. Q×e6  | f×e6    |
| 30. Rd7   | Resigns |

This position, with Black to play, is taken from the game Czerniak-Sacharovsky, Tel Aviv 1963. After Black loses his bishop he has a material deficit. But he can still win!



**SOLUTION:** 1...d2! This should preserve the bishop (after 2.Rd1) and give Black a decisive material advantage. But White hastens the end: 2.R×e5 ch Be6!! 3.Resigns. After 3.R×e6 ch Kd7 the rook is powerless to stop the passed pawn.

MURRAY CHANDLER