

Bring on the reserves

THE ADVANTAGE of having a reserve opening system was clearly illustrated at the Phillips and Drew Grandmaster tournament in London last April. With news of the latest innovations spreading so fast nowadays, most players find it useful to have a second defence for Black against both 1.e4 and 1.d4. But in London the Rumanian Grandmaster Florin Gheorghiu painfully discovered that the same policy can also apply to the White pieces.

Gheorghiu has relied a lot on meticulously prepared openings in his past two, very successful, globe-trotting seasons. Against the Queen's Indian defence he almost invariably employs the dangerous a3 variation (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3!) and has developed a formidable system. A system, for example, that he used to topple the notoriously resilient Ulf Andersson of Sweden in 35 moves in the first round at London.

Unfortunately, however, that same day Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman unveiled a new idea against Walter Browne of the USA who had adopted the a3 system. After 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3 Timman continued 4...c5 5.e3 g6! aiming for a Benoni-type set-up where a3 is not a particularly useful move.

It was unlucky for our Rumanian friend that this innovation should materialise in round one of the same tournament, thus ensuring that everybody who had the chance would use it upon him during the rest of the event. Consequently, against Jon Speelman of England in round seven Gheorghiu tried 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.Nc3!? — hoping for 4...Bb7 5.a3! avoiding Timman's line — but not to be tricked Speelman continued 4...Bb4 transposing to a Nimzo-Indian defence. Gheorghiu lost in 46 moves. And co-winner of the tournament Tony Miles was ruthless about exploiting this sudden hole in the repertoire:

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENCE

F. GHEORGHIU (Rumania)	A. J. MILES (England)
1. d4	Nf6
2. c4	e6
3. Nf3	b6
4. Nc3	...

The game that caused all the trouble, Browne-Timman from round one, had gone 4.a3 c5 5.e3 g6! 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.Be2 O-O 8.O-O Bb7 9.b4 (if White ever plays d5 then his a3 looks silly in a Benoni) cxd4 10.Nxd4 Nc6 11.Nxc6 Bxc6 12.Bb2 d5 13.cxd5 Nxd5 14.Rc1 Nxc3 15.Bxc3 Qg5! 16.g3 Rfd8 17.Qc2! (better 17.Qb3) and now after 17...Qd5! 18.f3 Bxc3 19.Qxc3 Ba4 Timman had an advantage and went on to win.

4. ...	Bb4!
5. Bg5	h6
6. Bh4	g5
7. Bg3	Ne4
8. Qc2	Bb7
9. e3	Bxc3 ch

Miles deviates from the game Gheorghiu-Speelman which had followed the fashionable line of 9...f5 10.Bd3 Bxc3 ch 11.bxc3 d6 12.d5!? with complications, although Black stood no worse.

10. bxc3	Nxg3
11. hxg3	Nc6
12. Rb1	...

Various sources suggest 12.Nd2! Qe7 13.Nb3 O-O-O 14.a4 d6 15.a5 with a big advantage. Miles said he had prepared something against this unconvincing line; my guess is 13...Qa3! with a good game for Black.

12. ...	Qe7
13. c5	h5!
14. Be2	...

Gheorghiu's draw offer was refused here. Miles considered Black to have not only the sounder pawn structure, but also the safer king.

14. ...	Na5
15. Nd2	Bxg2
16. Rxh5	O-O-O
17. cxb6	axb6
18. Rxh8	Rxh8
19. Bf3	...

This leaves White very weak on the light squares, but his position is difficult in any case. It becomes apparent that it is indeed the White king that is in the greater danger.

19. ...	Bxf3
20. Nxf3	Qf6
21. Ke2	Nc4
22. Qa4	d5!

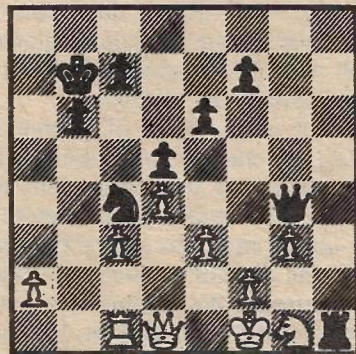
Calm defence. Gheorghiu now takes advantage of the Black king's somewhat exposed position to snatch a pawn (23... Qxg5? 24. Qa8 ch wins the rook), but Miles is able to mount an enduring assault on the light squares.

23. Nxg5	Kb7!
24. Nf3	Qf5
25. Rc1	Qg4!

Threatening 26...Ne5.

26. Qd1	Rh5
27. Kf1	Rh1 ch
28. Ng1	...

MILES



GHEORGHIU

28. ...	Nxe3 chl
29. fxe3	Qxg3
30. Ke2	Rh2 ch
31. Resigns	

On 31. Kd3 Qg6 ch 32. e4 Qxe4 is checkmate.

A fine game by Miles to unseat Gheorghiu, whose brilliant 1979 season in America has lifted his rating to number 10 in the world.

MURRAY CHANDLER