



## C O L U M N I S T S

**Checkpoint**

Carsten Hansen

**Reviewed this month:*****English ...e5***

by Alex Raetsky &amp; Maxim Chetverik

***English 1 c4 e5 (CD-ROM)***

by Mihail Marin

***The Queen's Indian***

by Jouni Yrjölä &amp; Jussi Tella

***The Knockout Nimzo (VHS)***

by Tony Kosten

***Chess Informant 87***

by Aleksandar Matanovic et al.

**Nimzowitsch's Openings**

Having been brought up on Nimzowitsch's ideals and his monumental *My System*, I have always had an affinity for his openings. I have been lucky enough to get more than one opportunity to write about some of the openings he played. The first book I wrote by myself was on the English Opening with 1...e5, and in this column we will take a look at the two most recent efforts on this line. The Queen's Indian and Nimzo-Indian are in my opinion Nimzowitsch's biggest contributions to opening theory, and this time we are fortunate enough to have a very thorough book on the Queen's Indian from the English publishing house, Gambit.



From Bad Bishop Ltd., I have received a video tape by renowned Nimzo-Indian expert Tony Kosten. Last, but not least, we have a returning favourite, Chess Informant. This is a series that has three new volumes every year, up from the original two volumes, but happily that hasn't hurt the quality.

*English ...e5* by Alex Raetsky & Maxim Chetverik, 2003  
 Everyman Chess, Figurine Algebraic Notation, Paperback, 208pp., \$19.95

The English Opening is one of my babies; it was the first opening I taught myself to play through games found in my father's old chess magazines. It was also the subject of the first two books I wrote. This month we will look at this book as well as a CD-ROM from ChessBase, both covering 1 c4 e5.



In the present book, two Russian International Masters have taken on the task on of covering this interesting opening. They have organized the material in the following fashion:

- Introduction
- **1 c4 e5**
- **Part One: White Plays an Early Nf3**
  - 1 Four Knights with 4 g3
  - 2 Four Knights without 4 g3
  - 3 Three Knights: 2...Nf6 3 Nf3 or 2...Nc6 3 Nf3
- **Part Two: White Plays an Early g3**
  - 4 Reversed Dragon: 2...Nf6 3 g3 d5

- 5 Other Reversed Sicilians and Keres System
- 6 Fianchetto Variation: 2...Nf6 3 g3 g6 4 Bg2 Bg7
- 7 Closed Variation: 2...Nc6 3 g3 g6 4 Bg2 Bg7
- **Part Three: Other Systems**
- 8 Black Plays an Early ...f7-f5
- 9 2 Nc3 d6
- 10 2 Nc3 Bb4
- 11 Early Deviations
- Index of Complete Games

This is almost identical with the way I split up the material in my 1999 book. The differences are that I combined their chapter 9 and 10 into one chapter, and that they have fewer variations in chapter 8, choosing instead to place them in chapter 7. Looking in the bibliography, I noted that my book is one of the few, and the most recent, references they have used, so their set-up isn't, in my opinion, altogether surprising.

So what do they offer, that my book doesn't? There are several things. First of all, the material has been brought up to date. A large number of developments and key games have been played since the release of my book. Four years is almost an eternity in chess theory these days, and in a key opening such as the English, that is no exception. Furthermore, they have added a number of suggestions, new ideas and improvements of their own, which adds to the value of their coverage.

However, the format of their book is quite different from mine. They have used the traditional Everyman Chess

format, building up the theory around main games, rather than the usual Gambit format based on variation trees. Both formats have their advantages and disadvantages. Speaking in favor of the Everyman format is that you have the complete games to support your understanding, making it easier to see the development of plans, etc. However, a lot of space is used, in some cases, on positions that are essentially of no importance or relevance to the understanding of the English Opening. This 'wasted' space, along with fewer available pages, account for variations and explanations that couldn't make the cut because they were not important enough.

In comparison, there are a large number of minor lines that have not been covered in similar detail as they were in my book, or in some cases are not there at all. So while the main and most popular variations have all been analysed in reasonable detail because they are seen in top games, the lesser lines, those that are likely to be played more often on lower levels, are missing altogether.


What is preferable? Personally, I like the detail in the theoretical coverage as opposed to complete games, but the other approach certainly has its followers as documented by the popularity of the Everyman books. However, it is noteworthy that for this book Everyman allowed the authors more than 200 pages, a good deal more than the usual allotment of 148 to 180 pages.

A good example of the compromises the authors have had to make can be found in chapter 8, where, among other things, we find the line 1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 d6 3 Nf3 f5 4 d4 e4 5 Ng5, a line that was covered in detail by Yrjola & Tella in their book, *An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black*, where it is an integral part of the opening repertoire they present. Only a very few of the examples given by Yrjola & Tella, were repeated by Raetsky/Chetverik, thus resulting in a much less detailed review of the theoretical standing of this

variation.

Curiously, the main move given by Yrjola & Tella, 5...Be7 is only given as a minor sideline by the authors, while the slightly inaccurate 5...Nf6 is given a 'main game coverage' - a somewhat odd disposition. This lack of appropriate coverage becomes really apparent in the line 5...Be7 6 Nh3 c6 7 e3, which was a main line in my book, and has a whole chapter devoted to it in the Yrjola/Tella book, but 7 e3 isn't even mentioned in the present book! If you didn't know any better, you wouldn't know this, but examples such as this one indicate the fundamental problem with the whole game presentation: it is relatively easy for the authors to omit or forget a particular line.

Overall, I think Raetsky & Chetverik have done reasonably well to cover the intricacies of the 1 c4 e5, but the omitted lines, big and small, will make this book less ideal for weaker players than it could have otherwise been. The complete games format, the selection of games and the game annotations do however take the book in a different direction than standard theoretical coverage. The result is overall an acceptable, though somewhat flawed, book that is mainly aimed at lower rated players.

**My assessment of this book:** 

[Order](#) *English ...e5*

by Alex Raetsky & Maxim Chetverik

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*English 1 c4 e5* by Mihail Marin, 2003 ChessBase GmbH,  
Figurine Algebraic Notation, CD-ROM, \$29.95

The Romanian Grandmaster Mihail Marin makes his debut as an author. Almost simultaneously with the publication of this CD, his book, *Secrets of Chess Defence*, was published by Gambit.



Marin has contributed to the New in Chess Yearbooks on several occasions with surveys on the English Opening, which he regularly plays himself, so his credentials are definitely in order.

If anybody ever should get the crazy idea that covering the English Opening is a walk in the park, some basic facts that may surprise you about this opening are given on the back cover of CD case. The total of games in the three databases included on the present CD amounts to no less than 69,000!! The author has had to write 60 chapters and annotate 330 games. No small feat.

The basic division of the material is the following, which looks fairly unimaginative:

- **A20-24**
- A20
- A21
- A22
- A23
- A24
- **A25-27**
- A25
- A26

- A27
- **A28-29**
- A28
- A29
- Training A20-29
- Tree A20-29

Hardly unique, but it's practicality is undeniable if you know what lurks behind the above ECO codes. However, if you are not certain which variations are in which classifications, then you are likely to get stuck fairly early on or you will have to work your way through the chapters (or database texts, if you like) until you find what you are looking for.

However, once you have located what you need, then you are in for a treat. The chapters are very well-written with plenty of strategic explanations, typical ideas are illustrated on the many diagrams and numerous games are linked to the chapters. Let's look at an example:

More popular is the natural development 4...Nf6 5.Nc3 Bc5 [KeyLink]. Rubinstein's favorite was 6.b3 0-0 7.g3 [KeyLink]. He managed to perfectly illustrate White's ideas in case of a slow course of the events in his games against Tarrasch Rubinstein,A - Tarrasch,S ½-½ and Sämisch Rubinstein,A - Saemisch,F 1-0, but Euwe,M - Alekhine,A ½-½ and Laurine,L - Keres,P 0-1 saw an energetic reaction in the centre from Black's part. Only the great Akiba could explain why he didn't choose the more natural move order 6.g3 [KeyLink] 0-0 7.Bg2, putting immediate pressure on Pe4. There will be plenty of time for b2-b3

and the rest of the plan later. White has been doing quite well in practice; it is suggestive that Rotstein, who is an expert of such positions with a restrained centre himself, lost quite convincingly when facing this setup as Black. At some moment, he might have felt like switching places with his opponent...

As a conclusion, 2.Nf3 leads to interesting play. Considering also the fact that it has never been one of the theory's main streams, this might attract players who rely on their over the board fantasy or enjoy specializing in certain rare variations.

I must admit that I'm pleasantly surprised by the quality of these very detailed and exhaustive chapters on even minor variations. Although the back cover blurb tells us that this CD is mainly aimed at advanced players, the explanations in the chapters will make the CD accessible to a much wider audience.

The linked games, however, are a different story. I appreciate the sheer volume of illustrative games he refers us to, but unfortunately a great number of the games are entirely without annotations of any kind. As I have pointed out on other occasions when reviewing CDs of this nature, it would not have taken a lot of effort to make a few basic indications as to who is better and when the tide is changing in the game, where the most obvious mistakes are made, etc. A bare game score is rarely of use to most players. On the subject of game annotations, we are told that there are approximately 1800 annotated games on this CD. Of the total, 330 of the games are annotated by the author himself. The quality of annotations vary tremendously from one game to the next. Some are very detailed with explanations of typical ideas, plenty of variations and so on. However, others have only a few moves suggested here and there; in

other cases the annotations are in German, which is hardly useful for anybody unless you read German, something, unfortunately, many of the potential readers may not be able to do.

Let's have a look at how well some of the games are annotated:

**(93) Marin, M - Rohde, M [A22]**

Banter Chess World Chess Network, 14.10.2000

[Mihail Marin]

**1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Bb4 3 g3 Nf6 4 Nf3 e4 5 Nd4 Nc6 6 Nc2 Bxc3 7 dxc3 h6 8 Ne3 0-0 9 Qc2 Re8 10 Bg2 d6 11 Bd2**

Before castling, White makes all the useful moves for this structure (compare with one of the lines of A29). This move order complicates a bit Black's task, since he has to be prepared for White's long castle, too.

**11...Rb8**

This move might be a bit too committal. [Black should probably choose between moves like 11...Bd7 ; and 11...a5 which can be useful no matter on which side White is going to castle.]

**12 0-0 a6**

Black is practically forced to start playing on the Queen-side; otherwise, rook b8 would be just a loss of time. We shall see, however, that White can control well the position. This might be the reason why in the main lines (A29) Black never uses this plan.

**13 a4 Re5**

[13...b5 14 axb5 axb5 15 cxb5 Rxb5 would allow an unpleasant pin: 16 Ra8; With his last move, Black had taken

under control the d5 square, noticing that after the more natural 13...Bd7 14 Nd5 he would have to move the Bishop again in order to defend pawn e4: 14...Bf5 15 Be3+]=]

**14 f4!**

This is a thematic move, the start of a plan which wins space on the King side.

**14...exf3 15 exf3 Bd7 16 f4 Re8 17 Nd5**

[17 a5 Qc8 (17...Ne7 Rohde) ; 17 Rae1 b5]

**17...b5** Exchanging on d5 would leave White with big space advantage on the whole board. Therefore, Black tries to undermine §c4.

**18 axb5 axb5 19 b3!**

How strange, isn't it? White was given the possibility of getting rid of the doubled pawns but he prefers to keep them! The secret is that if ♝d5 would be exchanged without the possibility of cxd5, White's space advantage would be less significant and his position would remain rather insecure on light squares.

**19...bxc4 20 bxc4 Kh8 21 h3** Continuing the expansion.

**21...Nxd5 22 cxd5 Ne7 23 f5 Ng8 24 c4**

[Maybe the prophylactic 24 Kh2!? was preferable, avoiding Black's next move.]

**24...c6 25 Ba5 Qc8 26 Bc3**

[Very tempting was 26 f6 Nxf6 27 Rxf6 gxf6 28 Bc3 but Black seems to have enough resources to defend: 28...Kg7 29 Rf1 Re5!? 30 Bxe5 fxe5 31 Qf2 f5 32 dxc6 Bxc6 33 Bxc6 Qxc6 34 Qxf5 Qxc4 and, with his King's position also

wide open, it is doubtful whether White has more than perpetual check.]

### **26...f6**

[This move leaves the Knight without any perspectives, but Black needed to block f5. Otherwise, White would have obtained a strong attack: 26...cxd5 27 f6 g6 28 Bxd5± Be6 (28...Bc6 29 Qxg6!! fxg6 30 f7+/-) 29 Qxg6! fxg6 30 f7+ Kh7 31 fxe8Q Qxe8 32 Ra7+/-]

### **27 Kh2**

[After 27 g4?! cxd5 White would be forced to take on d5 with the Bishop 28 Bxd5 (28 cxd5 Qc5+ 29 Kh2 Rbc8) which would allow Black to weaken the light squares in White's camp with 28...Bc6 ]

### **27...cxd5 28 cxd5 Re3?!**

The first step into the trap. Black's position is rather passive, especially because his Knight has no active squares. The only chance is to take advantage of such temporary factors like the pin on the c-file and the weakness of pawn f5.

[Other possibilities would have been 28...Rb5 29 Rac1 Rc5 30 Qd2 Bxf5 31 Bb4 Rxc1 32 Rxc1 Qb8 33 Rc6+/-; and 28...Qc4 29 Rf4 Qe2 30 Qxe2 (30 Ra2!?) 30...Rxe2 31 Ra7+/-]

### **29 Rac1 Ne7? 30 Qd2!+-**

And here we will leave the game, White is winning and won the game much later on move 79. **1-0**

Accompanying the databases and the numerous chapters, there is a training database. However, while some of the examples are very well chosen, all of the games I looked at only contained one training question, which isn't really much and doesn't give you a feel for the flow of the game. On his

CD on the Scandinavian Defence, Curt Hansen had selected a number of games and provided you with a number of decisions for you to make at crucial times throughout the games, but here you don't have that at all. Another problem is the way the questions are asked, e.g.,

"White has a nice queenside position. Should he concentrate on that wing or take some preventive measures?" For the sake of argument, I will say yes, but it turns out we are being asked to make a move, in which case the question obviously should have been asked differently.

Overall, I really liked the theoretical presentation and massive databases that accompany the coverage. The CD isn't without flaws, but players that have interest in the English Opening as White should invest in this CD, and so should those who meet the English Opening with 1...e5.

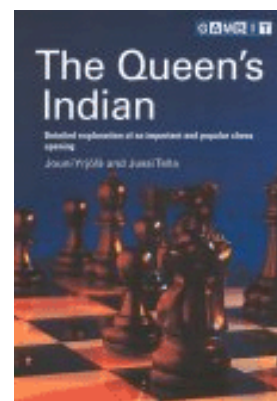
My assessment of this book: 

[Order](#) *English 1 c4 e5 (CD)*  
by Mihail Marin

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*The Queen's Indian* by Jouni Yrjölä & Jussi Tella, 2003  
Gambit Publishing Ltd, Figurine Algebraic Notation,  
paperback, 288 pp., \$23.95

This pairing of a Finnish Grandmaster and a Finnish International master is an excellent example of the kind of authors that Gambit Publishing has developed over their years in the business. Many of the authors, myself included, from this publisher, are largely unknown before the publication of their books, but certainly not



after. The first effort from this duo was *An Explosive Chess Opening Repertoire for Black*, which wasn't entirely explosive, but contained a great number of interesting ideas that could be combined into an interesting dynamic repertoire that would allow Black to play for more than equality. This time around we have a much heavier subject on the table, nothing less than the Queen's Indian Defence, that at one point or another has featured in the repertoire of most of the world's strongest players. Needless to say, with such attention from the strongest players, the opening is constantly developing. Any book written on this subject demands that all lines are covered in sufficient detail, showing what the current status is as well as some ideas as to where the contemporary development is going to take this opening. This is also mentioned in the three-page introduction, where the authors tell us that they have also considered the material based on its educational value, completeness and historical importance as well as typical ideas and themes. Let's take a look how the material is presented:

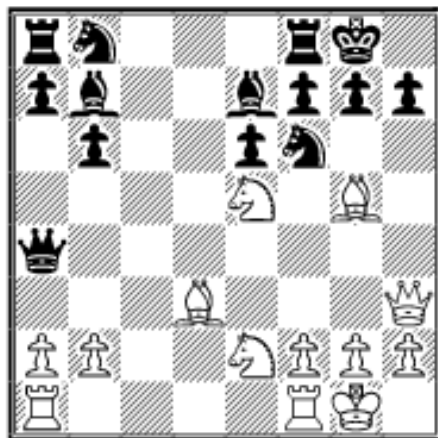
- Introduction (3 pages)
- 1 Strategic Introduction (7 pages)
- 2 The Miles Variation: 4 Bf4 (and 4 Bg5) (6 pages)
- 3 4 e3 (21 pages)
- 4 4 Nc3 Bb7: 5 Bg5 and Others (9 pages)
- 5 The Nimzo Hybrid: 4 Nc3 Bb4 5 Qb3 or 5 Bg5 (41 pages)
- 6 Petrosian Variation: 4 a3 (26 pages)
- 7 Petrosian Main Line: 4 a3 Bb7 5 Nc3 (55 pages)
- 8 The Old Main Line: 4 g3 Bb7 (42 pages)

- 9 4 g3 Ba6: Alternatives to 5 b3 (27 pages)
- 10 4 g3 Ba6 5 b3: Miscellaneous 5th Moves for Black (20 pages)
- 11 The Main Line: 4 g3 Ba6 5 b3 Bb4+ (23 pages)
- Index of Variations (4 pages)

I found the strategic introduction very useful and instructive, something that will allow the book to connect with readers who might normally rely on Everyman Chess's opening books for support. However, the strategic introduction is not the only guide for lower-rated players in this book. There are plenty of explanations throughout the book as to where the pieces belong, and typical ideas and plans. This usually happens in the beginning of each chapter, but further assistance is given in the various lines and variations.

Despite having to consider all of these things, there is also plenty for those who are avid students of opening theory and are looking for novelties. Throughout the book, you will find new ideas as well as strong novelties everywhere. One caught my attention on page 30. I think the idea is even stronger than they let on:

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 e3 Bb7 5 Bd3 c5 6 Nc3 Be7 7 0-0 cxd4 8 exd4 d5 9 cxd5 Nxd5 10 Ne5 0-0 11 Qg4 Nf6 12 Qh4 Ne4 13 Qh3 Qxd4 14 Bf4 Nf6 15 Ne2 Qa4 16 Bg5**



Here Solozhenkin-Sammalvuo, Helsinki 2002 continued:  
 16...Rd8? 17 Nc3 Qe8 18 Bxf6  
 Bxf6 19 Qxh7+ Kf8 20 Bb5!  
 Nd7 21 Nxd7+ Rxd7 22 Qh8+  
 Ke7 23 Qxe8+ Rxe8 24 Bxd7  
 Kxd7, and as indicated in the  
 book, White was winning at this  
 point, and soon won the game.

The authors (instead of the faulty 16...Rd8?) recommend **16...g6!** as a major improvement. They continue their analysis with: **17 Rfe1!?** (17 Bh6 Rd8!; 17 Rfc1 Qa5!) **17...Nc6 18 Nc3 Qd4 19 Nxc6 Bxc6 20 Rad1** "and White's strong attacking chances compensate for the pawn".

But I think that, Black can do even better with 17...Nbd7!?, e.g. 18 Nc3 Qb4 19 a3 Qc5, and now 20 b4 Qxc3 21 Nxd7 Rfe8 or 20 Nxd7 Nxd7 21 Be3 Qh5 22 Qxh5 gxh5 in both cases with an advantage for Black. An impressive novelty that is a sharp and fascinating line.

There are many other examples of this kind in the book. Generally this book makes an excellent impression on all counts and is far and away the best book on the Queen's Indian that I have ever seen.

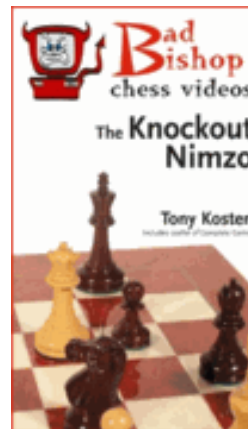
My assessment of this book: 

[Order](#) *The Queen's Indian*  
 by Jouni Yrjölä & Jussi Tella

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*The Knockout Nimzo* by Tony Kosten, 2003 Bad Bishop Ltd,  
 Figurine Algebraic Notation, VHS, 100 minutes, \$29.95

Over the last few months I have received and reviewed more chess videos than I have ever seen in my life. Although the videos have been of varying quality, they have all been better than I originally anticipated. The presentation of opening theory on video tape is in my opinion a very interesting alternative to the traditional setting in book form or as seen more recently on CD-ROMs.



Of the video tapes I have seen so far, the ones by Murray Chandler on the Bb5 Sicilians have been the best ones by far. The present tape by English Grandmaster Tony Kosten is the latest offering from Bad Bishop Chess Videos.

Tony Kosten has been one of my favourite chess authors for some years now. His book on the Philidor Defence (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d6) inspired me taking up this opening, and quite likely a lot of other players followed in his footsteps as the Philidor all of sudden experienced a minor surge in popularity following the publication of the book. His books on the Latvian Gambit have also helped the development of this exciting, but in my opinion quite dubious, opening. His book on the Najdorf a few years back was also quite excellent and definitely still worth a read, even though some of the material now is a bit dated.


In the present tape, Kosten gives a presentation of a repertoire for Black in the Nimzo-Indian, an opening about which he has also penned a couple of books some years back, this included the instructive *Mastering the Nimzo-Indian Defence* which I have enjoyed reading.

The tape starts with a short introduction where we see a somewhat uncomfortable Tony Kosten behind a chess board. Very quickly we move over to the repertoire presentation. The coverage is as follows:

- 1 4 f3, 4 a3, 4 Bg5 & Summary
- 2 4 Nf3 b6 5 Bg5 Bb7 6 e3, 4 Nf3 b6 5 Bg5 Bb7 6 Nd2 & Summary
- 3 4 Qc2 d5 5 cxd5, 4 Qc2 d5 5 a3 & Summary
- 4 4 e3 b6 5 Nf3, 4 e3 b6 5 Bd3 & Summary
- 5 4 e3 b6 5 Nge2 & Summary

The entire presentation, which lasts about 100 minutes and passes very quickly, is rather seamless as one grasps the theory that is being presented. Obviously the Nimzo-Indian is a rather broad opening complex to cover in a mere 100 minutes, something which is the biggest weakness of this tape - there simply isn't enough time to cover everything in detail and in fact the coverage is very superficial. If you have no prior knowledge of the Nimzo-Indian, this tape will be an excellent introduction to the opening as many of the typical ideas and plans for either side are illustrated, and you will be getting a playable repertoire at the same time. However, there are so many holes, mostly small ones, in the coverage that needs to be filled before you can play this opening with full confidence.

The game selection for the repertoire and the repertoire overall are well-picked and easy to adapt for Black, also giving the second player excellent possibilities of playing for a win. The tape will mostly be useful for players rated below 1900, but others may enjoy it too, but with more supplementary material.

**My assessment of this video:** 

[Order](#) *The Knockout Nimzo*  
by Tony Kosten

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*Chess Informant 87* by Aleksandar Matanovic et al., 2003  
Sahovski Informator, Figurine Algebraic Notation,  
paperback, 350 pp., \$36.00

Last, but not least we have the latest volume of *Chess Informant* or *Informator* as it is also known as in many countries. For those who are not sure what *Chess Informant* is all about, let's repeat the basic 4-1-1. It is a series of yearbooks that started back in 1966 by a group of the strongest Yugoslav players. Originally the series had two annual volumes, but then was increased to three volumes per years a few years ago because of competition from other publishers. The main core of the *Chess Informant* series is the annotated games in each volume. The games that are selected are usually the most important games from the previous trimester plus some games that are a bit older than that. The games are not only played by best players in the world, they are also annotated by the players themselves, which makes for the importance and the attraction of the work.



A lot has happened over the years: for a long period *Chess Informant* was the only readily available source to follow the theoretical developments in the openings. This was also where you could see the international rating list and the latest news from the World Chess Federation, FIDE. Nowadays, with other media available that better support rapid and ever-changing developments, it has become more a forum where good or interesting chess games are shown, still annotated by the players and still with some focus on the theoretical developments. The present volume contains games by nearly all of the world's strongest players and, in many cases, annotations by those same players, e.g. (in alphabetical order) Adams, Anand, Bareev, Bologan, Dreev,

Gelfand, Karpv, Kasparov, Kortchnoi, Kramnik, Lautier, Leko, Polgar, Ponomariov, Shirov, Short, Svidler and many others.

The contents of the present volume is divided up as follows, a division that has been standard for the last several volumes:

- Contributors (2 pages)
- The Ten Best Games of the Preceding Volume (2 pages)
- The Ten Most Important Theoretical Novelties of the Preceding Volume (4 pages)
- Code System (3 pages)
- Classifications of Openings (6 pages)
- A (28 pages)
- B (114 pages)
- C (44 pages)
- D (45 pages)
- E (47 pages)
- Index (10 pages)
- Commentators (2 pages)
- Combinations (6 pages)
- Endings (9 pages)
- Tournaments (7 pages)

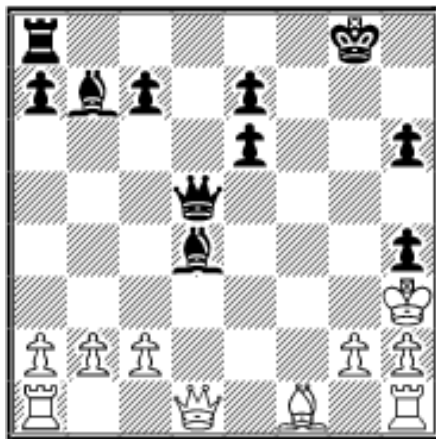
- The Best of Chess Informant - Larsen (16 pages)

The best game prize from the previous volume went fairly convincingly to the game Sutovsky-Smirin from the 2002 Israeli Championship, while the prize for the most important theoretical novelty of the previous volume went to Anand for his novelty he uncorked with the white pieces against Kasimdzhanov in Hyderabad 2002, on the 23rd move of a topical line in the Sveshnikov Sicilian. This should be a reminder to all of us why it isn't necessarily important to play exactly the same openings as our favourite players; the opening lines they play go so deep that it is nearly impossible to keep up with all the nuances. It is always interesting to see how the tides are changing regarding which openings are popular among the strongest grandmasters. For a while it seemed like the Najdorf Sicilian was the answer for most players, then attention switched to more solid lines like the Petroff and the Burn Variation in the French (with 3...dxe4). Nowadays the majority of the attention is on the Sveshnikov, which is featured in the repertoire of players such as Kasparov, Kramnik, Leko, Topalov, Gelfand to name but a few.

While most of the games you will typically find in *Chess Informant* can be found on most conventional databases, there is also a large number of games that you will not find anywhere else, games from national and local team tournaments, cup tournaments, etc. There are quite a few such games in this most recent volume too. One example is the following:

***Zelcic 2576 - Okhotnik 2453***  
**France 2003**

1 e4 g6 2 d4 Bg7 3 Nc3 d6 4 Bg5 Nc6 5 Nge2 h6!? 6 Bh4 Nf6 7 d5 g5! 8 dxc6 gxh4 9 e5?! Ng4 10 cxb7 Bxb7 11 e6 0-0 12 Nf4 Nxf2! 13 Kxf2 fxe6 14 Ke3 d5! 15 Nb5?! d4+ 16 Nxd4 Rxf4! 17 Kxf4 Bxd4 18 Kg4 Qd5 19 Kh3



19...h5!! 20 Qd3 Qg5! 21 Qxd4 e5 22 Qc4+ Kh8 23 g3 Qf5+ 24 Kxh4 Ba6! 25 g4 Qf2+ 26 Kxh5 Kg7 0-1

I have only included the punctuation from the annotation in *Chess Informant*, but obviously there is a lot more analysis of this game, which is quite beautiful and pretty amazing on its own accord.

Towards the end of each volume we find the combinational and endgame exercises, which are excellent for training purposes, and "The Best of Chess Informant" section, which this time around features my compatriot Bent Larsen. The section contains the usual selection of games, most important theoretical novelties, excellent moves and combinations, endings, statistics as well as some pictures from over the years. There are several familiar favorites, such as his queen sacrifice against Petrosian in Santa Monica 1966 from volume 2 or his win against Karpov with the black in Tilburg 1980, where he outplayed Karpov positionally.

Chess Informant is mostly for stronger players, say over 2000 ELO, but lower-rated players can get a lot of good out of these books too, studying the games by the best players in the world annotated by the players themselves.

**My assessment of this book:** 

[Order](#) *Chess Informant 87*  
by Aleksandar Matanovic et al.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>The Ratings</i></b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> — <b>A poor book, not recommended.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> — <b>Not a particularly good book, but perhaps useful for some readers.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> — <b>A useful book.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> — <b>Good book, recommended.</b></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> — <b>Excellent book, highly recommended.</b></p>

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