

The King's Indian Attack... ...Properly Played

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Jerzy Konikowski / Robert Ullrich

The King's Indian Attack – Properly Played

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Jerzy Konikowski

Preface

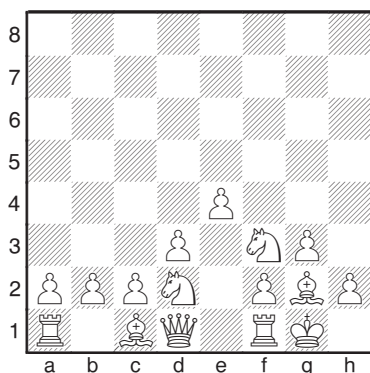
The success of a chess game undoubtedly depends to a large extent on how well the opening is treated. Correspondingly, the correct opening choice already entails good chances to achieve a positive result, and in extreme cases, this can even lead to nominally weaker players defeating a stronger opponent.

However, an intensive study of modern opening theory involves a great deal of work and thus requires a lot of time. Nowadays, all sorts of tournaments produce vast numbers of games. And since many of them contain new and complicated ideas, it's hardly possible for amateurs and hobby players to keep track of them all.

In order to come to terms with such difficult conditions, many players try to somehow bypass the opening phase by shifting the main emphasis and postponing decisive actions to the middle game (or even to the ending). However, this strategic approach often doesn't work as desired,

because if one gets into a material or positional disadvantage at the very beginning, it's very difficult to succeed in the middle game, and in extreme cases there will be no endgame at all.

Therefore, no success is possible without reasonable opening knowledge! But is it really impossible to avoid the jungle of complicated and widely analysed lines? – No, it's quite possible and even in a rather simple way! After 1.e2–e4 White can choose a universal structure, whose basic position is shown in the following diagram.



White dispenses with the active move d2–d4 and develops his forces in the spirit of the King's Indian Defence – but with reversed colours and therefore with an extra tempo. This idea leads to a strategically interesting opening, which is referred to as the 'King's Indian Attack' and with which all elaborated lines can be avoided.

The most important feature is that White – immediately after erecting a single, but extremely solid bridgehead in the centre – ensures the king's transfer to a high security fortress. Thereafter, the course of events depends on which structure Black is going to choose. White has three principally different methods at his disposal.

1. An action on the kingside according to the plan e4–e5, ♖e1, ♘d2–f1, h2–h4, ♞h2–g4 etc. – the move order, of course, depending on Black's way of developing his forces.
2. A queenside action including the moves c2–c3, a2–a3 and b2–b4.
3. An action in the centre including the moves c2–c3, d3–d4 and possibly e4xd5, whereafter one possibility consists in the push c3–c4 at the appropriate moment.

So White can choose from a variety of different plans with all sorts of positional and tactical options, but Black is obviously not without counter chances, which all in all leads to tense games and offers prospects for both sides.

It should be mentioned again that the authors have tried to present the treated opening system as objectively as possible without being influenced by any personal preferences.

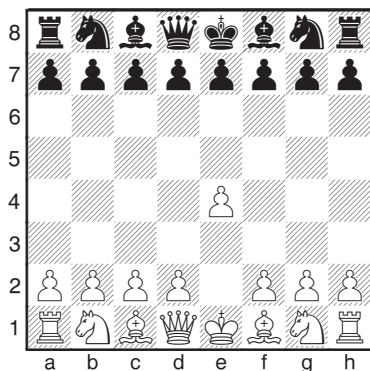
And here's our suggestion on how to work with the book.

1. It's important that you have a thorough look at all lines to get to know the motifs, ideas and plans of both sides. It's also necessary to study all the sample games in order to better understand all their subtleties and nuances. Pay special attention to different move orders or transpositions from one line to the other, which are especially to be found among the structures of the French and the Sicilian Defence.
2. It's advisable to carefully analyse all lines and develop your own ideas.
3. It's recommended to try out the new opening weapon first on less important occasions, e.g. in blitz or free games.
4. And only when your experience has grown sufficiently, should you actually include the 'King's Indian Attack' in your opening repertoire and apply it in serious games.

The 'King's Indian Attack' has long been popular with players of all classes, and even many world-class players have used it regularly and successfully – including the world champions Botvinnik, Petrosian, Smyslov, Kasparov and last but not least ... (see epilogue on page 295).

And also in current tournament practice, this substantial system is used by many top grandmasters – e.g. Karjakin, Aronian, Nakamura, Adams, Svidler, Navara, Mamedyarov, Bologan and – last but not least – current World Champion Magnus Carlsen!

Introduction

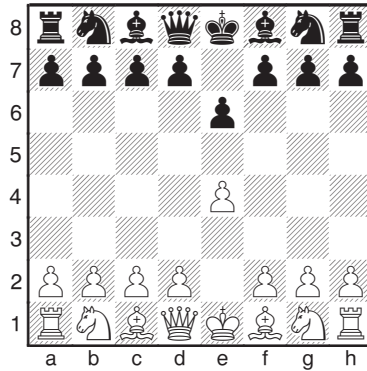


Most games in today's tournament practice begin with the move 1.e2–e4, which can lead to lively and interesting positions. It's especially recommended for players with well-developed tactical skills, because in most cases it leads to very sharp positions in which both sides have to rely on their combinatorial instinct.

In the diagram position, Black has a whole range of more or less popular answers at his disposal. The order in which we will analyse them is based on the fact that the 'King's Indian Attack' mostly occurs after the moves 1.e4 e6 or 1.e4 c5. And since the variety of positional mechanisms and tactical motifs can best be illustrated in the lines resulting from these introductory moves, we will begin with the French and the Sicilian structures.

Chapter 1

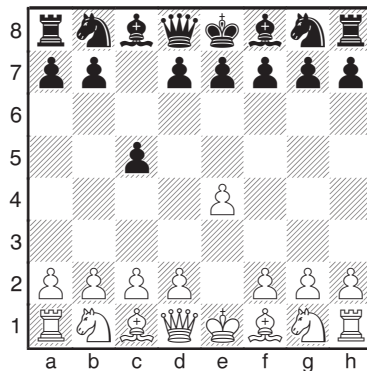
The King's Indian Attack against the French Defence



Black plans d7–d5 to force White's e–pawn to a decision.

Chapter 2

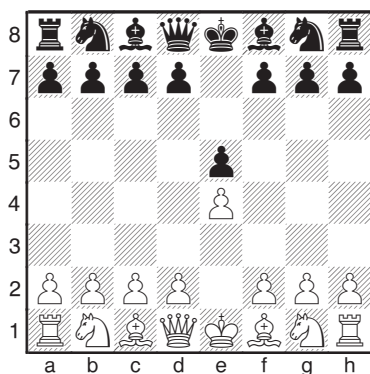
The King's Indian Attack against the Sicilian Defence



If the events take a 'normal' course, the game can be more or less opened, with the main focus being on whether or not White will sooner or later play d2–d4.

Chapter 3

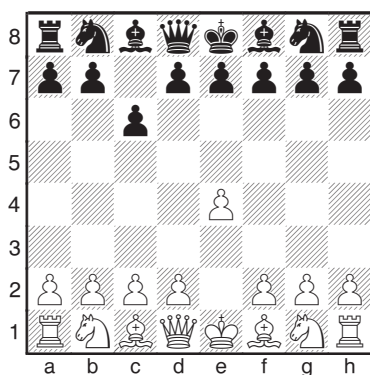
The King's Indian Attack against 1...e5



Here, too, the game can be more or less opened if the events take a 'normal' course – the fight being mainly focused on the pawn on e5 and the square on d4 – e.g. after 2.♘f3.

Chapter 4

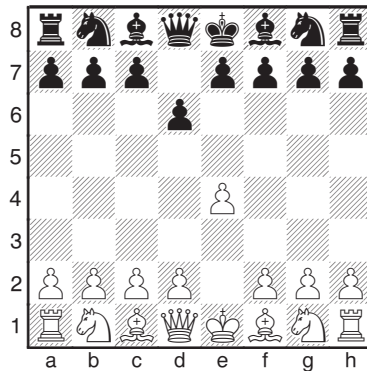
The King's Indian Attack against the Caro-Kann Defence



Similar to the French Defence, Black prepares d7-d5.

Chapter 5

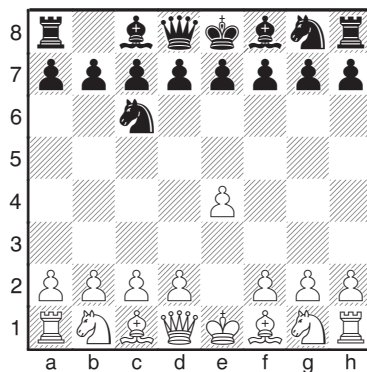
The King's Indian Attack against the Pirc Defence



Here, Black plans the attack on White's center pawn with 2...♘f6. Since the diagonal f8–a3 is completely blocked, the king's bishop will usually be fianchettoed. Occasionally, the move order 1...g6 and later d7–d6 etc. occurs, although this usually only results in a transposition of moves.

Chapter 6

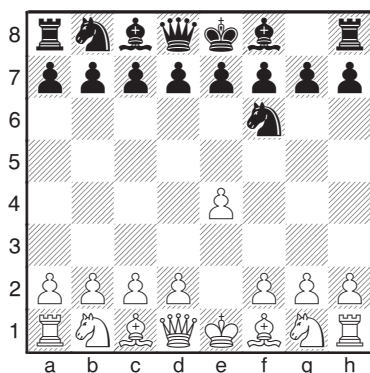
The King's Indian Attack against the Nimzowitsch Defence



After 2.d4 the attacking move 2 ... d5 is on the program.

Chapter 7

The King's Indian Attack against the Alekhine Defence



With this immediate attack on the king's pawn Black wants to provoke the push e4–e5.

Summary:

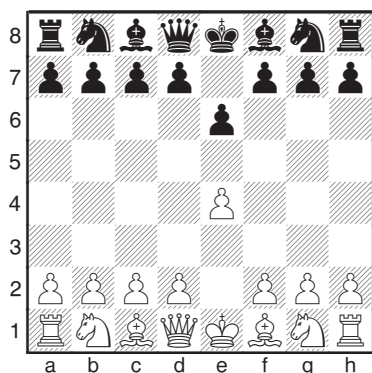
Now you have a first rough overview of what topics we will explore in this book – as objectively as possible and not influenced by the authors' personal preferences. However, not exactly how the game would go if the events took their 'normal' course in the above-mentioned openings, but how you can avoid the vast amounts of far-analysed lines by limiting your opening repertoire to a single universal weapon – namely the 'King's Indian Attack'.

The entire material includes 7 theory chapters and 69 example games. For a reliable and successful handling of this universal weapon, it's essential that you not only learn the theory, but that you also thoroughly study the example games. Because only by studying the practical problems in positions from actual games, can you make sure that you really get to know an opening with all its motifs and mechanisms as well as all its intricacies and pitfalls.

Chapter 1

The King's Indian Attack against the French Defence (theoretical section)

1.e4 e6



2.d3

This is the right move order, as it's very important to vacate the square on d2 for the queen's knight. 2.g3 is not precise in view of 2...d5! – whereafter the play might continue as follows:

A) 3.♘g2 dxe4 4.♗c3

Or 4.♘xe4 ♗f6 5.♘g2 ♘c5 6.♗f3 ♗c6 7.0-0 0-0 8.d3 e5 with good play for Black.

4...♗f6 5.♗xe4 ♗xe4 6.♘xe4 c5

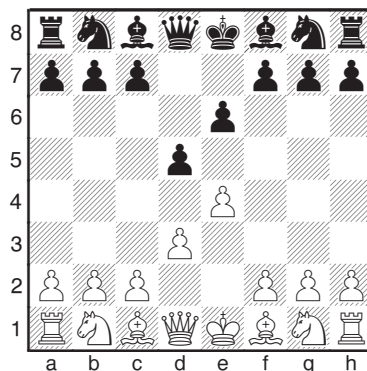
An alternative is 6...♗d7 7.♘g2 c5 8.♗f3 ♘e7 9.~ 10.d4 cxd4 11.♗xd4 ♗c5=, Carlsen–Rodriguez Vila, Caxias do Sul 2014.

7.d3 ♗c6 8.♗e2 ♘e7 9.♘e3 e5 10.h3 ♘e6 11.♗d2 ♗d7 12.f4 0-0 13.fxe5 ♗xe5 14.♗f4 ♖ad8 15.♗g2 b6 16.0-0 f5 Black has an excellent position, Gulden–Yurtseven, Kocaeli 2017.

B) Of course, the early exchange of queens after 3.d3 dxe4 4.dxe4 ♗xd1+ 5.♗xd1 is absolutely not on White's agenda.

2...d5

This logical reply in the spirit of the French Defence attacks the pawn on e4. The alternative 2...c5 can either (by transposition of moves) lead to positions discussed later on – or to **Chapter 2** (The Kings Indian Attack against the Sicilian Defence).



3.♘d2

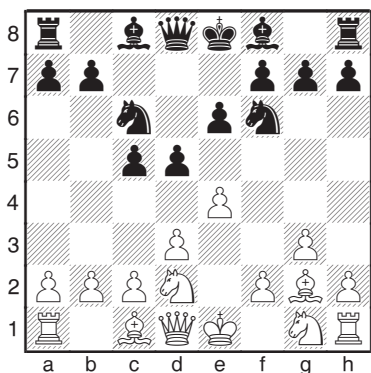
That's the usual move to keep the queens on the board. The interesting possibility 3.♞e2 will be analysed in **Line 1** (see page 37).

3...♙f6

Black wants to develop the king-side as quickly as possible. Another plan consists in 3...c5 followed by active measures on the queenside. Thereafter the play can either continue similar to the French Defence or take another course. After 4.♘gf3 ♘c6 5.g3 Black has two completely different continuations at his disposal: 5...g6 (see **Line 2** – page 51) or 5...♙d6 (see **Line 3** – page 66).

4.♘gf3

Instead of this natural developing move, another plan intending the early push f2-f4 comes into consideration; e.g. 4.g3 c5 5.♙g2 ♘c6



6.f4

6.♘gf3 leads to the main line.

A) 6...♞c7 7.♘gf3

An interesting approach consists in 7.e5!? ♘d7 8.♘gf3 h6 9.c3 b6 10.a3 a5 11.c4 d4 12.♘e4±, Kirchei-Ilina, Moscow 2017.

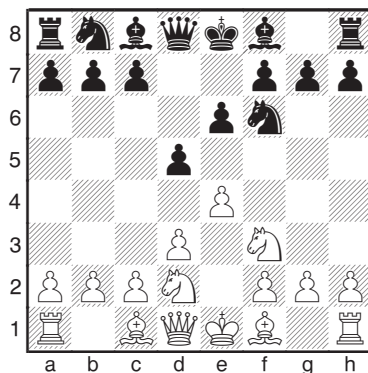
7...♙e7 8.0-0 b6 9.c3 ♙b7 10.♞e2 h6 11.♞e1 0-0-0 12.a3 d4 13.c4 ♘d7 14.e5 g5 15.♙e4 g4 16.♘h4 ♞dg8 17.b4! with some attack, Garma-Nadera, Manila 2010.

B) For 6...♙e7 see **Game 1**: Svetushkin-Salem, Abu Dhabi 2003.

C) 6...dxe4 7.dxe4 ♙e7 8.♘gf3

8.♘h3!? is an interesting idea; see **Game 2**: Fedorov-Kuroshkin, Yekaterinburg 2002.

8...0-0 9.0-0 ♞c7 10.c3 ♞d8 11.♞e2 b6 12.e5 ♘e8 13.♙e4 ♙b7 14.♘fg5±, Stefan-Buescu, Tusnad 2000.



4...c5

Since White didn't play d2-d4, Black takes this important central square under control. Another idea is 4...b6

followed by the fianchetto of the queen's bishop. White can do the same with his king's bishop after 5.g3 etc.

White can also try the approach 5.c3!?, which will be scrutinised in **Game 3: Adams–Bareyev, Sarajevo 1999.**

A) 5...♟b7 6.♞e2!?

This is an original approach to the given position. After 6.♟g2 dxe4 7.♜g5 ♜c6 8.♜gxe4 ♟e7 9.0–0 0–0 Black wouldn't have any problem.

6...dxe4 7.dxe4 ♟a6 8.♞e3 ♟xf1 9.♞xf1 ♟e7 10.♞g2 0–0 11.e5 ♜d5 12.♞e4 ♜d7 13.a3 ♜c5 14.♞e2 c6 15.c4 ♜c7 16.♞d1 ♞c8 17.♜e4 (17.b4!? ♜a4 18.♜e4±) 17...♜xe4 18.♞xe4 ♜a6 19.b4 ♞c7 20.♟g5 ♞ac8 21.♟xe7 ♞xe7 22.♞d6 f5 23.♞d3 ♜b8 24.♞d1 ♞fe8 25.h4 with a clear advantage, Timman–Speelman, Dordrecht 2000.

B) 5...dxe4 6.dxe4 ♟c5

After 6...♟b7 White can play 7.♟b5+ c6 8.♟d3 or 7.♞e2 followed by ♟f1–g2 etc.

7.♟g2 ♟a6 8.c4 ♞d3

Or 8...e5 9.b4 ♟d6 10.♟b2 ♞e7 11.a3 0–0 12.0–0 ♟b7 13.c5 bxc5 14.bxc5 ♟xc5 15.♜xe5 ♞d8 16.♞c2 ♜a6 17.♜b3±, Amin–Shyam, Dubai 2011.

9.b4! ♟e7

Of course, 9... ♟xb4?? would be a blunder, as after 10.♞a4+ Black loses his bishop.

10.♞b1 ♟b7 11.♞b3 ♞d8 12.♞e2 a5?

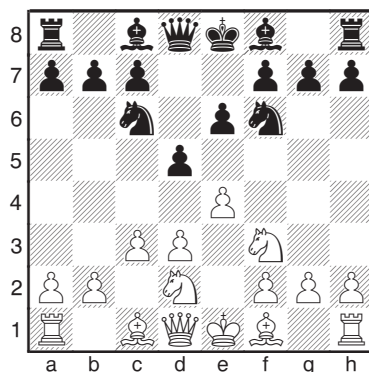
Black should first play 12...0–0! to secure the king.

13.♞d3 ♜fd7 14.b5 ♞c8 15.e5 ♜c5 16.♞d4 ♜bd7 17.0–0 h6 18.h4 ♞b8 19.h5 ♞a7 20.♞g4 ♞g8

After 20...0–0 21.♜d4! ♟xg2 22.♞xg2 the push f4–f5 gives White a strong attack on the king.

21.♜d4 ♟xg2 22.♞xg2 ♞b7+ 23.♜2f3 f5 24.exf6 ♜xf6 25.♜c6 ♜xg4 26.♜fd4 ♜f6 27.♜xe6 ♞f7 (27...♜xe6 28.♞xe6+–) 28.♜g5+, 1–0, Petrosjan–Wintzer, Gibraltar 2008.

After 4...♜c6 the recommended reply 5.c3!? can lead to the following lines.



A) 5...a5 6.♙e2 e5 7.0-0 ♘c5 8.b3!

White wants to gain more space on the queenside by playing a3 and b4, as the other attempt 8.♖b1 0-0 9.a3 wouldn't work in view of 9...a4!. Therefore, the plan has to be prepared more carefully.

8...0-0 9.a3 b6 10.♖b1 ♙b7 11.b4 axb4 12.axb4 ♙d6 13.♖c2 ♗e7 14.♖e1 ♖fe8

14...d4 is followed by 15.b5!.

15.♙f1 ♗d7 16.exd5 ♘xd5 17.♘c4 f6 18.♘xd6 ♗xd6 19.♘d2 White intends to play g3 followed by the fianchetto of the king's bishop, Schmaltz–Feygin, Holland 2002.

B) 5...♙e7 6.♙e2 0-0 7.0-0 a5 8.a4 b6 9.♖e1 ♙a6 10.e5 ♘d7 11.d4 ♙xe2 12.♖xe2 ♖c8 13.♘f1 ♗a6 14.♖c2 ♖ae8 15.♘g3 ♘cb8 16.♙g5 h6

Black should better play 16...c5!? to create counterplay on the queenside without loss of time.

17.♙xe7 ♖xe7 18.♘h5 c5 19.♖e3 ♘c6 20.g4

20.♘h4!? was strong, as after 20...cxd4 21.♖g3 f5 22.♘g6 White wins an exchange.

20...cxd4 21.cxd4 ♘b4 22.♖d2 ♖c8 23.♖c1 ♘a2 24.♖xc8+ ♗xc8 25.♙g2 ♘f8 26.g5 hxg5 27.♖a3 g4 28.♘f6+! gxf6 29.exf6 gxf3+ 30.♖xf3 ♘g6 31.fxe7 ♘xe7 32.♖g5+ ♘g6 33.h4 ♖c1 34.♖f6

White has a decisive attack, Swiercz–Cordova, Atlantic City 2016.

C) 5...♙d6 6.g3

The completely different plan 6.♙e2 etc. will be scrutinised in **Game 4**: Carlsen–Caruana, Sao Paulo/Bilbao 2012.

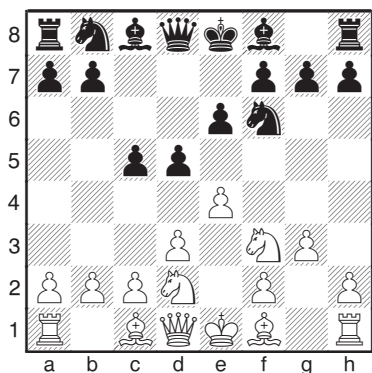
6...0-0 7.♙g2 dxe4

An alternative is 7...e5 8.0-0 ♖e8 9.♖e1 ♙g4 10.h3 ♙h5 11.♖c2 dxe4 12.dxe4 ♗d7 13.♘h4 ♙c5 14.♘f1 ♖ad8 15.♙g5 ♖e6 16.♘e3 h6 17.♙xf6 ♗xf6 18.♘d5 ♖g5 19.♘f5±, Vorobiyov–Lahiri, Voronezh 2005.

8.dxe4 e5 9.0-0 a5 10.♖c2 ♙c5 11.♘c4 ♖e7 12.♘h4 ♖d8 13.♘e3 ♙e6 14.♘ef5 ♗d7 15.♙g5 ♖d3 16.♖c1 ♘xe4 17.♙xd8 ♖xd8 18.♙xe4 ♖xe4 19.♖g5 g6 20.♖ae1 ♖c2 21.♖xe5 ♘xe5 22.♖xd8+ ♙f8 23.♘d4 ♖xb2 24.♖xc7 ♘d3 25.♘xe6 fxe6 26.♘f3 h6 27.♘e5 ♘xe5 28.♖xe5 ♖xa2 29.♖d1 a4 30.♖f6 ♖c2 31.♖xe6+ ♘h7 32.♖d7+ ♘h8 33.♖f6+, 1-0, E. Miller–J. Schneider, Apolda 2017.

5.g3

The fianchetto of the king's bishop is supposed to lead to some activity in the diagonal a8-h1 and to build a fortress for the king.



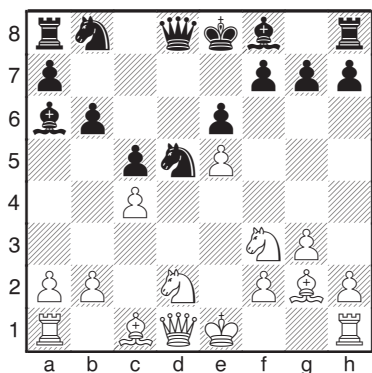
5...dxc6

Black keeps open the positioning of the pieces on the kingside. The following continuations are played less often:

I) 5...dxc6 6.dxc6 b6 7.♔g2 ♔a6

After 7...♔b7 White can develop his forces with 8.e5 ♘fd7 9.0-0 ♙e7 10.♖e1 etc.

8.e5 ♘d5 9.c4



A) 9...♘b4 10.0-0 ♙b7 11.b3 ♘8c6

After 11...♘d3 12.♙a3! the bishop remains on the board.

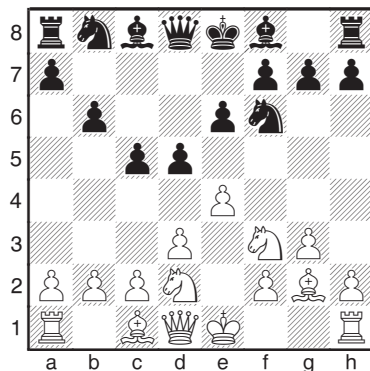
12.♙b2 ♖c7 13.a3 ♘d3 14.♙c3 0-0-0 15.♗e2 ♙e7 16.♖fd1 ♖d7 17.♘f1 ♖hd8 18.♖d2 f6 19.exf6 gxf6 20.♖ad1 White has a winning position, Morozevich–Kogan, London 1994.

B) 9...♘c7 10.0-0 ♙b7 11.♗c2 ♘c6 12.♗e4 ♙e7 13.♗g4 g6

Instead of this weakening of the kingside, 13...0-0! would have been better.

14.♘e4 h5 15.♗f4 ♙f8 16.♙e3 ♘b4 17.♘d6 ♙xd6 18.exd6 ♘e8 19.♘e5 ♘xd6 20.♙xb7 g5 21.♗f3, 1-0 Radlovacki–Maric, Belgrade 2013.

II) 5...b6 6.♔g2



A) 6...♙b7 7.0-0 ♘c6 8.♖e1 ♙e7 9.c3 ♗c7 10.♗e2 0-0-0

The alternative 10...0-0 will be examined in the highly tactical **Game 5**: Hera–Ganguly, Biel 2017.

11.exd5 ♘xd5 12.♘c4 h6 13.a4 ♙f6 14.a5 bxa5 15.♘fe5 ♘xe5 16.♘xe5 g5 17.♘c4 White has a

24 The King's Indian Attack against the French Defence

decisive attack, Pablo Marin–Gayson, Sabadell 2017.

B) 6...dxe4 7.♘g5

For 7.dxe4 – see **Line I** above.

7...♙b7 8.0–0 h6

Another line is 8... ♖c7 9.♘dxe4 ♘xe4 10.♘xe4 ♙e7 11.♙f4 ♖d7 12.♖g4 g6 13.♙e5 f5 14.♖f4 ♖f8 15.♘d6+ ♙xd6 16.♙xb7 ♖xb7 17.♙xd6 ♖f6 18.♙e5 ♖f7 19.♖fe1 ♘c6 20.♙c3 with white advantage, Ragni–Pitrola, Italy 2007.

9.♘gxe4 ♘xe4 10.dxe4 ♙e7 11.♖g4 h5 12.♖e2 ♘c6 13.♖e1

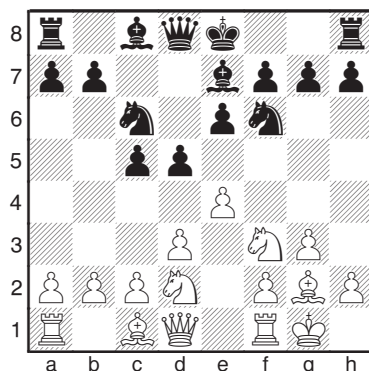
13.c3!? hasn't been tried out in practice yet.

13...♘d4 14.♖d1 h4 15.c3 hxg3 16.hxg3 ♘c6 17.e5 ♖c7 18.♘c4 ♖d8 19.♖g4 ♔f8 20.♙f4 ♖g8 21.♘d6 with some advantage, Bentancor–Martinez, Pinamar 2006.

6.♙g2 ♙e7

This is the best place for the bishop, as after 6...♙d6 7.0–0 0–0 8.♖e1 ♖c7 9.♖e2 Black would always have to keep an eye on the threatening fork e4–e5.

7.0–0



From the position shown in the diagram the play can develop as follows:

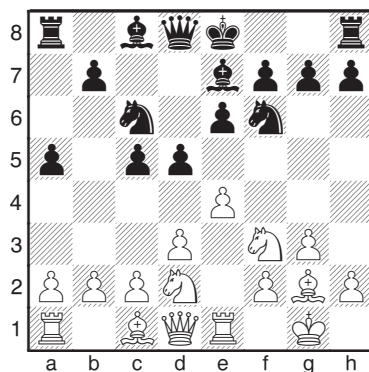
I) 7...0–0 (see **Line 4** – page 81)

II) 7...♖c7 (see **Line 5** – page 123)

III) 7...b6 (see **Line 6** – page 134)

IV) 7...a5 8.♖e1

The intermediate move 8.a4!? comes also into consideration.



A) 8...h6 9.h4

This characteristic move initiates the attack on the king (and thus justifies the name *King's Indian Attack*). In the game Dizdar-Joecks, Berlin 1988, White chose another plan: 9.c3 a4 10.a3 0-0 11.e5 ♘h7 12.♗f1 b5 13.h4 ♙d7 14.♙f4 b4. Black has counterplay on the queenside, although the opponent's initiative on the other side turned out to be quicker. 15.♗1h2 bxc3 16.bxc3 ♖b8 17.♗g4 ♜b3 18.c4 ♗a5 19.♞c2 ♞b6 20.♗d2 ♜b2 21.♞c1 d4 22.♙xh6! gxh6 23.♗e4 f5 24.exf6 ♗xf6 25.♞xh6 ♗xg4 26.♞g6+ ♔h8 27.♞h5+ ♔g7 28.♞xg4+ ♔h6 29.♗g5 ♜bxf2 30.♗xe6 ♜xg2+ 31.♔xg2 ♞c6+ 32.♔g1 1-0.

9...a4 10.e5 ♗h7 11.♗f1 0-0 12.♗1h2 ♜b8 13.♙f4 ♜e8 14.♗g4 White intends to play ♞d2, threatening a strong attack on the king with the sacrifice on h6, Dolmatov-Bernan, Mexico 1980.

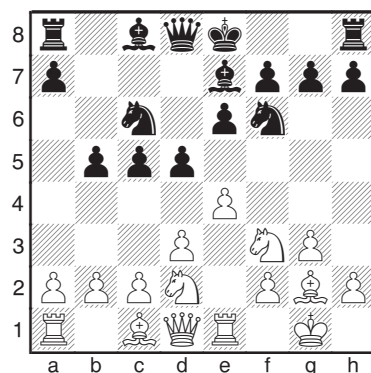
B) 8...a4 9.e5

After 9.a3 0-0 10.e5 ♗e8 11.♗f1 ♙d7 12.h4 b5 13.♗1h2 b4 14.h5 ♔h8 15.h6 intending ♗g4 White has good attacking chances, Dirr-Hornung, Germany 2007.

9...♗d7 10.a3 ♞c7 11.♞e2 b5 12.♗f1 0-0 13.h4 b4 14.♙f4 ♙b7 15.♗e3 bxa3 16.bxa3 ♗a5 17.h5 ♙a6?

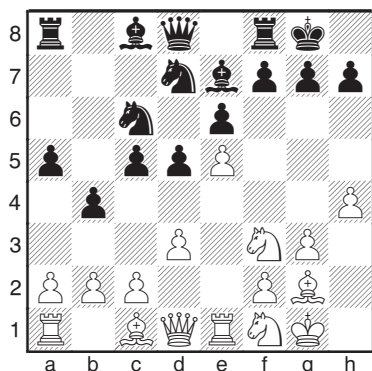
17...h6! was necessary to prevent White's next move.

18.h6 g6 19.♗xd5! This is a typical blow in the centre. 19...exd5 20.e6 ♙d6 21.♙xd6 ♞xd6 22.exd7 ♞xd7 23.♗e5 ♞d6 24.♞g4 White has an active position, Schuster-Gresshoff, Germany 1990.

V) 7...b5 8.♞e1**A) 8...0-0 9.e5**

This push drives away the knight that protects the opponent's king and is thus in the spirit of this opening. In the game Karjakin-Meier, chess.com INT 2017, White opted for another way: 9.exd5 exd5 10.a4 b4 11.♗b3 ♙g4 12.h3 ♙h5 13.g4 ♙g6 14.♙f4 ♜c8 15.♗e5 ♗xe5 16.♙xe5 ♙d6 17.♞d2 ♙xe5 18.♜xe5 h6 19.♞ae1 c4 20.♗d4 ♞b6 21.♞e3 cxd3 22.cxd3 ♞a6 23.f4 ♙xd3 24.g5 hxg5 25.fxg5 ♗e4 26.♗f5 ♜ce8 27.♗e7+ ♔h8 28.♞d4 ♞d6 29.♜xd5 ♞xe7 30.♞xd3 with a winning position.

9...♘d7 10.♘f1 b4 11.h4 a5



A1) 12.♙f4 a4 13.♘1h2 a3

This move is practically forced, as otherwise White could play 14.a3 himself and slow down the black initiative on the queenside.

14.b3 ♙b7 15.♙h3 ♖c8 16.♖c1 ♖e8 17.♘g5 ♙xg5 18.hxg5 ♘f8 19.♙h5 ♘d4 20.♙g2 ♖e7 21.♘g4 c4 22.♘f6+! ♔h8

(22...gxf6 23.exf6 ♖d7 24.♙e5 ♘f5 25.g4+-)

23.dxc4 dxc4 24.♖cd1

(24.♙xb7! ♖xb7 25.♖cd1 gxf6 26.gxf6 ♘g6 27.♙e3 ♙d5 28.♖xd4 ♙xe5 29.♙f3 ♖bb8 30.bxc4±)

24...cxb3 25.cxb3 ♙xg2 26.♔xg2 ♙b6 In the game Duda–So, Leon 2017, White should now have played 27.♘e4! to secure the better chances.

A2) 12.h5 ♙a6 13.h6 g6 14.a4 bxa3 15.bxa3 ♙c7 16.♙f4 ♖fc8 17.♘e3 ♘b6 18.♘g4 ♙d8 19.♙d2

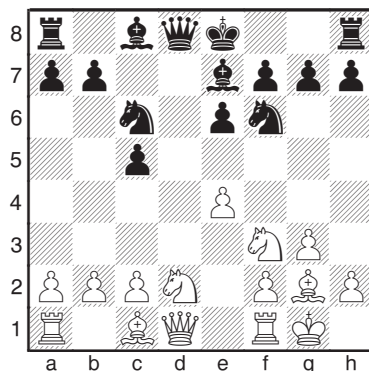
White intends to obtain good attacking prospects with the maneuver ♙f4–g5, Jell–Epding, Germany 2015.

B) 8...h6 9.c3 a5 10.a4 b4 11.e5 ♘d7 12.c4 ♘b6 13.b3 ♙g5?

Black should first secure the king by playing 13... 0–0!?

14.♙b2 ♙xd2 15.♘xd2 ♙a6 16.♖c1 ♖c8 17.cxd5 exd5 18.e6 White has a decisive advantage, Ruge–Nino, Medellin 2012.

VI) 7...dxe4 8.dxe4



A) 8...0–0 9.♖e1 b6

In the game Badea–Danilov, Bukarest 1998, White obtained the better position after 9...e5 10.c3 h6 11.♘c4 ♙xd1 12.♖xd1 ♘xe4 13.♘fxe5 ♘xe5 14.♘xe5, and went on to win.

10.e5 ♘d7

After the alternative 10...♘d5 11.♘e4 ♘db4 12.♘d6 ♙xd6 13.exd6 ♙b7 14.c4 ♙d7 15.a3 ♘a6

16.♙f4 White stands better, since the pawn on d6 restricts the opponent's forces very effectively.

11.♘e4

11.♘d4!? cxd4 12.♙xc6 ♖b8 13.♘b3 etc. doesn't look bad either.

11...♙a6 12.♙f4 b5 13.c3 ♗b6 14.♗c2 ♖fd8 15.h4 ♘f8 16.h5 ♖ac8?

16...h6!? was stronger.

17.h6 ♘g6 18.hxg7 ♔xg7

After 18...♘xf4 19.gxf4 ♔xg7 20.♘f6 ♙xf6 21.exf6+ ♔xf6 22.♘g5 h6 23.♘xf7! ♔xf7 24.♗h7+ ♔f8 25.♗xh6+ the mate cannot be parried any more.

19.♗c1 ♖d3 20.♙g5 White has a decisive attack, Petrosjan–Kan, Moscow 1955.

B) 8...♗c7 9.c3

The line after the pawn sacrifice 9.e5!? ♘xe5 10.♘xe5 ♗xe5 11.♘c4 ♗d4 12.♗e2 0–0 13.♖d1 etc. is interesting enough to deserve further scrutiny.

9...e5

After 9...0–0 the line 10.♗e2 e5 11.♘c4 b5 12.♘e3 ♙a6 13.♖d1 ♖ad8 14.♘d5 is recommended, as the active knight on d5 guarantees some positional advantage, Damjanovic–Larino Nieto, Lorca 2006.

10.♗e2 ♙e6 11.♘c4 0–0 12.♘g5

12.♘h4!? with the idea ♘f5! is also possible; e.g. 12...♖ad8 13.♘f5 ♖fe8 14.♙g5 h6 15.♙xf6 ♙xf6 16.♘ce3 ♘e7 17.h4 ♔h7 18.♔h2 ♘g8 19.♘c4 ♘e7 20.♘fe3 b5 21.♘a3 a6 22.♘ac2 ♖d7 23.a4 ♗b6 24.axb5 axb5 25.♘d5 ♙xd5 26.exd5 ♘c8 27.♙h3 ♖dd8 28.♗e4+ ♔g8 29.♙xc8 ♖xc8 30.♘e3, and in the game Vallejo Pons–Bellia, Gallipoli 2017, White remained with a strong passed pawn and a corresponding advantage.

12...♙xc4 13.♗xc4 h6 14.♘f3 ♖ad8 15.♘h4 ♖fe8 16.♘f5 ♙f8 17.♗e2 White has the active follow-up plan to increase the pressure on the black king with h4, g4 etc.

Sample games

Game 1 Svetushkin – Salem Abu Dhabi 2003

1.e4 c5 2.d3 ♘c6 3.g3 d5 4.♘d2
♙f6 5.♙g2 e6 6.f4 ♙e7

For other moves – see the theoretical section further above.

7.♘gf3 b6 8.0-0 0-0 9.e5 ♘g4

After this move the knight will soon end up in a rather passive position. Therefore 9...♘d7!? was recommended, whereafter White might complicate things with 10.c4!?

10.♖e1 ♙b7 11.♙f1 ♚d7?

Instead of this loss of time, 11...♘h6! 12.c3 was correct.

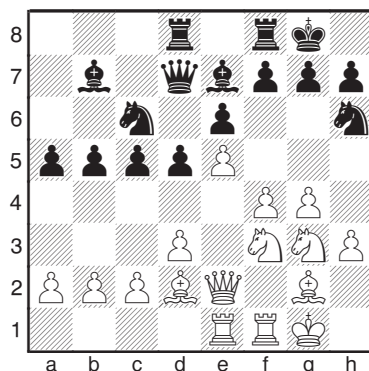
12.h3 is followed by 12...♘f5, and after 13.g4? Black has the strong reply 13...♘h4!.

12...d4 13.c4 a6 14.b3 Now White can play a3, ♖b1 and ♙d2 to prepare the push b4.

12.h3 ♘h6 13.g4!

This is the beginning of a pawn storm which is typical for this position.

13...♙h8 14.♘g3 ♖ad8 15.♙e2 a6
16.♙d2 ♙g8 17.♖f1 b5 18.♖ae1
a5



19.♘h5

White could play more energetically at this moment: 19.f5! exf5 20.♙xh6 fxg4 (20...gxh6 21.♘xf5±) 21.♘h2! gxh3 (21...gxh6 22.♘xg4+-) 22.♘f5 with a strong initiative.

19...c4 20.d4

Again 20.f5! exf5 21.g5 ♙c5+ 22.♙h1 ♘g4 23.hxg4 fxg4 24.♘h2 etc. was possible.

20...♖fe8 21.c3

Instead of reinforcing the pawn on d4, 21.f5! was more active.

21...♙h8 22.♙f2 b4 23.♘g5 ♙c8
24.♙g3

White systematically mobilises his forces for an attack. However, another approach was simply stronger: 24.f5! exf5

(24...♙f8 25.f6 g6 26.♘g7! ♙xg7 27.fxg7+ ♔xg7 28.♚h4 ♚e7 29.♖f6+-)

25.e6 fxe6 26.♘xe6.

24...♖f8 25.h4 a4 26.♙h3 a3 27.f5!

Better late than never!

27...axb2 28.f6 gxf6 29.♘h7! bxc3

29...♙xh7 30.♚e3! ♘g8 31.♖xf6 ♙xf6 32.♘xf6+ ♘xf6 33.exf6+-

30.♘xf6 ♚a7

The alternative 30...cxd2 would lead to a sharp line: 31.♚f4! ♘f5 (31...♘g8 32.♚g5+) 32.gxf5 ♖g8+ 33.♙h1 ♙f8 34.♘g7!! ♙xg7 35.♚g5, and the mate cannot be parried.

31.♙e3?

Instead of this risky decision, 31.♙xc3! was stronger.

31...♖g8!

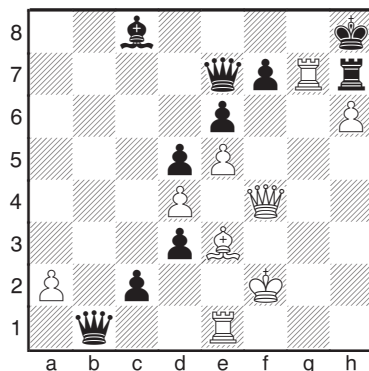
Creating counterplay is the right reaction, since after 31...♙xf6? 32.♖xf6 ♘g8 33.♚f4 Black could just resign.

32.♘xg8?

Obviously, White has lost the orientation in this sharp position. He should better have played 32.♙xh6!.

32...♖xg8 33.♘f6 ♙xf6 34.♖xf6 c2 34...♘f5!? was an interesting alternative.

35.♚f4 ♘xg4 36.♙xg4 ♖g7 37.h5 b1♚ 38.♙f2 ♘b4 39.♙e2 ♘d3+ 40.♙xd3 cxd3 41.h6 ♖h7 42.♖g6 ♚e7 43.♖g7



43...♚xa2?

Black's assessment of the situation is wrong. After the correct 43...♚d1! White would have been lost.

44.♙d2 ♚a4?

This mistake turns everything upside down, whereas 44...c1♚! 45.♖xc1 ♚h4+ 46.♚xh4 ♚xd2+ 47.♙g3 ♚e3+ would have led to a perpetual.

45.♖eg1 ♚ae8 46.♚g4 ♚f8 47.♙g5! f5??

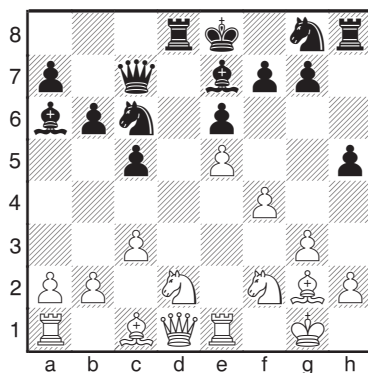
The last and decisive mistake. After 47...♚xg7! 48.hxg7+ ♔g8 etc. Black could still have put up some resistance. After the text move, however, White went on to win.

48. ♖h4! ♜xg7

48...d2 49. ♙f6! d1 ♘+ 50. ♚f3
(50. ♚e1?? ♜b4+ -+) 50... ♜a3+
51. ♙g2 ♘e3+ 52. ♙h1 +-

49. ♙f6!

Black resigned.



Game 2

Fedorov – Kuroshkin

Yekaterinburg 2002

**1.e4 c5 2.d3 d5 3. ♘d2 ♘c6 4.g3
♘f6 5. ♙g2 e6 6.f4 dxe4 7.dxe4
♙e7 8. ♘h3!?**

8. ♘gf3 was analysed in the theoretical section further above.

**8... ♜c7 9.0-0 b6 10.c3 ♙a6
11. ♖e1 ♖d8 12. ♘f2**

White keeps up the tension, since after 12.e5 ♘d5 13. ♜g4 0-0 14. ♘f2 b5 15.a4 b4 16.c4 ♘b6 17.b3 ♘d4 Black would have no problems.

12...h5

Instead of weakening the king-side, Black should simply play 12...0-0 to secure the king.

13.e5 ♘g8?

This is a completely illogical decision. After the right move 13... ♘d5! and the plausible continuation 14.c4 ♘db4 15. ♜a4 ♙b7 16.a3 ♘a6 the position would offer equal chances.

14.f5!?

with this proper approach White snatches the initiative.

14...exf5

The line 14... ♙c4 15. ♜c2 ♙d5 16.fxe6 ♙xe6 17. ♜a4 ♙d7 18. ♜e4 favours White, since he already threatens 19.e6!.

15.e6

White consistently sticks to his plan. However, the alternative 15. ♜f3!? ♙b7 (15... ♘xe5? 16. ♜f4 f6 17. ♜a4+ +-) 16. ♜xf5 h4 17. ♘c4± came into consideration.

15...fxe6 16. ♜a4 ♙b7 17. ♘c4!

It's important and can hardly be wrong to mobilise the reserves first of all, although 17. ♖xe6 ♖h6 18. ♖e1 h4 19. ♘f1 was also in White's favour.

17... ♜c8

After 17...h4 18. ♙f4 ♜c8 19. ♘e5 hxg3 20.hxg3 White is better.