

PREFACE

My main opening weapon throughout my chess career, from 1998 to 2010, was the French Defence. However, in the last five years of this period I played a large number of games in the strongest tournaments in Russia, mostly against players rated over 2600, and I suffered many humiliating but well-deserved defeats.

These losses made me reconsider the situation and I came to the conclusion that the cramped positions in the French Defence are strategically risky and do not quite suit my playing style. At the beginning of 2010 I qualified for the World Cup and I had to make up my mind how I was going to try to neutralize effectively Ostap Bender's favourite move (1.e4). *

The overwhelming majority of the world's theoretical experts consider that in reply to 1.e2-e4 there are really only two good moves. Since the sharp Sicilian positions might turn my hair prematurely grey, I decided to study the calmer move 1...e5.

I managed to study the new positions quickly and easily and I felt quite comfortable with them in practice. By the summer of 2011 I was already playing nothing but 1...e5 and had no opening problems with Black, either in the Finals of the Championship of Russia or in the World Cup.

In this book I have presented all my analyses and my discoveries during the World Cup. I believe that it will be useful for chess players at all levels to study them, together with the excellent annotations and explanations of Roman Ovetchkin.

* *English Editor's note: Ostap Bender is the hero of the famous Russian comic novel The Twelve Chairs, by Ilf and Petrov*

The reader might justifiably pose the following question: “How to cope with the Ruy Lopez if you are Black?”. In fact, almost every variation of this opening deserves to be analyzed in a separate volume, so we shall reveal to you the tremendously complicated and fashionable Berlin Defence in our next book.

Finally, I and my co-author R.Ovetchkin should like to express our immense gratitude to our friends, Grandmasters I.Kurnosov, P.Ponkratov and A.Riazantsev, as well as to my long-time coach N.Ogloblin, for their generous contributions and invaluable help during the writing of this book.

Igor Lysyj
Ekaterinburg, February 2012

Contents

Preface	7
-------------------	---

Part 1. All White Lines w/o 2.♠f3 1.e4 e5

1	Rarely-Played Moves. Centre Game 2.d4 exd4	9
2	King's Gambit 2.f4 d5	17
3	Vienna Game 2.♠c3 ♠f6	29
4	Bishop's Opening 2.♠c4 ♠f6	51

Part 2. All White Lines w/o 3.♠b5 1.e4 e5 2.♠f3 ♠c6

5	Rarely-Played Moves. Ponziani Opening 3.c3 d5	66
6	Belgrade Gambit 3.♠c3 ♠f6 4.d4 ed 5.♠d5 ♠e7	77
7	Glek Variation 3.♠c3 ♠f6 4.g3 d5	82
8	Four Knights Game 3.♠c3 ♠f6 4.♠b5 ♠b4	89

Scotch Game 3.d4 exd4

9	Göring & Scotch Gambits 4.c3 d5; 4.♠c4 ♠c5	105
10	4.♠xd4 ♠f6 w/o 5.♠xc6; 5.♠xc6 bc w/o 6.e5	119
11	4.♠xd4 ♠f6 5.♠xc6 bc 6.e5 ♖e7 7.♗e2 ♠d5 w/o 8.c4	138
12	4.♠xd4 ♠f6 5.♠xc6 bc 6.e5 ♖e7 7.♗e2 ♠d5 8.c4 ♠a6	144

Giucoco Piano 3.♠c4 ♠c5

13	Evans Gambit 4.b4 ♠xb4	158
14	4.d3 ♠f6 various; 5.♠b3 0-0	173
15	4.♠c3 ♠f6 5.d3 h6	178
16	4.0-0 ♠f6 5.d4 ♠xd4	183
17	4.0-0 ♠f6 5.d3 0-0	188
18	4.c3 ♠f6 various; 5.d4 exd4	194
19	4.c3 ♠f6 5.d3 0-0 w/o 6.0-0	216
20	4.c3 ♠f6 5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d5	223

Index of Variations	241
-------------------------------	-----