

## Quiet Waters

by Glenn Flear



It's safe to say that lovers of white water kayaking have a different perspective to life than those enjoying a gentle boat ride on a placid lake. For the former it's the excitement, the spray in their hair, and even danger that makes them tick, whereas for the latter just to be 'out and about' is enough.

Three of the four books that I've reviewed this time can be described as quiet waters. Their reputations sets them firmly into this category, largely due to early choices by White.

After 1.e4 e5 White can opt for various sharp gambits, the open play of the Scotch or the theoretically critical Spanish. However those that play the Four Knights are considered to be a stodgy lot. Rather few lines become sharp as White seeks riskless control, although there are exceptions, as Pinski's book tries to highlight.

The Queen's Indian Defence arises, first of all because White plays the cautious 3.Äf3, rather than the principled 3.Äc3, and finally when Black opts for 3...b6 instead of the sharper 3...c5. A standard choice at a high level for those not wanting too much spray in their hair.

The Colle is even more restrained, White doesn't risk 2.c4, the equivalent (if I pursue the metaphor) of not getting into any boat at all!

No one has yet gone so far as brought out a book entitled *Adventures in the French Exchange or Attacking with the Exchange Slav!* These are recognized as the ultimate in boring lines. They don't stimulate the chess public and aren't considered as dramatic win-

ning tries (although to be fair, I've lost to both of them in the last year!).

The three books I've mentioned aren't anything like as sterile but they aren't going to set the chess world on fire. Despite fine efforts to liven them up, we're all aware that there are more stimulating openings covered by other books.

In a different vein, Jeroen Bosch has revamped his off-beat opening column into a book format. Most of the material has been seen before but it's still a refreshing way of looking at the early phase. Some of the lines are placid, some turbulent, but the fact that one really doesn't know what to expect when turning the next page is invigorating!

Jan Pinski  
*The Four Knights*  
Everyman 2003  
192 pages, paperback

A whole decade has passed since Dr. John Nunn's *New Ideas In The Four Knights* was brought out by Batsfords in 1993.

It's no secret that I'm a steadfast 1...e5 player (too lazy to learn anything else properly!) and found the book useful myself, but even then, despite the appeal of such a prestigious author, I couldn't help wondering how many others would be tempted to buy it?

The timing was noteworthy, as publication followed in the wake of a mini-revival amongst leading English players in the years 1991/92. Then Nunn's efforts

For more book information  
we refer to our website:  
[www.newinchess.com](http://www.newinchess.com)

were centred on the principal move 4.Åb5 and more than half the book dealt with that, but despite the title he modernized in a comprehensive fashion all significant lines after 1.e4 e5 2.Åf3 Ac6 3.Åc3 except for omitting the Scotch Four Knights.



Dr. John Nunn

The material itself was the usual Nunn fare – detailed and serious, analytically precise but lacking a certain pragmatism. The main point was that the Four Knights just didn't 'turn on' the ubiquitous 'club-player' and interest in this opening soon waned. The author probably didn't do anything wrong but even mediocre books on the King's Gambit or Sicilian Dragon will sell better – people just consider them to be more 'sexy'.

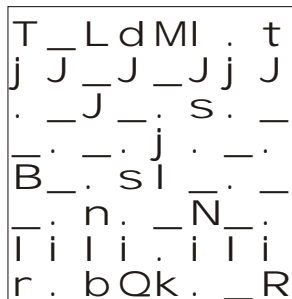
Ten years later and I'm faced with another book on the subject, but handled in a totally different fashion.

The author has gone his own way, concentrating on some snappy straightforward lines, clearly aiming to make the opening more relevant to run-of-the-mill amateurs who are the most likely purchasers. Fair enough in principle, but at what price?

I can't hide my own disappointment as at times this 'dumbing-down' process has clearly gone too far.

Gone are lines covering the Three Knights (where Black plays something else on move 3) which Nunn covered thoroughly, but OK space is short, I can live with that. The chapter covering 4.Åb5 Åb4 however is hard to accept. Although right at the beginning of the book in pole position, it covers a miserly ten pages and is so skimpy as to be of virtually no use to players of either colour. Nunn gives a whole chapter on the Metger unpin (the typical ...c8-e7 followed by ...Ac6-d8-e6 hitting the bishop on g5), Pinski one game where Black soon goes wrong. The line that I have played for some years involving ...Åd7, and in which there have been developments, receives three lines. Pinski claims that 4...Åd4 is the main line these days (rather than 4...Åb4) and consequently puts more energy in there, including his own ideas and analysis. On my recent databases these moves are equally popular.

Despite a decent chapter on 4...Åd4 with emphasis from Black's point of view, I have to disagree with something he writes: After 1.e4 e5 2.Åf3 Ac6 3.Åc3 Åf6 4.Åb5 Ad4 5.Åa4 c6



Pinski confidently states on page 24 that this is 'An interesting pawn sacrifice first found in the early 1990's by Jeroen Piket'. I can't agree. Apart from the fact that Leicester GM Mark Hebden had popularized this move first in England (and indeed has earlier references in the 2003 Megabase than Piket), there is a game Schlechter-

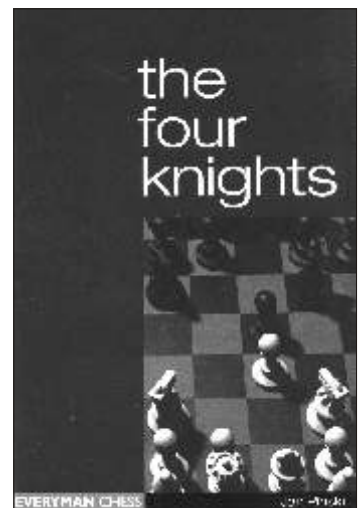
Marshall from Nuremberg 1906 when this move was played.

To be fair the Polish author has tried to put extra effort into a more dynamic approach throughout and so four pages are given to the tricky move 4...Åd6, which is co-incidentally the subject of one of Jeroen Bosch's opening surprises – see below!

On the plus side the author has given considerable space to the Scotch Four Knights. A dull hybrid between the Scotch and the Four Knights which I tend to do badly in, so I should be able to learn something here!

I was surprised to see the Belgrade Gambit receiving 30 pages and then only to read in the summary: 'For White I can only recommend that you play something else'. Clear enough advice, but why spend so much of the book on such a duff line?

Another part of the book that really is worthwhile are the 50 pages spent on the Glek System, which most people call 4.g3, an opening-system that Igor Glek really popularized in the nineties. I'm not sure that I agree with the author's assessments in all these lines, but he deals with the subject in such a convincing manner, that I feel I have a lot to revise here too.



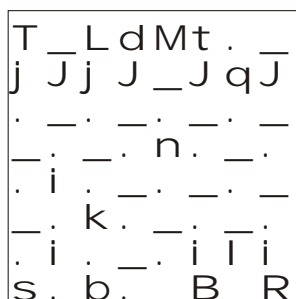
8...Äd4 isn't a ? move!

Unfortunately, I found a serious hole in his work on pages 95-96. This will trip up some 4.d4 players who consider the following line to be unplayable.

1.e4 e5 2.Äf3 Äc6 3.Äc3 Äf6 4.d4 Äb4 5.Äe5 Äe4 6.©g4 Äc3 7.©g7 Öf8 8.a3 Äd4

Pinski awards this a ? but I can't agree!

9.ab4 Äc2 10.©d2 Äa1 11.©c3



In Games 46-47 Pinski only deals with 11...a5 and gives a couple of quick white wins, but here Black has a strong move in

11...©e7!

Possibly a Pavlovic invention.

11...a5 is in fact the ? move.

12.Äh6

12.Äc4 d5! 13.Äb5 (13.Äh6 dc4

14.Öe1 Äe6ç ½-½ Rasidovic-Pavlovic, Biel 1990) 13...c6

A) 14.Äe3 a5 15.Äc6 bc6

16.Äc5 ab4 17.Äb4 ©e6 18.©f8

©d7i Fingerov-Sodol, Odessa 2003;

B) 14.Äc6 bc6 15.Äc6 Äd7

16.Äa8 ©e4! 17.Äh6 ©c2

18.©d4 Äb3 19.©e5 (19.©d5

©d3 20.©d4 ©d4 mate) 19...©e4

0-1 Todorov-Flear, Alès rapid

2002, for if 20.©d6 ©e6 21.©c7

©b6 mate;

C) 14.Äh6 d4 15.©d4 cb5

16.©f8 ©f8 17.Äf8 Äc2 18.©c3

©f8 19.©c2 Äf5â Rohl Montes-

W.Arencibia, San Salvador Zonal

1998.

12...a5!

Only now!

13.©f8 ©f8 14.Äf8 ©f8 15.b5

d6 16.Äf7

16.Äf3 a4 17.Äd3 Äb3 18.Äh7 Äd7i .

16...©f7 17.Äc4 ©f6 18.Öa1 Äd7i

Rausis-Koch, French Team Championship 2001.

This sort of error can often be avoided. All sharp lines should be double-checked to see if there have been serious alternatives played by strong players, or even recent developments, especially those that can completely change the assessment of a whole variation!

The Pavlovic gamelet is quoted widely in Megabase and 11...©e7 having been played several times, including at a Zonal, is hardly a secret.

Pinski's book on the Dutch involved him focusing on certain lines and rather neglecting others. There he could get away with such an approach as much of the Classical Dutch has been moribund for years and his own individual input more than made up for any holes. Here I don't think that I can fully forgive him for his failings, and despite being pleasantly surprised by some areas I can't get away from my overall feeling of unfulfilment.

In the Classical Dutch on page 94 he states 'No opening really promises Black even chances in all the critical lines. It is the nature of the game.' This seems reasonable enough as does his statement from the introduction of the Four Knights 'Objectively the different variations only give equality, but that is the eternal problem of openings.' However if you read one after another there seems to be some inconsistency here!

I found his approach in the Four Knights to be illogical. He might have done better to have covered the principal lines more rigorously, or alternatively drop the half-hearted chapters in favour of producing a

repertoire book based on the Glek System, Scotch Four Knights or even the Belgrade Gambit.

Pinski's writing style makes pleasant reading and fits in well with other works in the Everyman series where the theory is enveloped into complete model games. The quality of his English is pretty good and I found his summaries to be to the point and objective.

I can't recommend this book to anyone interested in 4.Äb5 Äb4, (i.e. 40% of Black players) and the lack of a chapter covering the Three Knights (3.Äc3 met by moves other than 3...Äf6) means that it doesn't work as a repertoire book either.

However it is certainly a useful work for lovers of the Scotch Four Knights (can anyone really enjoy playing this variation!?). I suspect that no author has covered the Glek System or the Belgrade Gambit with such application and these chapters will strike a chord with some.

So I have mixed feelings about the Four Knights. It will suit some players' repertoire but not others. Some chapters are rather good, and will even appeal to the stronger end of the market, but overall it's likely to appeal primarily to Joe-average club player.

Summing up: Overall, I found it to be patchy.

If the Four Knights defence is relevant to your repertoire, or some of the material may interest you, I suggest that you do the following: Have a good look before deciding whether or not to buy.

Jeroen Bosch  
Secrets of Opening Surprises  
New In Chess 2003  
208 pages, paperback

Many readers of these lines will already be aware of Jeroen Bosch's column in New In Chess Maga-

zine. They will know that over the last few years he has offered up some tricky ideas that can easily bamboozle one's opponents. I must admit that it's one of the first things I hunt for when surveying the list of contents, as (well let's face it!) SOS is such a great column. Tricky opening ideas, not much to learn, surprise value and lots of fun! Isn't that what chess should be all about?

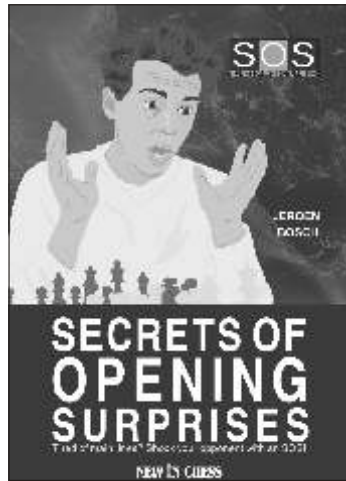
As a reviewer I have to consider this book in isolation, not harking back to a few months ago when I tried out one of his ideas a couple of times, nor the fact that I have used Bosch's work for training purposes. But it isn't easy! I have memories of spending an hour or so reading his column and then dying to try the variation out on the world. What a confidence builder!

The book consists of 16 short articles of a few pages each and two full-length surveys. All of which have Bosch's personal touch of lively 'gung ho' optimism.

Does such a collection of articles really work in a book? The idea is great and I believe that New In Chess were right to publish, but I have a couple of doubts. Because the openings are so varied, no one is really going to be able to use all 18 ideas. I counted



Jeroen Bosch



five that directly interest me and a two or three others which have relevance for training purposes, but this is still less than half the book. Won't those who already buy the magazine not bother?

Bosch and his publishers have pre-empted this problem by updating the articles somewhat (which in some cases date from the year 2000), essentially by adding on and annotating some recent games. As the lines are by definition somewhat off-beat the theory hasn't been shaken that much by recent developments and Bosch has gone into sufficient detail to satisfy most. So it makes more sense carrying around one handy-size up-to-date book than half-a-dozen old magazines.

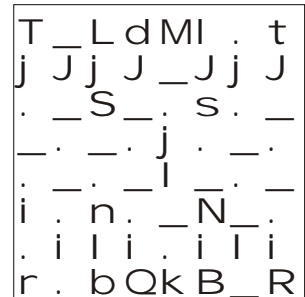
Evaluation

Overall, I found the material to be fun to read, informative without being at all heavy going, and suitable for a wide range of strengths. However stronger players would do well to check their database before venturing into the real world of tournament chess. This is due no doubt in part to Bosch being limited by space constraints in the magazine and even here in a somewhat expanded form, some of the sidelines are concise to the point of being skimpy.

The tricky 4. a3!?

If we compare the two variations of the Four Knights, covered by both Pinski and Bosch, I would describe Pinski's book as being more complete, but Bosch's as being more logical!

1.e4 e5 2.Äf3 Äc6 3.Äc3 Äf6 4.a3



4...d5 5.Äb5 d4  
'The only move' Pinski.

A surprising view on the Polish Master's part as he strongly recommends 5...Äe4 in the analogous position with reversed colours (except in that case the a-pawn is on starters) and yet doesn't even mention this natural move here! 6.Äe5 (6.©e2 Äc3 7.©e5 ©e7! 8.dc3 Äd7i , SOS page 20) 6...©g5 (I consider the extra move a2-a3 to be of minor significance. 6...©f6 is also OK for Black, see SOS page 20) 7.Äc6 ©g2 8.Öf1 a6 9.Äa4 (in the analogous position with reversed colours Pinski gives 9.Äd5 a ? 9...ab5 10.Äc7 ®d7 11.Äa8 ®c6 (Bosch gets this far and perhaps understandably reserves judgement on this sharp position!) and now 12.a4 loses but 12.©e2! Äh3! proved to be about equal in Rausis-Koch (with reversed colours) from the analysis included in my review of the Four Knights!) 9...Äc3 10.dc3 ©e4 11.©e2 ©e2 12.®e2 Äd7 is slightly favourable for Black, see Pinski's Four Knights page 93 with reversed colours. 5...de4?! 6.Äe5 ©d6 7.d4 does however seem to be somewhat better for White as Bosch's recommended

7...a6 as in Bhend-Flear, San Bernadino 1991, is refuted by Pinski's improvement 8.Äf4!

6.Äe2 Äd7

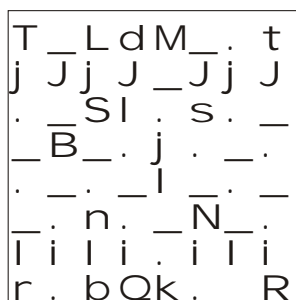
Both authors have interesting ideas about 6...Äe4, but after 7.d3 Bosch covers 7...Äf6 (whereas Pinski prefers 7...Äd6).

7.d3 Äd6

And from here Bosch just gives light annotations to Gunsberg-Zukertort, London 1888, whereas Pinski thoroughly analyzes the more recent (!) Blehm-Socko, Warsaw 2002, including several opening improvements.

Sokolov's Surprise

1.e4 e5 2.Äf3 Äc6 3.Äc3 Äf6  
4.Äb5 Äd6



Here both authors give some interesting ideas but Pinski has an extra one up his sleeve...

5.g4!?

Perhaps this Przedmojski move will be the subject of a future SOS column!

After 5.d4 Pinski includes a complete game plus a couple of IM/GM-level game references whereas Bosch just gives 5...ed4 6.Äd4 Äd4 7.©d4 ©e7 'Black is planning ...Äe5 at some stage and is definitely OK here'.

5...Äc5 6.g5 Äg4 7.Öf1

then looks critical. See the Four Knights page 35 for the details.

The title strikes me as unwieldy. I prefer 'Surprising Opening Secrets' or even 'Secret Opening Surprises', both of which respect the SOS abbreviation, but roll off

the tongue easier than 'Secrets of Opening Surprises'.

Admittedly a minor point as everyone will call this book SOS anyway!

No one will use all of the book, but there is something in here for everyone!

Don't dither, just buy it!

Jouni Yrjölä and Jussi Tella

The Queen's Indian

Gambit 2003

288 pages, paperback

With this Finnish pair hot on the heels of Jacob Aagaard whose Everyman publication Queen's Indian Defence, came out about a year ago, it's evidently a popular opening in Scandinavia! As openings go it has nevertheless a deservedly dull reputation everywhere; Black plays solidly, White grinds away but it's all a bit drawish. The authors make no secret of this, pointing out that at the top level 60% or more of games are drawn.

Not the sort of fare that is going to stimulate your average 'hacker' down at the local club!

This practical, sensible defence is always there as a sturdy partner for

the Nimzo-Indian but without the panache. People sometimes describe the King's Indian or the Modern Benoni as their favourite queen's pawn opening but never the unloved Queen's Indian.

Now, having stated the cruel reality of the world's shameless apathy, I'll ask the oft-repeated (well, by me anyway) question: Who's going to buy it?

This Gambit publication is almost exactly twice as long as Aagaard's 2002 Everyman book covering the same subject matter (see review in Yearbook 65). So inevitably we have more variations and game references.

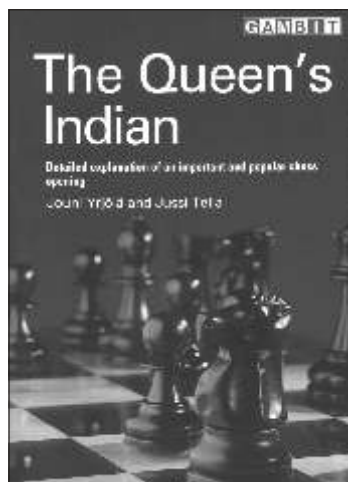
We have 288 pages of meaty theory including some typical Gambit variations called B222 subnote b23221 as we can find on page 212. So in my opinion the conditions are not right for commercial success: Unromantic opening, heavy going at times, lesser-known authors and appearing only a year after another english-language QID book.

My role however is not to predict the likely sales figures but to review the content of the book, so I'll stick to that from now.

Each chapter begins with a section called 'Typical Positions and Plans' and finishes with 'Conclusions'. These make such a difference and help one face even the most intricate lines with some degree of confidence, as at least we have a rough idea as to what's going on.

The material seems well-researched with plenty of 2002 game references. I like the comments in the text explaining why such-and-such a move order is less popular, or how so-and-so's idea is critical because of this key move etc.

The authors have aimed to give each variation an appropriate space allocation depending on popularity, so the traditional 4.g3



Äb7 being relatively on the wane for instance, receives less space than in Geller's 1991 book. The most popular lines are 4.a3 (80 pages) and 4.g3 Äa6 (with 70). I was relieved to see a decent 21 pages awarded to 4.e3, as Agaard only gave a disappointing five-and-a-half.

There is no Bibliography but the Index of Variations is clear and helpful.

Gambit's Queen's Indian is a more complete work than the Everyman equivalent for a modest two pounds (or 4 dollars) more. I believe that Yrjölä and Tella have made a better effort to deal with variations from both player's point of view which was at times lacking in Agaard's work.

The main drawback for many readers will be the exhaustive number of game references which at times are excessive.

A competent, albeit slightly heavy book, that mainly suits the stronger end of the market, as to be fair do most variations of the QID anyway!

So recommended for 2100+ players and QID fans (both of them!).

Valeri Bronznik

Das Colle-Koltanowski System  
Schachverlag Kania 2003  
999 pages, paperback/hardcover

This opening based on d4, Äf3, e3, Äd3, c3 and Äbd2 hasn't attracted many GMs on a regular basis. Mainstream theory doesn't really believe that White gets anything. The opening system is thus aimed to appeal to players lower down who will be happy to play with straightforward development and a natural plan with little risk of be-

ing surprised. A good choice against theory merchants who are known to struggle when out of their book.

I've already reviewed one of Bronznik's books, his high quality 300-page tome on the Chigorin from 2001.

His book on the Colle is thinner, in fact a modest 220 pages. However at 19.80 Euros for a hardback edition it's good value. In comparison, Gary Lane's 160-page Batsfords softback from 2001 costs 15 pounds (or 22 Euros). This goes to show (if nothing else) that England is an expensive country these days!

Bronznik just covers the pure Colle, where White leaves his b-pawn alone (i.e. a reversed Semi-Slav). Lane spent a fair portion of his book looking at systems where White fianchettoes his queen's bishop (he calls this the Colle-Zukertort) with a type of reversed Queen's Indian.

The German book is then covering a more limited area but goes into great detail. The detail is not Gambit-style (which one could describe as endless game references) but something more human. We have here in essence an 'Instructive games in the Colle' compendium. Complete games fully analyzed with feeling, even deep into the latter stages when the opening phase has been left far behind. One can find pages of quotations, positional considerations and home analysis. But there's more: Summaries of pawn structures, tactical motives, game references within reasonable bounds and timely comparisons with reversed colours positions etc.

One gets the impression that the author has put great time and energy into the project. Those able to



read German will be able to fully get to grips with the subject, but it's a shame if language barriers deny access. My German is limited but as it's a chessbook and with the occasional glance at a dictionary, I get by. Nevertheless this book makes me wish that my German was better!

To me Bronznik is an author who really researches and then writes his books. The bibliography reveals a wide variety of sources, some older works as well as modern databases up to June 2003.

Despite recent references, many of the complete games are old classics and although published in 2003 the book has a timeless quality. The theory of the Colle doesn't change that quickly and it's ideas and themes that seem most relevant. Unlike many opening books this one will still make sense in 10 years' time.

Good quality work, but unlike the Chigorin I have my doubts about the mass popularity of the Colle. I liked the book and would gladly recommend it, but I don't know anyone who is likely to play it.