

Drawing the Line

by *Glenn Flear*



NEW IN CHESS

with an additional
contribution by
Sergey Tiviakov

For more book information
we refer to our website:
www.newinchess.com

When a book has been commissioned, one of the first decisions of the prospective author is to decide exactly what he's going to be writing about! Nowadays databases literally contain millions of games and with so much material available it's become impractical to be exhaustive. The author must decide if he will cover the whole opening, or concentrate on just the fashionable lines? Maybe he prefers a repertoire approach? If he likes going into great detail, then perhaps he should cover just a sub-variation favoured by a world champion?

A good example of the exponential development of opening theory concerns the Najdorf. Over the years there have been a significant number of Batsford books on the subject including Michael Stean's in 1976, Nunn with Stean revamped the work in 1982 (98% new material from the former edition according to Nunn) and then in 1988 Batsford published Najdorf for the Tournament Player this time by John Nunn alone.

Eight years later it was decided to split the subject into two, the first of which, John Nunn's 1996 book *The Complete Najdorf: 6...Åg5*, was 320 pages long. Understandably tired by his labours he called in Joe Gallagher to help him with coverage of the rest and in 1998 *The Complete Najdorf: Modern Lines* was born. In the introduction written by Gallagher he did mention that the 'update' of Nunn's 1988 work involved expanding the relevant area from 95 to 336 pages. Now it seems some parts of this legendary variation have attracted

special interest, particularly those where White puts his bishop on e3 and f-pawn on f3 i.e. the fashionable English Attack.

In 1988, John Nunn's chapter '6...Åg3: Other Lines' covered 8 pages, 6...Åg4 was given just one game reference and 6.f3 didn't even get that!

In 1998 Joe Gallagher covered the English Attack in 30 pages and 6...Åg4 in 17 whereas 6.f3 was mentioned only as a transpositional move.

In 2004 we have whole books coming out giving great detail on an English Attack-based repertoire for White. What next I wonder?

Writing a book then involves deciding on the variations to cover and which to ignore, followed by designating the lines which merit extra detail and those which require only a lighter touch. Is the book going to be repertoire-based or comprehensive? How detailed are the sub-variations going to be and how much room should there be for game quotations and original analysis.

From the tens of thousands of games played in an opening only a handful make the final cut and are used by an author to illustrate a key line. So it's clearly an important skill to decide which ones are relevant and which can be ignored.

The author has to draw the line somewhere and some authors seem better than others at this fundamental task!

The authors of the offbeat King's Indian decided to deal in detail

with four White systems and ignore all others, whereas Nigel Davies in the Dynamic Réti outlines a rather individual repertoire based on $\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ and c4 . He found it convenient to include some lines that are really in the grey-area between the Réti and the English, but on the other hand to miss out great chunks of what is traditional Réti-territory.

Jeroen Bosch (with a little help from here and there) has continued with a successful formula and produced SOS-2. Here the opening ideas are a collection of short sharp surprises to be quickly learned and put into practise (and in some cases just as rapidly discarded!?) to keep opponents guessing.

Nigel Davies
The Dynamic Réti
Everyman 2004
144 pages, paperback medium

I have to be honest: This wasn't the book that I expected.

I expected a book to cover what I think of as the Réti Opening, whereas it's actually a plan-based repertoire based on playing $\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ and 2.c4 .

By 'plan-based' I mean that Nigel has privileged general development plans whilst limiting game references and superfluous variations to a minimum. He is not aiming to in-

clude every last nuance, nor search for the latest games (e.g. only 4 of the 65 complete games are from 2000 onwards).

His target area is the club player wanting a straightforward way of avoiding mainstream theory.

The chapter headings are symptomatic of the book: Original, clear but somewhat simplistic.

The author's own names for the chapter headings are an excellent idea as the structure of the book at once becomes clear and logical.

F flank openings are a tough subject for many players and Nigel has found a way to make this difficult area accessible to the masses.

Here in The Dynamic Réti it's less relevant what your database and memory come up with, but how you apply logical sensible development plans. So those fed on razor-sharp Najdorf or King's Indian theory may not find this book to their taste!

Transpositions, move-order strategy and sophisticated plans are an aspect that can be baffling, so Nigel has found a happy medium between detail and simplicity that will suit many.

There haven't been many books on the Réti. I have Batsford's 1982 work by Viacheslav Osnos which deals with $\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ d5 in 88 pages. The book lacked explanation and was at times hard to navigate but did cover some areas that Davies omits.

Khalifman's substantial four volume work dealing with Kramnik's 'repertoire' starting with $\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ has been called upon by Davies but only a few areas would be relevant.

Despite the title, most of Nigel Davies's book actually transposes to lines that in ECO start with 1.c4 . So I consider the material to be really hybrid Réti/English territory apart from Chapters 4 & 5 which arise uniquely from the Réti move-order.

The opening moves $\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ d5 2.g3 constitute an important area that Nigel has chosen to ignore. As an example, in my own games of recent years, after $\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ d5 , only 15 opponents have played 2.c4 whereas 40 have preferred 2.g3 . So The Dynamic Réti's relevance for players of the Black pieces is debatable.

As Nigel recently wrote a book on the Grünfeld, I'm surprised that he didn't want to take the opportunity to discuss the reversed Grünfeld ($\text{1.}\text{Äf3}$ d5 2.g3 c5 $\text{3.}\text{Äg2}$ Äc6 4.d4).

I presume that he had to draw the line somewhere and (to be fair) even when covering only part of the Réti with limited detail he's still able to fill a fair-sized book of 144 pages.

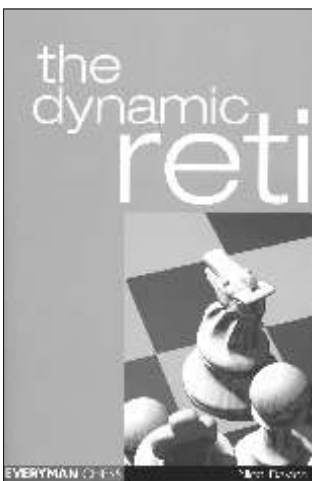
The Everyman formula of using complete games to highlight and illustrate the material is well-suited to this style of book and the fact that many of these are old classics doesn't matter. I would have preferred the author however to have been more rigorous in pointing out better defences for Black in a number of cases.

This book is an excellent foundation for club players intending to play in this manner with White pieces. But it won't suit everyone. Stronger players and those meeting the Réti will not be fully satisfied.

Krzysztof Panczyk & Jacek Ilczuk
Offbeat King's Indian
Everyman 2004
176 pages, paperback medium

At Everyman they like the word 'offbeat'. One of my own Everyman books even used this little word that seems to mean 'Frankly, we're not dealing with the main lines and we've got to call it something...'

The offbeat King's Indian deals with four 'not-so-off-the-beaten-



track' variations that White can play: 5.Äe2, 5.Äd3, 5.h3 and Averbakh's 5.Äe2 0-0 6.Äg5.

I've played three of the four myself over the years and this sort of book suits others such as myself i.e. those who are often looking for an effective system to counter the King's Indian but can't be bothered to learn the Classical, Sämisch or Fianchetto lines.

Panczyk and Ilczuk have hit on a niche-area that judging from 176 well-detailed pages and lots of big names is fairly significant. I don't know of any books covering these systems in the recent past so well done chaps, even without a great review King's Indian players will just have to buy it!

The Polish authors have worked on English-language books before and their use of my native tongue is now highly competent, so much so that I couldn't find any problems with it at all. It's very readable both from that point of view and with their efforts to include plenty of logical explanations even in the more forcing lines.

I think they have managed to put in a sufficient number of references (they too claim to have had to substantially condense the material to get it into one volume) to make this a worthwhile book for stronger players without going over the top. They include some useful home analysis where required and are generally not too biased for White.

Now for the negative stuff as I have a few reservations about their work.

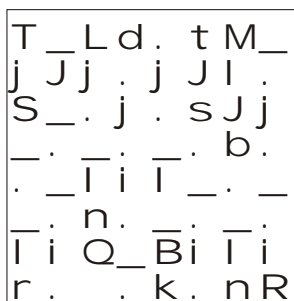
Some of their conclusions and logic didn't convince me and may leave some readers confused. Their chapter introductions and summaries are a little too light-weight for comfort which may be a problem for more modest readers and their choice of illustrative games may not always tell the full story that well.

Here's a couple of examples from

the chapter on the Averbakh System without ...c7-c5.

Game 58 on page 130

1.d4 Äf6 2.c4 g6 3.Äc3 Äg7 4.e4 d6 5.Äe2 0-0 6.Äg5 Äa6 Their summary at the end of the chapter is straight to the point: 'Black's best plan is definitely 6...Äa6 without ...h6 ...' However they don't elaborate which is a shame as their notes to the games concerning 7.h4 and 7.©c2 don't necessarily make a convincing case for 6...Äa6! To further muddy the water it seems that the move ...h6 seems important for Black in a number of lines. 7.©c2 A move (associated with Uhlmann) not mentioned in ECO and yet according to the authors leading to an advantage in all lines! 7...h6 All four alternatives lead to a White edge according to the authors, see page 130.

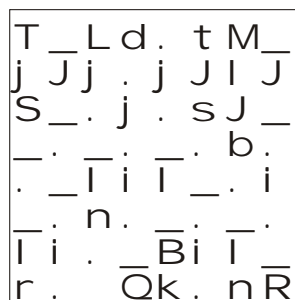


8.Äe3! 8.Äf4 c5 (the authors also suggest 8...Äb4!? as offering 'healthy counterplay') 9.d5 e6 10.de6 Äe6 11.Öd1 Äb4 12.©b1 Bönsch-Gallagher, German Bundesliga 2002/03, and now Hazai suggests 12...©a5! 13.Äf3 Äg4 14.0-0 Äe5 with an unclear position. 8...e5 9.de5 de5 10.Öd1 ©e8 11.Äf3 Äg4 12.Äc1 f5 13.0-0 Äb4 14.©b3 Äc6 Uhlmann-Gallagher, Dresden Zonal 1998, and now the authors recommend 15.c5! rather than 15.Äe3 15...©h7 16.Äb5 as yielding an edge. This seems right. 16...a6 If 16...Äe6 then 17.©a4 a6 18.Äc6 ©c6 19.©c6 bc6 20.ef5 gf5 21.Öfe1 is unpleasant for

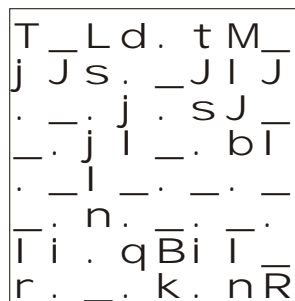
Black. 17.Äa4 Öb8 18.Öfe1 Äe6 18...b5 19.cb6 cb6 is dubious because of 20.Äc6 ©c6 21.h3. 19.©a3 With some pressure.

Game 57 on page 127

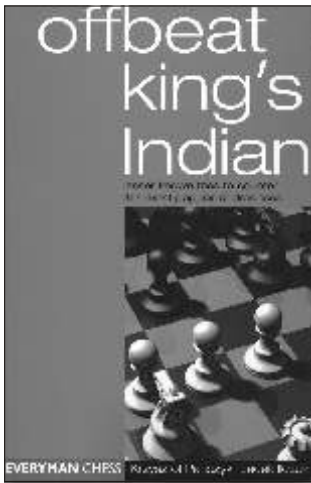
1.d4 Äf6 2.c4 g6 3.Äc3 Äg7 4.e4 d6 5.Äe2 0-0 6.Äg5 Äa6 7.h4



The authors' main game continues 7...c5 which they consider risky and so they recommend 7...e5. Unfortunately their preferred line with 9...h6! (see below) is not well presented as it's hidden from view unless one scrutinizes the notes very carefully. 7...e5 7...c5 is certainly 'risky', but is it really inferior? 8.d5 Äc7 9.©d2 e6 10.h5 ed5 11.ed5



Black's best may be the modest 11...a6! (preparing ...b5) 12.©f4 (12.Äh6 b5 13.Äg7 ©g7 14.hg6 fg6 15.Äf3 bc4 16.0-0-0 ©g8 17.Äc4 Äg4i Zakharevich-Kokarev, Russian Championship, Moscow 1999, led to a Black win) 12...b5 13.0-0-0 Äce8 14.cb5 ©a5 with counterplay, Kachiani-Vökler, Germany Bundesliga



1998/99. 8.d5 c6 9.h5 h6! With a reasonable game for Black. This timely resource is why 7.©d2 is the main move against 6...Aa6. Black has some problems after 9...cd5 10.cd5 Æc5 11.b4 Æd7 12.h6 Åh8 13.Åf3 ©b6 14.a3 Åg4 15.0-0, as Black experienced in the game Onischuk-Didishko, Erfurt 1993. 10.Æe3 cd5 10...g5 11.g4 Æd7 12.f3 cd5 13.cd5 ©a5 14.Ah3 Æc5 15.Åf2 Åa4, A.Petrosian-Wang Zili, Shenzhen 1992. 11.cd5 Æc5 12.©c2 ©a5 13.Åd2 Æd7 14.hg6 fg6 15.Öb1 ©b6 16.Æe3 a5 17.Åh3 Öac8 18.©d2 a4 19.f3 Åh5! Hauchard-Hebden, Cappelle-la-Grande 1998, with a dynamic position for Black.

The introduction starts with some history but is frankly a bit naff. The first page of which doesn't mention the content of the book at all or the reason why it was written and could have been lifted from any other KID tome (p.s. I don't like to 'wingè', but I am paid to give an honest review!). However overall I have to say that their work seems well researched and makes interesting and informative reading, if you take the time to go through it carefully! They're good at finding the critical moments in games, but not necessarily putting it across in a clear manner.

The Polish analysts claim to be aiming not just at club players but stronger more experienced ones who are looking to change systems. In both cases they just about hit the mark so it will be a useful handbook for players of varied strengths.

A book worth getting if the subject matter comes up in your repertoire or if you're looking to try something new and serious against the King's Indian.

Jeroen Bosch
Secrets of Opening Surprises,
Vol 2
New In Chess 2004
144 pages, paperback

I try and be reasonably objective in my reviews. So here I go reviewing a work to which I contributed and which is published by my paymasters at New In Chess. So before you have any doubts I can assure you that any conflict of interest is pure coincidence, honest!

The process of turning a successful column into a book isn't new, but New In Chess are now going further. An upgrade into a regular series of twice yearly publications shows just how popular Jeroen Bosch's SOS concept has become. In a way it's a logical development of chess theory: As main lines become better known, it's harder to fool an opponent with the predictable stuff, hence there is a real need to test opponents in situations where they are less familiar. Jeroen Bosch understands this and has made his mark digging up testing sidelines. The theory is invariably less-well developed and so there is less to learn, which is just as well because some of these ideas shouldn't be played too often! Surprise-value is prized more highly than any objective merit and there's emphasis on the mischievous pleasure in playing an odd-looking

move that's actually quite awkward to meet. The idea of inducing the same expression of shock and horror out of an opponent as that to be found on the cover is simply too tempting!

For those who are already SOS-addicts I should point out that there are some notable differences between this and the previous volume.

Jeroen Bosch is only human (and as such only has a certain number of cards up his sleeve!) and this time has prudently delegated the task of producing 12 of the 16 surveys to others.

I liked his new addition called 'SOS files' which is a brief review of developments from previous SOSs. However I would have preferred this to have been more substantial, although I imagine that this chapter will indeed expand in the future as there will be more surveys to keep track of as the number of volumes increase.

I was slightly surprised that despite the inclusion of his 'SOS files' the book is much shorter than Vol 1.

This is for a couple of reasons: Gone are the two mega-surveys (they were frankly too detailed to fit comfortably into the SOS formula) and a new compact printing style has tightened up the presentation.

The quality of the content is what will be remembered, not the number of pages, and here with contributions from some big-names I'm sure those who enjoyed the first book will find this one to their taste as well.

Bosch is now considered to be the 'editor' although he remains the 'author' of more than a quarter of the book. His influence is strong as he has endeavoured to keep the surveys of manageable length and even in those articles that aren't his own his informal but savvy style is omnipresent and makes the whole package an enjoyable read. I



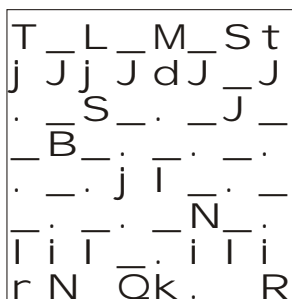
should also point out that he was the real inspiration behind my own survey and was probably instrumental in motivating the other guys to work for him.

The downside to these ideas is that they have a limited shelf life and might be better considered as one-offs. A good example can be found on page 82 where Reinderman admits in his postscript that when he tried out the idea in Chapter 10 on the ICC he came up with a problem. The surveys often lack the depth and rigour that can be found in the 'main line surveys' of the year-books. Some typical examples of the SOS's limitations can unfortunately be found from my own contribution.

Although Chapter 16 on the Spanish with 3...g6 is one of the longer articles, the author (in this case, yours truly) has had to streamline the material. So when Yearbook editor René Olthof tried it out in a recent game even before the book was published he was confused af-

ter his opponent played an old move that didn't make the final cut. So here's what I should have included...

1.e4 e5 2.Äf3 Äc6 3.Äb5 g6
4.d4 ed4 5.Äg5 Äe7 6.Äe7
©e7

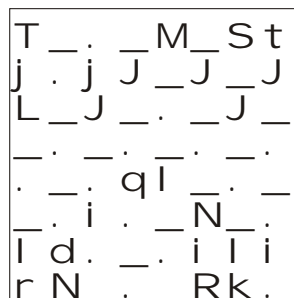


Now after 7.0-0!? rather than 7.Äc6, as on page 124, 7...Äf6 8.e5 then 8...Äh5! seems to be the right move. Not 8...Äe5? 9.Öe1 or 8...Äg4 9.h3!ä. For instance, 9.Öe1 0-0 10.Äc6 dc6 11.©d4 Äf5 with unclear play in the game Galdunts-Giorgadze, Podolsk 1989.

The other problem with playing the weird and wonderful is that with such under-analysed lines one's opponent has scope to find a new move over the board. Then the SOS instigator gets a taste of his own medicine! This I found to my cost in a rapid game...

Zozulia, Anna
Radulski, Julian
Marseille 2004 (9)

1.e4 e5 2.Äf3 Äc6 3.Äb5 g6
4.d4 ed4 5.Äg5 Äe7 6.Äe7
©e7 7.Äc6 ©b4!? 8.c3 ©b2
9.©d4 bc6! 10.0-0 Äa6



11.©h8 The most recent and perhaps critical try is 11.Öe1! e.g. 11...f6 (after 11...©a1 then 12.©h8 0-0-0 13.©d4 yields a strong initiative for White) 12.Äbd2 ©b6 13.©a4 Äb5 14.©a3 ©a6 15.©b2 Äe7 (if 15...d6?! then 16.e5 is dangerous for Black) 16.c4 Äc4 17.©f6 Öf8 18.©g7 Boudre-Flear, Bagnols-sur-Cèze 2004, and now after 18...Äg8! (rather than the weakening and dubious 18...h5) the struggle would remain unclear. 11...Äf1 12.©g8 ®e7 13.©a8 Äd3 14.h3 ©a1 15.©a7 Äb1 16.©d4 Äa2 17.®h2 Äe6 and Black had an edge.

Despite any limitations the material is truly inspirational and just what you need to cross the wires of those walking databases who know your usual repertoire backwards.

I recommend it as a buy as everyone will find a few ideas that they can use (occasionally) and liven up their own games. If you don't and get fooled by an SOS idea in your next tournament then I have no sympathy.

Clear enough was I?
It's time to add the SOS bi-annuals to your subscription.