

Jonathan Hilton and Dean Ippolito

Wojo's Weapons

Winning With White

Volume II



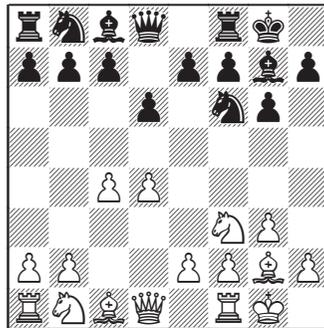
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Introduction

In Volume I of this series, we began our project of analyzing the late GM Aleksander Wojtkiewicz’s opening repertoire with White by investigating 1.♘f3 d5 2.d4. We discussed the key principles behind the opening play of “Wojo,” as he was commonly known, which functioned to create a system designed to generate the highest possible winning percentage with the least effort necessary – in other words, an efficient repertoire for defeating club players and masters with the white pieces. By employing sound positional lines to bring his less-experienced opponents into unfamiliar territory, Wojo was able to outplay them swiftly, often luring even masters into committing serious errors early on.

Against the King’s Indian Defense, Wojo played the Fianchetto Variation via the move order 1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7 4.♗g2 0-0 5.d4 d6 6.0-0. The position after White’s move 6 is the starting point for this volume:



From the position in the diagram, Wojo was able to achieve a stunning winning percentage of 80.2% over the course of 91 sample games found in the ChessBase database. This percentage would be even higher if we added in those games not catalogued in the databases (generally against weaker opponents), some of which are presented in this book. Note that, after 1.♘f3 d5 2.d4, as covered in the previous volume, Wojo only managed a 63.4% score out of 154 sample games. Thus, we can say with confidence that if the Catalan positions explored in the last book formed the “heart” of the Wojo repertoire, the Fianchetto King’s Indian really represents where the “big money” was. Wojo’s brutal efficiency in defeating the King’s Indian Defense game after game made the difference when it came to turning out the kinds of scores needed to win weekend Swisses. The Fianchetto King’s Indian was a staple of the Wojo repertoire and was fundamental to his success. For this reason, we have devoted an entire volume to scrutinizing Wojo’s ideas in the Fianchetto King’s Indian.

WOJO'S WEAPONS II

Given the fierce reputation of the King's Indian as a fighting defense, it may surprise some readers that the lines presented in this book are considerably less sharp than those which we presented in Volume I. As it turns out, White's fianchetto formation on the kingside does such a good job of taking the sting out of Black's ambitions on that flank that, generally speaking, a Fianchetto King's Indian middlegame should be less tactical in nature than, say, a line from the Early Open Catalan with 1.♭f3 d5 2.d4 ♭f6 3.c4 e6 4.g3 dxc4. Even Black's most aggressive lines – such as the Gallagher Variation, explored in Chapter 3 – do not generate the kinds of intense complications found in Part II of the previous volume. Thus, the idea is that, after studying this book, players of White should be able to emulate Wojo's strategies for blunting Black's activity and generating a significant space advantage. When played correctly, Wojo's ideas allow White to achieve a tremendous winning percentage; thus, players of White should look forward to facing the King's Indian Defense rather than fearing it. Our aim here is to make Wojo's 80% score against the King's Indian Defense accessible to our readers.

We have tried to keep the structure of this book similar to that of the previous one. Part I of this volume shares many features with Part I of the previous volume: both are designed to examine the critical ideas and concepts that form the real centerpiece of the repertoire presented. After reading Part I of this book, most readers should be able to begin employing the Fianchetto King's Indian in their own games to good effect, particularly at club level. We begin in Chapter 1 by covering the ideas developed in GM David Bronstein's *Zürich International Chess Tournament, 1953*, which has long been considered an important primer for anyone undertaking a serious study of the King's Indian. At the time that *Zürich 1953* was written, these ideas were the latest theory, but in this book, we can examine them with the benefit of hindsight. Wojo's games represent a significant contribution to the debate surrounding these ideas, which we consider has mostly been resolved in White's favor. Even when Black is surviving theoretically (which it is never completely clear that he is), White walks away with a tremendous "plus" score in practice – and it is this high winning percentage that we are most concerned with. Meanwhile, Chapter 2 continues to develop the key set of ideas that form the bulk of the basic knowledge a player of White needs to play against the King's Indian. Chapters 3 and 4 begin a more theoretical investigation into some of Black's most aggressive early tries, and Chapter 5 sums everything up and allows us to assemble a complete repertoire against Black's lines with ...♭b8-d7 based on the material already covered.

Part II, just as in the first volume, covers the most critical modern lines. These variations involve Black's bringing his queen's knight to c6 instead of d7. Here, Chapters 6 and 7 are the most important for club players to read and understand because they continue to develop ideas that are fundamental to Wojo's entire approach to handling the King's Indian – namely, achieving and following up on the c4-c5 break after White locks the center with d4-d5. From the standpoint of modern theory, however, the most significant section of Part II is Chapter 8

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on the Panno. This mega-chapter covers a wide berth of ideas in the 8.b3 Panno over the course of nine heavily annotated games. We have sought to examine enough approaches for White here against Black's most testing lines. Our readers should be able to select whichever line will work best for the occasion, from the surprise weapon that guarantees a slight advantage for White to the mainstream theoretical lines that look to keep the game double-edged.

Finally, Part III wraps up the book by covering all of Black's less common tries. In this sense, it is similar to Part IV of the previous volume. White can count on getting a nice advantage against the Kavalek and Larsen systems (covered in Chapters 11 and 12, respectively) and also against any of Black's other miscellaneous tries. Against the Yugoslav lines with 6...c5, however, we examine just one sideline for White out of a rich body of theory that we could have presented. Our reason for this was simple: White doesn't score well in the main lines of the Yugoslav, as these sharp variations tend to give Black everything the second player wants. Our Wojo sideline with 7.dxc5 dxc5 8.♘e5!? ought to be enough to give White just a slight pull from a theoretical standpoint. From a practical standpoint, considering this line's surprise value, White can aim for an 80% target score here just as in all the other chapters of this book.

It is our hope that this volume will prove a valuable contribution to chess theory and will help to preserve the games and ideas of our friend Aleksander Wojtkiewicz. Several people volunteered their time to review and improve this work. The authors would especially like to thank FM Tyler Hughes for his contributions to Chapters 3 and 4 and tournament director Michael Atkins for supplying us with several never-before-seen Wojo games for use in this book. We would also like to thank the countless numbers of players who, since the release of Volume I, have taken an interest in Wojo's legacy and have inspired us to include even more of his games in Volume II.

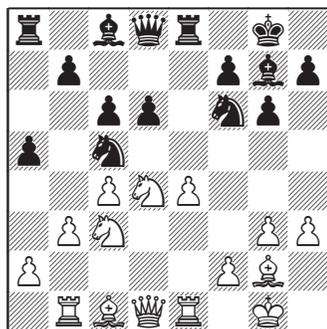
Part I

The Classical

Fianchetto King's Indian with ...  bd7

Chapter 1

The “Zürich 1953” Defense – Black Plays ...♖b8-d7, ...e7-e5xd4, and ...a7-a5



1. ♘f3 ♘f6 2. c4 g6 3. g3 ♙g7 4. ♙g2
0-0 5. d4 d6 6. 0-0 ♘bd7 7. ♘c3 e5
8. e4 c6 9. ♗b1 a5 10. h3 ♗e8 11. ♗e1
exd4 12. ♘xd4 ♘c5 13. b3 (give or
take)

In Volume I of *Wojo's Weapons*, we dedicated the first part of the book to examining the Closed Catalan. The reasons for this were twofold: first, the Closed Catalan is the opening readers are most likely to face at the club level after 1. ♘f3 d5; and second, the Closed Catalan was also the most thematic of the openings we presented, meaning that it could be readily be broken down into separate themes. In Volume II, we seek to do the same thing with the most common club-level responses to the King's Indian – those that feature the move ...♘b8-d7 early on from Black.

This chapter focuses on what happens when Black attempts to counter White's dynamic Fianchetto King's Indian setup with ...♘b8-d7, ...e7-e5, and ...exd4 (without following up with ...a7-a6, as in the Gallagher Variation, which we cover in Chapter 3). Those readers who have played over the games presented in David Bronstein's classic *Zürich 1953* tournament book will undoubtedly remember the stubborn, resistant position that Black tries to organize along the last three ranks in this variation. The following oft-quoted passage has served for decades as the definitive description of Black's strategy here:

Characteristically, the King's Indian Defense features a tense battle waged on all fronts simultaneously. The system used here secures White considerable territory, not only in the center, but on the kingside as well.

I do not wish to leave the reader the false impression that White's further task, which is to transform his sizeable spatial plus into a material advantage, will be an easy one. The secret of the King's Indian's hardihood is that, while

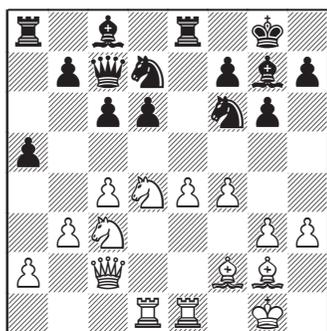
THE “ZÜRICH 1953” DEFENSE

conceding space, Black builds a few small but weighty details into his configuration. Foremost among these are his long-range bishops at g7 and c8, his firmly entrenched knight at c5 and the rook at e8, which maintain constant watch on the e-pawn. Nor ought we to forget his pawns. The “weak” pawn on d6 is just waiting for the chance to push to d5, so White must continually keep an eye on that... [The black a-pawn] also has an important role: the threat to advance it... can upset his opponent’s plans for that sector at any time, so White must take extra precautions regarding the defense of c3 and c4.

Much has changed since the 1950s, however. This chapter is devoted entirely to demonstrating how Wojo did indeed convert his “sizeable spatial plus” into something more concrete, either in the form of material or an attack. Let’s begin by examining the most obvious way that White can turn his space into material: winning the d6-pawn.

Black’s Pawn on d6 Falls

There are two common ways by which Black’s d6-pawn, during the course of the middlegame, may fall into White’s hands. The first is that Black simply overlooks something and ends up hanging it. This is surprisingly common even at the master level. Defending the d6-pawn becomes a challenge for Black at times, and if he makes some slight inaccuracies, the d-pawn dies a miserable death. Consider the following position, taken from Wojtkiewicz-Souleidis, Duisburg 1999:



Although Souleidis would go on to earn the title of International Master

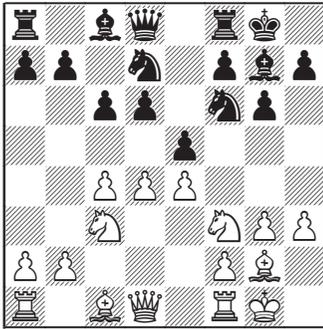
that same year, defending the d6-pawn proved too difficult for him from this cramped position. He went astray with **22...♘f8?!**, which, among other things, takes the f8 square away from Black’s bishop on g7. After **23.♖d2 ♙d7 24.♘f3**, Black found himself unable to stop White from crashing through on d6. He soon resigned after **24...♞ad8 25.♖xd6 ♜c8 26.♙b6 ♙xh3 27.♙xd8 ♜g4 28.♙xf6 ♜xg3 29.♞d2 ♙xf6 30.e5 1-0**.

The second way that the d6-pawn can fall is that, as Black is slowly squeezed against the edge of the board by White’s impending space advantage, he finds himself incapable of defending it. We illustrate this in the third game in this chapter, Wojtkiewicz-Shulman, after showing two games featuring tactical themes allowing White to crack the d6-pawn early on. Finally, the last game presented in this section shows Black’s d-pawn falling for a combination of the two reasons.

Wojtkiewicz, Aleksander (2460)
Garkov, Mitko (2415)

[E69] Warsaw 1989

1.♠f3 g6 2.d4 ♘g7 3.g3 d6 4.♙g2
 ♜f6 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 ♜bd7 7.♠c3 e5
 8.e4 c6 9.h3



Preventing ...♠f6-g4, one of Black's common tricks, before placing the dark-squared bishop on e3. Upon coming to the United States, Wojo would begin to use the more subtle move order 9.♞b1 in order to prevent the possibility mentioned in the note to Black's next move. The move 9.♞b1 is featured in the next game.

9...♞e7

This is too passive. The more ambitious 9...♞b6 is Black's best attempt, after which White can choose from among 10.♞e1 (Wojo's usual choice), 10.d5, and the crazy 10.c5. In Chapter 5, which goes over various move orders, we also examine one of Dean's favorite lines here, 10.♞b1!?

10.♙e3

It is worth noting at this point that there exists a huge misconception among club players that White's dark-

squared bishop belongs on the long diagonal and that he should fianchetto it with b2-b3 and ♙c1-b2. Although such a plan is still occasionally employed at grandmaster level, it is not White's best idea in this position. Black is aiming to play ...exd4 and open the center, so White should be seeking to neutralize Black's control of the a1-h8 diagonal by stepping off it – not by adding pieces to it for Black's g7-bishop to attack. From the position in the previous diagram, the e3 square is almost always the best one for White's own dark-squared bishop. From there, it eyes the queenside (particularly the vulnerable b6 square) and discourages skirmishes such as ...♞d8-b6-b4. Furthermore, should Black become ambitious and try ...h7-h5-h4 to take a potshot at White's kingside, it would help to be able to post the clergyman to the g5 square. Wojo sometimes developed the bishop to f4 in order to provoke Black into wasting time (such as with ...♠f6-h5), but ultimately the bishop was usually relocated to e3.

It is hard to say exactly why so many players choose to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop as White in these structures, but perhaps it has to do with a psychological defect of some sort. White players take comfort in developing both bishops to their respective long diagonals, and feel they are "countering" Black's dark-squared bishop on g7 by placing their own on b2. One look at Bronstein and Neat's 1999 work *Play the King's Indian* ought to cure any player of White of this attitude. The authors pick games featuring White's dark-squared bishop developing to b2 in order to demonstrate the potential of Black's position – for instance, in one