

Jonathan Hilton and Dean Ippolito

# Wojo's Weapons

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Winning with White

Volume III



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# Introduction

With this third volume of *Wojo's Weapons*, we bring closure to our quest to unwrap the secrets of the late GM Aleksander Wojtkiewicz's tournament-winning strategies with the white pieces — a quest that began some six years ago with the publication of the first “How Wojo Won” article on *Chess Life Online* in 2006 and has been an ongoing project ever since. In this final work, we detail Wojo's strategies for tackling everything not covered in the first two volumes: the Grünfeld, the English Opening (including the Maróczy Bind), the Dutch Defense, and all of the little odds and ends that come up from time to time in tournament play. Our hope is that our readers will be able to profit from Wojo's experience, as well as our own, to generate high winning percentages against each of the openings in this book.

To this end, we have invested a great deal of time and energy in our analysis of Black's most feared option among those mentioned above: the Grünfeld. The first two parts, which are devoted entirely to this opening, are really the heart and soul of this volume. We felt that this part was important for us to get right, especially given the sheer amount of ink that has been spilled over the past two decades in the name of promoting this opening for Black. One of us, Jonathan Hilton, has been a Grünfeld player for many years now and grew up reading books like *Understanding the Grünfeld* by GM Jonathan Rowson and *The Grünfeld Defence* by GM Nigel Davies (which is perhaps Davies's best opening book out of the many he has written). Books on the Grünfeld are written almost every year, too: as recently as 2011, GMs Alexander Delchev and Evgenij Agrest came out with yet another one.

To recommend something that is truly in the Wojo spirit against the Grünfeld, we needed to give a move likely to take most club players out of theory — that is, a move that often gets overlooked by Grünfeld authors. Given the progress of Grünfeld theory, both authors of this book felt that we ought to recommend something besides Wojo's favored system with 11.♘g5 in the Open Grünfeld, which seems to have gone out of favor. This system may have worked well for Wojo six years ago, but these days, most players of Black should be able to quickly and easily look up the antidote. So, after giving a chapter highlighting Wojo's ideas and best games with 11.♘g5 — and the reason we don't recommend the use of his system — we move on to Dean's innovative system with 10.♙c2!?, which we believe will cause Black major theoretical headaches in the near future. Our exhaustive analysis of 10.♙c2 is our biggest contribution to modern theory in this book. We believe that we have overturned several decades' worth of analysis in one critical line, given in the game E.Pigusov-Ye Jiangchuan, Biel 1993, to change the evaluation from equal to winning for White. Dean has been winning with 10.♙c2 for years, and his recent triumph over GM Alexander Evdokimov

## WOJO'S WEAPONS III

just this past year is a testament to the strength of this system. We hope that, for many players, our analysis of the often-overlooked 10.♖c2 alone will be worth the price of this book.

Part II of this work is dedicated to Wojo's use of the move ♖b3 against the Closed Grünfeld (1.♠f3 ♠f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7 4.♗g2 0-0 5.d4 c6 6.0-0 d5 7.♖b3). This is another variation that you won't find too much on in any given Grünfeld book. Although most authors who advocate ...c7-c6 for Black — and there are not so many who do — have a recommendation against it, no one seems to take the queen sortie seriously. But with its scores for White at a little over 64%, this gem of a sideline is starting to get a reputation for being difficult to equalize against as Black. With four whole chapters devoted entirely to 7.♖b3, this volume makes a much-needed contribution to the existing literature on the Closed Grünfeld. And what's better, we conclude that this line is almost certainly plus-over-equal for White, a nice upgrade from the line's previous evaluation as "equal" in most opening encyclopedias. If Black has a route to equality, it is with the groveling 7...♖b6 (the move that most top players of Black are switching to these days) — not with 7...dxc4, the usually recommended move.

Not all of this volume is so heavy on theory, however. Part III, which focuses on the English Opening — especially the Maróczy Bind and the so-called "Half-Maróczy" — contains somewhat more instructional material than heavy analysis. Theory already has given White a solid "plus-over-equal" evaluation in most of these lines, so we have not been too keen to reinvent the wheel where unnecessary. We do have some interesting analysis on the line 1.♠f3 c5 2.c4 ♠c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♠xd4 g6 5.e4 ♠f6 6.♠c3 d6 7.f3 ♠xd4 8.♖xd4 ♗g7 9.♗e3 0-0 10.♖d2 a5 11.♠a4!?, since 10...a5!? is recommended by GM Lev Alburt *et al.* in *Chess Openings for Black, Explained* and the recent innovation 11.♠a4!? is a move not given in that book. Our analysis of Black's other move 10 options (specifically, Black's plan with ...♗e6, ...♖a5, ...a7-a6, and so on), although perhaps not particularly dense, is certainly accurate and up-to-date enough to be of interest to strong players. Finally, the material in Chapter 12 on the "Wojo Weapon" starting with 1.♠f3 c5 2.c4 ♠c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♠xd4 ♠f6 5.♠c3 e6 6.♠db5 d5 7.♗f4 is without a doubt the most thorough analysis on this position ever published to date. Otherwise, however, Part III is largely meant to be instructional rather than theoretical.

Part IV, which focuses on the Dutch Defense, is also not meant to be overly theoretical. This is not to say that we had nothing interesting to contribute to the debates surrounding these openings, however. It is only that most of our innovations come at a more abstract level. Whereas our analysis of 10.♖c2 in the Open Grünfeld was meant to be an exhaustive proof that the move leads to an advantage for White, Part IV of this book concentrates on the development of opening ideas. For example, our chapter on the Stonewall Dutch calls into question several decades of positional understanding. We show how the old paradigm with b2-b3 and ♗a3, attempting to trade dark-squared bishops, does not promise

## INTRODUCTION

White the advantage that everyone thinks it does. In our quest for an advantage for White, we point instead to new ideas, like those of GM Kamil Miton involving ♖c2, ♜b1, and b2-b4-b5. Also, many players will find our suggestion against the Leningrad Dutch to be novel and interesting.

Finally, Part V wraps up the book by looking at Black's miscellaneous tries. Our coverage here is a combination of instructional material and in-depth analysis. We were not too concerned with finding any novelties in the Old Indian, but we did take time out to counter Alburt *et al.*'s analysis in *Chess Openings for Black, Explained* of the Bogo-Indian and to show once again that this opening is definitely “plus-over-equal” for White. Also, those who have played 1.♘f3 for any length of time will also appreciate what we have to say about the line 1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 a6!?

Since the publication of the previous volume, we have continued to receive positive feedback from club players and professionals alike. A number of GMs and IMs have told us that our analysis has held up well for them in practice, particularly in the Catalan and the Fianchetto King's Indian. It is our hope that our analysis will continue to be useful for many years to come and will shape the course of modern theory in Wojo's openings. These books have not been easy to write and progress at times has been very slow. At the end of four years of hard work, however, we can say with confidence that we know how Wojo won with the white pieces. We have uncovered the secrets of the “Polish Magician” and have made them available to you. Enjoy — and win.

*Jonathan Hilton and Dean Ippolito*  
*October 2012*

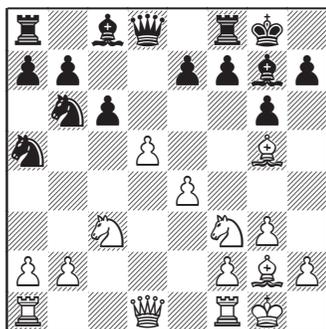
Part I



# **The Open Fianchetto Grünfeld**

## Chapter 1

# An Introduction to the Fianchetto Grünfeld: Wojo's Dynamic System with 11.♗g5



1.♟f3 ♞f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7 4.♗g2  
0-0 5.d4 d5 6.cxd5 ♞xd5 7.0-0  
♞b6 8.♞c3 ♞c6 9.d5 ♞a5 10.e4 c6  
11.♗g5

In this introductory chapter, we will briefly examine Wojo's method for handling the Grünfeld Defense. His favored move was 11.♗g5, a dynamic choice meant to actively employ both of White's bishops. Typically, middlegames stemming from 11.♗g5 feature active piece play by both sides, and whoever has a better knowledge of the underlying tactical themes (such as Black's idea of ...♞a5-c4xb2, ripping open the a1-h8 diagonal) will have an immense practical advantage. Thus, when Wojo faced players 200 or more rating points below him, he could push his winning percentage above the statistically normal 76%. In fact, our research shows that whenever Wojo outclassed his opponent by more or less 200 points, he scored well over 80%.

Despite Wojo's high winning percentage with 11.♗g5, however, this is not our main recommendation in this book. Our goal is to provide our readers with an overview not just of Wojo's own strategies, but also of the "most effective" ones: those that obtain the best results with the least effort and risk. We believe 10.♞c2!?, the subject of the coming chapters, to be an improvement in this regard. White seems to be guaranteed a slight advantage in all lines; meanwhile, the move is uncommon enough that the first player may surprise the second player by opting for it. As we show, when Black does not know what to do against 10.♞c2, he will usually self-destruct in short order.

This chapter, however, pays homage to Wojo's 11.♗g5. We will examine how he used it (and won with it) and what its pitfalls are — and why we're not recommending it as our principal line. So, without further ado, here is our analysis of this Wojo Weapon.

## White's Active Bishops and Black's Weakened Kingside

As mentioned above, Wojo's favorite move is designed to activate White's bishops. Black will usually kick White's dark-squared bishop off the h4-d8 diagonal by playing ...h7-h6, but this weakens his position. White simply retreats the bishop to f4 or e3 and the targeted pawn on h6 is a liability for Black. His bishop on g7, his chief tactical asset in the middlegame, is suddenly tied down to the defense of the h6-pawn. In the following game, Black attempts to free himself of the burden of defending the h6-pawn by playing ...g6-g5 with tempo, but this simply makes his situation worse. White's eventual h2-h4, prying open the kingside, does Black in.

**Wojtkiewicz, Aleksander (2628)**  
**Hilton, Jonathan (USCF 2089)**

[D76] Dayton (Ohio) 2005

1.♠f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7 4.d4

Wojo usually opted for this move order, which discourages Black from playing something other than the King's Indian or the Grünfeld. His winning percentages were higher in those two openings than in, say, the English (which would occur after 4.♗g2 c5).

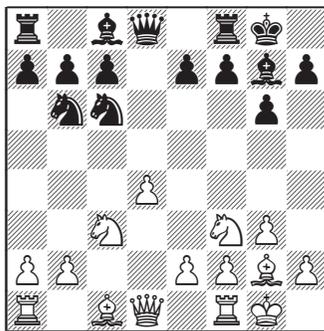
4...0-0 5.♗g2 d5

The move most in the spirit of the Grünfeld for Black. 5...c6 first, preparing ...d7-d5, is of course another main line for Black. We examine this later in Part I.

6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.0-0 ♘b6

This is Black's most common move order. The point is to stop White from playing an immediate e2-e4. The alternative 7...♘c6, which is designed to give White some extra options, leads to the same thing after 8.e4 ♘b6 9.d5 ♘a5 10.♘c3. If White is aiming for our recommended line with 10.♖c2!?, however, he should meet 7...♘c6 with 8.♘c3, since Black has nothing better than 8...♘b6, transposing. Note that Black does have the option 8...♗xc3 9.bxc3 e5, which we will examine in Chapter 4, but after 10.e3 practice has shown that White's solid center gives him a safe edge.

8.♘c3 ♘c6



Almost the only move ever played. 8...c6!?, with the idea of 9.e4 ♗g4 10.♗e3 ♘c4 winning the bishop pair for Black, can be adequately met by just about anything (except 9.e4, that is). For instance, 9.♗f4 ♘a6 10.♖c1, as in L.Navarovszky-B.Malich, Budapest 1965, seems good for an edge. White prepares ♗f4-h6, trading off Black's bishop: 10...♖e8 11.♖d1 (bolstering White's command of the center) 11...♗g4 12.♗h6 ♗f6 13.♘g5! (preventing

Black from exchanging on f3 in preparation for White's next move) 13...♖c7 14.h3 ♘c8 and White was in the driver's seat. Alternatively, 9.♗c3 is also good for an advantage.

**9.d5 ♘a5 10.e4**

10.♖c2!?, our recommended move, scores better: 62.9% for White as of 2012, whereas Wojo's 10.e4 c6 11.♙g5 scores 56.1%.

**10...c6 11.♙g5 h6**

The move order 11...♗ac4 12.♖e2 h6 13.♙f4 would transpose back into the game. Meanwhile, Black can also try 11...cxd5 12.exd5 h6 13.♙f4 ♗ac4, when Wojo agreed to a draw without further play in Wojtkiewicz-Nakamura, Western States Open 2003, but chose to play on in a few other games addressed later in this chapter. A trickier and less-explored route that White can go is the pawn sacrifice 12.♗xd5!? ♗xd5 13.exd5 ♙xb2 14.♞e1! (14.♞b1 ♙f6 15.♙xf6 exf6 has not been shown effective in practice), as in Ivanchuk–Gelfand, Tilburg 1990. After 14...♙f6 15.♙xf6, White kept a slight advantage. Probably better was 14...f6, though after 15.♞b1! White has a slight pull, thanks to his having provoked ...f7-f6, preventing Black from putting his bishop on that square. In any case, this pawn sacrifice is at least interesting and practical for the first player.

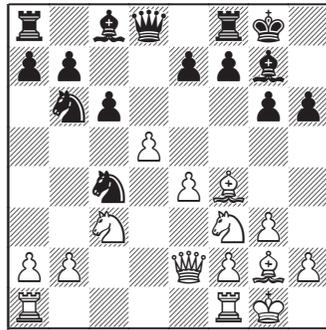
**12.♙f4 ♗ac4**

It was still not too late to play 12...cxd5, transposing into the line above, since 13.♗xd5!? ♗ac4 14.♖e2 ♗xd5 (14...e5!? 15.♗xb6 ♖xb6 16.♙xh6 ♙xh6 17.♖xc4 ♖xb2 18.♞ab1 ♖a3 19.♗xe5

♙e6 — as played by Romanishin — may give Black compensation) 15.exd5 ♗xb2 16.♙e5 ♗a4 17.♙xg7 ♗xg7 18.♗d4 e6 equalized for Black in E.Arguiñariz-A.Bericat, email 2003, after 19.♖b5 ♖d7. We will see some related analysis come up again in the following games, since had Black chosen 13...♗xd5, we would get Wojtkiewicz-Hossain below after 14.exd5 ♗c4 15.♖c1.

Black's other alternatives are poor here. 12...♙g4 13.h3 ♙xf3 14.♖xf3 just gives White the bishop pair for nothing, and 12...g5 13.♙e5! ♙xe5 (13...g4? 14.♙xg7 gxf3 15.♙xh6 fxe2 16.♞e1! ♞e8 17.e5! with the idea of ♖f3-h5 and ♞e1-e4 to follow gives White a convincing attack) 14.♗xe5 was better for White in Wojtkiewicz-R.Rodríguez, Bacolod 1991.

**13.♖e2**



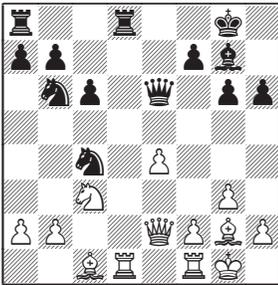
White simply develops. This position for the queen is both natural and powerful because, from e2, it defends the b2-pawn; would put pressure along the e-file should Black exchange on d5; and targets Black's active knight on c4. Black's position quickly becomes difficult.

**13...g5?!**

After the game, Wojo explained that he believed this move loses for Black.

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FIANCHETTO GRÜNFELD

White's h2-h4 on the kingside is simply too strong. This seems to be a gross exaggeration, but given how this game progresses, Wojo's comment seemed believable at the time. Instead, 13...e5 14.dxe6 (14.♗c1 cxd5 15.♘xd5 ♘xd5 16.exd5 ♘d6 17.♞d1 ♞e8 was good for Black in C.Blocker-A.Yermolinsky, World Open 1994) 14...♗xe6 15.♞ad1 ♞c8 (worse is 15...♞e7?! 16.♘d4), when Black is a bit cramped but has a solid position, is preferable. Now 16.♘d4 ♞d8 (16...♗h3?! 17.b3 ♘e5 18.♗xe5 ♗xe5 19.f4 ♗xg2 20.♔xg2 ♗g7 21.e5 was good for White in K.Wockenfuss-M.Stangl, Munich 1992) 17.♘xe6 ♞xe6 18.♗c1!?, shoring up White's b2-pawn, would leave the first player with the bishop pair but not much else:



The position is probably plus-over-equal.

### 14.♗c1

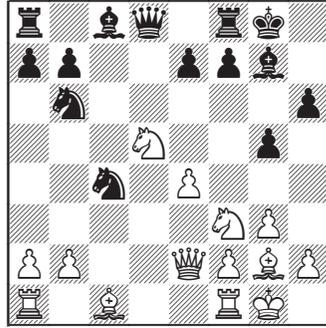
Although the bishop may appear undeveloped on c1, it is actually quite happy here for the time being: it targets the h6/g5 pawn configuration and defends the b2-pawn, taking the sting out of Black's queenside counterplay.

### 14...cxd5

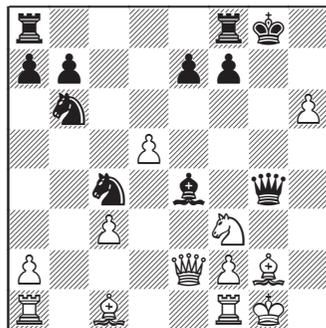
14...♗g4 15.dxc6 bxc6 16.h3 ♗h5 (or 16...♗xf3 17.♗xf3) 17.g4! ♗g6 18.h4!

gxh4 19.♞d1 ♞c7 20.♘xh4 probably gives White some advantage due to Black's bad light-squared bishop.

### 15.♘xd5



Best. White challenges the configuration of Black's two knights, which are (in combination with the bishop on g7) his most active pieces. Murkier is 15.exd5 ♗g4 16.h3 ♗h5, transposing into what we'll be seeing in the third and final game in this chapter. It is difficult to show any advantage for White here; for instance, 17.g4 ♗g6 18.h4?! ♞d7! 19.hxg5 ♞xg4 leaves Black better after 20.gxh6 ♗xc3! (20...♗f6 21.♞e1 was unclear in N.Krogius-V. Hort, Varna 1969) 21.bxc3 ♗e4!:



The knight on f3 is pinned multiple ways, and Black can always anchor his bishop in on the e4 square by playing

...f7-f5. As mentioned, we will see this variation (up to move 18) arise again later in the chapter.

**15...e6?**

This is the real culprit. By shutting in the bishop on c8, Black saddles himself with a clearly worse game. 15... ♖xd5 16.exd5 (or 16. ♖xc4 ♗b6 17. ♖e2 ♖c7! with the idea of 18. ♗e3 ♖c4) 16... ♗d6 17.h4 g4 18. ♗e5 h5 19. ♗f4 ♗f5 20. ♖ac1 with b2-b3 and f2-f3 coming would leave White with a nice pull, but not a winning game.

**16. ♗xb6 ♗xb6 17. ♖d1 ♖e7 18.h4!**

Played instantly. Black is passive and left completely without counterplay: his bishop on c8 is shut in, and he has no way to put his knight on c4. White has a huge advantage, and Black's kingside soon dissolves to rubbish.

**18...gxh4**

18...f6!? or 18...g4 19. ♗d4 h5 with the idea of 20. ♗g5 f6 21. ♗e3 ♗d7 22.f3 f5 would have put up more stubborn resistance on the kingside.

**19. ♗xh4 ♗d7 20. ♗f4**

Once again, White is able to activate his bishops.

**20...e5**

20...♖fd8 21. ♗d6 ♖e8, as awful as it looks, was preferable. Now the f5 square is weakened.

**21. ♗e3 ♗e6 22.b3**

Not altogether necessary, but certainly effective. White limits Black's counterplay on the queenside. The position is positionally won for White: Black's bishop on g7 is terrible and both his kingside and his queenside will soon come under attack.

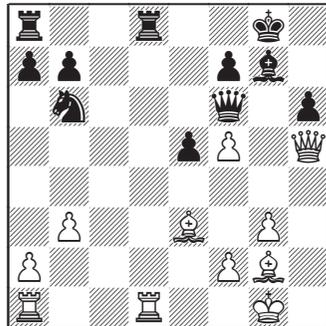
**22...♖fd8 23. ♖h5 ♖f6**

Black struggles to defend his h6-pawn. Notice how the weakness induced so many moves ago is bearing fruit for White.

**24. ♗f5**

The logical follow-up to ♖h5.

**24...♗xf5 25.exf5**



Black feels the full wrath of White's bishop pair. His queenside pawns are defenseless.

**25...e4 26. ♗xe4 ♖e7 27.f6**

Deflecting Black's protection of b7.

**27...♖xf6 28. ♗xb7 ♖ab8 29. ♗g2 ♖g6 30. ♖xg6 fxg6** and Black resigned shortly.

White is a full pawn up and has the bishop pair. It did not take long for him to convert this winning advantage.

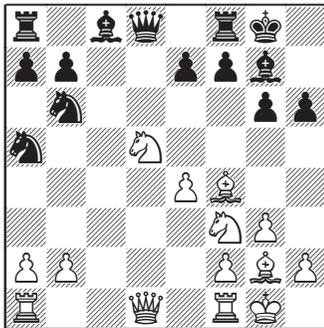
**Summary:** Black was imprecise in his timing of ...h7-h6 and ...g6-g5, and the results were disastrous. The pawns were simply weak, as illustrated by White's blow 18.h4. To compound matters, Black failed to play actively, and he voluntarily shut in his own light-squared bishop with 15...e6?. After 24.♖f5 ♗xf5 25.exf5, White's active bishop pair was too strong to handle for Black, whose position was passive. In sum, Black needed to choose a much more active set of strategies.

The next game does not feature ...g6-g5 by Black, but the second player still has a hard time defending his kingside.

**Wojtkiewicz, Aleksander (2581)  
Hossain, Enamul (2314)**

[D76] Stratton Mountain 2000

- 1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7  
4.♗g2 0-0 5.d4 d5 6.cxd5 ♖xd5  
7.0-0 ♖b6 8.♖c3 ♖c6 9.d5 ♖a5  
10.e4 c6 11.♗g5 h6 12.♗f4 cxd5  
13.♖xd5!?



13.exd5 is more common, and we'll see it in the next game.

**13...♖xd5?!**

It is not a good idea for Black to open lines like this. He will soon find himself with no pieces available to defend his kingside. Of course, 13...♗g4 can be met with 14.h3, winning the bishop pair for White (for instance, see Adorján-Milos, Szirák Interzonal 1987), so that would not work either. But best here is 13...♖ac4. Now the tempting 14.♖c7 is not helpful to White: 14...♖b8 15.♖xd8 ♖xd8 16.♖ad1 (16.♖a6 cannot lead to a draw by repetition because 16...e5 17.♖xb8 exf4 seems to give Black more than enough compensation for his exchange) 16...♗g4 and Black does better tactically thanks to his active pieces, for instance, 17.♖d5 e5 18.♖xb6 ♖xd1! 19.♖xd1 ♖xb2! 20.♗xe5 ♗xe5 21.♖d5 ♗g7 22.♖d7 ♖c8 23.♖c5 ♖a4! and White's weakness along the back rank was devastating in D.Kuljašević-E. Hansen, Lubbock 2010.

White can try 14.♖e2, when here 14...♖xd5 15.exd5 ♖xb2 is E.Arguñariz-A. Bericat from the note to Black's move 12 in the previous game. So White should probably play 14.b3, since 14...♖xd5 (not 14...♗xa1 15.♖xa1 g5 16.♖c7 gxf4 17.♖xa8 ♖xa8 18.bxc4, when Black's king is exposed) 15.exd5 ♖b6 16.d6!?, as recommended by *Rybka*, gives White an ever-so-slight pull after 16...♖e8 17.dxe7 (not 17.♖c1 g5) 17...♖xe7 18.♖e1 ♗e6 19.♖d6 ♖d8 20.♗e5:

