

# Testing the Book

By Chuck Unruh

Each year volumes of opening books come to market with the newest and latest modern chess opening lines. Somewhere in these volumes of paperwork there is always a line that is unclear or untested. The publishers' then slap a new cover on next years book and reprint 90% of the old material in the new 2005 edition. I'm not complaining, for my chess library is a little like cosmetic surgery and makes me look a lot smarter and better than my actual underlying know how. This year, with the money I save from not buying the new opening books, I plan to upgrade my Chessbase program with the new Grandmaster games from 2004.

The annotated game below is an example of a solid variation in the New Closed Sicilian (6.Be3 instead of the older 6.f4) coupled with the move 8.a4. While most opening books don't include 8.a4, the line is solid but unglamorous. Chessbase (database) has several recent games with 8.a4 that predict the White side still under performs the normal averages against the short center defense and 9...Nd4. When all is said and done, the higher rated player usually overcomes these small opening imbalances and goes on to win.

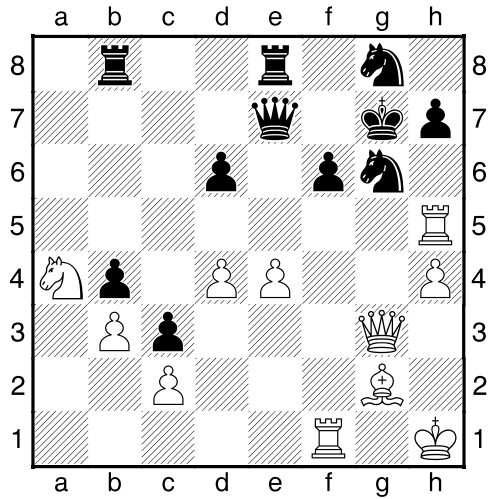
Although I study the chess openings, more and more of my chess library each year is devoted to the middle and endgame. A few good books on why we blunder, the psychology of time pressure and thinking like the grandmasters are some of my favorite chess improvement reading material. I recommend that the average tournament player only learn a few opening systems. Your minimum goal is to land in an equal middle game. Then, balance your studies on the other aspects of the game. In the early 1970's, I remember Grandmaster Bent Larsen stating that understanding the endgame would improve a players rating by two hundred points. Of course, our first we must survive the opening game and the massive informational overload of opening text books.

**Unruh, Charles (2130) - Dunlap, John (1954) [B26]**

OK State Class Championship 2004,  
Round 3, Closed Sicilian 1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6  
4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 e6 6.Be3 d6 7.Qd2 Rb8 8.a4 [RR 8.h4  
Nf6 9.Bh6 Bxh6 10.Qxh6 Nd4 11.Qd2 Qa5 12.Nge2 Bd7  
13.0-0 0-0 14.a3 Kg7 15.Rab1 h6 16.b4 Qxa3 17.Nxd4  
cxd4 18.Ne2 Rfc8 19.Rfc1 e5 20.Ra1 Qb2 21.Rab1 Qa2  
22.Ra1 Qe6 23.Rxa7 d5 24.exd5 Nxd5 25.Ra5 Bc6  
26.Rb1 b6 27.Ra3 Nf6 28.c3 Bxg2 29.Kxg2 dxc3 30.Nxc3  
Rb7 31.Qe2 Rbc7 32.Rbb3 Rc6 33.Qf3 Rd6 34.Ne4  
Nxe4 35.dxe4 Rd4 36.h5 gxh5 37.Qxh5 Rxe4 38.Rf3 Qg6  
39.Qh1 Rc7 40.Qd1 Rd4 41.Qe1 Qd6 42.Rae3 Rd1  
Vescovi,G-Ljubojevic,L/Elista 1998/CBM 66 ext/0-1 (81)]  
8...a6 9.Nge2 [RR 9.Rb1 b5 10.axb5 axb5 11.Nce2 Nge7  
12.d4 cxd4 13.Nxd4 Nxd4 14.Bxd4 e5 15.Be3 Be6  
16.Rd1 Rc8 17.Ne2 0-0 18.0-0 Qc7 19.c3 Rfd8 20.Ra1  
Qc4 21.Ra7 Nc6 22.Ra3 Ne7 23.Ra7 ½-½ Rebottaro,H-  
Chadwick,N/Villa Ballester 2002/EXT 2003 (23)] 9...Qc7N  
[RR 9...Nd4 10.0-0 (RR 10.Nd1 b6 11.Nc1 e5 12.c3 Ne6  
13.Ne2 Nf6 14.Bh6 0-0 15.Bxg7 Kxg7 16.Ne3 Bb7  
17.Nd5 Nxd5 18.exd5 Nc7 19.c4 b5 20.b3 bxc4 21.bxc4  
Bc8 22.0-0 Bd7 23.f4 Rb4 24.fxe5 dxe5 25.Nc3 Bf5  
26.Rf2 Ne8 27.h3 Qe7 28.Re1 Nd6 29.g4 Bd7 30.Qe3  
Rb3 31.Rc2 e4 32.Qxc5 Qe5 33.Nxe4 Nxe4 34.dxe4  
Rxh3 35.Bxh3 Qg3+ ½-½ Mestek,I-Soln,P/SLO  
1996/EXT 97 (35)) 10...Ne7 11.f4 (RR 11.Rac1 b5 12.b3  
b4 13.Nd1 h5 14.f4 h4 15.g4 f5 16.Nf2 h3 17.Nxh3 fxg4  
18.Ng5 Nec6 19.Ng3 Bf6 20.Rf2 Rb7 21.Rcf1 Qe7  
22.Bh1 Qg7 23.e5 Bxg5 24.Bxd4 Nxd4 25.fxg5 d5  
Horak,I-Krajnak,R/SVK 1997/EXT 98/1-0 (35)) 11...0-0  
12.g4 f5 13.h3 b5 14.axb5 axb5 15.Rab1 b4 16.Nd1 Qb6  
17.Ng3 Bb7 18.Bf2 Ra8 19.Ne3 Ra2 20.gxf5 gxf5 21.Qd1  
Qc7 22.c3 Nb5 23.Qb3 Raa8 24.Qxe6+ Cubas,J-  
Szelag,M/St Lorenzo 1995/Juniors/1-0 (44)] 10.0-0 b5  
11.axb5 axb5 12.f4!? Too slow, White suffers from  
"wanting" the normal f5 pawn sacrifice. Wanting is best described by trying to force a position without regard for the opponent's resources or moves. White should play against Black's lack of development on the Kingside by attacking the center with 12.d4+=. The text closes lines for the White Queen and Bishop and allows Black equality. 12...Nge7 The position called for 12...b4 first. Now with 13.e5! White breaks the black-squared pawn chain and the Queens Knight jumps into the attack from e4. 13.d4!? [13.e5! dxe5 14.Bxc5±] 13...Na5 14.b3= b4 15.Na4 15.Nd1 at least keeps the Knight in play. The slight advantage now shifts in favor of the Black camp. 15...c4 16.Rab1 0-0 17.g4 Looks impressive, but Black has the advantage after 17.....c3 and 18....Bd7. 17...Bd7 18.f5 exf5= 19.gxf5 gxf5 20.Bh6 More bark than bite, Black can capture on

h6, play fxe4 and still have an equal game. 20...f6 although more passive than 20...Bxh6 21.Qxh6 fxe4 22.Rf6 Kh8 23.Bxe4 Rg8+ 24.Kf2 Rg7=, the text also leads to equality. 21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Ng3 Ng8? A defensive mistake but not fatal, 22...Kh8 with equal play. 23.Nxf5+ Bxf5 24.Rxf5± c3 25.Qe3 Nc6 26.Kh1 Nce7 26....Nge7 or Kh8 provides the stronger defense. 27.Rh5 Ng6 28.Rf1 Qe7 29.Qg3 Not the best, but I thought 29.Bh3! ->f5 left the White King subject to counter attack at d5 and e4. 29...Rfe8 30.h4! Diagram

John Dunlap



Chuck Unruh

Another case of "wanting" a pawn on h5 against the pinned Knight. 30.Rg1! is more on target. 30...Nh6 31.Rd5 Kf7? 31...f5! and Black is still in the game. 30.h4 was not the strongest move owing to 31...f5 32.h5 Qh4+ 33.Qh3. 32.h5 Nf8 Retreating and without any counter play, Black's game quickly crumples. 33.Rxd6 Nd7 34.e5 Kf8 35.Nc5 Nxc5 36.Rdxf6+ 1-0

### Games From Recent Events

Colbert, Jeff (1360) - Unruh, Charles M (1343) [A58]

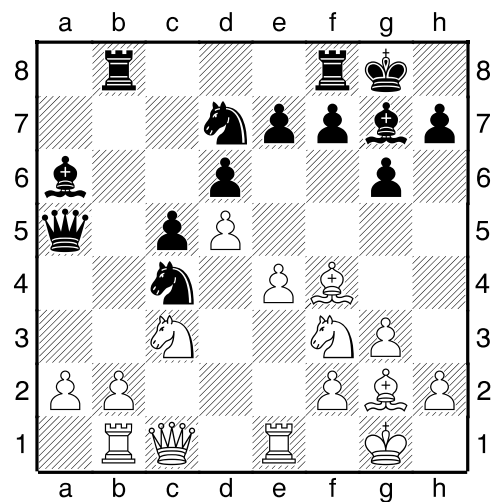
Icicle Quad 2005, Round (3)

Benko Counter Gambit

During his Christmas school break, Charles M. took some time out to study the Benko Gambit with the in house pro. Although popularized in the 1960s by Pal Charles Benko, a French-born Hungarian, the gambit has been around in some form since 1920. The gambit's most challenging modern lines are when white declines the pawn and plays 5.b6, f3 or e3. The following game is for King of this Icicle Quad and demonstrates the continuing improvement of both Jeff and Charles in

tournament chess. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 Bxa6 6.Nc3 d6 7.Nf3 g6 8.g3 Bg7 9.Bg2 0-0 10.0-0 Nbd7 11.Re1 11. Qc2 Qa5 12.Rd1 is considered the most popular fiachetto line. 11...Nb6 12.e4 12.f4! then, if Nc4, white sets up 13.Qc1 Qa5 14.Nd2 with the advantage. 12...Nfd7 13.Bf4 White piles on for the e5 break, but a direct Kingside attack in the following game is also a plan worth attention. [RR 13.h4 Nc4 14.Bf1 Qa5 15.Bxc4 Bxc4 16.Bd2 Qa6 17.Bf4 e5 18.dxe6 fxe6 19.Rc1 Rae8 20.b3 e5 21.Bd2 Bd3 22.Nd5 Bxe4 23.Rxe4 Qd3 24.Nc3 Qxf3 25.Be3 Qf5 26.Qxd6 Nf6 27.Qd3 Rc8 Epishin,V-Matamoros Franco,C/Seville 2002/CBM 86 ext/1-0 (39)] 13...Nc4 14.Qc1 Rb8 15.Rb1 Qa5N Diagram

Charles M. Unruh



Jeff Colbert

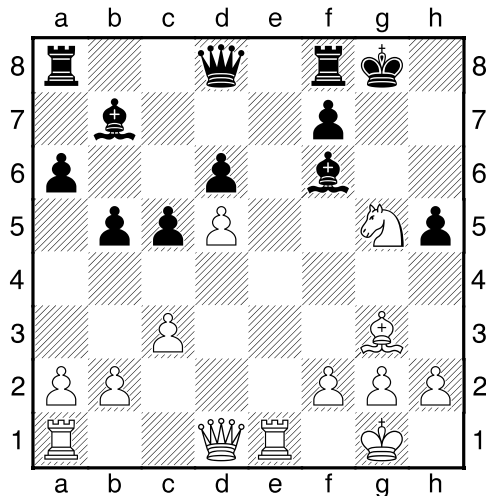
Old theory liked the queen on b6 in most lines. After decades of Benko gambits, the trend now favors Qa5. Black can delay his Queen sortie as in the next example game.[RR 15...Nce5 16.Nxe5 Nxe5 17.Bxe5 Bxe5 18.Qc2 Qa5 19.Rec1 Rfc8 20.Bf3 Rc7 21.a4 Rb4 22.Nb5 Bxb5 23.axb5 Qxb5 24.Be2 Qd7 25.Bc4 Rcb7 26.b3 Ra7 27.Qe2 Ra3 28.Kg2 Rb8 29.Rc2 Qa7 30.Rd1 Balenovic,Z-Marinkovic,I/Biel 1989/EXT 97/0-1 (65)] 16.Bf1 Nce5 16...Nxb2! 17.Nxe5 Nxe5 18.Bxe5 Bxe5 19.a3= Bxf1 20.Kxf1 Rxb2 21.Rxb2 Bxc3 22.Ra2 Bxe1 23.Qxe1 Qb5+ 24.Kg2 Ra8 [24...Qb3! 25.Qe2 Ra8 26.Rb2 Qxa3μ] 25.Qc3 Qa4 26.f3 Rb8 ½-½

Swerer,Robert (1014) - Swatek,Mike (850) [C70]

Icicle Quad 2005, Round 2

Ruy Lopez Mike is not only a up and coming Senior TD, but has also taken the time to improve his chess. In Icicle round two, After gaining an equal position on move 16, Robert throws him reeling with a mid game speculative sacrifice. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 b5 5.Bb3 h6 6.d4 Bd6 7.c3 Nf6 8.Nbd2 Bb7 9.0-0 0-0 10.dxe5 Nxe5 11.Nxe5 Bxe5 12.Re1 c5 13.Bd5 Nxd5 14.exd5 d6 15.Nf3 Bf6 16.Bf4= g5! 16...Qd7 is sound and same. 17.Bg3 h5 18.Nxg5?! Diagram

Mike Swatek



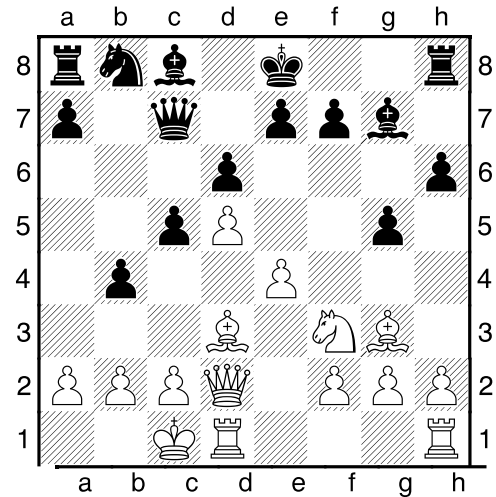
Robert Swerer

Shock value! 18...Bxg5 19.Qxh5 Qf6 20.Bxd6 Qxd6 21.Qxg5+ Qg6 favors black. 18...Kg7? ...and the shock worked! 19.Ne4+- Be7 20.Qxh5 Rh8 21.Qg4+ Kf8 22.Rad1 Bc8 23.Qf4 Bd7 24.Nxd6 f6 25.Bh4 Rxh4 26.Qxh4 Bxd6 27.Rd3 Be5 28.f4 Bd6 29.Rg3 f5 30.Qh7 1-0

Paolercio,Anthony (1787) - Unruh,Charles M (1428) [B07]

So, You Really Like Chess 2004, Round 2, Pirc Defense 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Bg5 c6 5.Qd2 b5 6.Bd3 Qb6 7.Nf3 h6 8.Bf4 Bg7 9.0-0-0 Nh5 10.Be3 Qc7 11.d5 b4 12.Ne2 c5 13.Nf4 (13.Bc4=) 13...Nxf4 14.Bxf4 g5 15.Bg3 Diagram

Charles M. Unruh



Anthony Paolercio

15...c4! 16.Be2 c3 17.Bb5+ Bd7 18.Qd3 a6 19.Bxd7+ Nxd7 20.Nd4 Nc5 21.Qc4 Qa5 22.Nc6 Qb5 23.Qxb4 cxb2+ 24.Kb1 Qxb4 25.Nxb4 Nxe4 26.Rd3 f5 27.f3 Nc5 28.Re3 f4 29.Bxf4 gxf4 30.Re2 Na4 31.Rhe1 Rb8 32.a3 a5 0-1

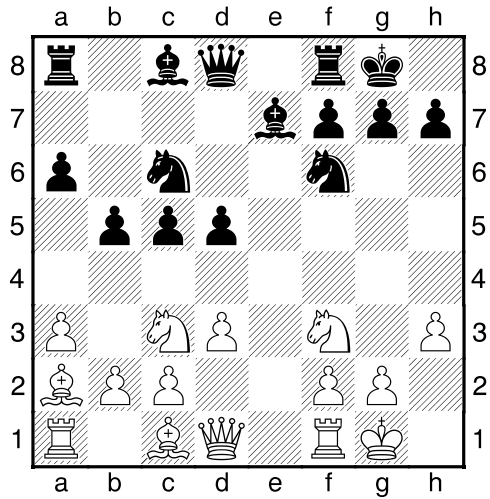
Britt,Brian (1443) - Classen,Chris (1434) [B50] OK

State Class Championship, Round 3, Sicilian Defense 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bc4 e6 5.d3 Be7 6.Bg5 0-0 7.0-0 a6 8.a3 Nbd7 9.Re1 h6 10.Bh4 b5 11.Bb3 Bb7 12.Nd2 Re8 13.Qf3 Nh7 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.Re3! White is asking too much out of this cramped position. Black has made Lebenraum "living space" for his pieces and should equalize. 15.Qg3 ->16.f4 to gain space is a good plan. 15...Nhf6 16.Qh3 Ne5 17.Rg3= Kh8 18.Nf3 18.f4-> 18...Ng6 19.Ne2 Bc8 20.Nh4 Nxh4 21.Qxh4 Nh7 22.Qg4 Qf6 23.c3 Ng5 24.Qh5 24.f4+/- 24...Kh7 24...c4+/- 25.h4+- Nxe4 26.dxe4 g6 27.Qf3 Qxh4 28.Qxf7+ 1-0

Wesson,Rafael (1767) - Paolercio,Anthony (1787) [B30]

Play it Again Sam 2004, Round 4, Sicilian Defense 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 e6 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.a3 d5 6.exd5 exd5 7.Ba2 Be7 8.d3 0-0 9.h3 a6 10.0-0 b5 Diagram

Anthony Paolercio



Rafael Wesson

This position was given to the Shedder program and the computer believes the game is dead equal. Black's space and control captures the advantage! Bad Computer??  
11.Ne2 Bb7 12.d4 c4 13.b4 a5 14.c3 Qd7  
15.Bb1 axb4 16.Ba2 bxa3 17.Ng3 b4 18.cxb4 Bxb4  
19.Rb1 c3 20.Ne5 Qe7 21.Qb3 c2 22.Nxc6 Bxc6  
23.Qxb4 cxb4 24.Qxe7 Qxa2 25.Nf5 Bb5 26.Rd1 Ne4  
27.Be3 Qe2 28.Ra1 a2 29.Qb7 Qb2 30.Rc1 a1Q  
31.Rxa1 Rxa1+ 32.Kh2 Qb1 0-1