

Beat the Dutch Defense

**A Killer Weapon
Against the
Dutch Defense**

First edition 2022 by Thinkers Publishing
Copyright © 2022 Jan Boekelman

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission from the publisher.

All sales or enquiries should be directed to Thinkers Publishing, 9850 Landegem, Belgium.

Email: info@thinkerspublishing.com
Website: www.thinkerspublishing.com

Managing Editor: Adrien Demuth

Assistant Editor: Daniël Vanheirzeele

Proofreading: Kai Tan

Software: Hub van de Laar

Cover Design: Iwan Kerkhof

Graphic Artist: Philippe Tonnard

Production: BESTinGraphics

ISBN: 9789464201581
D/2022/13732/30

Beat the Dutch Defense

**A Killer Weapon
Against the
Dutch Defense**

Jan Boekelman

Thinkers Publishing 2021



Key to Symbols

!	a good move
?	a weak move
!!	an excellent move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
□	only move
N	novelty
⊙	lead in development
⊙	zugzwang
=	equality
∞	unclear position
∞	with compensation for the sacrificed material
±	White stands slightly better
∓	Black stands slightly better
±	White has a serious advantage
∓	Black has a serious advantage
+−	White has a decisive advantage
−+	Black has a decisive advantage
→	with an attack
↑	with initiative
↔	with counterplay
Δ	with the idea of
▷	better is
≤	worse is
+	check
#	mate

Table of Contents

Key to Symbols	4
Bibliography.....	6
Foreword	7
Preface.....	8
Theoretical Introduction.....	12
PART I – Black Declines the Gambit	17
Chapter 1 – Others & 2...e6	19
Chapter 2 – 2...d6	31
PART II – Black’s Alternative Third Moves.....	43
Chapter 3 – 3...-- Others	45
Chapter 4 – 3...g6.....	55
PART III – White’s Alternatives 4.g4 & 4.f3.....	63
Chapter 5 – 4.g4.....	65
Chapter 6 – 4.f3	77
PART IV – 4.♙g5 - Others	91
Chapter 7 – 4...d5 & 4...b6	93
Chapter 8 – 4...e6.....	103
Chapter 9 – 4...c6	119
Chapter 10 – 4...g6.....	137
PART V – 4.♙g5 ♘c6	167
Chapter 11 – 4...♘c6 – Early Alternatives.....	169
Chapter 12 – 6...c6.....	191
Chapter 13 – 6...♘f7 - Introduction	211
Chapter 14 – 6...♘f7, 8...♚e7 - Mainline	235

Bibliography

Books

- Demuth, Adrien: *The Modernized Dutch Defense*, Thinkers Publishing 2019
- Johnsen, Sverre and Bern, Ivar: *Win with the Stonewall Dutch*, Gambit 2009
- Jones, Gawain: *Coffeehouse Repertoire, Volume 2*, Quality Chess 2021.
- Karolyi, Tibor: *Play the Dutch! Part 1*, Chess Evolution 2018
- Kindermann, Stefan: *Leningrad System, A Complete Weapon against 1 d4*, Edition Olms 2005
- Malaniuk, Vladimir and Marusenko, Petr: *The Leningrad Dutch*, Chess Stars 2014
- Marin, Mihail: *Dutch Sidelines*, Quality Chess 2021
- Moskalenko, Viktor: *The Diamond Dutch*, New in Chess 2014
- Palliser, Richard: *Play 1. d4!*, Batsford, 2003
- Pinski, Jan: *Classical Dutch*, Everyman Chess 2002
- Salgado Lopez, Ivan: *Gambit Killer*, Thinkers Publishing 2018
- Williams, Simon: *Play the Classical Dutch*, Gambit 2003
- Williams, Simon: *The Killer Dutch*, Everyman Chess 2015

Internet/digital resources

- Hayward, Keith: *Balogh Counter-Gambit*, Chessville
- Martin, Andrew: *Beating the Anti-Dutch Systems*, iChess.net
- The Dutch Defense: The Ultimate Chess Opening Guide*, iChess.net
- Various articles on the Brabo site
- Wikipedia

Databases

- 365chess.com
- Chess.com
- chessbase
- lichess.org

Periodicals

- New In Chess Yearbook no 52

Foreword

Once upon a time in Chicago...

My meeting with the Staunton Gambit was very amazing – I remember one of the famous games of Ed Lasker – Thomas 1912, London Blitz, when I was young and "green" in 1994. It happened that my results against the Dutch Defense were really good – it did not matter which variation Black chose, the Stonewall or Lenin-grad or even the Ilyin-Zhenevsky – I was really happy about the positions and the results.

However in 2015 in the fifth round of a very strong open tournament in Chicago my opponent was the very talented Ukrainian GM Ilya Nyzhnyk. I was playing as Black and was thinking which opening to choose and decided to play the Dutch Defense. So the game started 1. d4 f5 2. e4 – Ilya was playing very fast – 2... fxe4 3. ♖c3 ♗f6 4. ♙g5. I remembered from my experience that only 4... ♗c6 gave chances to have positions with counterplay and decided to use it: 4... ♗c6 5. d5 ♗e5. Here Ilya quickly played 6. ♗e2 instead of the more common move from my memory 6. ♗d4. I started to think – my first thought was that Black's position looked very dangerous! White has easy ideas and I needed to play very carefully. I spent around 40 minutes to find the idea of 6... ♗f7 7. ♙xf6 exf6 8. ♗xe4 ♗e7 9. d6 ♗e6 and was very happy that I did not lose in the opening. After that game I was really impressed with this idea and started to use it and to analyze it more deeply.

In 2017 I faced Erwin L'Ami in Wijk aan Zee, and after 1.d4 f5 I decided to use this idea again after which I was very happy. After the opening, at around move 10, I was ahead by about 40 minutes. Such a development of the game against a strong GM is very good as you can imagine.

I am very happy to be in contact with Jan Boekelman who has done a lot of work on this interesting and useful book. It is an honor to be a part of it. I hope his ideas will help you achieve good results against the Dutch Defense. I can highly recommend using this system at any time control.

Dear friends, I wish you good luck!

GM Vladimir Dobrov
April 2022

Preface

Sound Aggression against the Dutch Defense

Welcome to an aggressive but sound gambit system against the Dutch Defense! Who would not want to play a system against an opening that is theoretically sound, promises good attacking chances and avoids learning reams of theory about the Leningrad Dutch, the Stonewall or the Classical Dutch, opening set-ups our opponent knows everything about? This book explores such a system for White with a complete repertoire based on the Staunton Gambit. A repertoire for White, with attention for various alternatives White may choose from along the way, and an in-depth analysis of all of Black's responses.



The Staunton Gambit bears the name of Howard Staunton (*image*), an English chess master who lived from April 1810 to June 22, 1874. Staunton is widely regarded as the world's strongest player from 1843 to 1851, due in large part to his victory in 1843 against Pierre Charles Fournier de Saint-Amant. He was the main organizer of the first international chess tournament in 1851, which made England the leading international chess center and which recognized Adolf Anderssen as the strongest player in the world.

Modern commentators believe that Staunton's understanding of positional play was far ahead of his contemporaries. While not basically an attacking player, he did attack once he was done with his preparations. The English Opening and the Staunton Gambit are named after his advocacy of them. In addition, he is known for the fact that he lent his name to a chess set of clearly distinguishable pieces with a standardized shape that is still the style used for competitions today.

The Staunton Gambit was a fashionable opening in the romantic era of chess. Howard Staunton introduced it in his match against Bernhard Horwitz, London 1846. Its heydays were from 1850 to 1930. In the early decades of the 20th century, the gambit was even adopted by members of the chess elite at the time. The American grandmaster Frank Marshall used the gambit some 10 times from 1902 to 1930. Richárd Réti (1918–1920), Saviely Tartakower (1921–1925) and Max Euwe

(1920–1922) played the gambit on a regular basis, as did José Raúl Capablanca (1914–1922), although the latter only in simultaneous exhibitions. Mikhail Botvinnik tried it once in 1927. He held the gambit in high esteem as he was known to have said that he played 1. d4 e6 2. c4 f5 to reach the Dutch Defense in order to avoid the Staunton Gambit. Generally, the gambit was used as a surprise weapon by these famous players, especially in their younger years.

Recent Interest in the Staunton Gambit

Recently, a number of grandmasters have shown their commitment to the gambit and played it in games with classical time limits against strong opposition. The Russian/Slovak grandmaster Gennadij Timoscenko and the Serbian grandmaster Ivan Ivanišević are two good examples of this.

Garry Kasparov has played the Staunton Gambit in simultaneous exhibition games, demonstrating good knowledge of various key lines. The Turkish-Bosnian chess grandmaster Suat Atalik has played the gambit with great success in blitz on lichess.



A true hero of the Staunton Gambit is the Russian grandmaster Vladimir Dobrov (*pictured*). On numerous occasions, both in serious games and in blitz (chess.com handle: VladDobrov), he has shown his dedication to the gambit, often exploring and testing the cutting edge of opening theory. Many of his games will appear in this book.

With the increasing number of tournaments in rapid or blitz, the interest in the gambit has recently been on the rise. The gambit takes an important position among the various anti-Dutch systems, next to 2. ♖g5 and 2. ♘c3. It is liked for its aggressive and tactical nature.

Recent Theoretical Developments



Timoscenko (*pictured*) has played an important role in the theoretical resurrection of the Staunton Gambit during the mid-1990's. He introduced a new approach in the main line of the 4... ♖c6 variation, traditionally seen as the highroad to at least equality for Black. His invention in that line, after 5. d5 ♗e5, is 6. ♕e2!, instead of the traditional 6. ♕d4. This maneuver significantly improves White's chances for an advantage. The strength of this approach led to a renewed interest in Black's alternative

4th moves, 4... g6 and even the classical 4... c6!

Over the last few years the concrete and tactical lines of gambits generally have come under close scrutiny by strong chess engines. Most gambits collapse under the pressure and end up on the garbage heap. The good news for the Staunton Gambit is that the reverse is actually happening here. The engines find new possibilities for White, which strengthen White's theoretical case. A fine example of this is a recent game between two of the strongest chess engines Leela Chess Zero and Stockfish, in their 2020 match. It demonstrated the power of the important novelty (4. ♖g5 g6 5. ♖c4 c6 6. d5 ♖g7 7. ♗ge2 e6 8. ♗xe4 0-0) 9.d6!, reversing the theoretical verdict on one of the key lines of 4... g6.

The engines I worked with for this book are Stockfish 10–14, and Fat Fritz 2.

Acknowledgements

A great thank you to Daniel Vanheirzeele and his colleagues at Thinkers Publishing for the opportunity to publish this book. Their enthusiasm and understanding provided an excellent breeding ground for a nice result.

A special thanks to grandmaster and Staunton Gambit aficionado Vladimir Dobrov for writing the foreword to this book.

Enno Noordhoff, my chess companion, was so kind to review and comment upon earlier versions of the book.

Finally, I thank my beloved partner Leonoor who supported me so kindly during the time I was working on this book.

In Summary

The Staunton Gambit is a very rewarding opening. White's piece development follows the classical principles of gambit play. White is ahead in development and obtains a fine initiative. Even without the theoretical knowledge of certain variations, White should be able to find his way. Best of all, White determines the direction of the game already on move two, without the risk of having to play the maneuvering games we know from the Leningrad Dutch, the Stonewall Dutch or the Classical Dutch.

Good luck with this opening. With the rigorous and engine-assisted analysis of old and new theory and over 160 years of practice, this book presents an aggressive, interesting and robust repertoire for White against the Dutch. Despite its long history there are still many opportunities for White to improve on well-known theory and grandmaster games. Recent developments and insights have considerably strengthened White's theoretical case.

This all has once again made the Staunton Gambit a challenging variation for Black to meet when playing the Dutch. In games with a shorter time limit, the gambit has already made its comeback and has become a regular guest. I trust that this book will provide you with the basis for many victories against the Dutch!

Jan Boekelman
Overveen, the Netherlands
2022

Theoretical Introduction

1. d4 f5

Black plays the Dutch Defense. 1... f5 was suggested as the best response to 1.d4 in a book by Elias Stein in 1789 in The Hague, Netherlands, hence the name of the opening. The Dutch is an aggressive and unbalanced opening, resulting in the lowest percentage of draws of the common answers to 1.d4. Black places a claim on the e4-square and foresees a middlegame attack against the white kingside. The Dutch has never been a main line against 1.d4 and is rarely seen in high-level competitions these days, although a number of top players have used it consistently and successfully.

The lack of enthusiasm for the opening is reflected nicely in Artur Jussupov's funny statement: "The problem with the Dutch is that very often in the middlegame Black finds his best available move is f5-f7". That statement aside, the Dutch is a serious opening which requires a serious response. We will welcome it with the Staunton Gambit which arises after White's next move.

2. e4

White goes for the Staunton Gambit. Black will be playing a totally different game than he anticipated with his first move: a slow maneuvering game.

The Staunton Gambit is one of those annoying Anti-Dutch systems White can play on the second move. Many Black players detest them so much that they rather play 1... e6 with the risk of a French Defense, than having to face one of these systems.

White's second move opens useful lines of development. White immediately starts the fight for the initiative. White hopes to launch an attack against Black's kingside, which has been somewhat weakened by 1... f5, especially along the e8-h5 diagonal.

2... fxe4

Accepting the pawn with 2... fxe4 is the only realistic choice and is generally considered the strongest. Black is almost denied the opportunity to ignore the gambit and to decline the pawn offered. The most popular way of declining is 2... d6, transposing to the slightly dubious Balogh Defense (1. e4 d6 2. d4 f5). Other ways to decline the gambit are even rarer.

3. ♖c3

The moves 3. f3 d5! normally transpose to lines reviewed under 3. ♖c3 ♗f6 4. f3. Adrien Demuth makes a case for 3... e6, often followed by ...c5, which makes a strong impression as well.

3... ♗f6

The most natural continuation, developing a piece and defending the pawn just taken. 3... d5? fails on 4. ♔h5+. Other alternatives are playable, but lead to an easier game for White with more space and more influence in the center, without any investment in material. These alternatives will be explored in Part 2 of the book.

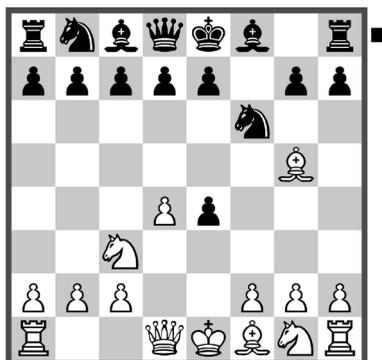
4. ♙g5

Important alternatives to the text are 4. g4 (Tartakower) and 4. f3. These options will be investigated in Part 3 of the book.

The move 4. g4 is attributed to Saviely Tartakower who won a famous 15-move game with it against Jacques Mieses, Baden-Baden 1925. It was Isidor Gunsberg who actually played it first, against Ignatz Von Popiel, Monte Carlo 1902. 4. g4 expands ambitiously on the kingside. The move is best met with 4... h6! securing the knight's position on f6. The weakness of the light squares on the black kingside is of less importance.

The move 4. f3, which treats the gambit as if it were an offshoot of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, has had quite a following among grandmasters. Big names such as Mihail Tal, Jan Hein Donner and Boris Gulko have experimented with it, albeit not on a regular basis. Black's best answer is 4... d5!. Contrary to the situation after 4. ♙g5 Black can push his d-pawn to the d5-square in one go because White has no check on h5. After 5. fxe4 dxe4 both 6. ♙c4 and 6. ♙g5 lead to interesting and open positions.

4. g4 and 4. f3 are nice surprise weapons, but if Black is properly prepared and knows his stuff, it is actually Black who is calling the shots. It will be challenging for White not to end up in a worse position.



Position after: 4. ♕g5

After 4. ♕g5 we have reached the tabiya of the Staunton Gambit. Black has to make an important decision.

4... d5? is a classic mistake, as White regains his pawn with 5. ♕xf6, 6. ♖h5+ and 7. ♗xd5, and can look forward to a superior endgame.

The move 4... e6 does not defend the pawn on e4. Black gives priority to developing quickly. After the natural 5. ♗xe4 ♕e7 6. ♕xf6 ♕xf6 positions are reached that often arise from other lines in the Dutch (2. ♗c3 or 2. ♗f3). White has several promising ways to proceed. The active one is 7. ♖h5 g6 8. ♖h6 planning a quick 0-0-0 and h4-h5. The positional one is 7. ♗f3 and 8. ♕d3 followed by 0-0 with central pressure. The game is relatively calm while both parties develop their forces. In both cases White will end up a bit better, but his advantage in the positional line is more convincing.

The move 4... c6 is an important resource against White's move. It was the way by which Black originally responded to the gambit. Today it is the third most popular move for Black in this position. Black prepares the key move 5... d5 to properly support his extra pawn on e4. At the same time, the move opens the queenside for the black queen's maneuvers. It is quite an acceptable choice theoretically, relatively easy to learn and from Black's perspective it has the advantage that it is less well-known than 4... ♗c6 and 4... g6. The strong grandmaster Mateusz Bartel has played it a number of times and Anton Korobov and Gawain Jones have also given it a try in recent years. Simon Williams recommends 4... c6 in his books on the Dutch.

The move 4... g6 came to the fore when the enthusiasm for 4... ♗c6 waned. Black not only makes himself ready for ... ♕g7 and castling on the kingside, but he also

sees to it that a future ...d5 can be executed without further preparation, as the h5-square is well-covered by his g6-pawn. That leaves the c6-square available for other purposes. Originally White aimed for an advantage in this line with a quick h4-h5-h6. A number of correspondence games have demonstrated that with some clever maneuvering Black can reach balanced positions and may even end up in endgames which are slightly better for him. The theoretical debate has since focused on 5. ♖c4, often leading to the same positions as after 5. d5. The game Leela Chess Zero – Stockfish, CCC season 13, 2020, showed that in the main line 5. ♖c4 c6 6. d5 ♖g7 7. ♗ge2 e6 8. ♗xe4 0-0 White has the important new move 9.d6!, replacing the previously played, but rather cooperative 9. dxe6 d5! with a slightly easier position for Black. After 9. d6 White will often sacrifice material, but he will have excellent compensation due to Black's underdeveloped queenside. This novelty overturned the theoretical verdict on one of the key lines with 4... g6.

The move 4... ♗c6 is the hypermodern response to the Staunton Gambit and has traditionally been the absolute main line. It has been played as many times as all the alternatives for Black on move 4 combined. The move was first played by Milan Vidmar against Victor Sjoberg, Gotenborg 1909. Over the years, the strength of this defense led to a significant decline in the popularity of the gambit. After the main moves 5. d5 ♗e5 6. ♖d4 ♗f7 the black knight stops its pilgrimage on f7. Black is theoretically in excellent shape and can even fight for an advantage. The stats after 6... ♗f7 are indeed worryingly positive for Black, a net of some 54% in his favor. That all changed when Gennadij Timoscenko introduced 6. ♖e2 in his game against Sergio Cacho Reigadas, Vendrell 1996. The new move quickly became the standard and central to the theoretical debate. This was the idea the Staunton Gambit community had been waiting for so long! White's chances for an advantage after 4... ♗c6 improved drastically. The stats were reversed and White now yields a satisfactory 58% in some 570 Chessbase games since 1996. The modern approach with 6. ♖e2 is seen as so strong that many Black theorists and players nowadays tend to prefer one of the fourth move alternatives to 4... ♗c6.

In summary, it has been very rewarding to work on such an interesting and respectable system as the Staunton Gambit. White has a simple answer to Black's ambitions in the Dutch Defense. The underlying development schemes and structures are natural and sound, i.e. White will have good gambit play. Black is generally not well-prepared for the gambit. Recent theoretical developments have significantly improved White's case. In my view the Staunton Gambit gives White excellent chances to exit the opening phase with a nice plus, both in theory as well as in practice.

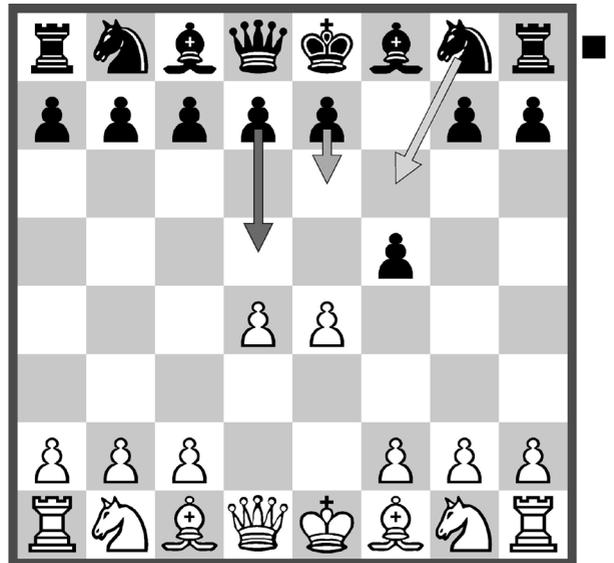
Part I

Black Declines the Gambit



Others & 2...e6

1.d4 f5 2.e4 --



Chapter Guide

Chapter 1 – Others & 2...e6

1.d4 f5 2.e4 --

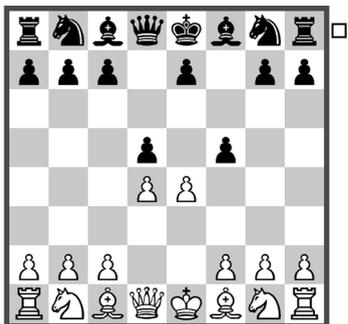
a) 2...d5.....	13
b) 2...f6.....	15
c) 2...e6 3.exf5 exf5 4. d3 --	16
d) 2...e6 3.exf5 exf5 4. d3 d5	18

a) 2...d5

1. d4 f5 2. e4

In this chapter I investigate three alternatives for Black on the second move, which appear to be very bad at first sight. And indeed, they are! White should not have any difficulties reaching a better position.

2... d5?!



Position after: 2... d5?!

The Scandinavian connection, another rogue move for Black.

3. exd5!

We do not mind playing a Scandinavian game, with a silly pawn on f5!

3... ♔xd5

The classical move in the Scandinavian.

3... ♞f6 4. ♞b5+! With an extra move

for White, it makes sense to try and stick to the extra pawn. 4... ♞bd7 [4... ♞d7 5. ♞c4 b5 6. ♞b3 a5 7. a4±] 5. c4 a6 6. ♞xd7+ ♞xd7 7. ♞f3 e6 8. dxe6 ♞xe6 9. ♔e2!



Position after: 9. ♔e2!

9... ♔e7 10. 0-0!N [10. d5 ♞f7 11. ♔xe7+ ♞xe7 12. 0-0± Zidek, V (2204) – Mrazek, L (2201) Czech Republic 2013] 10... 0-0-0 11. ♞c3 ♞e8 12. ♞f4+– White has an extra pawn and more space.

4. ♞c3



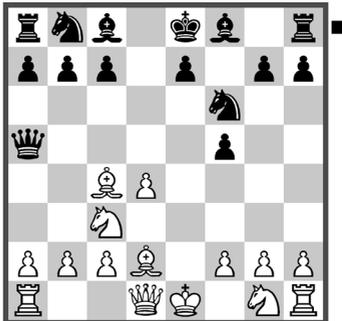
Position after: 4. ♞c3

Better this, making use of the extra move for White, instead of playing it positionally with 4. c4.

4... ♖a5

4... ♖d8 5. ♘f3 ♙e6 [5... e6 6. ♙c4 ♘c6 7. 0-0± ♘a5? 8. ♙xe6 ♙xe6 9. ♚e1 ♖d7 10. ♘g5 0-0-0 11. ♘xe6+— Koval, M (2067) – Ondo, R (2080) Slovakia 2009; 5... ♘f6 6. ♙c4 e6 7. 0-0 ♙b4 8. ♚e1±] 6. ♙d3 g6 7. ♖e2 ♙f7 8. 0-0 c6 9. ♘g5 h6 10. ♘xf7 ♙xf7 11. d5+— Budai, D (2282) – Dani, P (2118) Hungary 2010

5. ♙c4 ♘f6 6. ♙d2!



Position after: 6. ♙d2!

A standard maneuver in the Scandinavian, chasing away the black lady. The b2-pawn is poisoned.

6... c6

6... ♖b6 7. ♖e2

A) 7... ♖xb2?? 8. ♚b1 ♖xc2 [8... ♖a3 9. ♘b5+—] 9. ♙d3+—

B) 7... e6 8. 0-0-0 ♙e7 9. ♘f3 0-0 10. ♚he1+—

7. ♘f3 ♖c7

7... ♖d8?! 8. 0-0! e6 9. ♚e1+—

8. 0-0



Position after: 8. 0-0

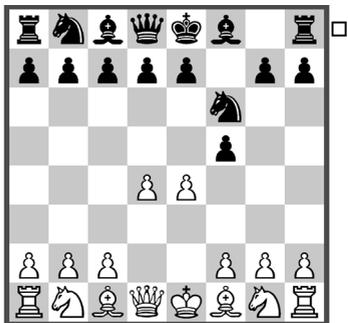
Increasing the pressure along the e-file as quickly as possible is more important than the standard 0-0-0 by White.

8... b5 9. ♙b3 e6 10. ♚e1+—

Black's position is a nightmare.

b) 2... ♞f6

1. d4 f5 2. e4 ♞f6?!



Position after: 2... ♞f6?!

The Alekhine connection, assuming White plays 3. e5, is actually quite a popular way to decline the Staunton Gambit in bullet and blitz games, not for its intrinsic value, but typically because Black has pre-moved 2... ♞f6. Nepomniachtchi has played the move recently in a rapid game and Carlsen actually tried it in bullet. I wonder whether they would dare to play it in a serious game.

3. e5

White has a luxury problem. This move might well be the easiest to play, leading to a clear advantage for White.

3... ♞d5

We have an Alekhine Defense with Black's f-pawn misplaced.

3... ♞g8 Black's knight returns to the stable empty-handed. White should now focus on quick development and opening up the position. 4. ♞c3! e6 [4... d6 5. ♙c4 dxex5 6. ♞f3!+- White sacrifices a pawn. It is clear who is calling the shots here.] 5. g4!N A maneuver known from the Dutch Stonewall. It is difficult for Black to keep his position together.

4. c4 ♞b6

4... ♞b4 5. ♞f3 e6 6. a3 ♞4c6 7. ♞c3± Delaney – Reeb, R Open – Riverside 1964

5. d5!±



Position after: 5. d5!±

White uses his extra tempo in the Alekhine to good effect. This move underlines Black's development issues. Black would wish his f-pawn was back on f7.

5... e6 6. d6!N

Other moves have been played here, but the text move is very strong. Black is completely closed in.

6... cxd6 7. exd6 ♖f6

7... ♘c6 8. ♘c3 ♕f6 9. ♘f3 h6 10. c5+-

8. ♘f3 ♘c6

8... ♘a6 9. ♘c3 e5 10. ♘b5+-

9. ♘c3 ♘e5 10. c5



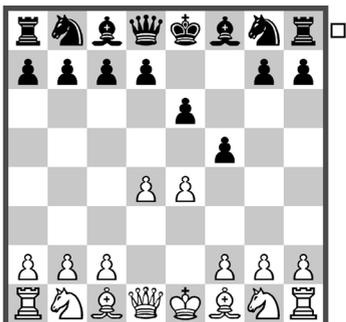
Position after: 10. c5

10... ♘xf3+ 11. ♕xf3 ♖e5+ 12. ♕e3+-

Black will soon lose a pawn in a difficult position.

c) 2...e6 3.exf5 exf5 4.♙d3 --

1. d4 f5 2. e4 e6



Position after: 2... e6

We have transposed into the Kingston Defense, named after the borough of Kingston-upon-Thames in south-west London, where Gavin Wilson lived at the time he wrote a monograph on the defense. It is an unusual chess opening

normally reached after the moves 1. e4 e6 2. d4 f5. Its first recorded game is Schiffers, E – Chigorin, M St Petersburg 1880. The first win by Black is the victory in the simultaneous game Lasker, E – Elson, F Great Britain 1892. The line fell into disuse until 1989, when the publication of Wilson's monograph suggested a repertoire of responses for Black to the principal third moves available to White, namely 3. exf5, 3. e5, 3. ♘c3, 3. ♘d2 and 3. ♙d3. With 2... e6 Black plays it cautiously, trying to maintain some presence in the center. This strategy backfires and White has no difficulties obtaining an advantage. After 3. exf5 Black's pawn on f5 hampers the natural development of Black's pieces and causes a lot of

weaknesses along the e-file and along the a2-g8 diagonal. In particular Black's light-squared bishop lacks opportunities, whereas a fianchetto creates its own problems on Black's light squares.

3. exf5!

While 3. Nc3 is by far the most popular move, the Exchange Variation of the Kingston Defense undoubtedly poses the greatest threat to the viability of Black's defense, as already mentioned by Wilson.

3... exf5

In 1998, Clyde Nakamura devised the Franco-Hiva Gambit variation of the Kingston Defense in which Black sacrifices material in exchange for a lead in development. 3... $\text{Nf6}?! 4. \text{fxe6} \text{d5} [4... \text{N}d6?!]$



Position after: 4... $\text{N}d6?!]$

This was Nakamura's original idea. 5. $\text{exd7+ Nxd7} 6. \text{Nc4+}$ Two pawns is a bit much, in Cashon, J (1835) – Nemeth, L (1463) corr 2005.] 5. $\text{Nf3 Nxe6} 6. \text{N}d3 \text{N}d6 7. \text{O-O O-O} 8. \text{Re1!+ Ng4} 9. \text{h3 Nh5} 10. \text{Nc3 Nc6} 11. \text{Ne2 Nb4}$

12. $\text{N}e5 \text{Nxe2} 13. \text{Rxe2 Nxe5} 14. \text{dxe5+}$ Cossmann, R – Gradert, G corr. 2011

4. $\text{N}d3!$



Position after: 4. $\text{N}d3!$

White develops quickly. Black has many holes along the open e-file. From here White only needs to continue his development wisely to get into an attractive position. A well-timed c2-c4 will then undermine Black's center, for example as follows.

4... g6

This has been played a few times.

A) 4... $\text{d6} 5. \text{c4 Nf6} 6. \text{Nc3 Nc6} 7. \text{Ng}e2 \text{N}e7 8. \text{O-O O-O} 9. \text{Re1+}$ L (2625) – Dolezal, M (2315) Prague 1990

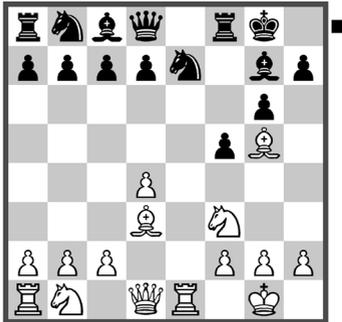
B) 4... $\text{Nf6} 5. \text{Nf3 d5}$ This is the main line again.

5. Nf3 Ng7

5... $\text{N}e7+ 6. \text{Nf1! Nf6} 7. \text{Nc3 Ng7}$

8. ♖g5 c6 9. ♔d2 0-0 10. ♜e1 ♔d8 11. h4!± White has an overwhelming attack, in Sveshnikov, E (2515) – Trajkovic, D (2230) Pula 1990.

6. 0-0 ♞e7 7. ♜e1 0-0 8. ♙g5!



Position after: 8. ♙g5!

Black is in serious trouble.

d) 2...e6 3.exf5 exf5 4. ♙d3 d5

1. d4 f5 2. e4 e6 3. exf5! exf5 4. ♙d3! d5



Position after: 4... d5

8... ♙f6

8... ♞bc6 9. d5 h6 10. ♙d2 ♞b8 11. ♔e2 ♙xb2 [11... ♜f7 12. d6 cxd6 13. ♞c3] 12. ♙c3+–

9. ♙xf6 ♜xf6 10. c4±

This was played in Shumilov, I (2175) – Evstifeev, A Dnepropetrovsk 2004.

The regular choice for Black in this position, defending the f-pawn, making room for queenside development, but at the same time creating various weaknesses along the e-file.

5. ♞f3 ♞f6

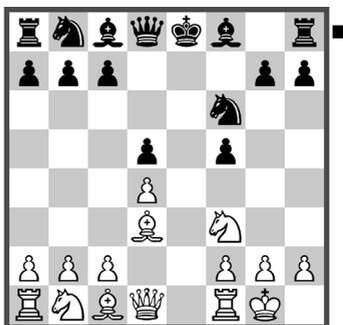
5... ♙d6 6. 0-0 ♞e7 [6... ♞f6 This transposes to the main line.] 7. c4! The standard recipe for White in this line. It emphasizes the weakness of the a2-g8 diagonal. 7... c6 8. ♞c3 0-0 9. ♔b3



Position after: 9. ♖b3

9... ♗b6 [9... ♘c7 10. ♙g5 dxc4 11. ♘xc4+ ♔h8 12. ♚fe1 ♙d6 13. ♞e5 ♘xe5 14. ♚xe5+] 10. ♗c2 c5?! 11. dxc5 ♗xc5 12. cxd5+ Sarwat, W (2310) – Al Badani, A (2155) Marrakesh 2014

6. 0-0



Position after: 6. 0-0

Black has played his pawn to d5 in order to prevent White from placing his king bishop on c4, which would make Black's kingside castling either impossible or unwise. So White has created holes on e5 and e6, which a knight on g5 can exploit to dangerous effect. Black's principal counterplay exists in moving his king knight to e4, which can be supported by maneuvering the queen knight to f6 and, if permitted, launching a pawn

storm with ...g5. If ever White nudges the knight on e4 away by playing f3, it is usually best to retreat the knight to d6.

6... ♙e7

A) 6... ♙d6?! Black insists on increasing the pain. 7. ♚e1+ ♞e4 8. c4! The same maneuver as we saw after 5... ♙d6. It is the move with which White confirms his advantage. 8... c6 9. cxd5 cxd5 10. ♗b3+– Black plays a failed Petrov Defense, in Edilsultanova, Z (1906) – Akbaev, K (2490) Nalchik 2013.

B) 6... ♞c6 7. c4! ♞b4 8. ♙g5 ♞xd3 9. ♗xd3 ♙e7 10. ♞c3 0-0 11. ♙xf6 ♙xf6 12. ♞xd5+– Jorgensen, E – Poulsen, J Denmark 2001

7. ♚e1 0-0 8. c4!



Position after: 8. c4!

White has a simple plan: playing c4 and ♗b3 to put pressure on the a2-g8 diagonal and to exploit Black's slow development on the queenside. The c2-c4 maneuver is known from similar positions in the Petrov Defense. Black's

center will soon collapse under the pressure.

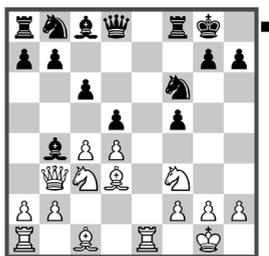
8... c6

8... ♖c6 9. cxd5 ♜b4 10. ♙c4 ♙d6 11. ♜c3 ♚h8 12. a3 ♜bxd5 13. ♙xd5 ♜xd5 14. ♜xd5+ Weber, A – Grunenberg, S (1508) Frankfurt 2009

9. ♜c3 ♜e4

Black continues playing in the manner of the Petrov Defense. The move is the most common in the position, but not necessarily the best.

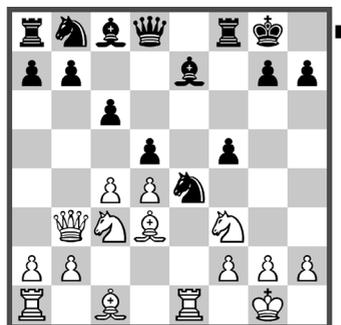
9... ♙b4 10. ♚b3!



Position after: 10. ♚b3!

10... ♙xc3 [10... ♙a5 11. ♙g5 ♚h8 12. ♚e3+–] 11. bxc3 ♜e4 [11... ♚b6 12. ♙a3 ♚e8 13. ♚xe8+ ♜xe8 14. ♙c5 ♚xb3 15. axb3 ♜a6 16. ♙e7 ♜ac7 17. c5± White has all the positional trumps: space, bishop pair and open files, in Garbowski, J (2000) – Kaczynski, M (1617) Wloclawek 2015.] 12. cxd5 cxd5 13. c4!± White is in full control.

10. ♚b3



Position after: 10. ♚b3

10... ♜xc3

10... ♚b6 11. ♙c2! White maintains the pressure against d5.

11. bxc3 ♙f6

11... ♚e8 12. ♙f4 ♜a6 13. cxd5 cxd5 14. ♚e3 ♙f6 15. ♚xe8+ ♚xe8 16. ♚xd5+ ♙e6 17. ♚xb7+– Fedorov, V (2425) – Gianopoulos, P New York 1993

12. ♙a3 ♚e8 13. ♚xe8+–

White already has a near-winning advantage. For whatever reason the game is recorded as a draw here, but White is much better, about to win a pawn and with a nice lead in development, in Virnyi, J (2081) – Eckert, M (1894) Dortmund 2011.

Conclusion

In this chapter we looked at many offbeat ways to decline the Staunton Gambit. Other than some surprise value, they do not bring Black much. White should be more than happy to face these. He will be able to obtain a much better position rather easily.

Black has a difficult task in the Kingston Defense after 2... e6 3. exf5!. Nakamura's 3... ♖f6?! is fun for blitz

and bullet games, but is not suitable for regular games. The main line goes 3... exf5 followed by ...d5 and ...♘f6 in any order. This gives Black many weaknesses along the e-file and later along the a2-g8 diagonal. Natural development of White's kingside followed by a well-timed c4, ♘c3, ♖b3 increases the pressure against Black's center and promises White a nice advantage.