

The Modernized Dutch Defense

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Adrien Demuth

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Key to Symbols

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

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Electronic/Periodical

Mega Database, Chessbase

Corr Database, Chessbase

New in Chess Yearbook, New in Chess

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Preface

Finding the right opening against 1.d4 has always been a difficult task. Keeping the balance between a solid position and having decent winning chances is very difficult. If you have experienced this problem, have you ever tried the Leningrad Variation of the Dutch Defense? When you play 1...f5, your opponent understands that you are not afraid and are out to win the game. Some White players like this, since they will also get more winning chances, but your choice might also unsettle many others.

For a long time, my trainers used to tell me that the Dutch Defense was quite dubious, and that there were many good ways to meet it and get an advantage with White. In fact the Dutch had a bad reputation in general, so they succeeded in convincing me for a while. But around 2013, some very strong players started to use it regularly; some of Kamsky's games were very impressive and even the World Champion, Magnus Carlsen, started to employ the opening occasionally. Most of the time when the Dutch appeared in top level games, Black's intention was to follow with an early ...g6, leading to the Leningrad Variation, probably the sharpest version of the opening! Now many strong grandmasters employ the Leningrad Variation from time to time.

After seeing these games which seemed to show that White was unable to find an edge in the main lines, I decided to work closely on the variation. First of all I got two of the most recent books on the Leningrad, by Malaniuk and Moskalenko, and even if I wasn't fond of every line, they were really inspiring. In 2015 I played my first games with the Leningrad. I even acquired a special feeling for this opening, because my first game with it was a win against GM Zakhartsov which was crucial in scoring my final GM norm in February 2015 at the Pfalz Open.

Since then I have included the Leningrad in my repertoire, even if only as my second or third choice main weapon, the reason being that I like to vary a lot, and I also like more positional openings.

After writing my first book almost two years ago on the Reti, I was kindly offered the opportunity by my editor to write another one on a subject of my own choosing. Obviously it was illogical to offer another repertoire for White, so the choice of the Leningrad for Black was obvious. The opening was a great source of interest to me, and I really wondered if I could devote a whole book to it. Also, I took a bet with my

editor, Daniël Vanheirzeele, who didn't believe in the Dutch at all, that I would make him like the book so much that he would play the Leningrad from the Black side. Time will tell if I have succeeded!

Throughout the book I have tried not only to look for variations where there is always life and winning chances for Black, but also to offer decent continuations, not just say that 'Black has counterplay', when he might clearly be worse, which is the case in some books.

The work presented here is designed for every player willing to improve his or her general understanding of the Dutch Defense, especially of the Leningrad Variation, with both colors. It provides a full repertoire for Black not only against 1.d4, but also against 1.c4 and 1.♘f3. I believe that the material offered here can help players from club level to GM level, and I hope you will enjoy reading it as much I did writing it!

Adrien Demuth
Arpaillargues, June 2019

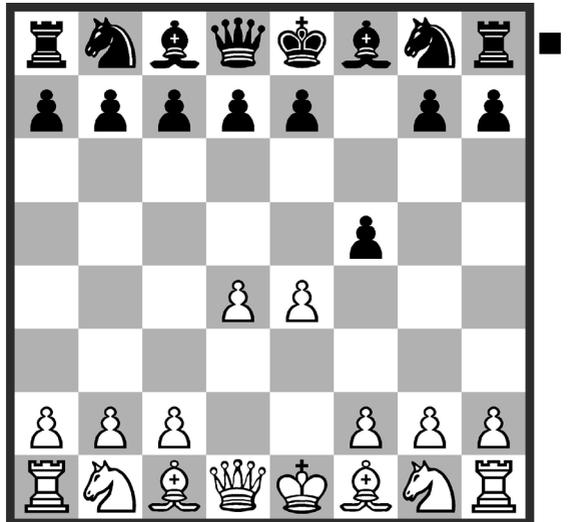
Part I

Early Sidelines after 1.d4 f5



The Staunton Gambit

1.d4 f5 2.e4



Chapter Guide

Chapter 1 – The Staunton Gambit

1.d4 f5 2.e4 fxe4

a) 3.f3 13

b) 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.g4?! 16

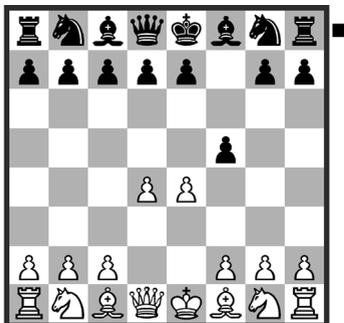
c) 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♙g5 ♘c6..... 19

d) 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♙g5 g6 5.--..... 23

e) 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♙g5 g6 5.h4 27

a) 3.f3

1. d4 f5 2. e4!?



Position after: 2. e4!?

Where better to start our work on the Dutch Defense than with the Staunton Gambit! Staunton was the first player to use this direct way to try to refute our system. He played it only once (to win a game in his match against Horwitz in 1846), but nevertheless chess literature retained his name for the opening. Even if it's a rare guest in top-level games, Black has to be careful, as it's easy to fall into a trap.

2... fxe4

Of course we have to accept the gift.

3. f3

I think it's illogical to start with this move, but it happens from time to time. It's reminiscent of the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit, except that Black hasn't moved any central pawn yet.

3... e6!?

I like this less-known approach, especially because we don't get two ugly (even if quite strong) d-pawns. The idea is generally to continue with ...c7-c5!

3... d5



Position after: 3... d5

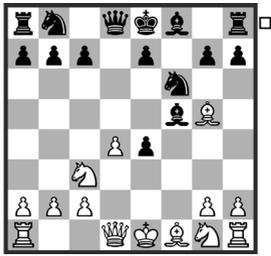
This is the move recommended by theory, and is completely playable. 4. fxe4 [4. c4 e6 5. ♘c3 ♙b4 6. a3 ♙xc3+ 7. bxc3 ♘f6; 4. ♘c3 ♘f6 5. fxe4 dxe4 transposes to 4.fxe4] 4... dxe4



Position after: 4... dxe4

This may seem quite ugly for Black, but he has an extra pawn and will probably be able to put pressure on the center

and disrupt White's development with the e4-pawn. 5. Nc3 [5. Sc4 Nf6 6. Ne2 Nc6!] 5... Nf6 6. Sc5 [6. Sc4 Nc6 7. Nge2 Scg4] 6... $\text{Scf5!$



Position after: 6... $\text{Scf5!$

A) 7. $\text{Qe2?!$ Placing the queen in front of the bishop definitely looks strange. 7... Nc6 8. Scxf6 exf6 9. 0-0 Qd7! 10. Sc3 Scb4

B) 7. Sc4 Nc6 8. Nge2 e6 Black is able to consolidate his center and has no problems at all. 9. 0-0 [9. d5 Na5 10. Scb5+ c6 11. dxc6 bxc6 12. Qxd8+ Kxd8] 9... $\text{Sc7!$ 10. Sc3 [10. Qe1 Na5 ; 10. d5? Nxd5!] 10... $\text{Ng4!$



Position after: 10... $\text{Ng4!$

Black trades the dark-squared bishops. The idea is to be able to bring the knight to e3, but it also allows him to accelerate queenside castling.

11. Scxe7 Qxe7 12. Qd2 0-0-0

C) 7. Nge2 e6 8. Ng3 Sc7 9. Qd2 Nbd7! I prefer Black here, partly because it's still not clear how White will restore the material balance.



Position after: 3... e6!

4. Nc3

The most played move.

A) 4. Nd2 is the computer's suggestion and has been tried a couple of times, but I still like Black after 4... c5! 5. fxe4 [5. dxc5 Nf6 6. fxe4 Nc6 7. Ngf3 Scxc5 8. Nb3 Scb6] White probably regrets his early f2-f3 .] 5... cxd4 6. Ngf3 Nc6 7. Scb5 Nh6! ? An interesting maneuver, to keep the dark squares under control. 8. 0-0 Nf7 9. Nb3 g6 10. Nfxd4 Scg7

B) 4. fxe4? Qh4+ 5. Qe2 Qxe4+ 6. Qf2 c5 Even if White is not totally lost here, his opening has been a big failure.

C) 4. Scf4 c5!

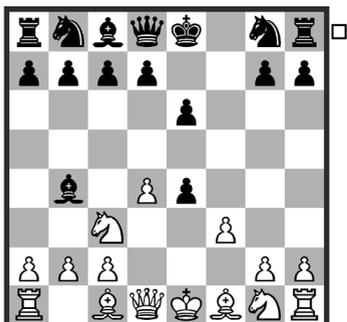


Position after: 4... c5!N

White has weakened the dark squares, so it's logical to strike back directly with the idea of opening the a7-g1 diagonal.

5. ♖c3 [5. dxc5 ♙xc5 6. ♖c3 ♘f6 7. fxe4 0-0] 5... cxd4 6. ♘b5 ♙a5+ 7. ♙d2 ♙xd2+ 8. ♙xd2 ♘a6 9. fxe4 ♙b4+ 10. ♙c1 ♘f6

4... ♙b4!



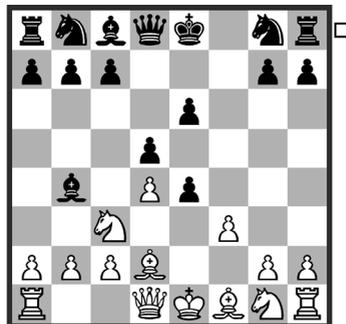
Position after: 4... ♙b4!

5. ♙d2

A) 5. ♘h3?! exf3 6. ♙xf3 ♙h4+ 7. g3 ♙xd4 Two extra central pawns are simply too much. White doesn't even have an advantage in development.

B) 5. ♙e2 ♘c6!N 6. ♙e3 ♘f6

5... d5!N



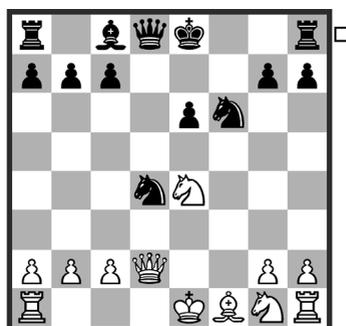
Position after: 5... d5!N

I believe that, played now, this is an improvement over the lines with 3... d5.

6. ♙e2

6. a3 ♙xc3 7. ♙xc3 ♘c6 8. ♙e2 ♘f6 9. 0-0-0 0-0

6... ♘c6 7. fxe4 ♘xd4 8. ♙d3 dxe4 9. ♘xe4 ♙xd2+ 10. ♙xd2 ♘f6

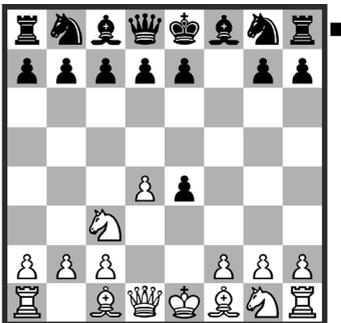


Position after: 10... ♘f6

Black has managed to keep his extra pawn and has the better prospects.

b) 3. ♘c3 ♘f6 4.g4?!

1. d4 f5 2. e4!? fxe4 3. ♘c3



Position after: 3. ♘c3

In most games White starts with this move, which is going to be our main continuation.

3... ♘f6

3... d5? This is the classical mistake and you have to keep the pattern in mind: 4. ♖h5+ g6 5. ♕xd5±.

4. g4?!

I believe this is objectively wrong, but Black has to play a slightly illogical – to my eyes – move.

4. f3 d5 transposes to the line 3. f3 d5 that we covered earlier.

4... h6!

This is the kind of move Black usually doesn't want to make!



Position after: 4... h6!

It weakens the kingside, and if a bishop was miraculously dropped on to g6, the outcome would be painful. But be assured, it won't happen.

5. f3

A) 5. ♖g2 This might seem the logical follow-up, but it's not strong enough. 5... d5!±

B) 5. h4 d5 6. ♖h3



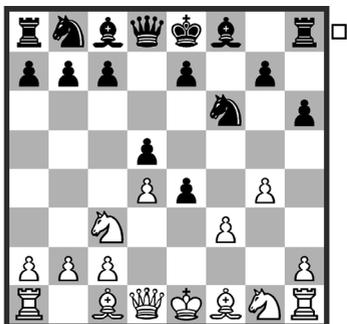
Position after: 6. ♖h3

6... ♘c6! [6... g5!? is an appealing option as well, and the position can soon get crazy.] 7. g5?! ♖xh3 8. ♘xh3 hxg5

9. $\text{N}xg5$ [9. $\text{h}xg5$ $\text{Q}d7!$ 10. $\text{g}xf6$ $\text{e}xf6$ → The knight is lost, and so is White's position.] 9... $\text{Q}d6$ ±

C) 5. $\text{g}5$ $\text{h}xg5$ 6. $\text{Q}xg5$ $\text{d}5$ 7. $\text{f}3$ – see the line 5. $\text{f}3$ $\text{d}5$ 6. $\text{g}5$ $\text{h}xg5$ 7. $\text{Q}xg5$.

5... $\text{d}5!$



Position after: 5... $\text{d}5!$

6. $\text{h}3$

This has been by far the most played move by White, but without much success.

A) 6. $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{c}5!$ It's clear here that, as often, when one faces a flank attack, one must react in the center. 7. $\text{f}xe4$ [7. $\text{d}xc5$ $\text{N}c6$ 8. $\text{f}xe4$ $\text{Q}xg4$ 9. $\text{Q}f3$ $\text{Q}xf3$ 10. $\text{Q}xf3$ $\text{d}4$ ±] 7... $\text{c}xd4$ 8. $\text{N}xd5$ [8. $\text{e}5?$! $\text{d}xc3$ 9. $\text{e}xf6$ $\text{e}xf6$ ±] 8... $\text{N}c6$ 9. $\text{N}h3$ $\text{e}6$ ±

B) 6. $\text{Q}f4$ $\text{c}5$ 7. $\text{N}b5$ $\text{N}a6$ 8. $\text{d}xc5$ $\text{e}5$ 9. $\text{Q}xe5$ $\text{Q}xc5$ ±

C) White remains worse after 6. $\text{g}5$

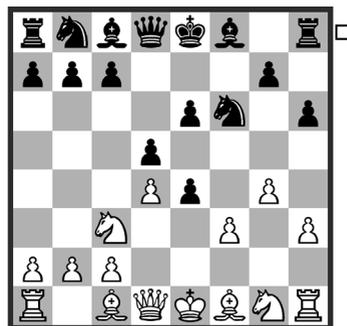
$\text{h}xg5$ 7. $\text{Q}xg5$ $\text{Q}f5$ 8. $\text{Q}g2$ $\text{N}c6!$ 9. $\text{f}xe4$ $\text{N}xe4$ 10. $\text{Q}xe4$ $\text{Q}xe4$ 11. $\text{N}xe4$ $\text{d}xe4$ 12. $\text{d}5$ $\text{N}b4$ ±.

D) 6. $\text{f}xe4$ Slightly illogical since $\text{g}4$ is no longer protected.

D1) 6... $\text{e}5?$ has been played by a strong grandmaster, but it fails to convince the computer, and White followed with a powerful sequence: 7. $\text{g}5!$ $\text{h}xg5$ 8. $\text{d}xe5$ $\text{Q}g4$ 9. $\text{Q}e2$ $\text{Q}xe2$ 10. $\text{Q}xe2$ $\text{N}xe4$ 11. $\text{N}xe4$ $\text{d}xe4$ 12. $\text{Q}xe4$ ± ½-½ (30) Kasyan, A (2348) – Miroshnichenko, E (2670), Tashkent 2011.

D2) 6... $\text{d}xe4$ Simplest is best here. 7. $\text{h}3$ $\text{N}c6$ 8. $\text{Q}e3$ $\text{e}6$ 9. $\text{Q}d2$ $\text{Q}b4$ ±

6... $\text{e}6!$



Position after: 6... $\text{e}6!$

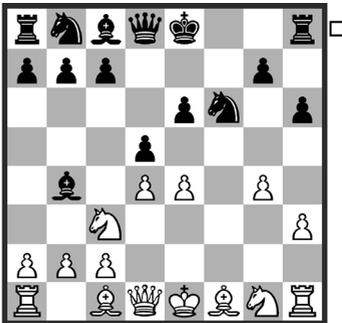
As $\text{g}4$ is no longer a target, we can change our mind and develop our dark-squared bishop.

7. $\text{f}xe4$

White tries to destroy Black's pawn structure, but things are not that simple.

7. ♖g2 c5! 8. fxe4 cxd4 9. ♔xd4 ♘c6
10. ♔a4 ♙b4

7... ♙b4!N



Position after: 7... ♙b4!N

This is the point: Black can take advantage of White's lack of development and the holes in his camp.

8. g5!

The only challenging move, otherwise it's not difficult for Black to be better.

8. e5 ♘e4+ ... ♘xc3 and ... ♔h4 are two threats which are hard to parry.

8... 0-0!!

(see diagram next column)

A very strong sacrifice. Black bets everything on his attack.



Position after: 8... 0-0!!

9. gxf6

9. gxf6 e5! [9... ♘xe4 is fine as well, but I prefer this beautiful move.] 10. ♖g5 [10. hxg7 ♔f7! 11. ♖g5 ♔d6] The queen is heading to g3, and White is in deep trouble.] 10... gxh6 11. ♖h4 ♘c6

9... ♔xf6 10. ♘ge2!

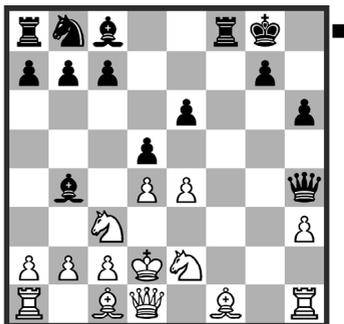
10. ♔e2 ♘c6!



Position after: 10... ♘c6!

11. ♖e3 [11. ♔g2 e5! 12. dxe5 ♔h4+ 13. ♔d1 ♘xe5+] 11... ♘xd4 12. ♖xd4 ♔xd4+

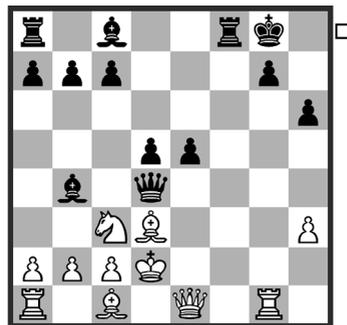
10... ♔h4+ 11. ♔d2



Position after: 11. ♔d2

I don't think many players would like to play this as White. Black needs to be precise, as he is a piece down, but objectively he has more than enough compensation.

11... ♖c6 12. ♔e1 ♜xe4 13. ♜g1
 ♘xd4 14. ♘xd4 ♜xd4+ 15. ♙d3 e5+

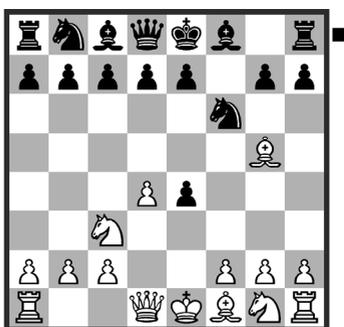


Position after: 15... e5+

I doubt that White will hold this for very long.

c) 3. ♘c3 ♘f6 4. ♙g5 ♘c6

1. d4 f5 2. e4!? fxe4 3. ♘c3 ♘f6 4.
 ♙g5!



Position after: 4. ♙g5!

This is the main continuation. It is hard to give global advice in this kind of position as the play is far too concrete. It may also be difficult to remember the

critical lines, as you might encounter this only about once a year. That is partly why I decided to choose quite a simple line here, based on healthy principles, instead of more abstract lines. But first, let's discuss one of the main lines before moving on to my main recommendation, 4... g6, in the next subchapter.

4... ♘c6!?

Even if it's not the line I would play, I'll give you the gist of my analysis if you want to investigate it.

A) In one of the first games where the Staunton Gambit occurred, Black went