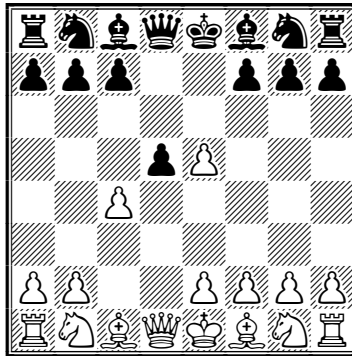


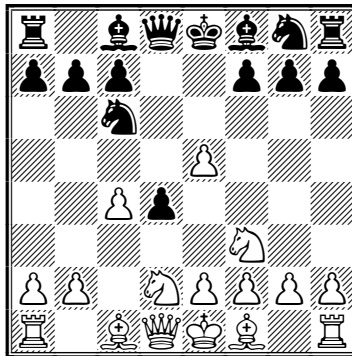
## Against the Albin Countergambit

1.d4 d5; 2.c4 e5; 3.dxe5



*Position after 3.dxe5*

The Albin Countergambit can give Black a serious initiative. White can obtain a lasting advantage by playing cautiously and not too greedily. **3...d4**; **4.Nf3 Nc6**; **5.Nbd2**. This is the most flexible approach. White can later adopt the kingside fianchetto seen in most of the main lines, but there is also the option to send the knight to b3. Black will find it very difficult to achieve sufficient compensation for the pawn. We'll look at a number of plans for Black.



*Position after 5.Nbd2*

**A) 5...Bg4.** This is the only move to prevent the Nb3 plan. **6.Qb3!** 6.Nb3 is premature. 6...Bxf3; 7.exf3 Bb4+ brought Black equality in Seitz vs. Zirker, Berlin 1920. **6...Bb4.** Black blocks the b-file, not that White was actually pawn-hunting on the queenside.

a) 6...Nge7; 7.h3! No need to gobble poisoned pawns! 7...Bf5; 8.a3 Rb8; 9.g4 Bg6; 10.e4 h5; 11.g5 and White is clearly better. The bishop at g6 looks pathetic, and it isn't clear how the Black king can find safety. Ivanov vs. Tarasevich, Moscow 1965.

b) 6...Rb8 is a Chigorinish reply, but it does not impress. 7.h3 Bf5; 8.g4 Be6; 9.e3 and Black is down a pawn and behind in development.

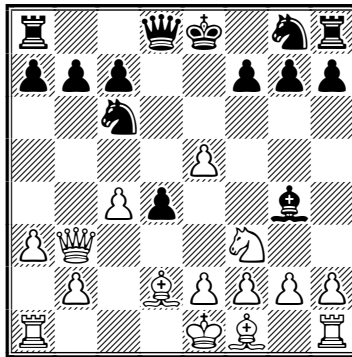
**7.a3 Bxd2+; 8.Bxd2.** Frank Marshall's move.

8.Nxd2 is usually played but Black usually manages to get compensation, for example 8...Nge7; 9.Qg3 Qd7; 10.h3 Be6 (Or 10...Bf5, which also leads to promising play. 11.Qxg7 Rg8; 12.Qf6 Rg6; 13.Qh4 Nxe5 is countered by 14.f4! N5c6; 15.g4. White has to do something to secure the king in the long run. 15...O-O-O! 16.gxf5

Nxf5; 17.Qf2 Ne3 threatens an immediate draw by repetition carried out by the knight alone.) 11.Qxg7 Taking this pawn seems safe enough. 11...O-O-O; 12.Qf6 Nf5 and now

13.g4?? gets clobbered. 13...Ne3!!; 14.fxe3 dxe3; 15.Qf4 Nd4; 16.Qe4 exd2+; 17.Bxd2 Nb3; 18.Rd1?? (18.Bg5 is a bit better, but Black is still in charge after 18...Nxa1; 19.Bg2 c6.) 18...Nxd2; 19.Qc2 Qc6 White resigned, Grekov vs. Nenarokov, 1922.

After the superior 13.Ne4 d3, Black has full compensation after 14.exd3 Ncd4!



*Position after 8.Bxd2*

### 8...Nge7!?

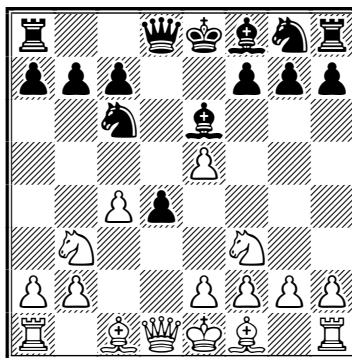
8...Rb8; 9.Bg5 Nge7; 10.O-O-O O-O; 11.e3! Re8; 12.Be2 gave White an excellent game in Marshall vs. Showalter, United States Championship match, 1909.

8...Qc8; 9.O-O-O Nge7; 10.Bg5 Nf5; 11.h3! Bxf3; 12.exf3 h6; 13.Bd2 Nfe7 (13...Nxe5?? drops the knight to 14.Re1.) 14.f4 Black is a pawn down, White has the bishop pair and easier development. Marshall vs. Reggio, Monte Carlo 1903.

**9.Bg5!?** Or 9.h3 Bxf3; 10.exf3 Nxe5; 11.f4 Nd7; 12.Qxb7 O-O; is less clear. 9...Bxf3; 10.exf3 Nxe5; 11.Qb5+. Material is even, but White has the bishop pair and Black's advanced d-pawn is a target. So White has the better chances.

**B) 5...Be6** is well met by **6.Nb3!** A strong gambit. **6...Bxc4**. Objectively best, since the alternative 6...Bb4+; 7.Bd2 Qe7; 8.Nbxd4 Nxd4; 9.Nxd4 O-O-O; 10.Nf3 gave White a small but persistent advantage in Isaksson vs. Muir, Postal 1960.

**7.Nbxd4** with a number of options.



*Position after 7.Nbxd4*

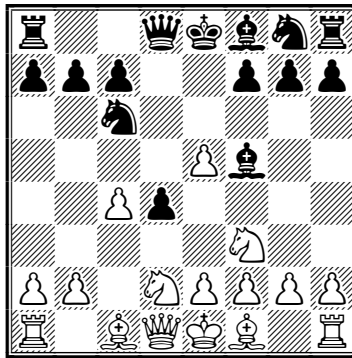
a) 7...Qd7; 8.Nxc6 Qxc6; 9.Bd2! is very nice for White.

b) 7...Qd5 is treated in similar fashion. 8.Nxc6 Qxc6; 9.Bd2! Qb6; 10.Qa4+ Bb5; 11.Qa5 O-O-O; 12.Qxb6 axb6; 13.e3 left Black without any compensation for the pawn in Chalupetzky vs. Bauer, Postal 1986.

c) 7...Bc5; 8.Qa4! Bd5; 9.Nxc6 Bxc6; 10.Qg4 White keeps the pawn, and the initiative. Development is a bit behind, but White's pieces will emerge quickly.

**7...Nxd4; 8.Qxd4 Qxd4; 9.Nxd4 Rd8.** If Black castles, the open c-file could be a problem. **10.Nc2 Ne7; 11.e3 Bxf1.** 11...Bd5; 12.Bd2 Ng6; 13.f4 Be7; 14.Rg1 f6?! Black should exercise more patience. 15.exf6 Bxf6; 16.Bc3 Bxc3+; 17.bxc3. White still has the extra pawn and will be able to develop. Alapin vs. Leonhardt, Barmen 1905. **12.Rxf1 Nc6; 13.f4.** White's advantage is indisputable, Guimard vs. Piazzini, Argentine Championship 1938.

**C) 5...Bf5!?** is also countered by **6.Nb3** with a similar number of options for Black:



*Position after 6.Nb3*

**6...Bb4+.**

a) 6...Qd7 doesn't work: 7.Nbxd4! Bb4+; 8.Bd2 Nxd4; 9.Nxd4 Qxd4; 10.Qa4+ c6; 11.Qxb4 where Black is in trouble.

b) 6...g6 hopes to make use of the long diagonal, but the bishop doesn't sit well at g7. 7.Nbxd4 Nxd4; 8.Nxd4 Bg7; 9.Nxf5! Qxd1+; 10.Kxd1 gxf5; 11.f4 O-O-O+ 12.Kc2 gave White two extra pawns in Gaier vs. Heckmann, Ladenburg 1992.

c) 6...f6 Offers a true gambit, but it isn't sound. 7.Nbxd4 Bb4+; 8.Bd2 Nxd4; 9.Nxd4 Qxd4; 10.Qa4+ Qd7; 11.Qxb4 is much better for White, who will keep at least one of the extra pawns.

**7.Bd2 Qe7**

7...Be7; 8.Bf4! Bb4+; 9.Nbd2 Nge7; 10.a3 Bxd2+; 11.Qxd2 Qd7; 12.Rd1 O-O-O; 13.b4 intending b5 was given in the *Encyclopedia of Chess Openings*.

7...Nge7; 8.Nbxd4 O-O; 9.Bxb4 Nxb4; 10.a3 Nbc6; 11.Nxf5 Nxf5; 12.e4 and Black has compensation for one pawn, but not two, Hickl vs. Musielak, Postal 1987.

7...d3!?!; 8.exd3! Bxd3; 9.Bxd3 Qxd3 might be countered by 10.Qe2 Qxe2+; 11.Kxe2 which is surely better for White.

**8.Nbxd4 Nxe5; 9.Nxe5.** We believe that this move secures a significant advantage for White. 9...Bxd2+; 10.Qxd2 Qxe5; 11.Nxf5 Qxf5; 12.Rd1. It is hard to believe anyone would want to play this line for Black.

**51 ALBIN COUNTERGAMBIT: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 d4 4.Nf3 Nc6**

**D08**

|    | <b>5</b>    | <b>6</b>     | <b>7</b>       | <b>8</b>       | <b>9</b>       | <b>10</b>    | <b>11</b>    | <b>12</b>    |     |
|----|-------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----|
| 1  | Nbd2<br>Be6 | Nb3!<br>Bb4+ | Bd2<br>Qe7     | Nbxd4<br>Nxd4  | Nxd4<br>O-O-O  | Nf3          |              |              |     |
| 2  | Nbd2<br>Be6 | Nb3!<br>Bxc4 | Nbxd4<br>Qd5   | Nxc6<br>Qxc6   | Bd2!<br>Qb6    | Qa4+<br>Bb5  | Qa5<br>O-O-O | Qxb6<br>axb6 | e3  |
| 3  | Nbd2<br>Be6 | Nb3!<br>Bxc4 | Nbxd4<br>Bc5   | Qa4!<br>Bd5    | Nxc6<br>Bxc6   | Qg4          |              |              |     |
| 4  | Nbd2<br>Be6 | Nb3!<br>Bxc4 | Nbxd4<br>Nxd4  | Qxd4<br>Qxd4   | Nxd4<br>Rd8    | Nc2<br>Ne7   | e3<br>Bd5    | Bd2<br>Ng6   | Ba5 |
| 5  | Nbd2<br>Be6 | Nb3!<br>Bxc4 | Nbxd4<br>Nxd4  | Qxd4<br>Qxd4   | Nxd4<br>Rd8    | Nc2<br>Ne7   | e3<br>Bxf1   | Rxf1<br>Nc6  | f4  |
| 6  | Nbd2<br>Bf5 | Nb3<br>Bb4+  | Bd2<br>d3!?    | exd3!<br>Bxd3  | Bxd3<br>Qxd3   | Qe2<br>Qxe2+ | Kxe2         |              |     |
| 7  | Nbd2<br>Bf5 | Nb3<br>Bb4+  | Bd2<br>Qe7     | Nbxd4<br>Nxe5  | Nxe5<br>Bxd2+  | Qxd2<br>Qxe5 | Nxf5<br>Qxf5 | Rd1          |     |
| 8  | Nbd2<br>Bf5 | Nb3<br>g6    | Nbxd4<br>Nxd4  | Nxd4<br>Bg7    | Nxf5!<br>Qxd1+ | Kxd1<br>gxf5 | f4<br>O-O-O+ | Kc2          |     |
| 9  | Nbd2<br>Bf5 | Nb3<br>Qd7   | Nbxd4!<br>Bb4+ | Bd2<br>Nxd4    | Nxd4<br>Qxd4   | Qa4+<br>c6   | Qxb4         |              |     |
| 10 | Nbd2<br>Bg4 | Qb3<br>Nge7  | h3!<br>Bf5     | a3<br>Rb8      | g4<br>Bg6      | e4<br>h5     | g5           |              |     |
| 11 | Nbd2<br>Bg4 | Qb3<br>Rb8   | h3<br>Bf5      | g4<br>Be6      | e3             |              |              |              |     |
| 12 | Nbd2<br>Bg4 | Qb3<br>Bb4   | a3<br>Bxd2+    | Bxd2<br>Rb8    | Bg5<br>Nge7    | O-O-O<br>O-O | e3!<br>Re8   | Be2          |     |
| 13 | Nbd2<br>Bg4 | Qb3<br>Bb4   | a3<br>Bxd2+    | Bxd2<br>Qc8    | O-O-O<br>Nge7  | Bg5<br>Nf5   | h3!<br>Bxf3  | exf3<br>h6   | Bd2 |
| 14 | Nbd2<br>Bg4 | Qb3<br>Bb4   | a3<br>Bxd2+    | Bxd2<br>Nge7!? | h3<br>Bxf3     | exf3<br>Nxe5 | Qxb7<br>Rb8  | Qe4          |     |
| 15 | Nbd2<br>Bg4 | Qb3<br>Bb4   | a3<br>Bxd2+    | Bxd2<br>Nge7!? | Bg5<br>Bxf3    | exf3<br>Nxe5 | Qb5+<br>N5c6 | O-O-O        |     |