

PREFACE

The advanced variation of the Caro-Kann Defence (1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5) attracted for the first time the attention of the chess theoreticians during the World Championship match between Mikhail Tal and Mikhail Botvinnik back in the year 1961.

White seems to lose a tempo for the move 3.e5, but closes the centre in this way, providing himself with a considerable space advantage and impeding the harmonious development of Black's kingside. The pawn-structure, which we analyse in this book, resembles a bit the closed variation of the French Defence (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5), but with the difference that Black, contrary to what happens in the French Defence, can develop his "bad" light-squared "French" bishop to the f5-square.

Black often tries the immediate undermining move 3...c5, but still we have to assume that his main line is connected with 3...f5. The forthcoming fight is centred more or less around space and although he has no obvious weaknesses, Black's position is a bit cramped. Therefore, in the majority of the variations, the evaluation of the position depends on the consequences of the undermining move c6-c5, creating more space for Black's pieces. Still, he has some other schemes in which he is trying to complete his development without playing immediately this undermining move. White often tries to seize the initiative on the kingside by advancing his pawns there in front of his own king. As a rule, he usually begins this by playing with tempo the move g2-g4.

The advanced variation of the Caro-Kann Defence is a very good alternative to the classical variation 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f2d2 (or 3.f2c3) dxe4 4.fxe4 f5 (4...f7). The theory after 3.e5 has developed extensively nowadays too; nevertheless, the positions of the advanced variation are considerably less studied than those in the classical lines, in which there is much less practical fight and much more a comparison of thorough theoretical erudition.

Naturally, I do not intend to assert that the move 3.e5 is better than the classical schemes for White. Still, my long-term experience in play-

ing the Caro-Kann Defence with Black has shown to me that his problems in this variation are not easy to solve at all. I hope this book will be very useful for the adherents to the Caro-Kann Defence, since it would help them to understand better the difficulties they would have to cope with.

The variation, we analyse in this book, often leads to non-standard situations on the board, so I would recommend it to players who are inclined to enter complicated and unusual positions and who hope to seize the initiative and to maintain it skilfully.

I believe this book will turn out to be a wonderful guide for my readers in the advanced variation of the Caro-Kann Defence...

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