

**The Modernized Nimzo –
Queen's Gambit Declined
Systems**

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Systems**

Milos Pavlovic

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






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Key to Symbols used

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

Preface

If you want to play like the best players in the world then playing the Queen's Gambit Declined is the right choice. Learning it, though, is a difficult process, as it involves a certain amount of knowledge that you won't find easy. It is not regarded as a particularly sharp opening, but missing one small detail can easily land you in a passive position. Although books on the subject are rare, when we look at all the matches for the World Championship we see that the Queen's Gambit Declined has always been one of the most popular openings, thus knowledge of the positions arising is the knowledge of the best players. A combination of the Queen's Gambit Declined and Nimzo-Indian is considered one of the best ways to play against 1.d4, 1.c4 or 1.♘f3.

Endgames and simplified positions are largely underestimated in today's chess, where engines and forced lines have taken over, but in my opinion simplicity is the best way. Simplicity doesn't mean a lack of ideas; on the contrary it means fine ideas carried out in a simple, harmonious way. To achieve this is true mastery of chess.

Capablanca, Lasker, Alekhine, Spassky, Karpov, Kramnik and Anand are just a few of the former World Champions who used the Queen's Gambit Declined on a regular basis and introduced many completely new ideas. Others have also analysed it extensively, e.g. the Tartakower line (not the subject of this book) was enriched by the Russian Makagonov, whom Bronstein once described to me as a remarkable theoretician.

In this book I present the Nimzo-Indian and Catalan in order to cover all aspects of ...♘f6/...e6 play. I often searched for more dynamic solutions when the positions permitted to make the book more comprehensive and to try to cover aspects specific to those openings. Also, I deliberately connected the Capablanca line in the Nimzo with the ♙f4 system in the Queen's Gambit Declined, an interesting combination that I noticed a long time ago, but didn't see many players use. The reason for that is also logical; not everyone who plays the Nimzo plays the Queen's Gambit Declined, so players who do play the Queen's Gambit Declined might find this an interesting idea.

Milos Pavlovic, Belgrade, January 2018.

Part I:

Queen's Gambit

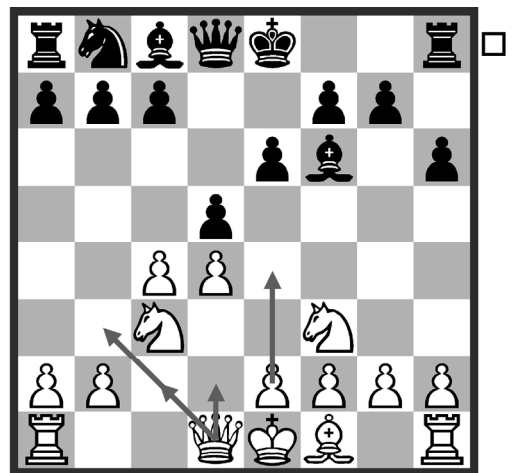
Declined

5.  g5 h6 6.  xf6







Queen's Gambit Declined (with 5. ♖g5 & 6. ♖xf6), Other 7th moves

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5
4. ♘c3 ♙e7 5. ♖g5 h6
6. ♖xf6 ♙xf6 7.--



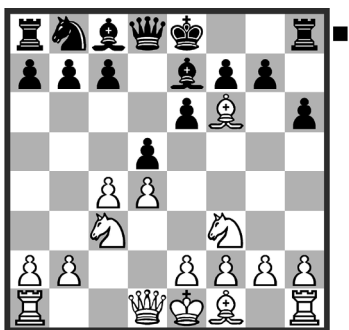
Chapter's guide

Queen's Gambit Declined (with 5. g5 & 6. xf6) Chapter 1 – Other 7th moves

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b) 7.  d2	15
c) 7.  b3.....	18
d) 7.  c2 dxc4 8.--	23
e) 7.  c2 dxc4 8.e3	26

a) 7.e4?!

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. ♖g5 ♗e7 5. ♗c3 h6 6. ♗xf6!?



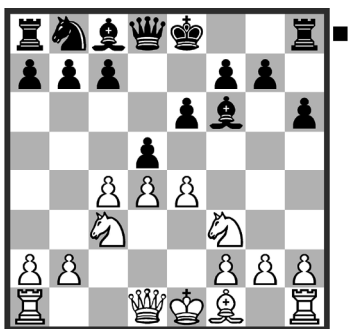
Position after: 6. ♗xf6!?

This is the main alternative to 6. ♗h4 if White wants to avoid the Classical QGD.

6... ♗xf6

White has many lines here. The main line, 7.e3, will be covered in chapters 2 and 3.

7. e4?!



Position after: 7. e4?!

Too early. This is an old line which has been known for a long time to only create problems for White. The only way to go e4 is after ♙c2.

7... dxe4 8. ♘xe4

The position resembles a more favourable version of the 3. ♗c3 ♘f6 4. ♖g5 dxe4 line of the French for Black.

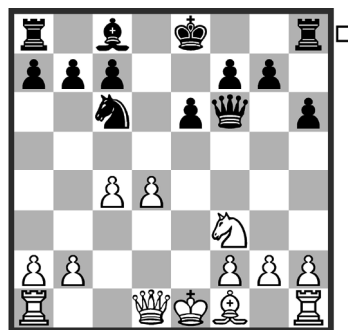
8... ♘c6!

An important move to remember; White has no time for 0-0-0.

9. ♘xf6+

9. d5 ♘e5 10. ♖e2 0-0 11. ♙b3 exd5 12. cxd5 c6= 0-1 (62) Romanishin, O (2610) – Geller, E (2590) Tbilisi 1978.

9... ♙xf6

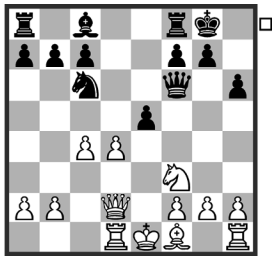


Position after: 9... ♙xf6

10. ♙d3

Probably the only critical move, directed against ...0-0. White wants to play ♖e4 and ♕d3. Now Black can go for ...b6/...♗b7 and ...0-0-0.

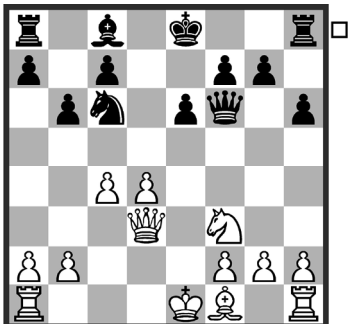
10. ♖d2 0-0 11. ♗d1 (11. 0-0-0 e5 12. d5 e4=; 11. ♖c3 e5! 12. dxe5 ♗e8 13. 0-0-0 ♘xe5 14. ♘xe5 ♗xe5 15. ♗d8+ ♖xd8 16. ♖xe5 ♗e6= ½-½ (25) Nikolic, P (2485) – Rukavina, J (2450) Vrbas 1982; 11. ♖e3 ♘b4 12. ♖b3 c5 13. dxc5 ♘a6 14. 0-0-0 ♘xc5 15. ♖e3 b6 1-0 (28) Matulovic, M – Ivkov, B Sousse 1967) 11... e5!



Position after: 11... e5!

12. dxe5 ♘xe5 13. ♘xe5 ♖xe5+ 14. ♗e2 ♗g4 1- Black is already better.

10... b6!



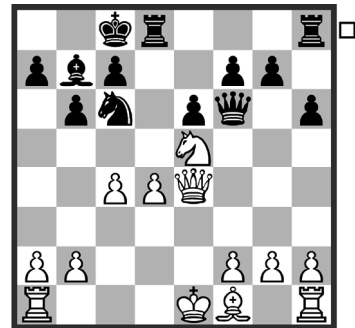
Position after: 10... b6!

As in the ♖d2 line this is very strong here. Black increases the pressure in the best possible way.

11. ♖e4

11. 0-0-0 ♗b7 12. d5 (12. ♗e2 0-0-0 13. ♖e3 ♘e7 14. g4 ♖b8=) 12... exd5! Simplest. 13. cxd5 ♘e7 14. ♖b5+ c6 15. dxc6 ♗xc6 16. ♖e5 ♗c8 17. ♖xf6 gxf6 18. ♖b1 ♗g8! Black is better.

11... ♗b7 12. ♘e5 0-0-0!



Position after: 12... 0-0-0!

13. ♘xc6 ♗d6 14. ♘xa7+

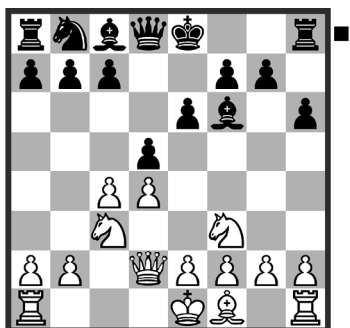
14. d5? ♗xc6 15. dxc6 ♖xb2+–

14... ♖b8 15. ♖e5 ♖xa7 16. 0-0-0 ♗hd8=

½-½ (16) Ghitescu, T (2390) – Geller, E (2505) Palma de Mallorca 1989.

b) 7. ♖d2

1. ♖f3 d5 2. d4 ♗f6 3. c4 e6 4. ♖c3
 ♗e7 5. ♗g5 h6 6. ♗xf6 ♗xf6 7. ♖d2!?



Position after: 7. ♖d2!?

The idea is to play e4, if ...0-0, when our line with ...Nc6 is incorrect.

7... dxc4!

The correct reaction, as usual.

8. e4

8. e3 0-0 transposes to 8. ♖d2.

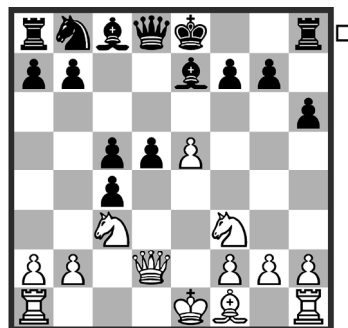
8... c5 9. d5

9. e5 cxd4

9... exd5 10. e5

10. ♖xd5 isn't dangerous: 10... ♗c6 11. ♗xc4 0-0 12. 0-0 ♗g4 13. ♖f4 ♗xf3

10... ♗e7!?

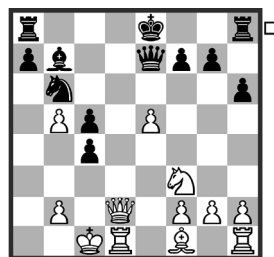


Position after: 10... ♗e7!?

11. ♖xd5

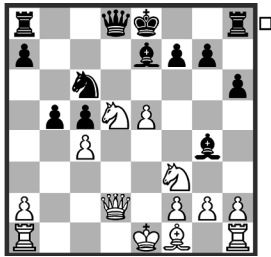
A critical attempt for White here.

11. ♖xd5 b5! 12. b3 (12. 0-0-0 ♗e6 13. b3 ♗c6 14. bxc4 bxc4 15. ♗xc4 0-0; 12. a4 ♗b7! 13. ♖xe7 ♖xe7 14. axb5 ♖d7 15. 0-0-0 ♖b6!



Position after: 15... ♖b6!

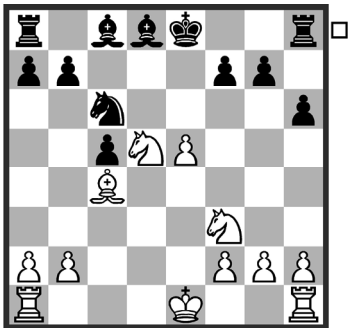
16. ♖d6 ♗d8 17. ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 18. ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 19. ♖d2 ♗d5 Black is fine in this endgame.) 12... ♗c6! (12... ♗a6 13. bxc4 bxc4 14. ♗d1± 0-1 (40) Nikolic, P (2630) – Jussupow, A (2620) Linares 1988) 13. bxc4 (13. h3 0-0 14. bxc4 ♗e8 15. ♗e2 ♗g5) 13... ♗g4!



Position after: 13... ♖g4!

14. ♘e2 bxc4!? (14... ♘xf3 15. ♘xf3 ♗xe5 16. ♗c7+ ♖xc7 17. ♘xa8 0-0 1-0 (39) Nikolic, P (2635)-King, D (2530) Germany 1998) 15. 0-0 ♘g5! 16. ♖d1 0-0

11... ♖xd5 12. ♗xd5 ♘d8! 13. ♘xc4 ♗c6!

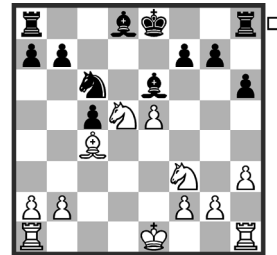


Position after: 13... ♗c6!

We have reached a very dynamic endgame with an unbalanced structure. Usually it should favour Black because of the bishop pair, but due to White's active centralised pieces we can say that the position is about equal. Black has no worries.

14. 0-0-0!

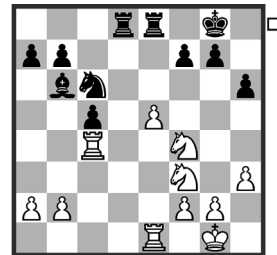
A) 14. h3!? ♘e6!



Position after: 14... ♘e6!

A1) 15. 0-0-0 ♘a5 (Δ... 0-0-0) 16. ♗e3 ♘c7!= (16... ♖d8 17. ♖xd8+ ♘xd8 18. ♘d5 ♘xd5 19. ♗xd5 ♖d7 20. ♖d1∞)

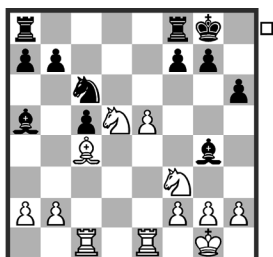
A2) 15. ♖c1 0-0 16. ♗f4 ♘xc4 17. ♖xc4 ♘b6 18. 0-0 (18. ♗d3 ♖ad8 19. ♖e2 ♗a5 20. ♖g4 c4) 18... ♖fe8 19. ♖e1 ♖ad8



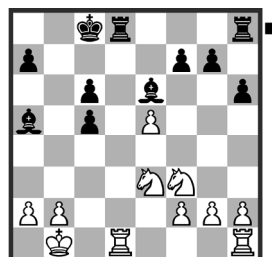
Position after: 19... ♖ad8

Black has active play in this endgame. 20. h4 (20. ♖ce4 ♘a5 21. ♖1e2 ♖d1+ 22. ♖h2 ♗d4) 20... f6! 21. exf6 ♖xe1+ 22. ♗xe1 ♖d1 23. ♖f1 ♗e5 24. ♖e4 gxf6 25. ♖e2 ♖b1

B) 14. 0-0-0 15. ♖ac1 ♘g4! 16. ♖fe1 ♘a5!



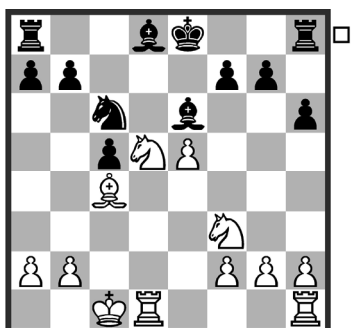
Position after: 16... ♖a5!



Position after: 18. ♗e3

17. ♜e4 ♖f5 18. ♜f4 ♖e6 19. ♗e3 ♖b6! 20. ♖xe6 fxe6 21. ♜xf8+ ♜xf8= Black is fine.

14... ♖e6



Position after: 14... ♖e6

15. ♖b1

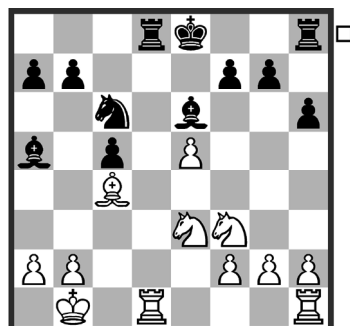
15. h3 ♖a5 16. ♗e3 ♖c7 17. ♜he1 (17. ♖xe6 fxe6 18. ♗c4 ♜e7 19. ♗h4 ♜hd8 20. f4 b5 21. ♗d2 g5) 17... ♜d8=

15... ♖a5 16. ♗e3

16. ♖b5!? 0-0-0! 17. ♖xc6 bxc6 18. ♗e3

The two bishops stand Black in good stead. 18... ♜xd1+ 19. ♜xd1 ♜d8 20. ♜c1 (20. ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 21. ♜c2 ♖c7 22. b3 ♖d5) 20... ♖b6 21. ♗c4 (21. b3 g5) 21... ♖f5+ 22. ♜a1 ♜d7

16... ♜d8!



Position after: 16... ♜d8!

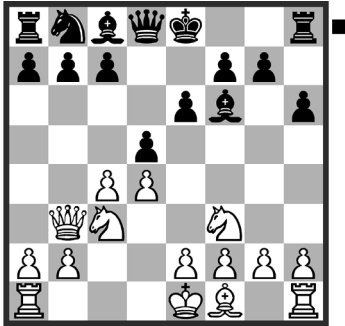
16... ♖c7? 17. ♖b5!± Now this is much more to the point.

17. ♜xd8+ ♖xd8 18. ♜d1 ♖xc4 19. ♗xc4 ♖c7↑

Another good endgame for Black.

c) 7. ♔b3

1. d4 ♘f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♘f3 d5 4. ♘c3 ♙e7 5. ♙g5 h6 6. ♙xf6 ♙xf6 7. ♔b3!?



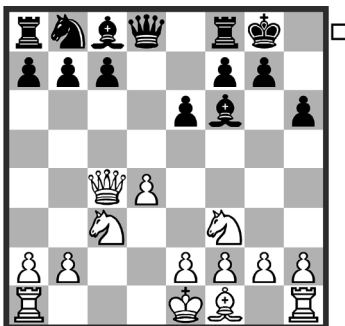
Position after: 7. ♔b3!?

Directed against ...c7-c5. White wants to provoke ...c6, then try moves like e3, h4 etc.

7... dxc4!

Again the best. Black will follow up with ...0-0 then ...a6/...b5.

8. ♙xc4 0-0!

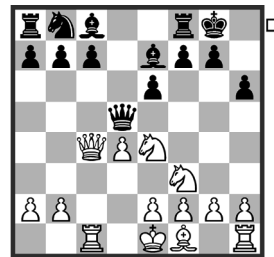


Position after: 8... 0-0!

9. e4!?

With this particular move order White can go e4 at once, giving the position a unique character. In my opinion, Black should now play as in a Grünfeld with ...a6/...b5 and then ...c5. The tactical idea is that the queen is misplaced on c4, and a4 will be met by ...b5 anyway!

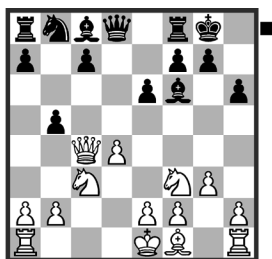
A) 9. ♘e4 ♙e7 Now Black stands very well. 10. ♖c1 (10. e3 b6! 11. ♖d1 ♙b7 12. ♙d3 ♘d7 13. 0-0 ♖c8 14. ♙c2 c5 15. dxc5 ♙c7=) 10... ♙d5!



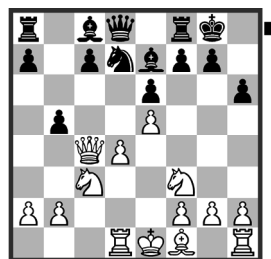
Position after: 10... ♙d5!

11. ♘fd2 ♙xc4 12. ♘xc4 b6 13. e3 ♙b7 14. ♘cd2 ♖c8 Black is in fine shape: 15. ♙b5 ♘a6 16. ♙d7 ♖cb8!N (16... ♖d8 17. ♙c6 ♙xc6 18. ♖xc6 ♖ac8 19. ♙e2 ♘b4 20. ♖c4 ♘xa2 21. ♖a4 ♘b4 22. ♖xa7 e5! = ½-½ (27) Bu Xiangzhi (2710) – Wang Yue (2729) Tai-zhou 2015) 17. ♙c6 ♘b4

B) 9. g3!? An interesting idea but it seems that Black is ready for it. 9... b5!?



Position after: 9... b5!?



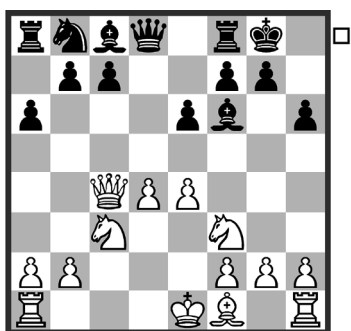
Position after: 11... b5!?

A Grünfeld reaction! 10. ♖xb5 ♘d7 11. ♖g2 c5 12. ♘e4 ♖e7 13. ♘xc5 ♖b8 14. ♖c4 ♘xc5 15. dxc5 ♖a5+ (15... ♖xb2!? 16. 0-0 ♖a5 Δ... ♖a6 may be even stronger) 16. ♖c3 ♖xc5 17. 0-0 ♖b6 Black is fine: ½-½ (27) Yilmaz, M (2603) – Cheparinov, I (2685) Gjakova 2016.

12. ♘xb5 ♖b8 13. a3 ♖b7 14. ♖c2 ♖d5 15. ♖e2 c6 16. ♘c3 ♖b3

This is just one possible line using the fantasy move ...b5, but with the bishop pair and faster development such moves cannot be excluded.

9... a6



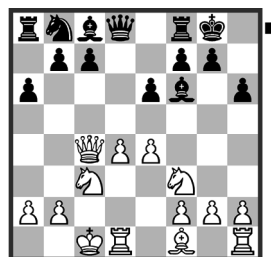
Position after: 9... a6

Black plays in the spirit of a Grünfeld, which the position now resembles. ...b6 looks slow to me. We have to develop the bishop to b7 but at same time put pressure on White's centre.

9... ♘d7!? 10. e5 ♖e7 11. ♖d1 b5!?

10. e5!?

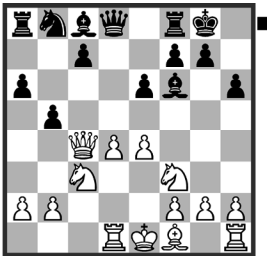
A) 10. 0-0-0



Position after: 10. 0-0-0

10... b5 11. ♖d3 (11. ♖b3 c5! Solves Black's problems. 12. dxc5 ♖c7) 11... ♖b7! Black develops and prevents the queen from going to e4. 12. ♖b1 c5

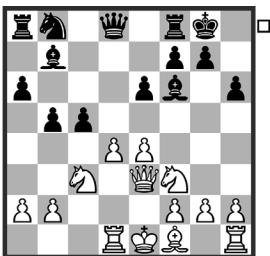
B) 10. ♖d1 The idea is e5/♖d3-b1. 10... b5!



Position after: 10... b5!

B1) 11. ♖b3? c5! This immediate reaction in the centre is simplest. 12. e5 (12. d5 c4 13. ♖c2 exd5 14. ♘xd5 ♙b7) 12... c4! Taking the d3-square from the ♙f1, preventing the manoeuvre ♙d3-b1. 13. ♖c2 ♙e7! Simplest. 14. b3 (14. d5 exd5 15. ♘xd5 ♙a5+ 16. ♚d2 ♚a7 17. h4 ♙e6) 14... cxb3 15. axb3 ♙b7=

B2) 11. ♖d3! Intending e5/♖e4. 11... ♙b7! Preventing the said manoeuvre. 12. ♖e3 c5!

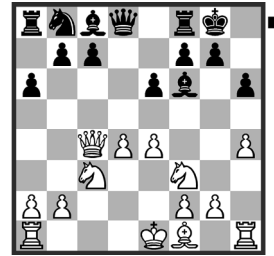


Position after: 12... c5!

Again the same idea as in the main line. 13. dxc5 (13. e5 ♙e7 14. dxc5 ♖c7 15. b4 ♙xf3 16. gxf3 ♘c6 17. ♖e4 ♘xe5 18. f4 ♘g6) 13... ♖a5! And Black stands well. (13... ♖c7 14. a3) 14. e5 ♙e7 15. ♙d3 (15. a3 ♚c8) 15... b4! 16. ♘e4 b3+ 17. ♙e2

♘d7! Black is better. 18. g4 (18. axb3 ♘xc5) 18... ♘xc5 19. g5 ♘xd3 20. gxh6 ♘xe5

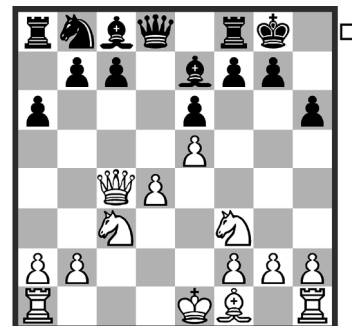
C) 10. h4



Position after: 10. h4

10... b5 11. ♖d3 ♙b7! Anticipating e5/♖e4. 12. g4 c5! 13. g5 (13. e5? ♙xe5+) 13... ♙xd4 14. gxh6 ♘c6 (14... g6 15. 0-0-0 ♘c6) 15. 0-0-0 (15. ♚g1 ♖f6; 15. hxg7 ♙xg7 16. ♖e3 ♖f6 17. 0-0-0 ♚fd8) 15... ♖f6 16. ♘xd4 (16. hxg7 ♚fd8+) 16... cxd4

10... ♙e7



Position after: 10... ♙e7

The position is very sharp. Ideas such as ♙d3 or ♖d3-e4 are dangerous now.