

THE RUBINSTEIN ATTACK!

A CHESS OPENING
STRATEGY FOR WHITE

Eric Schiller

If you are looking for an effective chess opening strategy to use as White, this book will provide you with everything you need to use the Rubinstein Attack to set up aggressive attacking formations. Building on ideas developed by the great Akiba Rubinstein, this book offers an opening system for White against most Black defensive formations.

The Rubinstein Attack is essentially an opening of ideas rather than memorized variations. Move order is rarely critical, the flow of the game will usually be the same regardless of initial move order. As you play through the games in this book you will see each of White's major strategies put to use against a variety of defensive formations.

As you play through the games in this book, pay close attention to the means White uses to carry out the attack. You'll see the same patterns repeated over and over again, and you can use these strategies to break down your opponent's defenses. The basic theme of each game is indicated in the title in the game header.

The Rubinstein is a highly effective opening against most defenses to 1.d4, but it is not particularly effective against the King's Indian or Gruenfeld formations. To handle those openings, you'll need to play c4 and enter some of the main lines, though you can choose solid formations with a pawn at d3. Against those openings, place your bishop at e2 and castle quickly. These are not the sharpest variations of the King's Indian and Gruenfeld, but they are reliable and your position will not suffer from any weaknesses which can be exploited by your opponent.

Your main weapons in the Rubinstein Attack are a strong bishop at d3, aiming at Black's vulnerable h7-square, and strong knights, one of which usually finds its way to e5. Your other bishop goes to b2, where it can later help in the kingside attack and until then will provide support at d4 and e5. This bishop can become a direct participant in the attack if the pawn at d4 can be gotten out of the way, usually by capturing a Black pawn at c5. Play along the c-file can be organized by playing Rc1 and c4, later capturing Black's pawn at d5, opening up the c-file.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the following members of Chessgames.com, who helped proofread the manuscript:

Galen Murray
Kyle Sillin
Craig Sadleir
Currt Sadfler
Rick Walsh

Produced in August, 2005 by Chessworks Unlimited using Chess Assistant and Adobe InDesign.

Typeset using

COPPERPLATE GOTHIC

Century Gothic

Adobe Caslon Pro

ADOBE TRAJAN PRO

Alpine Zurich Diagram

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BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

RUBINSTEIN VS. SALWE

MATCH, LODZ, 1903

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION: OPEN [D05]

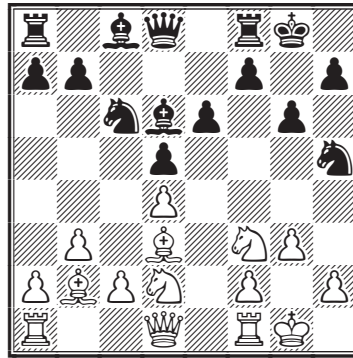
ATTACK ALONG THE G-FILE

1	d4	d5
2	e3	e6
3	Bd3	Nf6
4	Nf3	c5
5	b3	Nc6
6	Bb2	Bd6
7	Nbd2	O-O
8	O-O	cxd4
9	exd4	Nh5
10	g3	

This line had already been shown to work well for White in Capablanca vs. Corzo, 1901.

10 ... g6

Black creates a retreat for the knight at h5, but creates gaping holes in the pawn structure.



11 Ne5 Bd7
12 f4

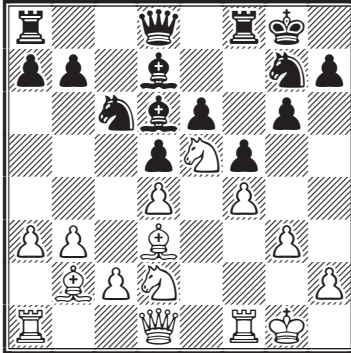
The stonewall formation is even more effective when Black's kingside looks like a slice of Swiss cheese.

12 ... Ng7
13 a3 f5

Because of the pawn exchange at d4, White has no backward pawn

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at e3, but Black's pawn at e6 is going to be very weak, in the long run.



14 Qe2 Be8
 15 Ndf3 Rc8
 16 Kh1

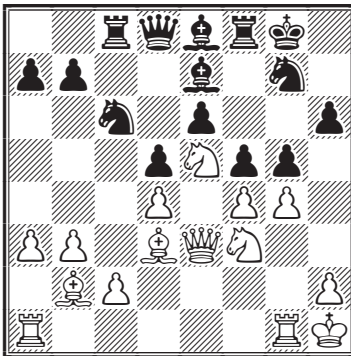
This move makes it possible for White to play on the queenside a bit later on.

16 ... h6?

16...Nxe5 17.Nxe5 Qc7 was a reasonable alternative.

17 Qe3 Be7
 18 Rg1 g5
 19 g4!

Rubinstein has executed his strategy perfectly, and the opening of the kingside leads to Black's demise.



19 ... gxf4

19...fxg4 20.fxg5 gxf3 21.gxh6 and Black is busted.

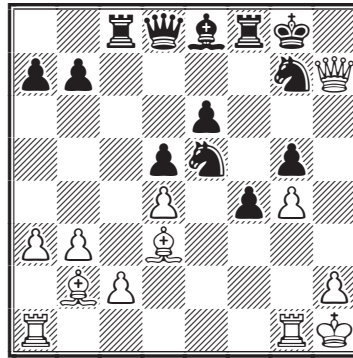
BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

20 Qxf4 Bg5
 21 Nxg5 hxg5
 22 Qg3 f4

This keeps the f-file closed, but it turns the bishop at d3 into a monster!

23 Qh3 Nxe5
 24 Qh7+!

A useful intermezzo, driving the enemy king out into the open battlefield.



24 ... Kf7
 25 dxe5 Rg8
 26 a4!

On the other side of the board, a small pawn move makes it possible for the dark square bishop to join the attack from a3.

26 ... b6
 27 Ba3 Rc5

Salwe offers an exchange sacrifice, but there is no salvation there, and the offer is declined.

28 Qg6+ Kf8
 29 Qf6+!

This forces the queen off, and White has a winning position.

29 ... Qxf6
 30 exf6 Bc6
 31 Bxc5+ bxc5

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32 fxc7+
Black resigned.

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

RUBINSTEIN VS. CHIGORIN

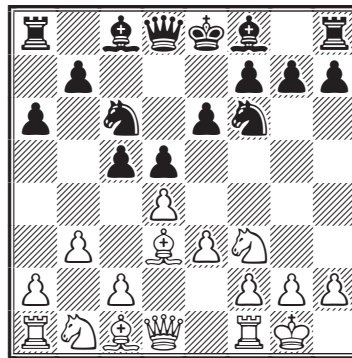
QUADRANGULAR TOURNAMENT, LODZ , 1906

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION: OPEN [D05]

KNIGHTS AT E5 AND G5

1	d4	d5
2	Nf3	e6
3	e3	Nf6
4	Bd3	c5
5	b3	Nc6
6	O-O	a6

A bit slow.



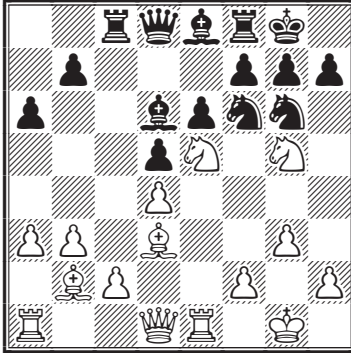
7	Bb2	cxd4
8	exd4	Bd6
9	Nbd2	O-O
10	Re1	Bd7
11	Ne5	Rc8

11...Nb4 12.Bf1 Rc8 13.c3 Nc6 14.Ndf3 leads to a balanced game, but White still has good attacking prospects.

12	a3	Ne7
13	Ndf3	Ng6
14	g3	Be8
15	Ng5!	

Even without an immediate threat at f7 or h7, this is a useful move.

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15 ... Be7

15...h6 would weaken g6. 16.Nxe6! fxe6 17.Nxg6 Bxg6 18.Bxg6

16 h4! Nh8?!

16...Bd6 would have been wiser, waiting for the h-pawn to advance before retreating the knight into the corner.

17 a4 h6

18 Nh3 Nd7

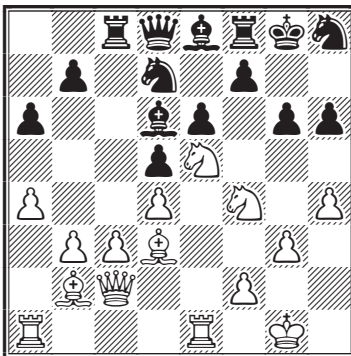
19 Nf4 Bb4

20 c3 Bd6

20...Bxc3? 21.Qc2! Bxe1 22.Bh7#

21 Qc2 g6

Another weakness is created, this time at h6.



22 Qd2 g5

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

Black is in some difficulty, but opening up the kingside is not the answer. Still, it is hard to find a better move.

23 Nh3 Nxe5
24 dxe5 Be7
25 hxg5 hxg5
26 Qe2

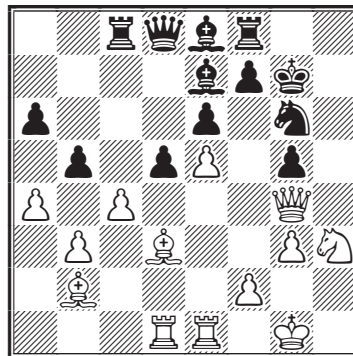
The kingside light squares are just too weak.

26 ... Ng6
27 Qg4 Kg7
28 Rad1!?

A useful move, setting up threats on the d-file.

28 ... b5
29 c4!

A powerful break that opens up key lines.



29 ... bxc4
30 bxc4 Bc6

Both of Black's bishops are relegated to purely defensive duties.

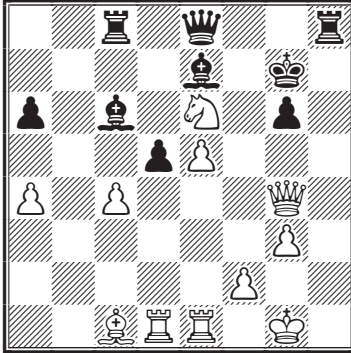
31 Bc1

Both of White's are attacking!

31 ... Rh8
32 Nxc5 Qe8
33 Bxc6 fxc6
34 Nxe6+

Black could have resigned here.

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34 ... Kg8
35 Bg5 Bxg5
36 cxd5 Bb7
37 Nxc5 Rc5
38 Ne4
Black resigned.

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

CAPABLANCA VS. CORZO

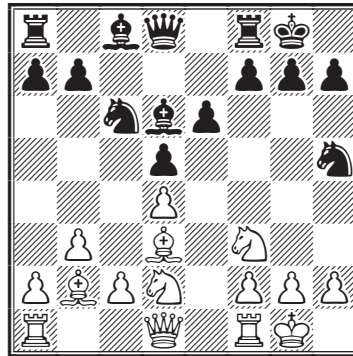
MATCH, HAVANA, 1901

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION: OPEN [D05]

THE ...Nh5 TRICK FOR BLACK

1	d4	d5
2	e3	e6
3	Bd3	Nf6
4	Nf3	c5
5	b3	Nc6
6	Bb2	Bd6
7	Nbd2	O-O
8	O-O	cxd4
9	exd4	Nh5!?

Sending the knight to the edge of the board is often a useful strategy for Black when White has left the f4-square unguarded. The idea is to bring the knight to f4 and attack the bishop at d3 while also covering the e2 square so that there is no potential retreat.



10 g3

A significant concession because the light squares in the White king's camp will be weak. However, because Black is saddled with a bad bishop at c8, there is no danger unless Black is able to free the position with an e5-break.

10 ... f5

10...Nb4!? comes into consideration.

11 Ne5! Nf6

12 f4

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White has now established a strong stonewall formation.

12 ... Bxe5?!

The knight is strong, but giving up the dark square bishop to get rid of it is to high a price to pay.

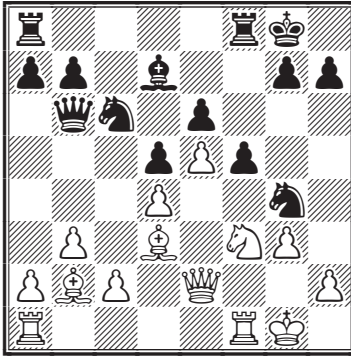
13 fxe5 Ng4

14 Qe2 Qb6

It will not be possible for Black to place enough pressure at d4 to cause white any problems.

15 Nf3 Bd7

The bishop will sit uselessly on this square until it briefly emerges and is swept off the board.



16 a3 Kh8

17 h3 Nh6

18 Qf2 Nf7

19 Kg2

Capablanca is in no rush and slowly prepare his his attack

19 ... g5

20 g4 Ne7

Black certainly can't afford to open the diagonal leading to h7.

21 Qe3 Rg8

22 Rae1?!

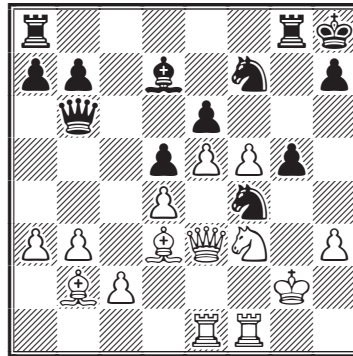
Generally, this is a good idea, but here it is flawed.

22.Rf2 would have been stronger, to double on the f-file.

BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

22 ... Ng6
 23 gxf5 Nf4+!

Black can now eliminate White's powerful bishop.



24 Kh2 Nxd3
 25 Qxd3 exf5

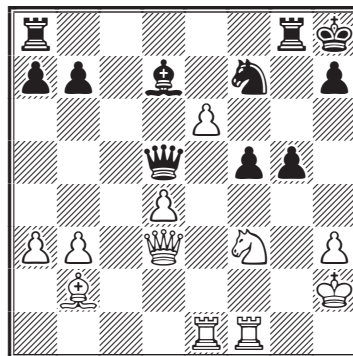
Black now has a defensible position, and even some attacking chances on the kingside. However, there are a number of weaknesses, and Capablanca mercilessly exploits them.

26 c4!

Opening a new front in the center.

26 ... Qe6
 27 cxd5 Qxd5
 28 e6!

A huge shot! The pawn cannot be captured.



28 ... Bb5

THE RUBINSTEIN ATTACK

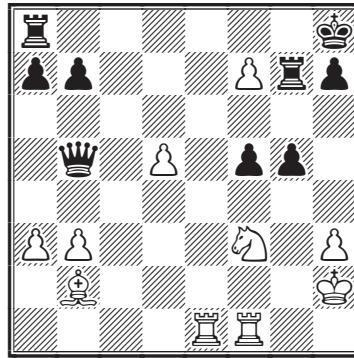
28...Bxe6 29.Rxe6! Qxe6 30.d5+ snares the queen and more.

29 Qxb5!!

The queen sacrifice is fully justified. The power of White's bishop at b2 should not be underestimated!

29 ... Qxb5
30 d5+ Rg7
31 exf7

Capablanca has just two pieces for the queen, but Black's rooks are useless and White's will quickly make their presence felt.



31 ... h6?

31...Qd7 would have provided more defensive resources.

32 Nd4 Qxf1

Black is forced into a horrible endgame.

It is too late for 32...Qd7

because of 33.Nxf5

33 Rxf1 Rxf7
34 Rxf5 Rxf5
35 Nxf5+ Kh7
36 Ne7

The rook is no match for White's minor pieces and passed pawn.

36 ... Rf8
37 Kg2 h5
38 d6 g4
39 hxg4 hxg4
40 Be5 Kh6

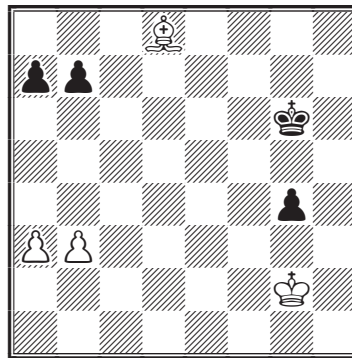
BOGOLJUBOW VARIATION

41 d7 Rd8
42 Ng8+!

A clean, efficient win, of the sort Capablanca would later become famous for.

42 ... Rxc8
43 Bf6 Kg6
44 d8=Q Rxd8
45 Bxd8

White has a bishop of the “wrong color”, but Black cannot exchange queenside pawns and reach a drawn bishop and rook pawn vs. king endgame.



45 ... b5
46 Kf2 Kf5
47 Ke3 Ke5
48 Kd3 Kd5
49 Kc3 g3
50 Bh4 g2
51 Bf2 a5

51...a6 52.Kb4 Kc6 53.Ka5 Kb7 54.Bg1 Black must lose the a-pawn, and then the b-pawn.

52 b4 Ke4

52...a4 53.Kd3 Ke6 54.Kd4 Kd6 55.Bg1 Kc6 56.Ke5 Kb7 57.Kd6 Ka6 58.Kc5! (58.Kc6 would be stalemate!)

53 Bb6 Kd5

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53...a4 54.Bg1 Kd5 55.Kd3 reaches the 52...a4 line.

54 Kd3 Kc6

55 Bg1 Kd5

56 Bh2 Kc6

57 Kd4 a4

58 Ke5 Kb6

59 Kd5 Ka6

60 Kc6

Black resigned.