

Mini-Lessons From Short Games Of 21st Century

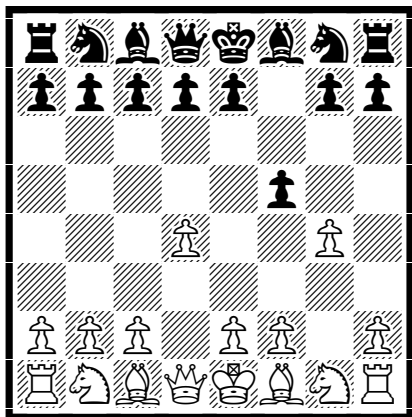
By IM Nikolay Minev

The Dutch Defense Under Pressure

In the last decade the Dutch Defense is under pressure by sharp attacking variations characterized by the thrust g2-g4. Here is my choice of some recent games with this continuation, which give some ideas about this recent dangerous trend.

A80 Lars Andreassen - Aksel Brasoy
Tromsø 2007

1.d4 f5 2.g4



Some books named this continuation “Lasker’s Gambit”.

2...fxg4 3.h3!?

This order of moves is missing in most of the publications.

3...g3

Opening the h-file by 3...gxh3 4.Nxh3 or 4.Bxh3 gives too many tactical opportunities to White, as shown in the next game.

4.fxg3 d5 5.Bg2 Nf6 6.Nc3 Bf5?!

Teske-E. Kristiansen, Voronezh 1987, went 6...c5!? 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.Bg5 cxd4 9.Nxd4 e5 10.Bxf6 gxf6 11.Nxc6 bxc6 12.e3 Qb6? (12...Be6! unclear) 13.Qh5+ Ke7 14.O-O-O Be6 15.Rd3 Rb8 16.b3 Qa5 17.Rhd1 Bg7 18.Nxd5+! cxd5 19.Bxd5 Bxd5 20.Rxd5 Qa3+ 21.Kb1 Rbd8 22.Qg4! 1-0

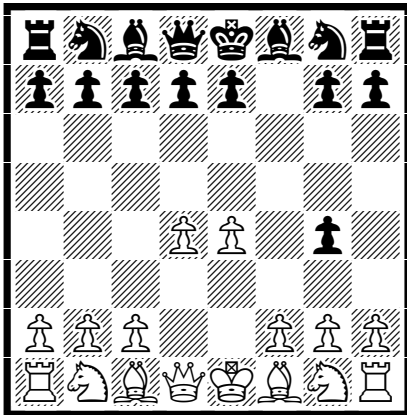
7.Nf3 e6 8.g4 Be4 9.O-O Bd6 10.Bg5 Nc6

If 10...Bg6 11.Nh4 Bf7 12.e4 with advantage to White.

11.Nxe4 dxe4 12.Nd2 Nxd4 13.Nxe4 O-O 14.c3 Nc6 15.Qb3 Qe7 16.Qxb7 Ne5 17.Nxf6+ gxf6 18.Bxf6 Qe8 19.Bxe5 1-0

A80 J. Salvaing – Pascal Gerfault
Angers 2007

1.d4 f5 2.g4 fxg4 3.e4



This visually attractive order of moves is used often in practice.

3...d6

According to ECO, after 3...d5 4.e5 Bf5 5.h3 gxh3 6.Nxh3 White has compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

4.h3 gxh3 5.Bxh3!?

With the idea (in case of 5...Bxh3 6.Nxh3) of making weak light squares inside of Black's position. Also promising is 5.Nxh3, with compensation for the pawn.

5...e6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Be3 Nc6 8.Qd2 Qe7 9.O-O-O Bd7 10.Nf3 O-O-O??

This is a blunder in an already difficult position. If 10...h6 then 11.e5 (as played in the game) still looks very strong.

11.e5 dxe5 12.dxe5 Nd5 13.Bg5 Qe8 14.Bxd8 Nxd8 15.Nxd5 exd5 16.Qxd5 Bxh3 17.Rxh3 Ne6 18.Qe4 h6 19.Nd4 Nxd4 20.Qxd4 b6 21.Rhd3 1-0

The direct assault by g2-g4 can also come not immediately on second move, but later, after some preparation, as in the next examples.

A80 E. Prie – V. Schweitzer
Cap D'Agde (France) 2008

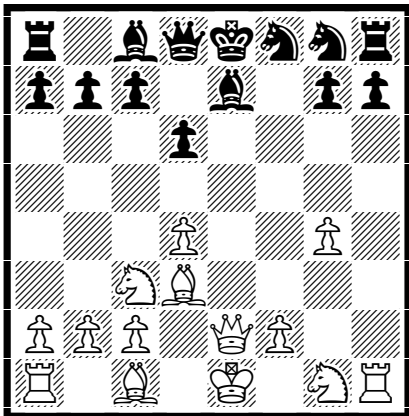
1.d4 f5 2.h3!? d6 3.Nc3

Instead 3.g4 fxg4 4.e4 transposes into the previous game.

3...Nd7?!

An experiment that cannot be recommended.

4.g4 fxg4 5.hxg4 e5 6.e3 exd4 7.exd4 Be7 8.Bd3 Nf8 9.Qe2



White stands clearly better.

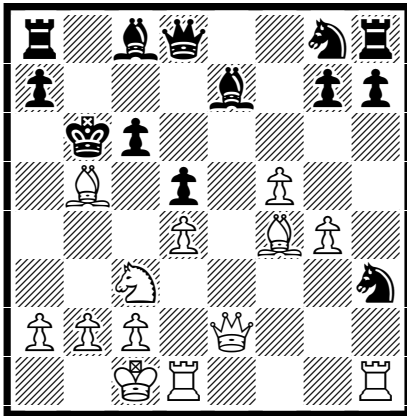
9...c6 10.Bf4 Kd7 11.Nh3 Kc7 12.O-O-O Ne6 13.Be3 d5 14.f4 b5

If 14...b6 15.f5 Ng5 16.Bf4+ Kd7 (16...Kb7 17.Ba6#) 17.Nxd5! cxd5? 18.Bb5#

15.f5 Ng5 16.Bf4+ Kb6

Or 16...Kb7 17.Bxb5 Nxh3 (17...cxb5 18.Qxb5+ Qb6 19.Nxg5) 18.Ba6+ Kb6 19.Na4+ Ka5 20.Bd2+ Kxa4 (20...Bb4 21.Bxb4+ Kxb4 22.Qd2+ and mate in two) 21.Qd3 Qb6 22.b3+ Ka3 23.b4+ and mate follows.

17.Bxb5 Nxh3



18.Na4+ Ka5 19.Bd2+ Bb4 20.Bxb4+ Kxb4 21.a3+ 1-0

For if 21...Ka5 22.b4#

A84 Igor Khenkin - Axel Rombaldoni
Bratto 2007

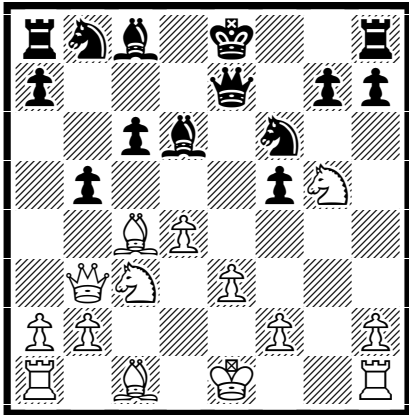
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.e3 f5 5.g4!? Nf6

If 5...fxg4 then 6.h3! is the best reply.

6.gxf5 exf5 7.Qb3 dxc4

If 7...Bd6 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.Bg2.

8.Bxc4 Bd6 9.Nf3 Qe7 10.Ng5 b5



11.Bf7+ Kf8 12.Be6! Nfd7

Or 12...Bxe6 13.Nxe6+ Ke8 13,d5! with a strong attack.

13.h4

But not 14.Nf7 Nc5! 15.dxc5 Bxe6 16.cxd6 Qxf7 unclear.

13...h6?

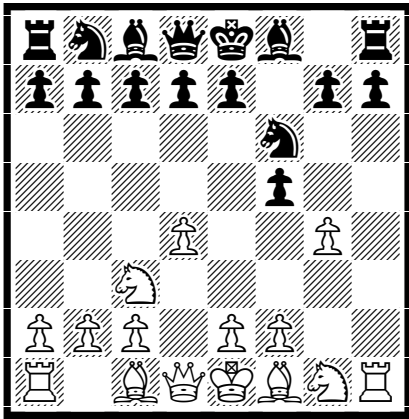
This loses because it opens the door to a surprising intermediate move.

14.Nf7 Nc5 15.dxc5 Bxe6 16.Nxh8! 1-0

Next, let's see two classical examples, where the assault g2-g4 is used on third move. In the first game White wins, while in the second it is Black who prevails.

A80 E. Bogolyubov – V. Wendell
Stockholm 1920

1.d4 f5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g4



3...Nxc4

If 3...fxg4, then White can continue 4.h3 or 4.e4, or even 4.Bg5.

4.e4 e5!

4...e6!? or 4...d6!?

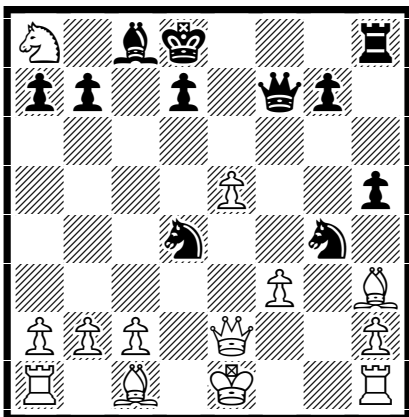
5.exf5.Qh4 6.Qe2 Nc6 7.Nf3 Qh5 8.Nd5

If 8.dxe5 Ngxe5!

8...Bd6 9.Nxe5 Bxe5

After 9...Nxd4 10.Qxg4 (Better than 10.Nxg4+ Nxe2 11.Ngf6+) Qxg4 11.Nxg4 Nxc2+ 12.Kd1 Nxa1 13.Bc4!, intending 14.Re1+, and White has the advantage.

10.dxe5 Qxf5 11.Bh3! h5 12.f3 Qf7 13.Nxc7+ Kd8 14.Nxa8 Nd4

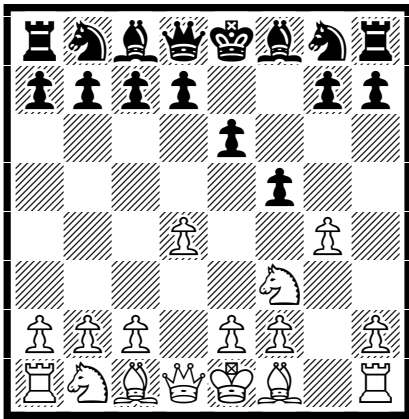


15.fxg4 1-0

For if 15...Nxe2 16.Bg5+ Ke8 17.Nc7+ Kf8 18.Rf1 and White wins.

A80 E. Bogolyubov – V. Hasenfuss
Kemer 1939

1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g4



3...fxg4 4.Ne5 Qh4

Probably Black's best continuation.

5.e4 g3! 6.Bg2 gxf2+ 7.Kf1 Nc6 8.Nxc6 bxc6 9.c4 Nf6 10.e5 Nd5! 11.Bf3

If 11.cxd5?? Ba6+.

11...Ba6

11...Nf4!?

12.b3 Be7 13.Kg2 O-O 14.Rf1

If 14.cxd5? Rxf3! 15.Qxf3 Rf8.

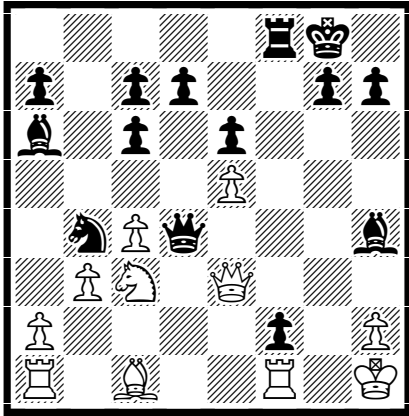
14...Rxf3!

14...Nf4+!?

15.Qxf3 Rf8 16.Qd3 Qg4+

If 16...Nb4 17.Qe2!

17.Kh1 Nb4 18.Qg3 Qxd4 19.Nc3 Bh4 20.Qe3



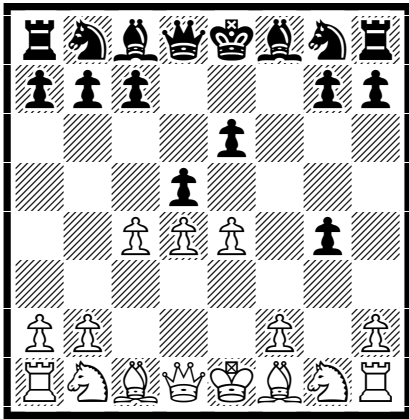
20...c5! 21.Qxd4 cxd4 0-1

For if 22.Ne4 Bb8.

This last experiment from the past shows that while the Dutch Defense is under serious pressure, it still is not refuted. Searching for evidence, I found the following incredibly original recent example.

A84 Igor Efimov – Igor Naumkin
Arvier 2005

1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.g4 fxg4 4.e4 d5



5.Nc3

Maybe 5.e5!?

5...dxe4 6.Be3

If 6.Bxe4, then 6...Bb4+ (with 7.Nc3 Nf6) or the immediate 6...Nf6 are good replies.

6...Nf6 7.Qc2

7.h3!?

7...Nc6 8.O-O-O Nb4! 9.Qb3 Bd7 10.a3? a5! 11.Rd2

The alternative 11.axb4 axb4 12.Kb1 (12.Nb1? Ba4) bxc3 13.Qxc3 looks no better.

11...a4 12.Qd1 Nd3+ 13.Kb1

Or 13.Bxd3 exd3 14.Rxd3 b5! etc., as in the game.

13...b5! 14.cxb5 Qb8 15.Bg2 Bxb5 16.Nxe4

Perhaps White's last chance was 16.Nxb5 Qxb5 17.Bxe4 Nxe4 18.Rxd3.

16...Bxa3!!

17.bxa3 Nxe4 18.Ka1

If 18.Bxe4 Bc6+!

18...Nxd2 19.Qxd2 Bc4! 20.Qc3

In case of 20.Bxa8, then 20...Qb3 21.Ne2 Qxa3+ 22.Kb1 O-O and Black wins.

20...Ra6 21.Ne2 Qb3 0-1