

Richard Shorman

Chess

Long ago, when gambits were in vogue, master and amateur alike specialized in fierce, all-out attacks, caring little for the art of defense. Many sparkling games were produced, mainly at Black's expense, because greed and singleminded aggression went hand in hand.

White: Schnitzler.

Black: Alexandre.

Berlin, 1879.

Danish Gambit

1 P-K4	P-K4	9 N-B3	Q-R6
2 P-Q4	PxP	10 R-N3	Q-R3
3 P-QB3	PxP	11 Q-N3	BxNch
4 B-QB4	PxP	12 QxB	N-KB3
5 BxP	Q-N4(a)	13 R-N6!!	PxR
6 N-KB3	QxP	14 QxNch!	PxQ
7 BxPch!	K-Q1(b)	15 BxPmate	
8 R-N1	B-N5ch		

(a) Black thinks he can fight on a full stomach.

(b) Not 7 . . . KxB? 8 R-N1 Q-R6 9 N-N5ch.

With the advent of modern position play the gambits nearly disappeared. Defensive technique had finally caught up with attacking skill, enabling the second player to accept material, while concentrating on rapid, efficient development.

The heart of Black's anti-gambit strategy was to react sharply in the center in order to enter the middle game with a good position, even if this meant returning the sacrifice.

White: Jacques Mieses.

Black: Akiba Rubinstein.

Prague, 1908.

Danish Gambit

1 P-K4	P-K4	10 P-QR3	Q-Q2(c)
2 P-Q4	PxP	11 B-QB1	N-B4
3 P-QB3	P-Q4!(a)	12 Q-R4	0-0
4 P-K5	PxP	13 Q-KB4	P-B3
5 N-B3	PxP	14 P-N4(d)	PxP
6 BxP	N-KR3	15 NxKP	NxN
7 N-B3	B-K3	16 QxN/K5	B-B3
8 B-Q3	B-K2	17 Resigns	
9 Q-B2	N-B3(b)		

(a) The universal antidote to most gambits: an early thrust into the center.

(b) Much better than 9 . . . P-QB3, which fortifies the QP but curtails development.

(c) Bringing another piece into play and keeping White guessing about where Black intends to castle.

(d) Loses fast, but Black's superior development leaves him ahead even if White should break off the attack.

The perpetual quest for new lines of play has led to a revival of gambits based on sounder positional considerations. Thus, the modern gambiteer prefers to hold off direct K-side operations until every available man has been brought to bear on the central strong points.

Better defensive technique notwithstanding, current gambit research once again tends to favor the attacker.

White: Jude Acers.

Black: Alan Baisley.

Sunnyvale, April 28, 1969.

Danish Gambit

1 P-K4	P-K4	15 BxN	QxB
2 N-KB3	N-QB3	16 NxKP	Q-N3
3 P-Q4	PxP	17 R-Q3	N-R4
4 P-B3	PxP	18 Q-B3	NxB
5 B-QB4	PxP	19 R-N3!	B-N5
6 BxP	B-N5ch	20 QxN(d)	K-R1
7 N-B3	N-B3	21 P-KR3	Q-K3
8 0-0(a)	BxN(b)	22 Q-B3	PKB4
9 BxB	P-Q3	23 N-B5	QxP
10 P-K5!	PxP	24 R-K6!	P-QN3(e)
11 Q-N3	0-0	25 RxPch	K-N1
12 KR-K1!(c)	P-K5	26 N-K6	R-B2
13 QR-Q1	Q-K2	27 R-N6	Resigns
14 N-N5	P-KR3		

(a) Sharper still is 8 Q-B2 P-Q3 9 0-0-0.

(b) On 8 . . . 0-0 White plays 9 Q-N3, e.g., 9 . . . P-KR3 (if 9 . . . P-QN4, then 10 BxP R-N1 11 BxN PxP 12 P-QR3 or 9 . . . Q-K2 10 N-Q5 NxN 11 BxN) 10 N-Q5 B-K2 11 Q-B3.

(c) Admirable restraint.

(d) Threatening 21 RxB, QxR 22 N-B6ch.

(e) White also wins after 24 . . . K-R2 25 PxP P-B5 (not 25 . . . PxP 26 RxNP QxPch 27 K-R2 Q-B2 28 R/6-KN6 R-KN1 29 NK6) 26 R-R3 QR-K1 27 Q-Q3ch K-N1 28 R/6xP.