

# **MODERNIZED: THE KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE**

*Dejan Bojkov*



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First Edition

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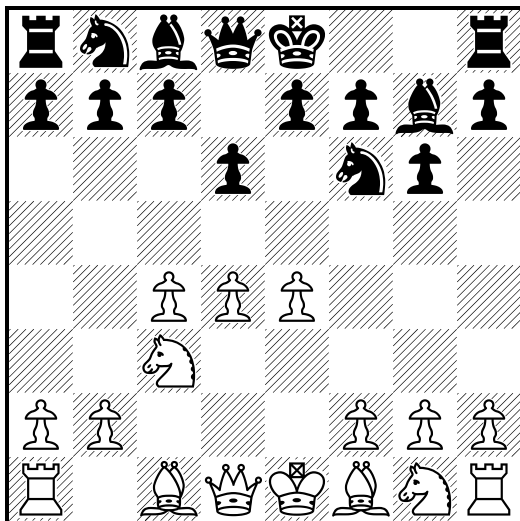
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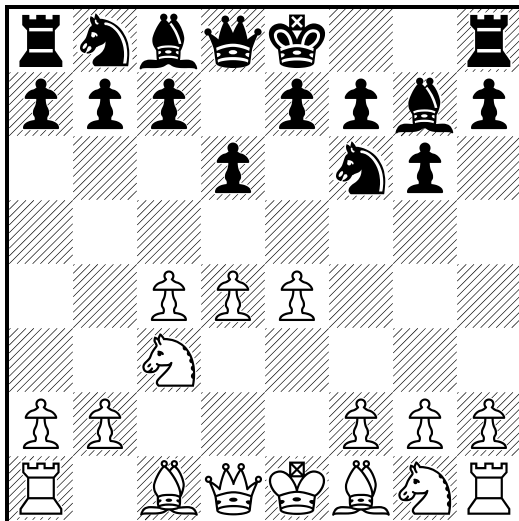


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## ***Symbols***

!	Good move
!!	Excellent move
?	Bad move
??	Blunder
!?	Deserves attention
?!	Dubious
#	Checkmate
□	Forced; the only move
∞	Unclear position
=	Equal position
±	Slight advantage for White
∓	Slight advantage for Black
±	Distinct advantage for White
∓	Distinct advantage for Black
+−	White is winning
−+	Black is winning
↑	with the initiative
→	with the attack
∞	insufficient compensation for the material
∞	sufficient compensation for the material
↔	with counterplay
Δ	with the idea...
○	better is...
N	Novelty
⊕	Time pressure

# Introduction



Dear reader, you are holding in your hands a book on my beloved opening, the King's Indian Defense. I started playing this line in my youthful days after reading the famous book by David Bronstein about the Interzonal tournament in Zurich-Neuhausen 1953. It was the time when the defense appeared in elite tournaments and never left.

I witnessed Garry Kasparov's glorious career and followed his final match against his great rival Anatoly Karpov when Kasparov did not fear to use the KID and even won the match.

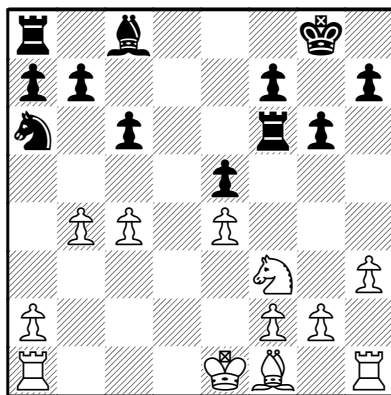
My passion for the King's Indian remains undiminished all these years. For some people it is a religion.

Many of my friends have tried to convince me that this opening is positionally unsound. White is taking more space and controls the center better.

I strongly disagree. The KID is founded on strong fundamentals; the center is temporarily given up but can later be attacked and destroyed, while Black's control of key squares can compensate for his lack of space.

Have a look at the following example:

**Skembris - Van Wely**  
*Skei 1993*



White indeed has more space, but his position is strategically lost. His gain of space has opened up some weaknesses in his camp, specifically the d4 square. At the same time,

the analogous square on d5 is well covered by the black pieces and is unreachable by the white knight.

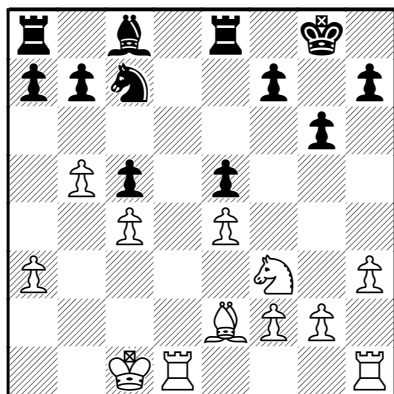
**14.a3 c5!**

This fixes the white pawns on the color of Black's own bishop, and prepares a standard knight maneuver.

**15.b5 Nc7 16.Be2**

Of no relief is 16.Nxe5 due to 16...Re6 17.Ng4 f5 18.Ne3 f4 19.Nd5 Nxd5 20.cxd5 Rxe4+ $\mp$ , while 16.Rd1 Re6 17.Rd8+ only helps Black to proceed with his idea: 17...Kg7 18.Be2 Re7 $\mp$ .

**16...Re6 17.O-O-O Re8 $\mp$**



White can do nothing to face the establishment of the black knight on d4. After this, Black can either prepare the f5 breakthrough, or he can even open the position on the queen's flank at the proper moment.

Probably not familiar with this game from two months before, Polgar, with 17...Kg7 18.a4 a6, rushed and threw away the edge. Now White uses the open a-file to release the pressure. 19.Kb2 Re7 20.Rd6 Ne8 21.Rd5 axb5 22.axb5 b6 23.Ra1 Rxa1 24.Kxa1 f6 25.Rd8 Bb7 26.Nd2 f5 27.exf5 gxf5. The game was later drawn, Huebner-Polgar, Biel Interzonal 1993.

**18.Rhe1 f6 19.Rd6 Kf7 20.Nd2 Ke7 21.Rd3 Ne6 22.g3 h5 23.h4 Nd4 24.Nf1 b6 25.Ne3 Bb7 26.f3**

If 26.Nd5+ then 26...Kd6, answering 27.Nxf6 with 27...Rf8 28.Nd5 Rxf2 $\mp$ .

**26...Rg8 27.Bd1 Kd6 28.Rd2 Raf8 29.a4 f5 30.exf5 gxf5 31.f4**

Probably more stubborn is 31.g4 hxg4 32.fxg4 f4 33.Nf5+ Rxf5 34.gxf5 e4 $\mp$ .

**31...Rgx3 32.Nc2**

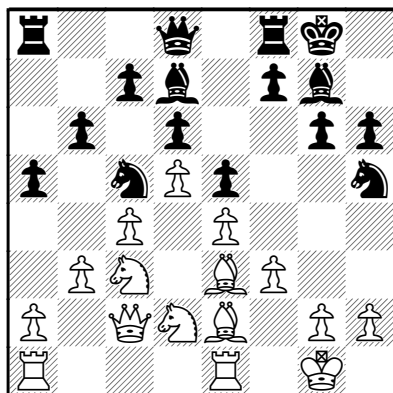
Better was 32.fxe5+, which is answered by 32...Ke6 33.Rf2 f4 34.Bxh5 f3 35.Bg4+ Kxe5 36.Nf5+ Kf4+.

**32...Be4 33.fxe5+ Kxe5 34.Nxd4 cxd4 35.Bxh5 Rh8 36.Bf7 Rxh4 37.Kb2 Rhh3 38.c5 bxc5 39.a5 Ra3 40.a6 Ra4 41.Be8 c4 42.Rf2 Rb3+ 0-1**

In order to better understand the King's Indian Defense, one needs to appreciate the importance of Black's dark-squared bishop. This mighty piece on the long diagonal is the pride and the joy of any KID player. The black squares are the territory of the second player, yet the bishop might in fact not even be needed for the second player to demonstrate this:

### Naumkin - Smirin

*Ischia 1995*



Here, Ilya Smirin introduced a fabulous novelty, based on his deep understanding of the position:

**15...Bf6!!N 16.Bxh6**

Rejecting the offer would not save White from problems: 16.a3 Bg5 17.Bf2? Bxd2 18.Qxd2 Nxb3±.

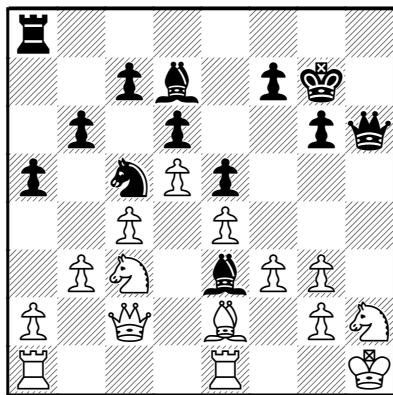
**16...Bg5!**

The point behind Black's maneuver. Without the black-squared bishop, White can do nothing to control his dark-squared perimeter.

**17.Bxg5**

The exchange is poison, as Black will mate on the dark squares: 17.Bxf8? Be3+ 18.Kh1 (*Also mating is 18.Kf1 Qh4 19.Nd1 Ng3+ 20.hxg3*

*Qh1#.*) 18...Ng3+ 19.hxg3 Qxf8 20.Nf1 Qh6+ 21.Nh2 Kg7--



And now if 22.Bf1 then 22...Qxh2+ 23.Kxh2 Rh8 mate.

**17...Qxg5 18.Nf1**

If 18.Bf1 then 18...Kg7!? intending ...Rh8.

**18...f5**

With the attack. The outcome of Black's idea is very impressive, and the position of his pieces on the king's flank is quite frightening.

**19.exf5**

Not 19.Qc1 Nf4 20.g3 Nh3+ 21.Kg2 f4±.

**19...gxh5 20.a3 a4!**

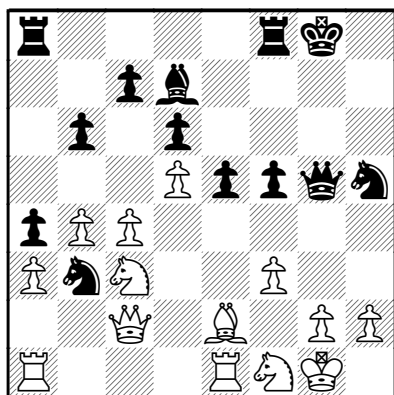
Energetic play on both flanks!

If 20...Nf4 then 21.g3.

**21.b4**

Or 21.bxa4!?

**21...Nb3±**

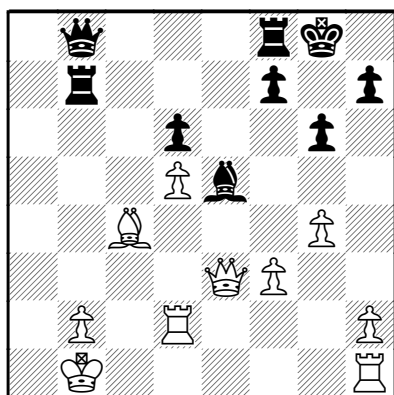


Smirin's inspired play has given him the advantage, which he later converted into a full point on move 47.

As we have seen, the positional pawn sacrifice is one of the strategic ideas to prove superiority on the dark squares.

However, we also have another strong weapon in our arsenal, the attack with opposite-colored bishops:

### Kamsky - Kasparov *Manila (ol) 1992*



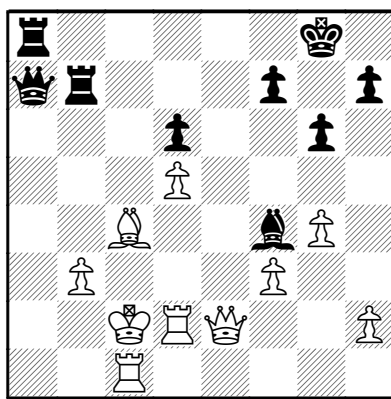
Kamsky has an extra pawn, but it's no consolation. The open files and diagonals, and above all the fact that

Black is using one extra piece at least (the bishop!) in the attack, makes his position resignable.

### 31.Qe2

If all the white pawns leave the black squares, White will have no control over them: 31.b3 Rc8 32.Kc2 Rxc4+! 33.bxc4 Rb2++.

### 31...Qa7 32.Rc1 Ra8 33.b3 Bf4 34.Kc2



### 34...Re7

Kasparov is not interested in trading his bishop for a rook!

### 35.Qd3 Qc5 36.Rb1 Re3 37.Qd4 Ra2+ 38.Kd1

It's mate after 38.Rb2 Rxb2+ 39.Qxb2 Be5 40.Qa2 Rc3+.

### 38...Rxf3

There were other wins as well, for example 38...Re8!? 39.Rd3 Qb4 40.Qc3 Qxc3 41.Rxc3 Rd2+ 42.Kc1 Re1 mate.

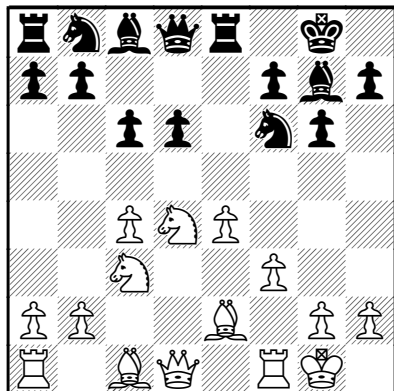
### 39.Qxf4 Rxf4 40.Rxa2 Qg1+ 41.Kc2 Qxh2+ 0-1

You will have noticed that the attack was conducted mainly on the squares of the color of the black bishop.

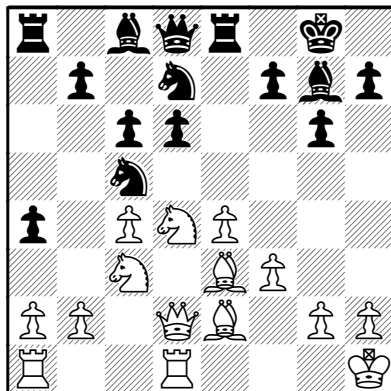


# Memory Markers

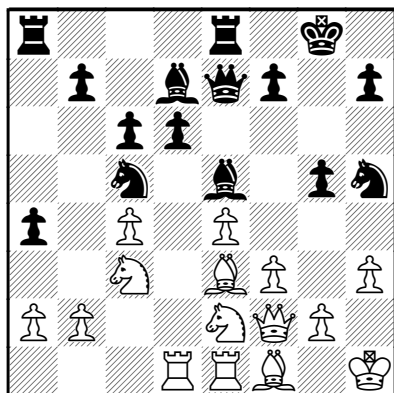
Here are reminders of some of the ideas and motifs in this chapter, which include queen sacrifices, breaking open the center, knight outposts, and blockading. Giving up the center opens up many possibilities!



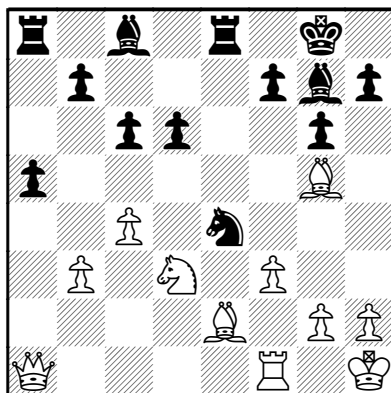
**1. After 9...c6.** Our starting position.



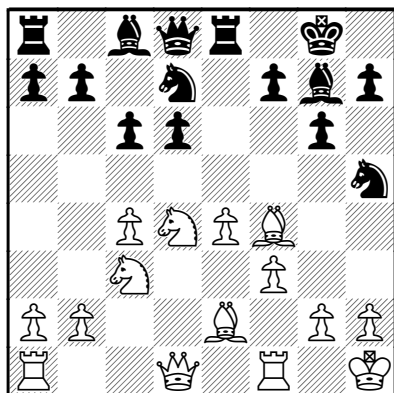
**2. After 16...Nf6-d7.** The queen is best placed on d8 to work on both sides, text move in Fier-Bologan, page 20.



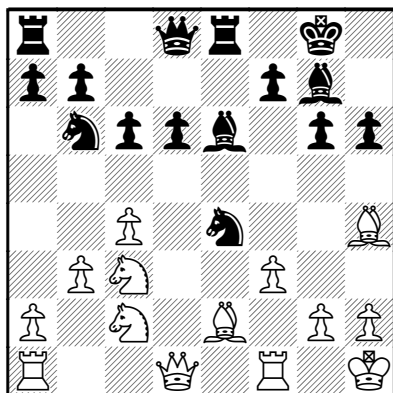
**3. After 22...g6-g5!.** A black-square blockade. See diagram on page 21 in Fier-Bologan.



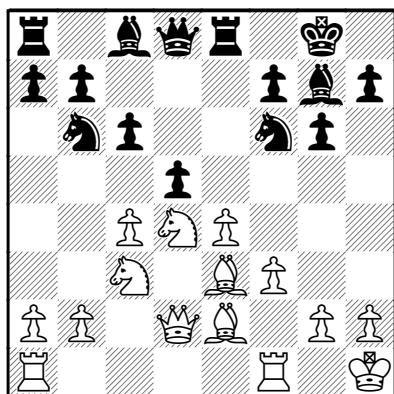
**4. After 18...Nf6xe4!.** Typical queen sacrifice, see diagram on page 28 in Eljanov-Bologan.



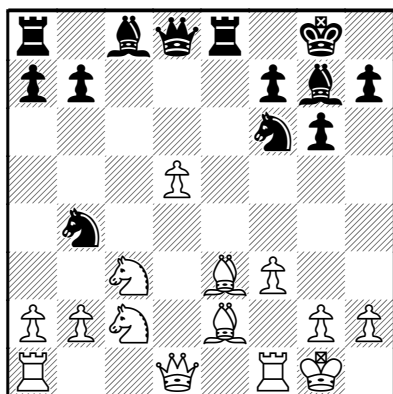
**5. After 11...Nf6-h5!.** Active play against the bishop sortie on f4, text move in Premnath-Kokarev, page 32.



**6. After 14...Nf6xe4!!.** Yurtaev's brilliant idea. See diagram on page 37 in Kovalenko-Kokarev.



**7. After 12...d6-d5.** The central strike, see diagram on page 41 in Kramnik-Ponomariov.



**8. After 13...Na6-b4!.** Black square compensation, see text move in Nyzhnyk-Kazhgaleyev, on page 51.

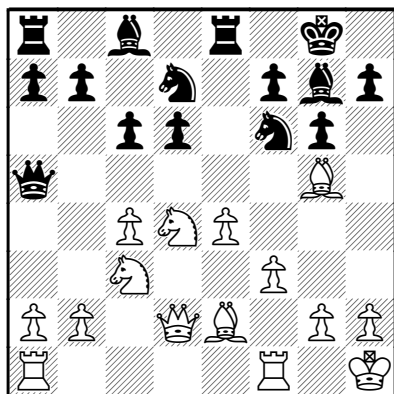
# Exercises

## Black to play!

With these situations from actual games, you, as Black, can practice finding some of the breakthroughs, tricks, combinations, and positional opportunities that may appear after “abandoning” the center in the Classical Variation.

Solutions to these exercises begin on page 307.

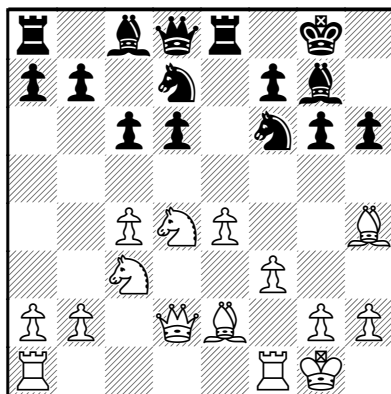
*Exercise 1*



**Cobb - Grossett**  
*Bristol Open 1998*

The seeming happiness in White's camp is deceptive. Prove it!

*Exercise 2*



**Young - Yermolinsky**  
*US Open, Chicago 1994*

Remember the previous one?