

Ivan Sokolov vs Alexander Morozevich
Corus Group A (2005)

This game is memorable for Black's delayed castling maneuver but will never supersede the famous Wedin-Hammarstrom (Lund Skol-SM, 1991) where Black helped set a record by waiting until Move 41. Nigel Short spoke of the dilemma people face when playing against the Russian:

"Yesterday evening I was talking to Ivan (Sokolov), and he said: 'Okay, if I play 1.d4 against Morozevich, he'll play 1...d5, and then if I play 2.c4 he'll play the Albin Counter Gambit.' I said 'Come on Ivan, that is nothing to worry about. But let us suppose you are really concerned about this gambit, which absolutely nobody in the world plays, then you can play Nf3 on move two.' But Ivan said 'Then he can play the Chigorin!' So he was almost in zugzwang on move two. He did not know whether to allow the Albin Counter Gambit or the Chigorin. So when you are playing Morozevich you have to do deep historical research!"

The game proceeded as follows:

1.	d4, d5	d2-d4	d7-d5
2.	c4, e5	c2-c4	e7-e5
3.	dxe5, d4	d4-e5	d5-d4
4.	Nf3, Nc6	g1-f3	b8-c6
5.	Nbd2, Nge7	b1-d2	g8-e7
6.	Nb3, Nf5	d2-b3	e7-f5
7.	a3, Be7	a2-a3	f8-e7
8.	g3, a5	g2-g3	a7-a5
9.	Kd3, a4	d1-d3	a5-a4
10.	Nbd2, h5	b3-d2	h7-h5
11.	Bh3, g6	f1-h3	g7-g6
12.	Ne4, h4	d2-e4	h5-h4

Chapter 19

The Albin Counter Gambit

The opening is an uncommon defense to the Queen's Gambit. In exchange for the gambit pawn, Black has a central wedge at d4 and gets some chances for an attack. Often White will try to return the pawn at an opportune moment to gain a positional advantage.

The Albin counter gambit is an interesting break away from the more traditional responses to the Queen's Gambit like the Sicilian or Roy Lopez. The main line continues 4. Nf3 Nc6 (4...c5 allows 5.e3 because Black no longer has the bishop check) and now White's primary options are 5.a3, 5.Nbd2, and 5.g3. Perhaps White's surest try for an advantage is to fianchetto his king bishop with 5.g3 followed by Bg2 and Nbd2. Black will often castle queenside.

We will be looking at the following four games that used the Albin counter gambit:

I Sokolov vs Morozevich, 2005

Dodge vs J R Houghteling, 1904

Lasker vs Alekhine, 1914

Spassky vs V Mikenas, 1959