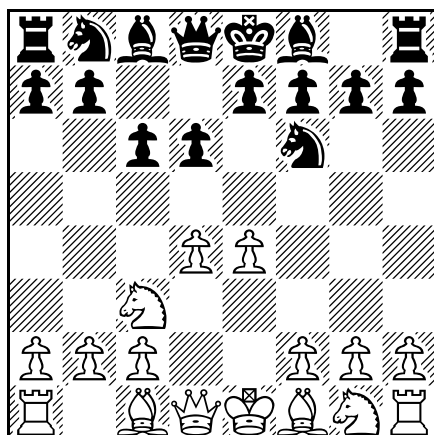


Introduction

When I told friends I was working on a 1...d6 book they usually asked if I meant Pirc. Next, they would incorrectly guess Modern. I actually had trouble explaining just what the no-name opening was. In Canada, where I grew up, we called 1...d6 “the Rat”, but this was invariably a euphemism for the old Pirc/Modern complex. This book covers a patchwork of opening repertoires created by many players over the decades, but mostly through the work of Czech IM Josef Pribyl and English IM Robert Wade, who transformed it into a real system.

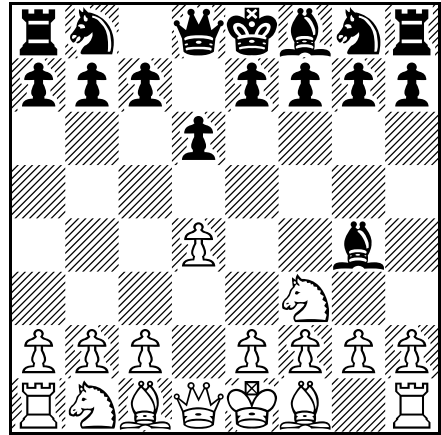
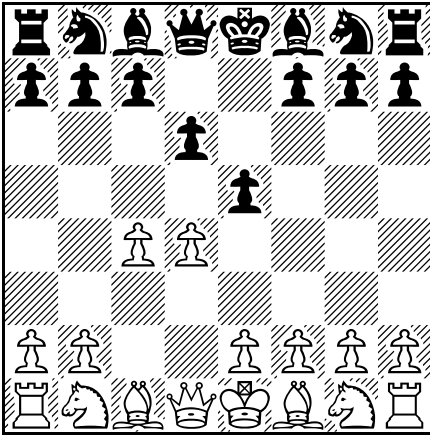
The Pribyl/Wade/Rat/No-name System defies the corporatization of pedigreed opening systems. In the way a cave engulfed in darkness for a half billion years may be illuminated by a single flashlight, the hope is to turn this little known fringe idea into the mainstream of theory by trying to explain what was formally theoretically incomprehensible. Having tested out the lines in blitz versus IMs and GMs over the internet, I was staggered to discover that even FIDE 2600+ players knew little about the opening, yet usually entered the sharpest lines. Many were just making moves up as they went along! If GMs and IMs barely know it, what need for explanation about your club opponent’s knowledge of it? Mastery of the Pribyl/Wade/Rat ensures you of a clear experience/theory advantage from the get go.

1...d6 is intended to be a universal system which can be employed against virtually any first move. In essence the book divides into two sections, with Chapters One through Five dealing with 1 e4 and Chapters Six through Eight dealing with queen’s pawn and English setups from White. Now, on to business:



Here we arrive at the main starting position of the e-pawn sections of the book. The pawn structure is so fluid and unorthodox that it essentially constitutes a blank slate. White can respond with critical lines like 4 f4, the Austrian Attack (Chapters Two and Three). Or he can try quieter lines like 4 Nf3 (Chapter One). On virtually all other responses we weave in and out of Philidor structures with ... Bd7 and ...e5, mixed with strange Pribyl ideas. Black's position is maddeningly slippery from White's perspective, and it is deceptively hard to catch and checkmate us. Quite often our counterattacks come through first. We see a pattern of Black successfully exiting through back windows when our opponents, in trembling fits, try to kick in our front door.

The next two diagrams represent our main challenges in the queen's pawn sections.



Here, unlike many of the 1 e4 segments, White doesn't try to refute our line by playing directly for mate. Instead, we engage in heavyweight strategic battles which are no less tricky. As mentioned before, your biggest weapon will be your familiarity of this virtually unknown, oddball line. Soon, you will add experience as a second weapon. Let's get our opponents thinking on move two rather than move 22.

The Format

The *Move by Move* format is designed to be interactive and simulate a chess lesson as closely as possible. Walt Whitman wrote: "The process of reading is not a half sleep, but in the highest sense an exercise, a gymnastic struggle, that the reader is to do something for himself." The *Move by Move* books are not intended to be a passive process and the reader is expected to get involved and sweat a bit! We start with a question-and-answer format in the early part of the game, which mainly deals with theory (what little there is!). Many of the questions are ones asked by my own students, ratings ranging from 1000-2400, so some questions are basic; others sophisticated. Then as we move into the middlegame and endgame we begin drilling with exercises to test your skills and understanding with planning, critical decisions, combination alerts, multiple choice quizzes and homework assignments. My goal as a teacher is to help you develop your entire game, not just the open-

ing, and the aim is to drive you toward your highest potential.

Let's begin the book with a game where the godfather of our opening system shows how to befuddle a higher-rated opponent:

Game 1
E.Vasiukov-J.Pribyl
Stary Smokovec 1988

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 ♗c3 c6

Game on! Pribyl faces down a GM, armed with his understanding of an unknown and quirky system and distilled by his experience in the line. Pribyl was the underdog in this game but one should never underestimate the value of experience (it's a reasonable assumption that Vasiukov's sum total of experience in the Pribyl/Rat was zero!). To understand, one must first do!

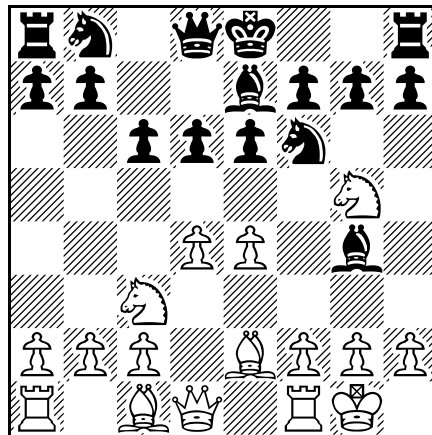
4 ♗f3 ♕g4

Reaching the starting position of Chapter One. This move must have come as a surprise to Vasiukov, who probably expected 4...g6 and a transposition to the Pirc.

5 ♕e2

5 h3 ♕h5 6 ♖e2 intending g4 and ♗h4 is the scariest line for us. We cover this one in detail in Chapter One.

5...e6 6 0-0 ♕e7 7 ♗g5!?



A novelty at that time and one which isn't particularly dangerous to us.

Question: Why not?

Answer: By swapping White breaks the principle: Avoid exchanges when the opponent is cramped.

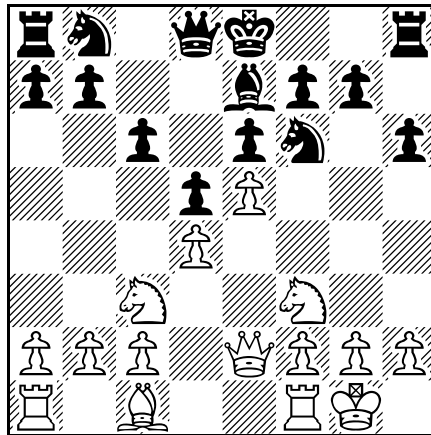
Question: But Black can swap anyway on f3 even if White avoids his last move, correct?

Answer: Correct, and we see this plan arise in Game 2, Langeweg-Petrosian. In this case White gets the bishop pair, although it's debatable whether the bishop pair actually constitutes an edge in such a blocked position.

7...♙xe2 8 ♚xe2 h6 9 ♘f3 d5

The main idea. Black gets a French sans bad bishop.

10 e5



Question: Hasn't White gained a typical advantage against the French or Caro-Kann now?

Answer: No. White's last move, although gaining space, actually violates a few principles:

1. Don't place too many pawns on the same colour as your remaining bishop.
2. Don't close the position when your opponent owns the knights.
3. Don't close the position when leading in development.

Question: So was White's move an error?

Answer: Paradoxically, no. White gets nothing as well if he retains the central tension: 10 ♙f4 0-0 11 ♜ad1 dxe4 12 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♚xe4 ♚d5! with equality, S.Neamtu-I.Cosma, Herculane 1996. The lesson: Following principles doesn't work 100% of the time. There are always exceptions.

10...♘fd7

Question: Doesn't White have the edge with his extra space?

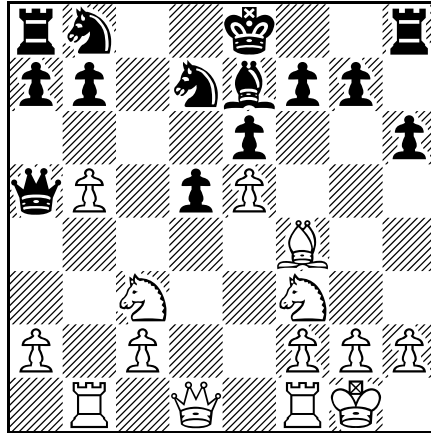
1...d6: Move by Move

With this pawn break Black swaps off a wing pawn for a central pawn, but on the downside White gains d4 for his pieces and opens the game when ahead in development.

14 dxc5 ♟xc5!?

I would play 14...♞c6 to avoid what follows.

15 b4! ♟e7 16 b5 ♞a5!?



Exercise (critical decision): Should White remain calm and play positionally? Or should he, upon the mildest provocation, fly into a paroxysm of rage, accept the challenge and sac on d5?

Answer: 17 ♞xd5!

Rage it is! The “give and let live” philosophy is correct here. White burned his bridges positionally; hence the position calls for drastic measures. Sometimes one must take on sensible debt in the face of a strategic emergency.

16...♞b6 would have prevented the sac on d5.

17...exd5 18 e6?

There is boldness and then there is leaping off a cliff. This is the wrong way.

White gets full compensation for the piece with 18 ♞xd5!. For example, 18...♞c7 (or 18...♞b6 19 e6! fxe6 20 ♞h5+ ♟f8 21 ♞fe1) 19 ♞fe1 ♞b6 20 ♞xf7+! ♟xf7 21 e6+ ♟g6 22 ♟xc7 and White’s huge development lead compensates him in this unbalanced ending.

18...fxe6 19 ♞d4 0-0 20 ♞xe6 ♞f6

Giving White the choice of either rook.

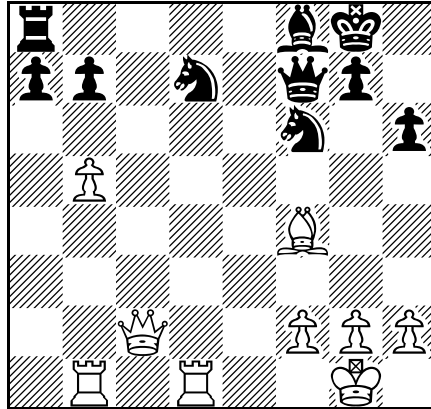
21 ♞xf8

White didn’t get enough for his sac. If 21 ♞e2 then 21...♞e8 (preventing ♞xg7) 22 ♞c7 ♞bd7 23 ♞xa8 ♟c5! wins the a8-knight with advantage.

21...♟xf8 22 c4

Hoping to milk his development lead.

22...♞xa2 23 cxd5 ♞xd5 24 ♞c2 ♞bd7 25 ♞fd1 ♞f7



Black consolidates. His knight pair is worth more than a rook.

26 ♖d6 ♜b6 27 ♙xf8 ♜xf8 28 ♚b3!?

Vasiukov is concerned about the safety of his own king and allows queens off the board. The plan of keeping queens on and going after a7 isn't all that tempting either. For example, 28 ♜a1 ♜fd5 29 ♜xa7 ♜c3! 30 ♜e1 ♜xb5.

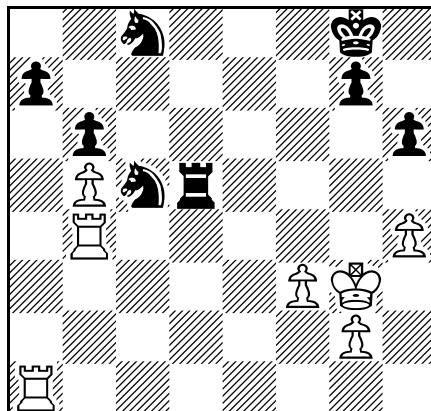
28...♜e4 29 f3 ♚xb3 30 ♜xb3 ♜c5 31 ♜b4

31 ♜a3 is met with 31...♜c8 32 ♜d5 b6.

31...♜f5 32 ♜a1 ♜c8

Divided we stand. In the next few moves Black harmonizes his clunky knights.

33 h4 ♜d5 34 ♙h2 b6 35 ♙g3



Exercise (planning): Black guarded his queenside property with meticulous frugality. Still, he finds himself a bit tied down to his weakness on a7. Is there a way he can do the same to White by targeting the b5-pawn?

1...d6: Move by Move

Answer: There is, by heading to d6.

35...♘b7! 36 ♖c1 ♗c5 37 ♖e1

Or 37 ♗xc5 bxc5 38 ♖a4 ♘bd6 39 ♖a5 ♔f7 and Black should win.

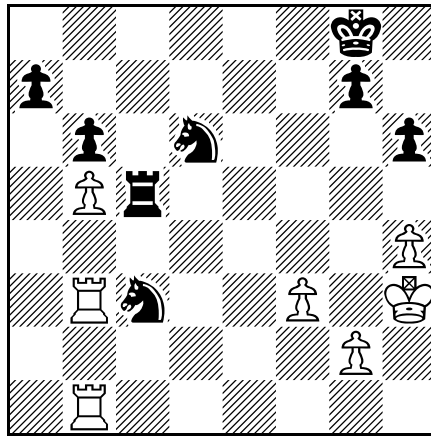
37...♘bd6

Forcing White's rooks into indenture, guarding b5.

38 ♖eb1

38 ♔f4 ♘xb5 39 ♖e8+ ♔f7 40 ♗xc8 ♗xc8 41 ♗xb5 ♗c4+ is totally lost for White, who has no chance against the connected queenside passers.

38...♘e7 39 ♔h3 ♘d5 40 ♖4b3 ♘c3!



There goes b5, after which a knight conveniently covers a7. White could resign here.

41 ♖e1 ♔f7 42 g4 ♘dx b5 43 ♖b4 ♘d5 44 ♖be4 ♘d6 45 ♖d4 ♘c8 46 h5 ♘ce7 47 ♔g3 b5 48 ♖e5 a5 49 ♖f4+ ♔e8 50 g5 ♖c1 51 gxh6 gxh6 52 ♖d4 ♖c5 53 ♖de4 ♔d7 54 ♖g4 b4 55 ♖g6 b3 56 ♖b6 ♘xb6 57 ♖xc5 a4 0-1

Summary: Our opening is weirdly deceptive. Read on and the next 400 or so pages explain why!

I wish the reader good luck with the Pribyl/Wade/Rat/No-name System. May your booked up opponents give you perplexed looks when you employ it!

Acknowledgements

Thanks to editor John Emms, for his untiring help and encouragement throughout the book. To Nancy for proofreading and also for kindly agreeing to urgent pleas that she stop talking about the royal wedding; and to Tim for nursing my elderly computer, keeping it rosy cheeked, skipping about and clapping its hands in delight at every variation in the book.