

E21 Nimzo-Indian Defense

white Yefim Bogolyubov, black Mario Monticelli

San Remo 1930

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Nf3 b6 5 Bg5 Bxc3+

In the early years of this variation Black toyed with this capture, which modern masters often delay until after 5 ... h6 6 Bh4.

6 bxc3 Bb7 7 e3 d6

This was highly praised at the time because the natural, "classical" moves such as 7 ... 0-0 and 7 ... d5 leave White with an obvious positional advantage. Black has in mind what was then a fairly original plan: queenside castling.

8 Bd3 Nbd7 9 0-0 Qe7 10 Nd2

Tartakower considered 10 e4 h6 11 Bxf6 Qxf6 12 Qe2 promising.

10 ... h6 11 Bh4 g5

Black would not dare castle kingside, because of the advance of White's f- and e-pawns.

12 Bg3 0-0-0

More exact may be 12 ... h5 because now White can target the king at the cost of a pawn with 13 c5! dxc5 14 Qa4 Kb8 15 Rab1.

13 a4 a5 14 Rb1 Rdg8 15 f3

If White prepares c4-c5 with 15 Nb3 Black attacks a4 with 15 ... Bc6.

15 ... h5 16 e4 h4 17 Be1 e5 18 h3 (see diagram)

18 ... Nh5 19 c5!

White recognized that he was losing without the counterplay offered by this pawn sacrifice.

19 ... dxc5 20 d5

Compared with 19 d5? Nc5, White stands relatively well with Nc4 followed by Ne3-f5 or Qb3/Nxa5 or d5-d6.

20 ... Nf4 21 Nc4 Rh6!

Black prepares to sacrifice the exchange when White advances the d-pawn.

22 Rf2

The rook defends g2 and prepares to go to d2 in support of d5-d6 or to b2 in preparation for a sacrifice on a5 or b6. But 22 Ne3 was needed to stop Black's next move.

Bogolyubov-Monticelli
After 18 h3

